THE BRAIN-EYE

New Histories of Modern Painting

Éric Alliez
with collaboration from Jean-Clet Martin

Translated by
ROBIN MACKAY

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Translator's Preface

A major work of—and beyond—philosophical aesthetics, a dense and perplexing multiplicity of a text, but one infused by an irrepressible and compelling élan, at once a set of discontinuous 'plateaus' which the reader must learn to assemble and a series of lyrical sallies of cumulative intensity and momentum, *The Brain-Eye* conducts its rediscovery of the plural powers of painting through an experiment in writing and an audacious (de)construction of the book-form. In a manner that recalls Gilles Deleuze's refusal of 'the' history of philosophy as a teleological progression with a common finality, and his insistence instead on a 'history of problems' (in the entirely positive sense he gives to the term), the chapters that make up *The Brain-Eye* set out to overcome a set of obstacles erected by art history and the philosophy of art so as to arrive at an understanding of the singular problems that trouble and motivate protagonists whom we once imagined we knew, as, between the practice of painting and the discursive conceptualisation of the new modes of seeing it engenders, they bring to the surface of painting the materiality of the visual. Patiently reconstructing the itineraries of these singular voyages, negotiating the byways of received opinion, critical commentary, and the never straightforward relation between painters' writings and sayings and their practice, Éric Alliez gives us a series of 'case studies', each of which can be read as a self-contained history but which are raised to their highest power when one perceives, braided together across them, a set of transversal threads that make of the book a whole that greatly exceeds its parts.

This textual dispositif harbours a writing machine that is as meticulous in its employment of a formidable corpus of secondary materials as it is intransigent in its exuberant refusal to submit writing to the demands of 'communication' by collapsing its perplexities, resonances, and reiterations into a 'clear' propositional form (as if the thickness of writing was merely the

result of an obdurate refusal to make things explicit, rather than the necessary prerequisite of a real engagement with matters that overflow a strictly discursive frame). This is, therefore, a book that leaves the reader no choice but to participate actively in a construction that is laid out precisely and delicately, touch by touch, in order to realise a whole whose 'finish' is that of an all-over effect rather than a transparent encapsulation: a definitively incomplete whole which, by means of its conceptual warp and weft, continually maintains in tension a set of forces that it falls to the reader to negotiate.

In staging these histories which operate a mutual complication of philosophical aesthetics and art history, Alliez brings before us a cast of characters whose aspect is equally unfamiliar to both disciplines—Delacroix, the Turk; Seurat, the extraterrestrial automaton; a serialist Manet, a logician Cézanne glaring at us with the enucleated eyes of a skull. . . . In the process, he punctures biographical legend and shatters critical commonplaces (Delacroix's Orient is absolutely determinative, yet the 'outside' it brings to light is hardly that of the orientalist imaginary; Cézanne's dedication to 'nature' and his 'provençal blood' only serve to obscure the rigour of his endless labour 'on the motif'; Gauguin is a potter even when he's a painter, and his 'exoticism' pertains to a land more foreign yet than the luxuriant tropics, a new earth . . .). As evidenced by the precise analyses of selected paintings that serve as focal points for each of the chapters (and which will serve the reader as the most potent proof of the penetrating force of their arguments when consulted with—at least—a reproduction to hand), these audacious figures are the direct result of the author's decision to attend exclusively to what is realised *in the practice of painting itself*—or rather, *practices* plural.

For, upon entering into this open-air theatre, we must also abandon a linear narrative of the history of art—that of a chain of successors who break with the past and advance in the direction of some ulterior finality—in favour of an untimely and imageless history of researcher-painters who, between them but never in unison, project, construct, and *hallucinate*, from the middle (*par le milieu*), the virtual field of forces that is modern painting. To extract these kernels of painter-thought, Alliez patiently peels off the petrified carapace of historical cliché, hagiographic doggerel, and indurate myth, allowing us to *see* the paintings once more, attending to the movement of thought deposited in them, and registering the tension implied by the continual struggle of painters to say what they do, or at least to distance themselves from what is said of them and on their behalf. As these overcodings fall away, what is revealed is the *style* of each subject: style as a *habitus*, a culture unto itself, at once overdetermined by a multiplicity of influences and intuitions and resolute in the obsessive pursuit of its singular problem. These disparate microcultures, in their turn, are over the course of the book patiently worked into a broader vision of the modernity of painting, with the 'plateaus' coming together and

interlocking at unexpected moments and unanticipated angles. Thus, *The Brain-Eye* confronts us with a punctual set of historical events, observations, causes and effects, surface formations rebarbative to any kind of dialectical or narrative reconciliation, while at the same time indicating the continuity of a subterranean plane of consistency whose unearthing will require an unprecedented effort of thought.

Furthermore, beyond analysis and description alone, the writing of each chapter seeks to *inhabit* the style of its subject. The turbulence of Goethe's nature-philosophical morphology; the churning cascade of Delacroix's animal melee; the crisp, stark delivery of Manet's frontally lit flatness; the spectral greyness of Seurat—all imbue these 'portraits of the artist as philosophical persona' with a stylistic energy that makes for an experience of reading we might well qualify as *hallucinatory*—which is appropriate enough, given that hallucination constitutes the major leitmotif running through the work.

It is the work of Hippolyte Taine (largely neglected in the Anglophone world) that provides the most explicit theoretical basis for the book's central claim: that throughout the nineteenth century, painting became the testbed for experiments in hallucination that ran parallel to the development of psychophysics, which sited sensation in a nervous system and a brain that could offer no guarantee of an organic pre-established harmony of the subject with the external world it perceives. This is not, however, a story of how art was 'informed' by science. The brain of *The Brain-Eye* is not one conducive to a 'neuroaesthetics' that would enable us to explain (away) visual effects by reducing them to a causal order independent of the event of seeing; no more than its eye is one that would—in line with the strategy of Merleau-Ponty, the philosophical enemy of choice here—allow the philosopher to avert such an 'objectivizing' catastrophe by rooting the visual firmly in a lived body and its antepredicative enmeshment with the 'flesh of the world'. *The Brain-Eye* is an inhuman eye, and in its wake the phenomenology of the worldly subject and of its 'flesh' and the devitalised physics of an unseen light must both yield to the divagations of an alien subjectile, the bizarre developments of a phaneroscopic eye that belongs to no one, and which is deployed by the researcher–painter–seer in order to map out a vision yet to come.

The primary element of these researches is colour: as detailed in the opening chapter on Goethe, colour has long provoked a 'philosophical rage' because it has proved impossible to collapse onto the side of either the subject or the object of modern philosophy. The differential, intensive dimension of colour—the raw material of painting—perishes when colour is reduced to being an epiphenomenon of the physical realm, and yet, as the enterprises of psychophysics showed very clearly, colour phenomena obey a logic that

is not purely 'subjective'. The logic proper to colour perishes also when it is corralled into a model drawn from another art, whether literary, poetic, or musical, or subjected to the identificatory regime of the traditions of beauty (line and form) or to imaginary conventions (sentiment and symbol). *The Brain-Eye* details how the breakout of colour from its subservience to all of these extraneous models served as a catalyst for the exploration of a logic proper to *the visual* as such.

Colour becomes a component in a war machine that enables painting to liberate the matrix of the visual from its local instantiation in the visible and its models, both the artistic academicism that had allotted it a secondary role within an ideal beauty and the everyday modes of representation founded on common apprehensions that buttress the myths of 'natural' perception and representation. The autonomisation of colour announces a visual whose relation to the visible world will be attenuated and placed in tension by a series of hallucinatory research programmes, at the same time provoking a 'delocalisation' that disrupts representation by favouring the consideration of the picture as a dynamic whole perpetually 'unfinished' by the colour-forces deployed within it. Seeing is now conditioned by the hallucinatory powers of the brain-eye in its complicity with colour and in its ceaseless constructive strivings, which the painter unseats from their organic function by manipulating and heightening the exhortations of colour.

In engaging this abstract machine, the painter enters into a becoming-unnatural that corresponds to the movement of naturalisation/denaturalisation precipitated by the emergence of psychophysics, which, with its postulation of preconscious sensation and its discovery of the continuity between normal and pathological perception, at once placed sensation into the class of natural, law-governed phenomena (a logic of sensation), and revoked the 'natural' status of representational perception (an inorganic eye). This enables painting to aspire to a supernaturality that exceeds the actual ('natured nature'), with the painter equipping himself with the prosthesis of an inhuman eye subtracted, at any cost, from the 'visual atlas' of common perception. The perceiving subject is stripped of its flesh to reveal a hallucinating automaton, which promptly takes leave of the space of representation and its (perspectival, subjective, mimetic) 'point of view'—meaning that the conditions of the pictorial as such must be rethought in the light of the visual. (Here the encounter with photography, in its revelation of a generalised, impersonal visuality, plays a crucial role in several respects, which are explored here in a way that goes well beyond common generalisations regarding its impact on modern painting.)

Now, if this virtual field of colour, the province of the brain-eye, constitutes the highest truth of seeing, but one with no trace of actuality (Goethe), then how could the *truth in painting* be other than a *truth of hallucination*,

with painting consequently becoming the laboratory of *true hallucination* (Taine)? The hallucination of a truth in painting that is glimpsed in between the lines of the visible, that is announced by the insubordination of colour, but is yet to be realised . . . .

To paint is to conceive, as Cézanne insists; and as they paint, painters formulate their own conceptions of what they see. And yet the virtuality of *The Brain-Eye* is attained not through the peremptory imposition of a theory but through *encounters*. At this point, the Deleuzian principle that concepts must be referred back to their sensible conditions and to the 'involuntary adventure' of culture comes into play in a series of narrative sequences, the conceptual tenor of which raises them well above the level of biographical anecdote: Goethe is transformed from poet to painter by his Italian voyage; Delacroix's oriental reveries enable him to anticipate Chevreul's analysis of colour complementarity, leading him to apply a decorative model to painting (the carpet, not the window); silently demurring from a miscognised application of Chevreul's principles, Seurat evades the neatly drawn line from Impressionism to neo-impressionism by disappearing into the grey particles of the photographic emulsion . . . . In each case, these actual encounters with an outside of painting are only the harbingers of a virtual outside, which each painter must then strive to keep 'in focus' and, each in their own way, each struggling with their own problem, *realise in (a) practice*. The aesthetics (and the critique of aesthetics) proposed here is therefore one that involves experience *and* experiment, passive synthesis *and* constructive artifice, with the painter being both the receptive patient of accidental passions and an experimental agent striving to *construct* the new on the basis of an always precarious hold on the evanescent traces of these contingent encounters, percepts that must be registered, retained, and developed in the face of the constant threat of discursive formations that summon them to fall back onto a cartography of the visible world laid out in advance.

Such a radical (transcendental) empiricism effectively disrupts a whole series of structural oppositions and developmental sequences which art history and the 'philosophy of art' have tended to assume: evading the double binds of objectivism and subjectivism, realism and naturalism, classicism and romanticism, *The Brain-Eye* demonstrates how, fuelled by such encounters, the forces of painting ceaselessly insinuate themselves between these lines—and indeed reveal the lines themselves to be the epiphenomenon of a differential play. With a consummate mastery of historical and contemporary secondary materials, Alliez shows how, in the controversies over these generic terms, what is at stake is rarely the real work of the painter-researcher, but rather the shifting sands of political, professional, and sometimes petty motives. Even the allegiances professed in the writings and reported remarks of painters themselves are not primary evidence to be taken at face value,

but attest to a constant back- and-forth between the experience/experiment of practice and its discursive translation, whose infelicities only serve to motivate a further return 'to the colours themselves'.

Intent on animating a modernity of painting beholden to no inevitable progression, no formalist evacuation, all of this is of a piece with the author's determination—in the footsteps of these painters and in an advocacy of the singularity of each one of them—to strip away all the modes of intentionality to which the visual has been subordinated, and to return to the (virtual) materiality of painting, all the while resisting another narrative that constantly threatens to take up the baton in the guise of a *formalist purification* that would dissolve this pluralism by implanting a new finality: that of the abstraction of colour, or of a 'pure Painting'. The combination of the episodes recounted in *The Brain-Eye* yields instead a series of *acute points of decision* that emerge from the problematic field of modern painting, and which are neither consummations nor impasses, but jumping-off points for the reproblematisation of the 'truth in painting', a truth whose effects will also be felt in the philosophical field.

All of this demands a tactical finesse, a great deal of circumspection, and textual manoeuvres whose subtlety and non-linearity are manifest throughout the book, as writing invests the plasticity of painting, relaying and extending the furious patience of the artist as he activates the futural charge compacted within the materiality of colour. Alliez's flexuous sentences continually coil back upon themselves, amplifying and inflecting, cumulatively adding further touches that transform the aspect of a preceding phrase before its sense has set fast. In multiple recommencements, hesitations, and refrains, the same question or observation will return repeatedly with a new inflection, resetting the course of the argument as it is menaced by the inertial attractors of the readymade images of painting and painters peddled by critics and advocates alike. Thus, one must come back to Cézanne, to Gauguin, to Seurat once again—and not even to them 'in person' but to the pre-individual singularities that they track and which are the real of their style (a singularity 'signed' Gauguin, a Seurat-effect, a *Cézanning* . . .)—in a spiralling movement that cumulatively amasses an instrumentarium of concepts coaxed out of the material with an acute and penetrating gaze, utilising semantic shifters, rhythmic devices, and hallucinatory effects that seek to rival the plastic creations they invest. Thus, terms that initially seem merely descriptive gradually take on the status of concepts (concepts that therefore will have already been at work, nondiscursively, within paintings): a process that also testifies to the outside that philosophy needs in order to truly become an art of the 'creation of concepts'.

This is how the event of *The Brain-Eye* emerges, as if in a hallucinatory stereoscopy, from the 'overlabour' of the text: not as a chronological

development entered into the ledger of art history, but as a virtual event or problematic field whose chronically uneven distribution demands a crooked path, a zigzag line, a series of retouchings that each time change the whole picture; a virtual event that solicits the participation of the viewer-reader in the construction of a tableau which must be seen 'from too far away and up too close' in order to appreciate both the ambitious sweep of its argument and the fine details of its 'broken touch'.

Needless to say, all of this not only makes demands upon the reader, but also exacerbates further the celebrated impossibility of translation. Alliez convokes into his patchwork theatre a multitude of actors, sometimes with a corroborative function but often ventriloquised in a more subtle and ironic fashion. The precision with which he approaches his materials has in many cases demanded a revisiting of existing translations of these sources, since his local deployment of every phrase is calibrated in view of a global construction whose consistency is rigorously maintained throughout. And then, to this orderly cacophony, the translator inevitably adds his own voice. Despite my intent to prioritise the accessibility and lucid rendering of argument over fidelity to the author's style, the sensation of the two pulling against each other was impossible to brush aside; in a work such as this, the argument and its mode of delivery are ultimately inextricable. I take full responsibility for the triage I was forced to operate in each instance, and do not trouble the reader with details of the inevitable compromises it entailed. Indeed, I have attempted to avoid as far as possible any emphatic intrusion on the part of the translator, and have only intervened explicitly in the text where it seemed absolutely necessary. I have tried to preserve certain key terms that operate like passwords or instructions for assembly, granting access to the intersections within and between chapters: these recurring formulations which span each of the 'cases', and indicate the points where they are to be coupled, are marked in the original French where necessary. And then we have the Proustian scope of certain sentences, which, decanted directly in English, would sometimes be a recipe for sub-Scott-Moncreiffian disaster; this occasionally made reformulation unavoidable, although where possible I have tried to maintain the author's unremittingly additive, amplificative cascade of prose, its constant kaleidoscopic requalification and transmutation of its own sense.

In attempting to confront discursive thought with the nondiscursive forces that are at work within it, in describing how painting has been broken open by its outside, and in bringing the outside that is the practice of painting to bear upon the philosophical concept, *The Brain-Eye* makes significant contributions to our understanding of modern art history and of modernity itself, and has seismic consequences for a thinking of the relation of philosophical conceptuality to the logic(s) of sensation at work in visual art—something that should be of immediate interest not just to philosophers and students of

painting, but also to those working in the expanded field of contemporary art, which, too often, esteems itself 'conceptual' while supposing that the conceptual can be cleanly extricated from its sensate precursors; or generates impoverished encounters with 'sensations' (or the 'sensational') that remain burdened by the actuality of the contemporary rather than being pregnant with its virtualities. *The Brain-Eye* plunges into the prehistory of the contemporary only to extract that part of the past which remains for the future to develop.[1] The fruit of many years of fastidious historical research into the art of modernity, the book also poses ineluctable questions about the post- or trans-modern prospects of the art and philosophy of tomorrow. Above all, it is an exhortation to think and to see, in which content, expression, form, and matter enter into a new alliance that I am sure will be hugely rewarding for readers prepared to surrender themselves to its shimmering, spectral, hallucinatory effects.

I owe thanks to Éric Alliez, whose contribution to the translation during a long and sometimes fraught process was substantial and indispensable: his patience in answering my numerous and sometimes facile questions and in attending to multiple revisions of the manuscript was much appreciated; and equally, his impatience with any dereliction of duty on my part was a continual spur in my endeavours to master his work and to do justice to it. Thanks also to Sarah Campbell, my editor at Rowman & Littlefield, who valued the work enough to graciously accept many unanticipated delays in its completion. I would like to dedicate this translation to my beloved wife Louise, who mustered superhuman forbearance and kindness as she involuntarily shared in the struggle and unflaggingly supported me through the vicissitudes of linguistic hallucination.

Robin Mackay
Truro, June 2015.

NOTE

1. Alliez's recent *Défaire l'image: De l'art contemporain* (Paris: Les presses du réel, 2013) extends *The Brain-Eye* in the direction of a critique of aesthetics by emphasising the necessary discontinuity between a *diagrammatics* capable of critically addressing contemporary art, and the *aesthetics* of modern painting, itself an hallucination belonging to the historical ontology of the nineteenth century.

Thus, external perception is an internal dream which proves to be in harmony with external things; and instead of calling hallucination a false external perception, we must call external perception a true hallucination. [. . .] *Sensation, whether in the absence or presence of impulsions from without and of nervous action, produces hallucinations, and produces them by itself alone.*

Hippolyte Taine
De l'intelligence, Paris, 1870

Note to the Viewer-Reader

This book contains no reproductions, apart from the vignettes used as frontispieces for each chapter. This absence is not just a matter of the prohibitive costs of photographic reproduction; more to the point, it is the corollary of a project that seeks both to interrogate the status of description (the province of art history) and to subvert the illustrative role to which the philosophy of art all too often condemns artworks. Here, the primary task of writing is to explore and to map out in depth—sometimes in the most minute detail—not so much images as the registers of a plastic thought in action (that of each of the painters studied).

As well as the reference works and exhibition catalogues cited, fine reproductions can be found in many mass-market books; and there are many image-banks on the Internet that can be freely consulted.

Acknowledgements

On the basis of a research project devised together with Jean-Clet Martin (codename: 'Colours of Modernity/Modernities of Colour'), the content and overarching articulations of this book were developed through my teaching in Aesthetics at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna, between October 1997 and June 2000. Each chapter, while still in progress, was the object of a seminar that, in turn, would contribute toward the composition of the book. Thus, in very first place, I owe thanks to Peter Sloterdijk (who, as director of the Institut für Kulturphilosophie, warmly welcomed me during these three years), my assistants Simon Wagner and Stephen Zepke (who managed to assemble an impressive iconography while making sure, through their own interventions, to maintain the philosophical dimension of the seminar), the students (whose diligence was equalled only by their desire to place these *New Histories of Modern Painting* in a renewed relation to contemporary art)—and Elisabeth von Samsonow, Chair of Art Anthropology, with whom I organised two colloquia whose problematic was directly linked to this work: 'Kunst und Konzepte der Wahrnehmung zwischen Bewußsein und Technologie' (May 10–11, 1999) and 'Chroma—Zum Status der Farbe' (May 26–27, 2000).[1]

The seminars I directed as visiting Professor at the University of Warwick in 1999 were equally important because of the discussions to which they gave rise—in particular, those concerning the nexus Impressionism-Phenomenology, upon which I was working at the time, following a close commentary on two then little-known texts by Mallarmé ('The Impressionists and Edouard Manet') and Foucault ('Manet and the Object of Painting').

There were also the sessions given with Jean-Clet Martin in Paris in 2000–2001, as a part of his seminar at the Collège International de Philosophie, under the title 'Tableau contemporain de la modernité', which were the

occasion for particularly stimulating exchanges with the audience and between the two of us.

I should also particularly like to thank Jean-Claude Bonne, who contributed a great deal to the final draft of this book through his reading of various versions of the manuscript and through our working sessions both leading up to and following *La Pensée-Matisse*.[2] For, along with the latter volume, this book belongs ultimately to a single research programme divided into two components along lines that are not merely chronological;—two complementary 'halves' that we might designate as *The Brain-Eye* and *The Eye-Brain* (the latter an expression of Henri Michaux, which ought to be reserved for Matisse alone).

Finally, my thanks to Jacqueline Lichtenstein, who welcomed the book into her collection 'Essais d'art et de philosophie' at Éditions Vrin, and in doing so was exceptionally generous with her time and her valuable comments; and to Sarah Campbell at Rowman & Littlefield, who commissioned the English translation and has overseen its realisation with the greatest professionalism and enthusiastic personal engagement.

EA

NOTES

1. These two colloquia provided material for a publication: E. Alliez and E. von Samsonow, *Hyperplastik. Kunst und Konzepte der Wahrnehmung in Zeiten der mental imagery* (*TransArt* 2) (Vienna: Verlag Turia+Kant, 2000); *Chroma Drama. Widerstand der Farbe* (*TransArt* 4) (Vienna: Verlag Turia+Kant, 2001).

2. E. Alliez, J.-C. Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse. Portrait de l'artiste en hyperfauve* (Paris: Le Passage, 2005). Since the publication of the present book in France in 2007, *La Pensée-Matisse* has been extended into an interrogation of the couplet Matisse/Duchamp, proposed as the basis for an archaeology-in-tension of contemporary art (*Défaire l'image* [Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2013]); one not unrelated to the configuration of forces at play in the philosophical couplet Deleuze/Badiou, defined as one of the constitutive axes of contemporary philosophy in my *De l'impossibilité de la phénoménologie. Sur la philosophie française contemporaine* (Paris: Vrin, 1995; second edition in progress).

Introduction

Show and Tell

I

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari affirm, one last time, that if there is thinking outside of philosophy, then it also thinks from the outside *within* philosophy. So that philosophy, exposed to an Outside foreign to its customary habits of thought, will now have to be defined from the point of view of a wholly Deleuzian becoming (and becoming-other). . . . We must admit that such a becoming is hardly what springs to mind when we survey the state of a discipline that, behind closed doors, would almost rather shrink from being 'contemporary' than confront questions that are bound up with the plural reality of images of thought.

For our part, we can certainly say that this book, the sole object of which is to bring to light a thinking at work in 'modern painting' (to show *that* it thinks and *how* it thinks, and to do so, as far as possible, on the basis of the works themselves, with the aid of all the available critical material), could only have been written from an outside of philosophy called 'modern art' in so far as the latter stands in an essential relation to this non-philosophical thinking: a relation that directly concerns so-called 'modern philosophy' by virtue of the play that painting introduces into it.

In order to enter into this play, which is not a play of pure form, since it involves a questioning of the events-values of Modernity by way of the modern idea of art, we will insist

1. That we must attend to the first proposition (*there is thinking outside of philosophy*) so as better to discern philosophy's difficulty in regard to modern art, and, in particular, the so-called 'plastic' arts in their irreducibility to a musical paradigm figurable in its very immateriality—a paradigm

cultivated by the aesthetic philosophy par excellence, Romanticism, in its pursuit of a universal synthesis of the arts of the visible and the invisible. As for the phenomenology that succeeds Romanticism (as philosophy of art, and perhaps in every other sense), it seeks to found itself upon a 'seeing' only by *reducing* it from the outset to a pure 'perceiving', itself soon supplanted by the hidden-revealed light of a yet more pure 'appearing'—which inevitably promotes Impressionism (a 'superior' Impressionism, it goes without saying) to the rank of the Image of a last philosophy of the Subject, unveiling the world in an 'atmosphere' that is entirely that of the flesh. Thus, Merleau-Ponty discovers a proto-Impressionist Cézanne, Maldiney follows suit (albeit more 'rhythmically'), and the same story has been rehashed ever since, on the basis of this fixation that would have us reading and rereading Gasquet rather than studying Cézanne. . . . Whence also, in this book, the final chapter of which conducts the experiment of a rigorously anti-Impressionist Cézanne, our constant return to the question of phenomenology: as the obstacle that must be overcome today in order to *think otherwise* of the powers of painting.

2. That these difficulties of the philosopher testify to the complexity of the relations between seeing and saying: a complexity that modern art invites us to consider in terms of an irreducibility *in principle* and of relations of force *in fact*. If the Expression of this dissemblance in the Construction of relations of force mobilised by always-singular operations concerns every 'work of art' in so far as it is 'modern', the inability of the aforementioned 'philosophy of art' to undertake any real thinking of the *construction of the sensible* on the basis of these works takes on, to say the least, the status of a general symptom (there being a reciprocal causality between its will to speak the Image as a sensory presence purified of all artifice—aside from its own, which leads art back to the spirit made flesh—and its inability to think works and artists on their own operational level, along with their concomitant enunciations).
3. That this 'symptom' is at work within a time, our time, which can no longer hope to resolve the underlying issue by multiplying mediations, bridges, and so on, between history of philosophy and art history: for today, both of these disciplines have become generally subservient to a *hysterically* antiquarian history, as evidenced by their accelerated fossilisation. (Yet, the *détournements* which we have managed to operate in the course of this work—ultimately just as foreign to one discipline as to the other—show well enough how they may still retain something of their 'former glory'.) The new lease of life with which a certain 'phenomenology of art' sought to endow them is hardly convincing, given its extraneous inscription of the *pictorial epoché* within a history of philosophy and of painting that is primordially and exclusively that of its own making.

So while it is true that we do not listen enough to what painters say—especially true of philosophers, who persist in limiting themselves, at best, to 'consulting' and 'citing' them—there is no point in trying to make amends for this from within a framework where thinking remains the monopoly of the philosopher (a unique image of thought) because of the latter's insistence on disregarding the reality conditions of a plastic thought which, in its works of sensation, expresses itself from *outside* the concept while capturing certain discursive and nondiscursive forces that surface *within* the concept. On the contrary, in following this movement, which is as one with the necessity of a new relation to painting and to art, philosophy and its concepts must bring their very discursivity into confrontation with the signification-effects, the *sense/sensation*-effects, of the nondiscursive . . . . Moreover, language itself is not the province of one single regime, and not for nothing do we bring to the fore the very 'different' character of painters' writings (and sayings); for these must be connected with a *diagrammatic* aspect of their thought that governs the impact upon writing of the painter's practice as it develops 'in the very nerves', at the junction of aesthesic matters and aesthetic functions whose modern effect will have been to cerebralise seeing. We have systematically made reference to these writings throughout the book: on the one hand, because the 'signs' used by artists to describe the trans-formation of the regime of visibility implied in their productions relate to and confront forces that this plastic thinking directly experiences and with which it constructs an Allagmatics (a theory of operations that it discovers and mobilises); and on the other hand, because in each case, as this takes place, the very principle of the relation between seeing and saying, between the construction of a new seeing and the saying that is sensibly implicated in it, ends up profoundly displaced, in an always-singular *act of thinking*. But as we know, art history (and in particular 'French historiography', as Jean-Paul Bouillon insists) is no less 'timid' than philosophy when it comes to any mention of painters' 'thinking'.

II

As close as possible to the works and the enunciations that constitute modern painting, between Delacroix (who writes) and Cézanne (who corresponds and talks), we seek in this book to track the mutations in the relation between the Eye and the Brain—the Brain-Eye—on the basis of the denaturalisation and the cerebralisation of the Eye *recorded* and *developed* in those 'psycho-physiological' studies that centred around the notion of 'hallucination' (the guiding concept of Hippolyte Taine, building on an immense body of scientific literature: every perception, every image, every sensation is by nature hallucinatory). The vector of a monism of sensation that seeks to produce a

'true hallucination' of the world, the painter's Brain-Eye is an experiment in a modernity irreducible to the common philosophical notions of subject and object. Within this historico-critical perspective, the question(s) of colour have constituted a permanent horizon of interrogation since Goethe's *Farbenlehre* (*Colour Theory*), to which our first chapter is dedicated. But Goethe appears here against type, given his supposed proclivity for 'the invisible', for 'spiritual life', and for 'the expression of subjectivity' (the 'Return to Goethe' being a time-honoured slogan of anti-Kantianism). Instead, we privilege the psychophysical field of the sensory that he explores *objectively* in a *living Nature*, perturbing the scientific (Newtonian) solution in ways that will be the object of a growing interest throughout the nineteenth century ('for scientists and artists alike', as Jacqueline Lichtenstein has recently reminded us);[1] our book does not invest the field of colour to merely recount the story of its 'pictorial liberation' in the Goethean progeny of 'colour abstraction'—the liberation of Colour in Painting, as will be repeatedly claimed, following a somewhat hasty teleology (of an 'abstract-Impressionist' vocation? See the late Greenberg) whose self-proclaimed modernism is today, to all appearances, exhausted. Far from motivating a cult of *pure painting*, for us colour is the matter and the stake of dispositifs (this plurality contaminates art history—in painting, we can only tell [*hi*]*stories* in the plural) that involve an extreme and always singular problematisation of the Painting-Form in its striving 'to make us sense insensible forces' (Deleuze). As the construction of a Seeing that amounts to a trans-formation of common experience (what is seen of unknown forces, what is said of them in a becoming that amplifies them, a short-circuit between what can be shown and what can be told), painting does not become 'modern' without converging with the trajectory of a general line of force that draws the interiority of 'Art' outside. In this way, modern art's claims to autonomy in fact prove to be strictly contemporary with a 'de-identification of art' (which is never *complete*—even when it claims to be) and of the public frameworks within which art functions. In consequence, the ensuing aesthetic revolution acquires an ontological import whose political significance can be gauged by the continued destruction of the system of representation and the continually reprised problematisation of the very notion of the Image—a revolution which by (de)definition cannot be transposed into the terms of the alternative posited by Etienne Gilson: 'philosophical introduction to painting' versus 'pictorial introduction to philosophy' (even admitting the undeniable provocation of the latter in relation

1. In a work first published in 2003, wherein I found reiterated the importance I had accorded to the theory of sensation developed by Taine in *De l'intelligence* (1870): cf. J. Lichtenstein, *The Blind Spot: An Essay on the Relations between Painting and Sculpture in the Modern Age*, trans. Chris Miller (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2008), 175.

to the former). Far from any universality consistent with a project of negotiation between the descriptive and the prescriptive, what we are dealing with here are effects of transversality between the visible and the sayable that are constitutive of that 'inside of the outside' that goes by the name of Aesthetic Thought (in the primary sense of the term, which engages sensibility in a thought unequal to itself) once a Brain-Eye has disoriented the general system of sensible self-evidences and their discursive localities. 'Hallucination' is identified with the productive, differential, *constructive* force of *operations* without which there can be no 'expression' of the excess of the visible, in a logic of sensation that invents a new cerebrality which frees the eye from its role as a fixed organ, and from its representational function.

III

The content and organisation of this book obey not so much the authorial model of the learned celebration of 'great painters' as that of the case study (Delacroix, Manet, Seurat, Gauguin, and Cézanne are not so much the 'authors' as the 'vectors' of the paintings analysed) and of problems (Delacroix and the 'true hallucination' of colour, the question of the 'plane' in Manet, and of the 'spectral element' in Seurat's Science-Art, that of 'symbolism' and 'decorative abstraction' in Gauguin, and the problem-question of a Cézannian 'construction' irreducible to the superior Impressionism projected onto his work by the phenomenology of art). Its rhythm is certainly (and inevitably) chronological (Manet exhibits *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* in 1863, the year of Delacroix's death, which implies that the latter dies twice in the official calendar of Modern Art—but only so as better to be resurrected within it, after Manet and Seurat, in Gauguin and Cézanne). But perhaps more importantly (for the chronology itself depends upon this), the work presented here is open to the scansion of the *photographic* (with all that goes along with it—which is to say everything, or almost everything, when the entirety of the Visible is forced to confront the Visual). For with Manet and Seurat, the photograph disrupts, in exemplary fashion, any ontology of painting that might be grafted onto the period, by preventing it from getting locked into the repetitive conjugation of the *pictorial* (the last religion of art). Consequently, these *New Histories of Modern Painting* will be written in six chapters, divided into three sections: the first section comprises Goethe and Delacroix, the second, Manet and Seurat, and the third comprises Gauguin and Cézanne. Although they are not labelled as such within the 'text', we mention these sections so as to indicate, taking things from the middle (*par le milieu*), the disjunctive temporality which, from within (an inclusive disjunction), has animated and complicated the course of our research.

Goethe, *Garden and Terrace with Steps*, August 1787(?)
Pen drawing, sepia, watercolour, 15.6 × 20.8 cm, Museen der Klassik Stiftung Weimar

Chapter 1

June 19, 1799—The Goethe Transformation

May God us keep
From Single vision and Newton's sleep!

—William Blake, *Poems from Letters*

Closing my eyes and lowering my head, I was able to imagine a flower in the centre of my eye: and to perceive the flower in such a way that it did not remain even for a moment in its initial form, but spread out, and yet other flowers, with coloured as well as green leaves, continued to unfold from within. These were no natural flowers, but imaginary ones, and yet they were as regular as stonemasons' rosettes. I could not fix this cascading creation, yet I could make it last as long as I wished, neither diminishing nor intensifying. I was able to produce the same effect by imagining the decoration of a coloured disc, which likewise ceaselessly transformed itself from centre to periphery, just like those kaleidoscopes that were only invented in our times.

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Beiträge zur Morphologie*

And what is seeing without thinking?

—Goethe, *Italian Journey*

1

The events that blossom in the eye, those uncommon colour events that Rousseau still associated with the sensibility of a distant boreal people, find in Goethe, from the time of his flight to Italy,[1] the *Künstler* capable of bringing them back to the plane upon which they take shape, to constitute the profile and the animated depth

of the visible. Pointing the way towards this refined enjoyment of 'the world's surface'[2] of which 'we Cimmerians'—enveloped in 'eternal fog and gloom' under the greyness of a 'turbid [*Trübe*] sky'[3]—know nothing, the discovery of colour, 'the ultimate art of colour' (in the words of painter Philipp Otto Runge) will parallel the progressive discovery of the art of painting with a living art, an *art of life in seeing* that belongs to a 'rebirth [*Wiedergeburt*]', an Italian 'second birth', 'remolding' the poet 'from within', and which 'is still in progress'.[4] Like a flower at the centre of the field of vision that 'forms unexpectedly'. . . .[5]

'We thus identify with colour. It attunes the eye and mind in unison with it [*Man identifiziert sich alsdann mit der Farbe; sie stimmt Auge und Geist mit sich unisono*]'.[6] Like an echo of that verse in the first act of *Faust II* (in a scene rewritten during the visit to Rome) which, as colours emerge from a grey ground, exalts in 'this rainbow-hued [. . .] reflection' that is none other than 'life', as the blinding whiteness of the sun 'shin[ing] at my back'[7] is rendered into the polychromatic creations of appearance, the *Farbenlehre*'s famous passages on this identification with colour emphasise the far from *classical* significance of an analysis of the experience of vision that will nonetheless distance itself from the heartfelt formulae of romantic pathos. (The latter will be mocked in the 1780 'dramatic fantasy' entitled *The Triumph of Sensibility*). As announced from the time of Goethe's return from Italy (approximately 1790), the requisite of immanence demands that vision be treated as an experience unshackled from any model foreign to the visible—even a poetic model given over to the inspiration of the *Dichter* . . . —because it is 'nature as a whole', become living, that through colour and light 'manifests itself [. . .] in an especial manner to the sense of sight',[8] a nature, which the eye itself, in perceiving it, will begin to 'speak'.[9] Having thus renounced any attempt to trace, like Rousseau, the field of its harmonics from language, since one cannot 'express clearly in words the effect a colorful object has on your eyes',[10] Goethe was of the opinion that the 'difficult science of the theory of colours'[11] does not take its lead from the object of knowledge either, according to the mechanistic model of light imposed by Newton's prismatic experiment:

> Until now light has been viewed as a kind of abstraction [*eine Art von Abstraktum*], an entity existing and acting by itself, determining itself in some way, and creating colour out of itself. To turn lovers of nature away from this mode of thinking, to make them aware that prismatic and other phenomena involve not an unbounded determinant light but rather [. . .] a luminous image [*Lichtbild*] [. . .]. This is the problem to resolve, the goal to be attained.[12]

To insist that this luminous image is not the result of the dispersion of light, of the mechanical division of an 'abstract light [*abstraktes Licht*]' within the prism (the 'prismatic phantom') and its diffraction into 'rays' according to the laws of optics, but instead the result of its limitation by 'some darkness'

amounts to positing immediately that the *Farbenlehre*, qua doctrine of colours or *Colour Theory*, is no *Treatise on the Rainbow* for which 'colours in their specific state [would be] contained in light as originary modes of light which only manifest themselves through refraction and other external conditions'.[13] And that consequently it would be impossible to account for them with the mathematical model of a quantitative scale of colours obeying an abstract analogy with the notes of the musical scale ('as the cube-roots of the squares of lengths of a monocord which produce the tones of an octave, the sol, la, fa, sol, la, mi, fa, sol, with all their intermediate degrees corresponding to the colours of those rays, in accordance with the established analogy').[14] To object, then, against Newton, and contrary to an account of light suggesting that it can be grasped externally as a given substance whose mechanism might be treated by physics, that 'light is not visible qua light, but only when it appears in the form of an image'.[15] This means that one must—like Aristotle, and those Greeks for whom 'science gave forth life'[16]—hold to the *sensible* image itself, so as to submit colours to the living plane of the eye upon which they gain a sense that can account for the genesis of the visible; a plane that is not the wholly physical plane of a 'real' supposedly independent of the organ that perceives it, the retina that takes possession of it and, already, fosters within it aesthetic landscapes.

'To destroy the aesthetic image is also to destroy truth', as Simmel sums up in a landmark formula. Explaining this Goethean phenomenon, whose consequence—drawn in full by the author of the *Farbenlehre*—is that we must 'conceive of science as an art' in order to find in it 'any kind of totality whatsoever', [17] Simmel writes,

> Because beauty represents the incarnation of an ideal content in real being, to accord it overall supremacy is to abolish the fundamental opposition between the spiritual principle and the natural principle, between the subjective principle and the objective principle of being—it is to recognize the absurdity of such an opposition. This is why Goethe finds in beauty the infallible criteria for the correctness of knowledge: at the instant when the (material or intellectual) decomposition of the object annuls the beauty of its appearance, it also thereby proves the inexactitude of the results obtained. The dismemberment of nature 'with levers and screws' is a theoretical error because it is an aesthetic error.[18]

On the basis of Goethe's chromatic analysis, Schopenhauer will reactivate on his own account this challenge to a nature derealised by Newtonian mechanism, and which takes 'for extensive what is intensive, for mechanic what is dynamic, for quantitative what is qualitative, and for subjective what is objective, in that the object of [Newton's] study was light when it should have been the eye'.[19] It could not be clearer: the comprehension of colours, the analysis of their relations and their mixtures, relates to a 'subjective'

retinal geography. The landscape of colour is condensed from the precincts of the eye; it must be referred back to the ocular sphere within which colour is immersed and differentiated by degrees of contraction and curvature, as the qualities of the perceived world are superposed within the intimacy of vision, and in order that they may be so superposed—like an image on a cone whose coordinates are deformed and reorganised according to a design and assemblage quite different from that of the objects supposedly reflected in it. For Schopenhauer, the world of colour is inseparable from a kind of anamorphosis unrelated to any 'thing', and which is hardly even 'natural' since it is entirely beholden to the subterranean work of the eye (whence the deceptive aspect of the 'colours of nature', to which 'one must be careful not to attribute too much importance').[20] The truly blind, therefore, are those Newtonians for whom 'colors are as a matter of fact mere words, mere names, or even numbers; they do not really know them; they do not look at them'.[21]

And yet, although Goethe militates against Newtonian objectivism on every count, he also means to subtract himself from this too-radical subjectivism by reorienting the physiological analysis of colour towards sensible dimensions that exceed the pole of the subject alone. There is no other way to understand the urgency of his need to pursue colourism to the point of considering the 'physical' (calling for 'the intervention of certain material milieus') and 'chemical' (considered as 'integral to the object') constitution of colours, so as to furnish a material-objective basis for his naturalist metaphysics. Refusing to choose between the insensibility of objects and the egological reflexivity of phenomena, Goethean naturalism as expressed in the *Colour Theory* projects a being, a thought-(of the)-sensible/sensibilia that stops short of the opposition between the 'world as will and representation' and the homogeneous world of *res extensa* independent of all perception. For as 'the ultimate result of light on the organic body [. . .] the eye realises the totality formed by the encounter of external and internal worlds'.[22] Hence, responding to Schopenhauer's invitation to rally to his own views, Goethe will declare: 'I am a stranger to [them], to such a point that it seems difficult, impossible even [. . .] to accommodate myself to them'.[23] To the philosopher who asserts that 'the world is my representation', and that there would be no light did we not see it, Goethe will object: 'You would not be, if light did not see you'.[24] With this riposte Goethe shows himself for what he was: the precursor of a *Naturphilosophie* whose opposition to the 'Newtonian' spirit of the Kantianism of the first *Critique* would not lead to the speculative 'delirium' of an absolute subjectivism (even one developed from the point of view of a 'metaphysics of the will') nor to the romantic exaltation of the most profound internal depths. This romanticism he dubs 'the common affliction of our times': the *affliction of subjectivity* and of excessive self-reflexivity[25] in the wake of Kant, an affliction of the *Gemüt* that cannot be cured by the

insistent appeal for a return to the ancients—for 'the study of the ancients [. . .] what does that mean if not: turn toward the real world and seek to express it?' Which is what Goethe here calls the 'objective tendency',[26] echoing Schopenhauer's criticism: 'Goethe's propensity was for understanding and interpreting everything purely *objectively*'.[27] We should, however, be wary of translating this objective tendency too simplistically into the terms of the *Colour Theory*, as is shown by Goethe's retort to Eckermann's objection that colours must involve 'more of the objective than he had observed', and that 'in the production of this phenomenon [a coloured shadow] the law of subjective solicitation could be looked upon as merely secondary'. For, in fact, Goethe finds little to choose between *objectivists* and *subjectivists* à la Schopenhauer (those 'fine folk' with whom he soon becomes impatient), drawing from them this general conclusion: 'My Colour Theory [. . .] fares just the same as the Christian religion. It seems for a while as if there were faithful disciples; but very soon they fall off and form a new sect'.[28]

It is light that contemplates us, in an anonymous percept, as if the Eye were already among things and our own eye immersed in it, a retinal contraction in nature's general vision, which couples it to its own rhythm—like the child who, contemplating 'strange forms in the clouds', colours them and makes of them an image, divagating in these flocculent figures that the wind and natural turbulence have called forth with their impersonal wishes in 'the rising flux of the night'.[29] One thinks here of that poem written in homage to the English 'meteorologist' Luke Howard ('Howards Ehrengedächtnis') in which Goethe sanctifies the creative force of natural forms, celebrating the 'sublime majesty' of Kâmarûpa, the Indian goddess who presides over changes in forms: 'Here lions threat, there elephants will range / And camel-necks to vapoury dragons change; / An army moves, but not in victory proud, / Its might is broken on a rock of cloud; / E'en the cloud messenger in air expires, / Ere reach'd the distance fancy yet desires'.[30] And yet—continues Goethe, admirer of the 'law of nature' discovered by the Englishman through direct observation, *by the naked eye*, of phenomena—'*Howard gives us with his clearer mind / The gain of lessons new to all mankind; / That which no hand can reach, no hand can clasp, / He first has gain'd, first held with mental grasp. / Defin'd the doubtful, fix'd its limit-line, / And named it fitly.—Be the honour thine!*' Here we see the kinship between Goethe's meteorological studies and his colour theory: the cloud makes visible the elemental forces, the turbulence that it traces out like an imaging relay, according to a series of metamorphoses and natural transformations that the experimental theorist will define. The meteorological synthesis of 1825 (*Versuch einer Witterungslehre*) thus tends to show how the air, the 'troubled' milieu if ever there was one, interposing itself between the force of attraction and the force of warming, gives rise to atmospheric phenomena, which are the sky's equivalent of chromatic phenomena:

> I find the preceding description resembles the one I use in the *Color Theory*.
>
> In chromatics, I oppose light and darkness to one another: these would never have any connection if matter did not intervene. Whether matter is opaque, transparent, or even alive, the quality of light and dark will be manifest in it, and color in all its nuances will be created forthwith.[31]

From aeolian *turbulence* to the *turbidity* of colours, one and the same tempest churns, animating and agitating them in the name of Nature. It is this intimate correspondence between the great convulsions of the heavens and the minute intermixing of colours that Goethe condenses in the idea that 'the blues of the sky reveal to us the basic law of colour';[32] as if the workings of the depths of the eye were in direct contact with natural events, obeying the same movements and the same fluidities, which in both cases we owe to the *imaginative* tendency of nature; as if our seeing of the cloud communicated with the process of cloud formation itself, realising a 'luminous image' that is both retinal and cosmic (the image *of* the sky). This ontological indiscernibility of seen and seer, in which the organs of perception are events of nature, is a guiding thread for Goethe's thought from the very Introduction to the *Farbenlehre*:

> The eye may be said to owe its existence to light. From among the lesser ancillary organs of the animals, light calls forth, as it were, a sense akin to itself; the eye, in short, is formed by light and for light so that the inner light may be juxtaposed to the outer light [*und so bildet sich das Auge am Light fürs Licht, damit das innere Licht dem außeren entgegentrete*].

He goes on to cite the following verses by a certain 'old mystic', one hardly suspected of intervening in favour of any kind of subjectivity of representation, and whom we recognise as Plotinus (in the *Treatise on the Beautiful*): 'If the eye were not sunny / How could we possibly perceive light? [*War nicht das Auge sonnenhaft / Wie könnten wir das Licht erblicken*?]':[33] verses whose Ionian fulgurance makes a return in the writings of the young physicist Johann Wilhelm Ritter: 'Thus the entire world is eye, everywhere retina and ray of light'.[34]

Although it is well known that the Plotinian conception according to which 'everything is entangled so as to form a whole' (as we can well appreciate in reading *Faust*) was widely explored (via the *Alten Mystiker* Jakob Böhme) by Romantic *Naturphilosophie*, it has rarely been remarked that the genealogy Novalis proposes for the latter (in the *Encyclopedia*, §452 [IV, 1098]) also leads back to Goethe:

> Plotinus [. . .] was the first to grace the Holy Sanctuary with a genuineness of spirit—and yet no one after him has again ventured so far.

> In numerous ancient writings there beats a mysterious pulse, denoting the place of contact with the invisible world—a coming into life [*ein Lebendigwerden*]. Goethe shall be the liturgist of this physics [*der Liturg dieser Physik*]—for he perfectly understands the service in the Temple. Leibniz's *Theodicy* has always been a magnificent attempt in this field. Our future physics will achieve something similar, yet certainly in a loftier style.[35]

Under the injunction of this vitalist physics, the metamorphoses of nature bear witness to a soul that vivifies them and inscribes them within a contemplation, a 'theoretical' visuality, of which the human eye is but a derivative crystallisation.

Destined to coincide with 'the attitudes of the century', this idea of a naturing visuality will not be without immediate consequences on the aesthetic plane, whose concept Moritz will rearticulate in a constant rapport with Goethe, his companion for walks in Rome. Schelling, who knew the poet's works on colour and was permitted to read them long before their publication,[36] says in one of his 1802–1803 lectures on the *Philosophy of Art*: '[] Perhaps we can recognize [in Moritz] the influence of Goethe, who expresses these views quite clearly in his own works and doubtlessly awakened them in Moritz'.[37] Furthermore, in Moritz's 1788 essay 'On the Creative Imitation of Beauty' [*Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen*], the central part of which Goethe intercalates into his *Italian Journey*,[38] in the context of an 'aesthetic cosmology' (in Beck's words) that embraces the Great All of Nature, Moritz displaces the question of imitation in the direction of the notion of a 'formative drive', which, renouncing beauty that is realised, isolated, and dispersed in nature, will instead 'form after and on the basis of itself' relations proportionate to the harmony of the Great All. In doing so, this active faculty 'intervenes in the coherence of things, and what it embraces, it would form, in resemblance to Nature itself, into an All consistent in itself, endowed with a proper power'—or an All *complete in itself*: in the sense of 'a living art that forms a totality', the constant note of Goetheanism once it had been constituted in opposition to the 'intimate feeling' that had the status of a first premise for the young Goethe.[39] 'Thus, that alone which can educate us in the true enjoyment of beauty is that through which the beautiful itself emerges: a prior calm contemplation of Nature and Art considered as one single great All'.[40] Considering that Goethe will present Moritz as his spokesman, we can understand how granting a greater importance to the Moritz-Goethe relation sets the Goethean cursor sliding in singular fashion in between classicism and romanticism, in the direction of a no-less-singular problematisation of the 'classical'. Once detached from a transcendent aesthetic indexed on the most prescriptive Idea of the Beautiful, the classical will find itself subject to the requisites of an immanent aesthetics that cannot be reduced to the sole thesis of the autonomy

of the work as totalising poetic positing of the 'System-subject'.[41] A morphologically superior romanticism, then, capable of integrating within its dynamic the formation of a new classicism—which comes out of it profoundly modified in relation to its erstwhile calm contemplation. . . . Such is the whole disquieting strangeness of Goethe's 'classicism',[42] which recalls, in turn, the ultimate ambition of romanticism to arrive at 'a higher form of classicism'[43] (an ambition which in itself opens up—to speak like Baudelaire—an evident contradiction between romanticism thus understood and the actual works of its principal partisans), not to mention the case of Nietzsche—who we know did not hesitate to associate Goethe with 'the highest of all possible faiths', the faith that Nietzsche himself 'baptised [. . .] with the name *Dionysus*'.[44] Thus, it should come as no surprise that, from the *Colour Theory* onward, Goethe takes an inevitable step back from the idea that the poet is the 'obstacle against which the figure of the romantic artist is constructed'.[45] Were not *Wilhelm Meister* (1796) and—despite the classicist advocacy of the journal *Propyläen* (1798–1800) that he would direct with Schiller—*Faust I* (1808) considered by the Romantics themselves as their model for the novel? As for *The Sufferings of Young Werther*, published in 1773 in the aftermath of Goethe's involvement with *Sturm und Drang* ('Storm and Stress'), we know the extent to which the 'congreve-rockets' of this book-manifesto of a young generation in revolt against 'the narrow limits of an antiquated world'[46] paved the way for a vitalist critique of Kantian rationalism that would not stop at the exacerbated pathologies of pure feeling (a Wertherism that is sublimated, at the very least, in the artist's re-creation of the life of nature). Via the *Farbenlehre*, the complexity of Goethe's position, in the gap held open between cosmological image and egological empathy, stands for a resistance against both romantic sentimentalism and the project of a speculative aesthetics based on the a priori identity of being and thought presided over by the (hyper)subjective Ideality of the Beautiful. A position that shows well enough just how much Goethe's aesthetics differs from the 'mannerism' of pure artistic subjectivity (the cult of genius: 'an ideal *manqué*, a subjective ideal, [but] not devoid of spirit').[47] For one of two things must transpire, both of which in fact come down to the same thing, having in common the acceptance of the naïve opposition between the 'classical' and the 'romantic': either 'manner' only ever expresses the swing of the pendulum from the objective pole of 'simple imitation' towards the subjective pole, the inevitable inverse of the nature-object it itself had posited beyond all knowledge, and then a third term—'style'—must be opposed to them, in a symmetrical movement of desubjectivisation (in regard to 'manner') and deobjectivisation (in relation to the 'mere imitation of nature') capable of accessing the inner life of forms; or else the 'simple imitation' of tangible forms, where 'everything depends on the varied texture and the colour of the surfaces', is already susceptible to being raised to a higher level: 'without conscious effort', Goethe explains, '[the artist's] eye will learn to see the harmony

of the brilliant colors' of flowers and fruits, and he will then be able to learn to recognise 'the influence of the various parts on the health and growth of the whole'—'he will not only show his taste', and 'we could say that he has formed his own style', whereas the 'manner' of the artist who forgets nature 'moves further away from the foundations of art', and 'will become the more vacuous and insignificant the further he moves away from simple imitation and from style'.[48] At this point, the programmatic component of this twofold demonstration has the force of necessity for its author: the inspired poet, *der Dichter*, becomes a *Künstler*. The date? 1789.

Spurred by a vitalist intuition whose encompassing dynamic is irreducible to the manners of the Self in so far as its 'language without nature' cannot accommodate 'the most fundamental principle of cognition',[49] the *Farbenlehre* affirms the ontological efficacy of a vision that is singularised in the anonymous view of the world that it expresses, and which seeks only to inflect the cosmic membrane, to reflect the force that animates form. (Not without a certain humour, Goethe will object, against Schopenhauer and his pure Representation, that the highest singularity of the individual cannot be attained without an immersion in the Nature that overflows and dispossesses him—for it is *in nature* that one becomes a *thinking eye*.) A vision in which nature glimpses itself through the meteorological play of forms and the flux of colours, the solar eye invoked at the beginning of the *Farbenlehre* opposes to the Newtonian physicalist paradigm the retina's immanence to the visible, which it 'retracts' rather than 'refracts'. There are anonymous contemplations which, while exceeding the intentionality of the human eye, do not for all that depend upon objects that are foreign to sight, but proceed from retinal qualifications that respond to the polarities of *natura naturans* and justify an apprehension of the sensible, as in a pantheistic morphology, through the force of plasticity (*die Anschauenlichkeit*) that comes to light within it. Founded upon a labour of the observation of nature that produces essays in subjects ranging from botany and zoology to meteorology and to geological studies privileging the question of 'the differentiation of the primitive rock' (*Differenzieren der Urgestein-Art*)—a little 'as if artistic nature [. . .] itself made sculptures', as Lacoste will say[50]—this Spinozism of the concrete[51] sees the reality of sensible intuition (*die Anschauung*) and the necessary possibility of a *Scientia intuitiva*[52] as originating in the visual perception of reality. This distances Goethe as much from the young Schelling's 'speculative physics', with its scorn for empirical knowledge ('Nature is *a priori*')[53] as from the visionary mysticism of Caspar David Friedrich, who opposes the 'eye of the spirit' to the physical eye ('Close your bodily eye so as to see your painting firstly through the eye of the spirit')[54]—and indeed from Schopenhauer's subjective idealism, which

has in common with the inanimate exteriority of Newtonian nature a certain abstract universality (this is what enables Schopenhauer to propose a rational anticipation of colour independent of all experience). It is this question of an *aesthetics of nature* that must be confronted in order to grasp the singularity of Goethe's enterprise as it presents itself, far from all aesthetic autarky, in a colour which, although visual through and through, cannot be reduced either to a phenomenology of perception, or, as Thierry de Duve claims, to a 'generalised subjectivization of nature' stemming from a 'symbolist, psychologizing, and subjectivist [. . .] ideology'.[55]

2

Let's start again from the beginning, from Goethe's obsessive anti-Newtonianism, which has more than once seen the *Colour Theory* put down to 'a curious case of hallucination'.[56]

The *Farbenlehre*, as we have seen, refuses the very principle of an optical analysis reduced to the calculation of the refraction brought about by the decomposition of light. The objectivation of light rays into a cone along which are assembled images that, in the last analysis, proceed from 'particles upon which the colour of bodies depends'[57] is of no use when considering those events that blossom in the eye, and of which the physico-mathematical disciplines of Optometry can learn nothing through measurement. Goethe's Aristotelian inspiration[58] is opposed at every point to Newton's project, which claims to transform 'the Science of Colours [into] a Speculation as truly mathematical as any other part of Opticks'. This antagonism, declared from the very opening pages of the treatise, is the subject of tenacious argument in the 'polemical' and 'historical' parts (first printed in 1808 and 1809, respectively) of a work that *absolutely* refuses to submit the difference of colours to their degree of refrangibility[59] so as to 'explain the colours of the rainbow'[60] independently of the conflict between light and shadow—'as Philosophers hitherto believed' was possible. A miscognition of the qualitative character of the phenomena it is supposed to explain, the principle of refrangibility will be contested in the name of a more primitive plane of Nature in which the eye participates, in its 'affinity' (*Verwandtschaft*)[61] with the 'actions and passions of light' (*Taten une Leiden des Lichts*), with that intense plane that relates to the 'vitality' (*Lebendigkeit*) of vision, to the dark interiority of colour upon which the *visible* depends, and from which the observer cannot claim to subtract himself through recourse to the prism. Just as the cloud was shaped by the vicissitudes of the *diaphane* of aeolian flows (murky shadow), light must be darkened ('limited') by colour in order for an 'image' to come about—something that Hegel will explicate in his gloss on Goethe: 'Among

the incomprehensible features of colour-theories [inspired by Newton's 'conceptual barbarism'] is the fact that men have ignored a prism's property of lessening transparency and in particular of doing so unevenly according to the varying thicknesses of the diameter of the different parts through which the light passes'.[62] More simply, more radically, Goethe, in the 'Author's Confession' published at the end of the *Materials for the History of the Colour Theory*, will recount the following story, which could well be taken for the primal scene of the *Farbenlehre*:

> I was in a totally white room. As I held the prism before my eyes, I expected, keeping Newtonian theory in mind, that the entire white wall would be fradated into different colours, since the light returning to the eye would be seen shattered in just so many colored lights.
>
> But I was quite amazed that the white wall showing through the prism remained as white as before. Only where there was something dark did a more or less distinct color show. The cross frames of the window appeared most actively colored, while the light-gray sky outside did not have the slightest trace of color. It required little thought to recognize that an edge was necessary to bring about colors. I immediately spoke out loud to myself, through instinct, that Newtonian theory was erroneous.[63]

Let us add to this the fact that 'past observers have mistakenly used the rainbow as an example of the entire scale of colours', when 'in fact, no general phenomenon in nature manifests the totality of colours'.[64] As we read already in 'Diderot's "Essay on Painting"', 'The rainbow, like prismatic phenomena, is only a particular case of the harmony of colours, which is far broader, wider, and deeper', a harmony 'whose laws they also obey'.[65] Now, these laws—and the whole object of the *Farbenlehre* is to manifest them by firstly approaching 'the physical phenomena of colour on the basis of Nature' so as to 'draw from them something equally valid for art'[66]—respond to the needs of the painter, who will abandon the merely colourful (*das Bunte*) in order to recognise in the Beautiful 'a manifestation of the secret laws of nature that would have remained hidden from us forever without its appearance [*Erscheinung*]'.[67] Thus, 'the Beautiful necessitates a law that accedes to appearance [*Erscheinung*]. The example of the rose. In flowering, the law of vegetable life appears in its supreme form, and the rose is the summit of this appearance [*Erscheinung*]'.[68] Contrary to all Platonism, and without any need to seek the laws of its intelligibility outside of sensibility, here the sensible phenomenon is directly elevated to the form of the Idea qua *milieu* of a vivified nature that is the *reality* condition for any possible creative experience. Refusing the principle of a 'natured' nature governed by some higher form of ideality (whether mathematical or theological), a principle with which the modern understanding (*Verstand*) veils itself, in its will to

'fix everything so as to make use of everything',[69] Goethe makes himself the herald of a truth of sensible nature, a 'naturing' multiplicity through which, setting out from the transformations of a structure immanent to the eye, the painter himself will be led to conceive and to extend the secret of the variety of forms.[70] (In Goethe's formula: '*Gestaltungslehre ist Verwandlungslehre*', the theory of configurations is the theory of transformations).[71] Discovering the immanence to itself, and to a nature-in-'becoming', of the chromatic circle (*Farbenkreis*)—the 'circle of six colours' constituted in the eye according to the fundamental principle of polarity (*Polarität*) between light and shade, and not that of the linear order of the appearance of colours in the Newtonian spectrum conceived externally on the basis of the decomposition of white light—recovering this immanence which, on the basis of an isolated colour, 'stimulates the eye to seek totality',[72] it will become possible for the painter who extends the art of chiaroscuro and who extends his art beyond it, to accede to the aesthetic freedom of producing, of composing, by *intensification* (*Steigerung*), an infinite combination of colours[73] in a 'harmonious' form seldom found *readymade*.

The essential limit of applicability of the prism and the analysis of light it yields is that it falls short of the richness of sensible variations and of that *Totalität* through which 'nature tends to emancipate (*Freiheit*) the sense [. . .] with aesthetic implications'.[74] Its lot is that of a stubborn blindness, comparable to the will of an astronomer who, 'on a whim, would place the moon at the centre of our planetary system. He would then be forced to make the earth, the sun and all the planets revolve around the satellite, to dissimulate and to compensate for the error of his initial hypothesis through artificial calculations and representations'.[75] One would be completely and utterly wrong therefore to consider the differentiation of colours only by way of abstract laws for the diffraction of the light spectrum, laws that substantialise and reify light, thereby making the system revolve around arbitrary hypotheses and experiments carried out to justify them *a parte post*,[76] independently of that which blossoms in the eye in the 'lived' observation of the colour phenomenon. Quite to the contrary, one must conceive of an internal process of the differentiation of colours that really determines their engenderment, the singularity and the development of each of them, and their actions upon each other. For, 'the colours which we see on objects are not qualities entirely foreign to the eye; the organ is not thus merely habituated to the impression; no, the eye itself is always predisposed to bring forth colors [*Nein, dieses Organ ist immer in der Disposition, selbst Farben hervozubringen*]'.[77] If light potentially implies all colours through its combination with darkness (*Finsternis*), there is also a light that belongs to the eye, a prior chromatic circle that emerges from within sensibility, like a curious and paradoxical formative force unique to the visible, and which should be the starting

point for any theory of colour: 'This immediate affinity [*unmittelbare Verwandtschaft*] between light and the eye will be denied by none; to consider them as identical in substance is less easy to comprehend. It will be more intelligible to assert that a dormant light resides in the eye, and that it may be excited by the slightest cause from within or from without'.[78] Which is why it is so difficult to speak of colours to a blind man: he lacks that activation of the *internal diaphane* by light to which respond those infinite contractions of the retina that produce colours. The prior plane, the active predisposition that makes the emergence of colours possible, is lacking in the absence of the principle of continuity between the eye and nature, in the absence of that Eye-Nature unity that Goethe's physiology of perception establishes *naturally* as the *Urphänomen* proper to the experience of any image.[79] So that the pleasure of the eye, when the totality of colours is provided to it 'externally', is explained as 'the result of its own activity [being] presented to it as a reality [*weil ihm die Summe seiner eignen Tätigkeit als Realität entgegenkommt*]'.[80]

The entire reality of this life of colour, this vitalism of light to which the eye owes its existence, is revealed by the least pressure upon the closed eyelid; it cannot be reduced to the wholly external mechanism of an objective and quantitative scale of colours set out by an optics founded on physics. Colour is not produced *out there*, on the surface of things; it happens *between* matter and the eye that contracts it, *between* the light in which objects are immersed and the retina that absorbs it. An intermediary reality, of the order of a relation that makes vision possible, colour does not belong to the physical order of causes, but to the virtual iridescence of effects that condition its existence from within the affine interior of a solar eye. When it comes from without, the cause remains a reality foreign to the phenomenon, whereas the effects themselves suppose no antecedence, no prior anteriority distinct from the result, but only a condition (or many conditions). The internal world is populated by effects so immanent to the visible that they cannot be explained from the point of view of a first cause (*Ursache*). In which case, we can hardly envisage the effect of colours according to a principle that would determine them from afar, on the basis of an externality that the absolute anteriority of cause would imply, by virtue of an ontological independence whereby they would be underpinned by the supposedly foundational autonomy of a strict causality. The upshot, according to Schelling's Goethean observation in his *Philosophy of Art*, is that 'Newton's theory is self-refuting for anyone who has elevated himself at all above the perspective of one-sided causal relationships'.[81]

Allowing ourselves a rather forced comparison (yet a pictorially, experimentally, and philosophically well-founded one—think of the landscape painters' watercolours evoked by Goethe,[82] of the experiment of the 'large water-filled prism' which alone can afford a 'complete clarity' on the subject of refraction,[83] and of the diaphanous nature of water, which Aristotle

associated with coloration),[84] colour, like water, is an event, an emergent property, the effect of an encounter. In this respect, it is similar to the aqueous milieu, which greatly 'exceeds' its component parts, and which cannot be satisfactorily described in terms of oxygen and hydrogen. Water exceeds the atoms to which it can be reduced. In this encounter, in this mixing of components, something new emerges, the creation of an effect replete with unprecedented properties, and whose guise cannot be reduced to an analysis of its causes. It is an event of this kind, albeit one far more complex since it is constructed upon a strictly differential principle, that the *Colour Theory* seeks to determine in the living flux of the emergence of colours. The differential principle is that of the contrast (*Gegensatz*) between *bright* and *dark* permitted by the *mixing* (*Mischung*, the Aristotelian *mixis* as opposed to *sunthesis*) of shadow *with* light (in itself invisible, *abscolor* in the medieval Latin neologism), of opacity (*Undurchischtige*, the *skotos* of the Stagirite) *with* transparency (*Durchsichtige*, Aristotle's *diaphanes*) whence flow the innumerable effects of colours.[85] In the order of the visible, everything begins with the interference of darkness *with* light—an interference that *composes* colour, whose proper element is shadow[86] in its confrontation with light. Whether the eye is half-open or closed, a panoply of iridescences—blinding and blind, dazzling and tenebrous—traverse the retina. For, in the order of brightness and absolute whiteness, there is no visibility. The dazzling white that reflects everything makes visibility impossible. Inversely, in the dull and reflectionless register that is complete darkness (that of 'absolute night', as Ritter says), the blackness is such that nothing can be differentiated from it and thereby perceived. It is impossible to conceive of any image coming about on the basis of these two extremities of the visual. In order to witness the advent of the visible we must suppose a creative impairment between shadow and light, their mutual attenuation: 'a milieu in between black and white'.[87] White must be susceptible to degradation, must become tenable, must become the bearer of vision, and black must be raised up, must become discernible and must discern us, in order to make room for the perceptible. This is why the visible begins with colour, which is the effect of the 'dynamic combination' of bright and dark, the crossing of one into the other. Colour is the *blow* dealt by darkness to transparent brilliance (understanding by transparency, with Aristotle, 'that which, although visible, is not visible in itself').[88] When black comes into the proximity of the most dazzling white, the latter is attenuated, darkened by a degree, and fades towards yellow, while the black is brightened gradually, lifted towards blue. Thus, yellow and blue are the first degrees of a visuality[89] whose mixture will yield green, and whose further intertwining will raise it from yellow towards orange and from blue towards violet, to the point of attaining their 'intensification towards red', towards the pure red (*das reine Roth, der Purpur*)[90] that will designate the *emphatic* point of this

arche *energetically* constructed[91] within the interiority of the eye. Now, pure red (*der Purpur*) is the colour that is 'totally absent from Newton's scale',[92] since the colours of the rainbow lack the 'chief color [*die Hauptfarbe*]—pure red—[. . .] [which] cannot be produced, since in this phenomenon, as well as in the ordinary prismatic series, the yellow-red and blue-red cannot attain to a union'.[93] Inversely, freed from the manipulative laws of Newtonian optics, colour can bring about the reign of the visible—a phenomenon of encounter, a phenomenon of mixing, turbulence, and turbidity—only through this energetic intensification that *experientially* brings forth the world by predestining us to the freedom of its 'aesthetic usage [*ästhetischen Gebrauch*]'. The supreme colour, pure red (*der Purpur*), will be called *Blüte*, 'blossoming'.

Where and how is colour born if not in the eye, with it and within it, according to a perfect immanence that implies Nature itself? It is with this 'intuitive view' that the *Farbenlehre* begins, marking from the outset its difference from the theory that will be defended, beyond Goethe, by Schopenhauer. For if colour is produced in the eye, this does not mean that it has to be conceived idealistically as the exclusive property or projection of the subject alone, according to the entirely subjective logic of a rational anticipation independent of all experience—a logic that would compare the knowledge of colours to 'that of regular geometric figures' and to 'the hypothesis of a relation expressible by the first whole numbers, by them alone'. If colour is constituted between 'eye and mind' (*Auge und Geist*),[94] then it will in truth be situated not so much at the intersection of subject and object as at the point of encounter between matter and psyche, of which colour is like the excessive vanishing point, reducible to neither one nor the other. Colour is that singular *psychophysical* entity whose emergences and effects are neither purely corporeal nor simply incorporeal; they mark out the field of the sensorial as belonging to the totality of a living Nature.[95] Colour thus belongs to a paradoxical *Naturlehre*—one from which the anomalies of colour vision cannot be excluded, 'for whenever a living being deviates from its form-giving principles, it still seeks to agree with the general vitality of nature in conformity with general laws'.[96] If this were not the case, it would be impossible to understand how Goethe's treatise comes to find its centre of gravity in the question of physiological images (of which 'pathological colours' are but an extension): images that are founded in us, in the problematic interlacing of an elusive subject and the paradoxical objects before which it is placed. Situated at the hallucinatory limit of dream and wakefulness, bringing psychophysical orders of interference into play upon the sensorial membrane, these non-objects do not fall under the regime of self-evidence according to which classical-modern philosophy had articulated the hierarchy of this relation by submitting it to the authority of the subject, or of the 'world as representation', the ultimate avatar of the Copernican revolution; nor do they

fall under the inverse, supposedly wholly objective movement, as explored by a positive science whose principle is to distance itself from such metaphysical 'hypotheses'—hypotheses upon which it had nevertheless founded itself ever since Descartes. To these two latter positions inherited from Cartesian dualism—that of a submission of the object to the subject, and that of the subject to the object in the amorphous space of mechanical science—the author of the *Farbenlehre* will oppose an *aesthetic* alternative which alone can account for the *heterogenesis of appearances*, for 'the form in which [. . .] nature as a whole manifests itself to the sense of sight'. And he will do so against the notion of any kind of development of the heterogeneous out of the identical—something Goethe qualifies as *theological*.

It will come as no surprise, then, that the relentless critique of Newtonian science is accompanied by the following observation, adopted from a certain 'predecessor', which takes to task the *incolore* philosophy and logic of these concepts: 'The bull becomes furious if a red cloth is shown to him; but the philosopher begins to rave even if color is merely discussed'.[97] For colour provokes a kind of a philosophical rage owing to the psychophysical nature of its emergence and its anomalous position in regard to the apparently contrary presuppositions of idealism and mechanism. Neither a 'representational' attribute of the subject nor a 'corpuscular' property of the object, colour designates an intermediary field between outside and inside, a plane upon which they tend to become indiscernible, and which populates the world with impersonal events present within the insularity of every eye but which can hardly be called objective, given that 'they seem to contradict the real'. This, then, is what leads Goethe to begin his treatise on colour with the study of colours that 'belong to the eye' (so-called 'physiological' colours), the 'most important' ones in so far as they peel colours off the surface of things *without* projecting them into the objective universe of geometrical determinations; leading him quite naturally to 'physical' colours and 'chemical' colours, which depend ever more closely upon the intensive membrane of a matter in which they will be *realised* 'vitally'. Such a progression, from the point of view of *Naturphilosophie*, is but a matter of 'three modes in which [colour] appears', 'three views of [colours] [. . .] in an unbroken series, to connect the fleeting with the somewhat more enduring, and these again with the permanent hues; and thus, after having carefully attended to a distinct classification in the first instance, to do away with it again when a larger view [is] desirable'.[98]

3

In the case of physiological colours, those colours that belong entirely to the eye, 'that is to say to the subject itself', and which manifest themselves as dazzling

shockwaves, what will be emphasised is that they owe their accidental nature to an *accident of the very subject* from which they are drawn. It follows that they will always be in excess over the 'receptive' usage of its faculties, which they affect according to a regime which is that of the deregulation of the senses and of the *mise en abyme* of a real polarised into subjects and objects according to the opposition of outside and inside. Vision unexpectedly realises an 'irreal' in which we are confronted with the gestation of our own gaze, revealing itself to us like the dimension of an unknown genesis that *moves* us. For what can we say of so-called 'persistent' images—for example, afterimages of the sun that we still see when we look away—if not that such images are as one with the retina, that they contract upon its surface, from which they will inevitably inherit a particular geography?

It will be remarked that 'on the retina each form occupies its own space which will be large or small depending on the distance of the form', and that 'if we shut our eyes immediately after looking at the sun we shall be surprised to find how small the residual image [*das zurückgebliebene Bild*] seems':[99] for this image adheres to a hallucinatory plane that has nothing to do with supposed relations between objects. Prior to being copies of the objective world, images and colours float before our eyes as 'the visible signs of our internal state',[100] signs issued by a living eye that can no longer be considered a homogeneous milieu or an indifferent receptacle. This is evident when we see aureolae, virtual fringes, or halos accompanying bodies, which we perceive as their first or last forms, and whose ungraspable persistence confers upon reality an iridescence, an intensity, and a force of modulation that it would not otherwise have. The tension of the eye, this contraction that is its whole life, reacts back on the coloured animation of its landscapes:

> The waking eye exhibits its vital elasticity [Lebendigkeit] more especially by its tendency to alternate its impressions, which in the simplest form change from dark to light, and from light to dark. The eye cannot for a moment remain in a particular state determined by the object it looks upon [*Das auge kann und mag nicht einen Moment in einem besondern, in einem durch das Objekt spezifizierten Zustande identisch verharren*]. On the contrary, it is forced to a sort of opposition [*zu einer Art von Opposition*], which, in contrasting extreme with extreme, intermediate degree with intermediate degree, at the same time combines these opposite impressions, and thus ever tends to a whole.[101]

The eye gives life to colours, churning them in the kaleidoscope of its contrasting and vibratory tensions—here lies the radical nature of the problem, excluded at the outset by the physicist from the field of optics. There is a mobility of the retina, a chromatic circle we traverse, and which is *animated* (a 'living circle') according to a movement of eternal opposition (*Entgegenstellung*) capable of animating images with a molten rapidity whose lasting effect is conserved in colours:

> It is the universal formula of life [*die ewige Formel des Lebens*] that manifests itself in this as in other cases. When darkness is presented to the eye it demands brightness, and *vice versa*: it shows its vital energy, its fitness to receive the impressions of the object, precisely by spontaneously tending to an opposite state [*und zeigt eben dadurch seine Lebendigkeit, sein Recht, das Objekte zu fassen, indem es etwas, das dem Objekt entgegengesetz ist, aus sich selbst hervorbringt*].[102]

In this tension and this non-dialectical appeal to contrast as constitutively primary, the eye never grasps the object without exposing it to those halos that do not come entirely from us,[103] nor entirely from the thing—like a tissue braided between the two in a unique space of life that colour comes to populate. The retina is a metastable surface that reacts back upon the stuff of the world, a restless membrane that unleashes between the self and the world its wild outbursts, its emergent effects irreducible to the weight of causes and mechanical laws, but which animate the metamorphoses and the transfigurations of these 'contingent colours' (*zuffällige Farben*)—according to the physicists' name for them—'upon which all harmony rests'[104] and which the artist must know how to manifest on his canvas in order to reconstitute the affect of the visible and to make painting possible. Hence (as Goethe explains in the 'Confession of the Author'), the 'return path to art', following this first passage 'from poetry to the plastic arts, and from them to the science of Nature' (the *Italian Journey*) will lead 'by way of physiological colours and their moral and aesthetic effect in general'.[105]

If 'the truth of colour [. . .] must be sought in the vision of man', if 'it rests upon the internal action and reaction of the organ of vision, in virtue of which each specific colour calls for another', this truth will only appear 'to an artistic, healthy, powerful' eye 'practised'[106] in the harmony of contrasts between cold and warm tones (dependent on the polarity between yellow and blue, the only absolutely pure colours, along with their intensification towards 'pure red') whose complementarity will realise expression, to the detriment of the chiaroscuro[107] that is inseparable from the unity of drawing (chiaroscuro alone being sufficient to render the relief of bodies), which, for the classical tradition, derives from the very laws of nature (the superiority of drawing over colour, which is thereby reduced to 'isolated tones'). Thus, it is confirmed—and Goethe continually comes back to this—that the *Farbenlehre* has no objective other than to show 'how the theory of the harmony of colors may be deduced from these phenomena [those of polarity], and how, simply through these qualities, colors may be capable of being applied to aesthetic purposes'.[108] From the point of view of the Newtonian theory, which claims to axiomatically deduce colour from the decomposition of white light alone, this is Goethean chromatology's most scandalous proposition: given that 'we

see darkness as well as light transformed into colour',[109] and that light *must be akin to* shadow in order to appear, colour might be called *lumen opacatum*,[110] as in the key formula proposed in the seventeenth century by Kircher;[111] and the composition of each colour, in its dependency upon other colours, must be considered as a veritable *relation of forces* (between shadow and light) activating the relational fabric internal to the system of the eye.[112] Thus, the 'unity of chiaroscuro' that wards off 'a conflict of equivalent forces that would disconcert the eyes',[113] and the relation of proximity between tones, is succeeded by 'the transversal, *diametrical*, relation of opposed and complementary tints'.[114] A relation irreducible—how very irreducible—to the traditional 'scale of brightness', external to the retina, that organised the painter's palette according to the opposition black/white, conceived as an opposition of objective values and not as a difference of immanent forces bearing with it (or them) this 'reddish [*rötlich*] hue [*Schein*]', showing with its 'dreadful light [*ein furchtbares Licht*]'[115] that 'each color, even in its lightest state, is a dark'[116]—*and that, in so far as this is the case, it is primed for intensification*.

On the basis of this contrasting affinity, inherent to the circle of the retina, between light and shade, the *Colour Theory* will give rise to a *Chromogenesis* that associates the process of the engendering of colours with the heterogenesis of visible forms issuing from a Nature that is reflected in incessant variation. Freed from geometrical optics, *colour trans-formations* are brought back into the 'general dynamic flow of life and action [*dem allgemeinen dynamischen Flusse des Lebens und Wirkens*]',[117] into the bio-universal becoming constitutive of a pandynamism characteristic of the *Naturphilosophie* that Goethe felt he had initiated[118] and which he wished to elevate to the status of a rigorous science founded on the direct intuition of phenomena. The *Farbenlehre* will thus study the chromogenesis of the modes of appearance of those coloured phenomena for which—given the solar (*sonnenhaft*) origin of the eye, formed by and for light—objectivity and subjectivity designate only 'twin phenomena [*Zwillingsphänomene*]'[119] whose specular combination is that of an in-between governed by the *mise en abyme* of both in the image. Indeed, 'our [most determinative] objective experiments [in terms of physical colours] also involve images'[120] (and, following this: 'No matter how small the aperture, the image of the sun's full disk will always pass through it'). For the phenomena grouped together as 'subjective experience' and 'objective experience' 'may be attributed to the same source'.[121] This comes out in the priority that Goethe lends to physiological colours: coloured shadows, reflections, halos, consecutive images (or the phenomenon of *after-images*), phenomena of auras producing a 'mixture' (*Mischung*) in the eye—these phenomena are so many manifestations of a natural autonomy of vision that gives the lie to the relational opposition between perceiving subject and perceived world, between experiencer and object of experience. The fact that the 'retina [is]

stimulated [. . .] to produce the opposite color' will then be attributed to the chromatic circle that the retina determines, in so far as 'colors diametrically opposed to each other in this diagram are those which reciprocally evoke each other in the eye [*im Auge*]: Thus, yellow demands purple; orange, blue; red, green; and *vice versa*'[122] (cf §60 of the *Colour Theory*: 'the eye especially demands completeness and seeks to eke out the color wheel in itself [*Das Auge verlangt dabei ganz eigentlich Totalität und schließt in sich selbst den Farbenkreis ab*]';[123] and §809–810).[124] In other words: even at the level of 'physical colours'—that is to say, colours perceived in themselves through refraction (*Brechung*) in 'certain milieus that in themselves have no colour', the activity through which a colour s*tructurally* calls forth its complementary by eliciting the totality of the chromatic circle marks precisely the role played by the eye in the natural-living (or naturing) play of light and shadow in an aqueous, troubled, and opaque milieu without which the world would not be able to trans-form itself before our eyes.

According to a genitive that in truth is neither subjective nor objective, this Role *of* the Eye [*La Part de l'Oeil*] would be, in one and the same vital movement, as irreducible to the homogeneous field of Newtonian reason (in its concern to assure the objective victory of transparency over opacity)[125] as to the Kantian retrenchment into the category of relation (which preserves the pertinence of nature qua set of phenomena legitimated by being brought together by my representation into a postulated unity).

A morphological monism, then, whose natural sequel is an aesthetics of creation rather than a transcendental correlation seeking to reequilibriate objectivity and subjectivity from 'the perspective of judgment that limits aesthetic reflection to the effect'[126] according to the principle of an aesthetics of reception indifferent to the material existence of the thing.[127]

The highly pictorial notion of *turbidity* (*das Trübe*), which defines this matter indispensable to the placing into relation of light and shadow characteristic of the medium of *morphological intensification*,[128] is defined by Goethe as follows:

> If turbidity [= the 'troubled' character] is the weakening of transparency and the beginning of *corporeality*, we can express it as an *set of differences*, that is to say between transparency and non-transparency, which result in an *unequal fabrication* that we designate by the expression coming from the alteration of unity, of rest, and of the connection of such parts, which are then found in disorder and confusion—that is to say, *turbidity*.[129]

The nature of this corporeality unleashed by 'turbidity' relates to a 'set of differences', an 'unequal fabrication', a weave whose 'disorder' is not that of the *flesh* but that of a strange abstract machine that comprises an infinity

of possible relations between innumerable degrees of colours. . . . For not all of these virtual mixtures will be actualised in the human eye. And even then, they do not so much *exist* in the constituted eye as *insist* in another eye, a non-human eye anterior to the calibration of all vision, in so far as chromatic possibilities belong to a reality necessarily richer than that of the body that will actualise them. This Eye of Nature relates to a texture which is not that of the spacings of the flesh of the world (in the sense in which phenomenology proposes this carnal alterity as an escape from the solipsism of the ego): an entirely other alterity is implied by the naturing corporealisation of Goethean turbidity. For who could fail to perceive in the 'troubledness' of the Eye of Nature the neoplatonising influence that is constantly at work in Goethe? As we know, it is Plotinus for whom contemplations belong to no human, but presuppose a vision beyond the Soul, 'deeper' than that at work in the 'animate' world. We traverse an ever-denser turbidity in moving from anonymous Intelligence perceiving the whiteness of the One, towards the Soul contemplating intelligence, and then to the body, with its increasingly opaque view of an infinitely refracted Soul, progressively sinking into the black that is still an effect of the intelligible principle (Matter as last reserve of Intelligence *dunamis panton*). In the same way, in Goethe, the eliminated dualism is preserved in full (along with Plotinus's two matters—Plotinus as *go-between* of dualism and monism):[130] the world-retina is an Eye whose tiers are so many descents and hypostases, with pure red (*Blüte*) as the most powerfully turbid degree, the thickened blood (*Blut*) of the most mixed corporeality. Plotinian in inspiration, this visual sphere possesses only functions and degrees, unfolding space according to stases that have nothing to do with organs oriented by the flesh of an actualised body. The body that is incorporated into turbidity is a *body without organs*. It traverses thresholds and spacings (hypostases and hyperstases) by the most inorganic path—that proposed by Runge in his 'ideal demonstration' of the *Colour Sphere* (1810), which Goethe reinscribes in the chromatic circle with its colours mixing according to topological gradients upon which the eye itself, qua constituted organ, depends.[131] As 'impure' as it may be from a Kantian point of view, there is thus indeed a *transcendental* plane of vision anterior to the vision of individual souls, an 'intelligence' of *theory* whose axes will permit the distribution of all colours, on the basis of their 'universal relation' to white and black, across that curious visiosphere that Runge had projected, independently of the 'science of how colors come about through light',[132] into all its poles, tropics, and longitudes, its points of pure colour (blue, yellow and red) which repel each other equally. Any particular colour can only be actualised on a geodesic stretching between the north pole of the visiosphere, the white polarity, and the south pole of the purest black ('without attributing any mystical significance to them', as Runge insists in a letter to Goethe).[133] Here

space is not visual extension, but the tension of geodesics that draw colour out along the line of greatest abstraction by projecting an ideal sphere upon which white is placed at the higher pole and the black pole is attributed to the lower part. So that, under the tension of the sphere's curvature, the colours become brighter in moving from the equator to the white of the higher pole (hyperstases) and darken all the way to black in the opposite direction (hypostases).

From this *geometral* projection we can deduce, along with the 'construction of the spherical relation of colors',[134] a construction of the world that is opposed to a purely phenomenological treatment (where it would only be a question of 'what is actually perceptible', as Wittgenstein specifies):[135] a 'superiorly' dynamic structuralism common to Runge's sphere and Goethe's chromatic circle. A structuralism *dunamis panton* . . . means that the intuitive a priori thresholds that trace its abstract *geometral* induce a change in nature at every longitude and latitude, bringing into play a hypostatic genesis where *everything* changes coloration according to 'the circumference of the complete circle [which] contains all the transitions of the color mixtures and the pure colors themselves'.[136] Naturing nature embraces a multiplicity of virtual natures as it surveys the natured nature of its 'turbid' cloud of possibilities. Although irreducible to the 'grammar' of manifestation that Wittgenstein began to set forth in 1929–1930 in his *Philosophical Remarks* on the octahedron of colours, such a metaphysical 'structuralism' does have a strong resonance with the ontological import of this other assertion of his: 'The unlimitedness of visual space stands out most clearly, when we can see nothing, in pitch-darkness'.[137]

The gesture of attaining an emphatics of colour, of raising oneself to the purest plane of chromatic sensation that diagrammatises the phenomena in the differentiating play of topological hypostases, communicates secretly with Goethe's analysis of the genesis of plants, following his discovery that the actualisation of each plant necessitated that it pass through abstract thresholds and degrees, through a virtual origami that ideally traced its potential deployments, the axes of its eclosion, the stases of its development. For in the treatise on *The Metamorphosis of Plants* (published in 1790, this text is 'the most direct fruit of the Italian journey'),[138] in the form of the *Urpflanze* that will open up the 'world garden' (*Weltgarden*)[139] to the voyager by equipping him with the key of creation (the *hen kai pan* of the vegetable world and its irreducibility to any kind of preformation), we find this conjunction between the theme of the *construction of metamorphosis* and (although the term does not appear explicitly before the work preparatory to the *Farbenlehre*) that of the *Urphänomenon*:

> The primitive plant [*Urpflanze*: the proto-plant] will be the most astonishing creature in the world, that nature itself will envy. With this model [*Modell*] and

its key, one can then invent plants to infinity, which will be meaningful, that is to say which, *even if they do not exist* [*wenn sie auch nicht existieren*], could however exist [*doch existieren könnten*], and which will not be picturesque and poetical shadows and appearances, but will have an internal truth and necessity. The same law will apply to all living beings.[140]

This is something the painter, in turn, will be able to verify at the level of the *animation* of colours, by adopting the model of the circle, in which colours develop according to variations related to the *totality* of chromatic possibilities—and not to the 'local' usage that natured nature might make of them. The chromatic circle would thus be like a kind of *box* (colouring box, black box, Pandora's box . . .) in which colours can be redistributed, rearranged according to virtually infinite combinations that are never preserved in their totality in actual phenomena. It is up to the painter to shake up the box, to take another turn around the chromatic circle, in order to extract from it colours whose 'general table' (Runge) is that of a visuality without any necessary relation to the everyday visible world, in that it allows one to become a rival to nature *from the point of view of its art*. An instance of genetic production and not of generic representation by imitation, the dimension of these proto-phenomena corresponds to the virtual stripping off of all the diagrams through which the world expands into an actualising multiplicity of divergent colours. The *Urphänomen* revisited in turbidity is thus nothing other than the making possible, within a natured nature, of this topological fabrication of which the human eye is but a local zone, but one that can hardly be located, in so far as the retina of the world envelops it and borders it with a fringe of 'abstract' yet entirely real virtualities. So turbidity is like the setting into motion of the world and a replaying of its process of thickening and congelation, the intrication of a reality whose iridescence opens up between multiple combinations of colours, according to a weave that constitutes an intra-worldly depth that is neither that of the subject (perspective) nor that of the object (extension).

Following the intuitive idea[141] that the eye and light belong to each other, it is in the crucible of this world-eye fabricated by Nature in the vibratory play of colours that Goethe formulates the 'laws of vision' (*die Gesetze des Sehens*,[142] in the key expression of the paragraphs on those coloured figures and shadows that are at the heart of physiological colours) that govern the phenomena soon to be become known as *successive contrast* and *simultaneous contrast*,[143] and through which '*colors may be capable of being applied to aesthetic purposes*'.[144] Well before Chevreul, then, who would codify them in his *Law of the Simultaneous Contrast of Colours*—a first formulation of which was delivered by the chemist in an 1828 Memoir of the Academy of Sciences[145]—and before the intensive use of colour contrast by painters from

Delacroix onward, which paid no regard to the Newtonian framework within which the scientist had claimed to situate the phenomena of contrast.[146] This discovery makes all the more precious Goethe's observation that landscape painters (*Landschaftmalern*), upon reproducing in watercolour these phenomena observed at the frontiers of nature, are often criticised for being 'unnatural'.[147] In fact, we should emphasise that this remark, which seems to anticipate the most common criticism made against Impressionism, is in fact contemporary with the 'new art' that a young painter answering to the name of Philipp Otto Runge calls for, having determined that 'the force of the general concept [of life] freed from any static particularity' constituted 'the originality of [his] epoch':[148] the art of landscape [*die Landschafterei*]. Aside from the overly hieroglyphic character of his *Naturmythologie*,[149] the announcement of this 'new pictorial art', this 'revolution in art' that consecrates landscape, to the detriment of the historical and portrait genres,[150] as the summit of painting whose 'enjoyment was reserved for the moderns' (according to Humboldt's proposition)[151] cannot be entirely unconnected to Goethe's most un-Kantian affirmation, in the introduction of the *Farbenlehre*, of the secondary status of form, which in the academic tradition was always linked to drawing as the vehicle of meaning and beauty ('beautiful form'):

> The eye sees no form [*Forme*], inasmuch as light, shade, and color together constitute that which to our vision distinguishes object from object [*den Gegenstand vom Gegenstand*], and the parts of an object from each other. From these three, light, shade, and color, we construct the visible world [*die sichtbare Welt*], and thus, at the same time, make painting possible [*und machen dadurch zugleich die Malerie möglich*], an art which has the power of producing on a flat surface a much more perfect visible world than the actual one can be [*welche auf der Tafel eine weit volkommnersichtbare Welt, als die wirkliche sein kann, hervorzubringen vermag*].[152]

A turbidity, a troubledness, a 'mixture of matters'[153] reproducing on the palette of the painter the three strands—bright, dark, and colour—that contract the retina and which the painter must take control of by going all the way back to the pure plane of sensation that will permit him to expose a world 'much more perfect [. . .] than the actual world' in an art that will no longer be 'the art of forms' (of which antique sculpture is the archetype) oriented by 'a beauty elevated above all sensibility' (still advocated by Schelling).[154] In following the physiological heterogenesis of painting conceived as the art of sensible appearance, one discovers, with this dispositif that presides over the primacy of landscape painting, the three elements of an aesthetics that is *otherwise* transcendental, since here *the difference of colour* produces the properly heterogenetic element of the visible world, of Nature in so far as it 'manifests itself in an especial manner to the sense of sight'—and this

without its being the consequence of the substance or form of an object upon whose surface we perceive colour.[155] *Colour difference*, then, as *Urphänomen of Life/of Seeing* [*de la Vie/Vue*], is the 'fundamental manifestation [*Grunderscheinung*] within which one can have an intuition of multiplicity';[156] like that abstract-concrete truth of the sensible, that ultimate knowable that Hegel and Schopenhauer will apprehend in the mode of a simple *preparation* (*Präparat*, Hegel's word);[157] and which Schelling, de facto, will associate with the 'empirical truth' of landscape painting, threatened as it is by an 'unformed being', 'where the light is externally inorganic, but mobile and thus living' (unlike the human form, that 'most perfect object of painting', 'where the colour appears internal, organic, living and mobile').[158] In diametric opposition, Runge writes: 'Everything converges toward landscape, seeking the determinate in this indetermination'.[159]

It is thus necessary to come to grips with this living relief—excessive in relation to the self and the inert object—that activates the image, that brings the image in the making to the surface, allowing it to float free, to live of itself, according to a movement that has its own space and temporality even though (or rather because) it is bound up with the protophenomenal all. Thus 'seeing' is founded (always already) *aesthetically* upon the dynamic autonomy of the image, in its aesthetic liberation from its floating, 'abstract' forms; it implies the turbidity that testifies to a region irreducible to either psychology or topology, a turbidity whose events alone can instruct us, by way of the contractions they ceaselessly induce between the eye and things, on the psychophysical plane of pure sight where colours ceaselessly act upon each other. That the retina is 'solar' in its principle does not imply that, since the world in which it participates actively is not entirely *for me*, it exists *in itself* or *for itself*, but that—in Ritter's formula—'all nature constructs that experiment, not just the narrow sphere which we attribute to it'.[160] The world is detained in the crucible of these ontological dimensions (in itself/for itself/for me . . .), in a kind of floating materiology the experience of which is triggered by the contagion of light ('Light is a *contagium*')[161] through a universal placing in variation of intensities. It follows that the world, the *colourist* emergence of the world, no longer belongs to the constellation of the self any more than to the gravitation of the thing itself or to the dialogical community capable of endowing it with meaning. It presents itself as a turbidity, that of the emergence of 'the greatest organization in the lowest individualization'[162] that refracts itself (*sich brechen*) or imagines itself in an affect of the eye whose laminated modalities are realised—as they are experienced—beyond all constitutive representation (Schopenhauer) and all constituted objectivity (Newton) alike. Against both one and the other, it must be maintained that (1) once one fully conceives of experience, one no longer knows anything of matter;[163] (2) 'On earth every color becomes at once matter.—'[164]—that one

sees in it different matters. A point upon which 'the expression [of Zeno the Stoic] according to which colours are the first schematisms of matter [. . .] entirely agrees' with Goethe.[165]

The world floats within the troubled image wherein it is configured, incorporated, and transformed. This troubled floating of images, this texturality into which threads of colour are cast according to a fabrication and an iridescence that are not reducible to the form of things, is to Goethe's eyes the only way in which the world can be embodied, the only way in which to recognise its autonomy, and its depth, without which there would be nothing to see or to think. A world whose creative content is modalised in the pictorial play of colours.[166] But so great is the temptation here to propose a supposedly modern foundation for Goethean aesthetics, that we must insist that the world troubles colour, that in its animation and in the floating of its contour it *perturbs* the Flesh rather than deploying the conjunctive tissue of the Flesh within which the subject is given as source and destination of the visible, so as to render the world 'purely' present to it. For Flesh, *which here is absolute*, remains a primitive form of the phenomenon, reticulated by the internal sense and external sense of the subject, which thus separates the world from its own visibility by supposing it to be the complement of another vision. It is, in Husserlian terms, the *originary opinion* (*Urdoxa*), the *archi-immobile* prefiguration upon which is founded the vast network of relations that we weave around us, like the spider in its web, in the space of relative *heres* and *theres*. . . . In Goethe, there is instead an *originary perturbation* of the world in the material turbidity of colour, one that participates as little in the passive dimension of the phenomenological self (the givenness of a transcendence) as it does in the entirely spiritual unity of the Steinerian Self[167] (and its Kandinskian reprise). So that the poppy's fire-flower will be held within a halo of virtualities in which the 'soul', not so much phenomenological as physiological, does not give us to see, in a 'pure' seeing, the world of the Flesh and the flesh of the World—it *incorporates* a 'impure transcendental'[168] miming the back-and-forth between subject and object, all the better to subvert their common constitution:

> On the 19th of June, 1799, late in the evening, I was strolling through the garden with a friend just as twilight was deepening into a cloudless night. We distinctly observed something flamelike [*etwas Flammenähnliches*] appear close to some oriental poppies, a flower redder than any other. We approached the place and looked attentively at the flowers, but could perceive nothing further, until at last we succeeded in repeating the effect at will by walking to and fro while looking at them sideways. It became evident that the apparent flashing was really the afterimage [*das Scheinbild*] of the [red] flower. [. . .]
>
> This experiment is practicable on a cloudy day, and even in the brightest sunshine, for the bright sunlight, by enhancing the color of the flower, renders

> it fit to produce the complementary color [*die geforderte Farbe*] vividly enough for it to be perceptible even in a bright light. Thus, peonies produce beautiful green spectral images in this way, while calendulas produce lively blue ones.[169]

On this day, June 19, 1799, the world materializes in a singular concrescence, a persistent turbidity whose limit-value, as phenomenologically excessive as a flower in flame, is but the extreme edge of what takes place physiologically in every perception, which it is the business of the painter—for whom and with whom one writes[170]—to render visible at its evental apex. It is a question of the persistence of a spectral image whose autonomous floating was realised by the bright blue-green, which was the essence of the exhortation of colour, of the living surface upon which it was animated, at the behest of a speed which was that of a virtual reality; a reality that the walkers' promenade induced but was not sufficient to produce, in so far as it depended entirely upon the troubled-troubling surface contracted by the retina. There is an inclusive bifurcation here between that which the chromatic spectrum of the flower-thing produces and that which the retina induces as contrasting colour. The distance between them will create an image in disequilibrium, a floating, a movement—in short, a turbidity whose persistence materialises the world by involving it in a sensible, vibratory becoming, scintillating with the differential and structural aspects of a hierogamic coalition of colour variations.

Without the concentric circle of tensions animated on the surface of the retina, there would be nothing to see of the surface of the world (cf. 'this beautiful pleasure that the surface of the world procures', which the Italian Goethe undertakes to appropriate for himself through 'all manner of speculations about colors').[171] The world *is* the troubled fabric, aflutter with halos, virtual images that take us by surprise as they float, emerge, and expand, like so many circles forming in water. This was set forth, for all to read, in §98 of the *Farbenlehre*:

> Subjective halos [*die subjektiven Höfe*] may be considered as the result of a conflict between light and a living surface. From the conflict between the exciting principle and the excited there arises an undulating motion [*Aus dem Konflikt des Bewegenden mit dem Bewegten entsteht eine undulierende Bewegung*], which may be illustrated by a comparison with circles spreading on water. A stone dropped into water drives the water in every direction; the effect attains its maximum, it reacts, and being opposed, continues under the surface. The effect goes on, culminates again, and thus the circles are repeated. We may recall the concentric rings that appear in a goblet of water when we attempt to produce a tone by rubbing the edge; we may also think of the intermittent pulsations created when the sound of bells dies away. Thus we may approach a conception of what may take place on the retina when it receives the impression

of a luminous object (except that the retina, as a living and elastic structure, already has a certain circular quality in its organisation).

What is affirmed here, on the basis of these intermittent and as if intermediary effects, is a Physiology that is truly pictorial, even in its first principle, that of coloured images (*farbige Bilder*), 'numerous instances' of which 'occur in daily experience',[172] animated by those who cast a stone into the pool of their eye to make the experiment of 'troubling' appearance, of fabricating shockwaves and overlappings of all the circles of which colour, in its various mixtures, is capable. Just as if painting became definitively, by vocation of its palette, the experimental arena for the theory of vision put forward by Goethe (*to see the world through the eyes of the painter*, as he announces, and will continue to maintain throughout his Italian journey). Goethe indicates as much by the extraordinary 'impressionism' to which he delivers himself in §57 of the *Farbenlehre,* dedicated to *simultaneous contrasting colours*, and which can be read in turn as 'a way of inviting painters to open up their studio to the fresh air'[173] and to come out of the darkroom (the *camera obscura* that Goethe evokes in one of his *Maxims* as 'the penumbra of the empirico-mechanico-dogmatic torture chamber [*der düstern empirisch-mechanisch-dogmatischen Marterkammer*]'):[174]

> Although this experiment may be made with any colors, yet bluish red and green are particularly recommended for it, because these colors seem powerfully to evoke each other [*weil diese Farben einander auffallend hervorrufen*]. Numerous instances occur in daily experience [*Auch im Leben begegnen uns diese Fälle häufig*]. If a green paper is seen through striped or flowered muslin, the stripes or flowers will appear reddish. A gray building seen through green palisades appears in like manner reddish. A modification of this tint in the agitated sea is also a compensatory color: the light side of the waves appears green in its own color, and the shadowed side is tinged with the opposite hue. The different direction of the waves with reference to the eye produces the same effect. Objects [*die Gegenstände*] seen through an opening in a red or green curtain appear to wear the opposite hue [*der geforderten Farbe*]. These appearances will present themselves to the attentive observer on all occasions, even to an unpleasant degree.[175]

And then, in §59:

> As the compensatory colors [*die geforderten Farbe*] readily appear, where they do not exist in nature, with and after the color that calls them forth [*fordernden*], so they are rendered more intense where they happen to mix with a similar real hue. In a court which was paved with gray limestone flags, between which grass had grown, the grass appeared of an extremely beautiful green when the evening clouds threw scarcely perceptible reddish light on the pavement. In an opposite

> case we find, in walking through meadows, where we see scarcely anything but green, the stems of the trees and the roads often gleam with a reddish hue. This tone is not uncommon in the works of landscape painters [*Landschaftsmalern*], especially those who practice in watercolours: they probably see it in nature, and thus, unconsciously imitating it, their coloring is criticized as unnatural.[176]

Colours bring to bear a certain *exhortation* [*un appel des couleurs*] in their mutual interpellations, following a syntax that is not propositional or grammatical (in the sense of a grammar of colours), nor even strictly optical, but, in its pure chromatism, properly aesthetic. Launching a movement upon which Schopenhauer will imprint the seal of an exclusively subjective legislation, Goethe is thus led to superimpose the axis yellow-solar/blue-celestial of physical colours onto the contrasting red-green combination of physiological colours, so called because 'they direct our attention to the laws of vision'. They are, he emphasises from the very first paragraph of the *Farbenlehre*, 'the foundation of the whole theory' in so far as they 'belong to the sound eye' in its capacity to form colours out of itself for reasons that are essential and not pathological (that is to say *accidental*—according to the categorisation of Buffon, who in his Memoir *Sur les couleurs accidentelles* [1743][177] opposes 'natural' colours, assimilated to the normal conditions of perception, to 'accidental' colours—passing aberrations, mere subjective effects: red producing an 'accidental' green, etc.) In which case, we can understand why Goethe considered this as one of his most important contributions to an intuitive science—in accord with the Spinozist definition from the second part of the *Ethics*—that would be able to extract its 'concepts' from effectively perceived phenomena[178] and to see a 'diversity of substance in natural objects'[179] according to the principle of a sensible morphogenesis, a *phantastic* aesthetic in which the eye would be the privileged vector of knowledge (for 'here one does not ask about causes, but about conditions under which phenomena appear').[180] 'There is no truth, ultimately, except endowed with a form, seen'. . . .[181] A form in formation that will even allow one to 'see an idea with [one's] eyes'.[182]

Giving birth to a new ideal of knowledge that might be called phenomenological only in the (weak) sense that it aims at the apprehension of that which appears, that which shows itself,[183] but *biological* in the strong sense which, in Humboldt, associates nature with the reign of freedom and identifies life with an *analogon of art*, this genetic method, which Goethe, around 1796, dubs *morphology*, is opposed point by point to the Galilean-Newtonian physico-mathematical model. By definition, the latter owes its existence solely to the generic unity of a homogeneous, neutralised field, empty of all sensible presence. The supposed cause prevails over the effects by writing off visual appearances as the mistresses of illusion, by ceding to a mechanical re-presentation of the objectivity of the world whose material dispositif

and epistemological paradigm alike were furnished by the *camera obscura*. Goethe, blocking the luminous opening of the darkroom so as to observe the chromatic transformations of coloured discs that seem to float before our eyes,[184] will annul 'the separation between interior representation and exterior reality implicit in the camera obscura', replacing it with 'a single surface of affect' upon which inside and outside are fused in a physiological subject that can no longer be reduced to pure receptivity.[185]

Goethe's contribution to the critique of the principle of causality, by way of the affirmation of a qualitative optics (a *chromatics*) effectuated by a *superior physiology*, now proves to be indissociable from the 'passage' from romanticism to a science of colours enjoined to develop itself outside of the alternative between objective and subjective (outside of all *Stimmungen*) in virtue of the integration of sensation as reality-condition of the observer-artist's experience. Instead of a blind instrument in the service of a geometrical optics independent of any sensorial system, the eye becomes the support of a *physiological optics avant la lettre*,[186] intensifying the indistinction of the lived phenomenon in an artistic practice whose foundation is nothing less than the fusion between observation and impression on one and the same plane of immanence—a plane brought into view by painting, as defined by Goethe as a *science of seeing*, a science that distanced the cofounder of *Propylaea* from the 'classical earth' advocated by the very title of the journal. . . . Painting will no longer be presented as a window opened onto the world, presupposing the distance consequent on the placing into perspective of a homogeneous extension between the observer and the subject of observation. It will instead present itself in the passage from representation to an experience in which are fused the intransitivity of the producer-artist and the naturalism of *natura naturans*.[187] As Goethe affirms, inscribing it in the lineage leading from Herder and Mendelssohn to Moritz—and he will most certainly have been the first to formulate it with this theoretical emphasis—painting 'has the power of producing on a flat surface a much more perfect visible world than the actual one can be'[188] in so far as each colour can be brought into play as a function of its own 'distinct impression', like a language expressing 'primordial [*Urverhältnisse*] relationships which do not present themselves to the senses in so powerful and varied a manner'.[189] Thus, Goethe can successively write (1) that 'artistic truth [*das Kunstwahre*] and the truth of nature [*das Naturwahre*] are totally unlike each other [. . .] and that the artist does not have the duty, nor even the right, to lend his work the appearance of a work of nature [*daß sein Werk eigentlich als ein Naturwerk erscheine*]': it must be the case, and it is sufficient, that its 'harmony [*Übereinstimmung*]' is driven by an 'internal truth [*eine innere Wahrheit*]' which cannot be subject to any external resemblance whatsoever; and (2) that 'a perfect work of art appears like a work of nature [. . .] because it accords [*übereinstimmt*] with our higher nature,

because it is beyond the natural [*übernatürlich*] but not outside of nature [*außernatürlich*]. A great work of art is a work of the human mind, and thus also a work of nature. But because the work of art treats its diverse subject matter [*die zerstreuten Gegenstände*] as a unified whole [*in eins gefaßt*] and reveals the significance and dignity [*Bedeutung und Würde*] of even the most ordinary objects, it goes beyond nature'.[190] By this we are to understand that the work of art manifests the truth of its process by projecting itself behind and beyond the piecemeal productions of natured nature.

The setting in motion of painting depends on the light-space contracted by the painter within the round of his retina, saturated with fringes that complement each other and respond to each other across the chromatic circle whose every degree and tension and whose infinite variations Goethe describes, like the eternal law of a living nature through which the visible emerges. This living, sensible surface, this solar eye that Goethe reinstates for painting by requiring of the artist that he 'should evoke its form and content from his inmost being [*aus der Tiefe seines eigenen Wesens hervorrufen*]';[191] this intersection of a form and a content that is not that of nature seen through a temperament (according to what would soon become the canonical formula of naturalist realism), but the expression of a *style* whose relation to nature is a matter of the creation of a life that constantly reinvents itself ('an ever-creative nature');[192] this new plane manifested by the metamorphoses of colour in its indifference to the 'subject', and which demands that the forms of the seen marry with the principles of an aesthetics of creation—it is this that Delacroix, in his own words, intends to carry through in 'all the flamboyancy of its beauty' so as to express the 'great natural harmony' of a world where all forces communicate through colour.[193] There could be no other precedent for this thinking of the mysterious force of colour than what we have called the *Goethe Transformation*; a first clue to this is the way in which Delacroix, in his *Journal*, turns to Goethe in order to state his resolute opposition to the Morality of Ideal Beauty that had made a determined comeback in the *Fleurs du mal* trial: 'I add, on my own account, that as regards painting, it is always *beauty* that these people use to strike down anything that gets out of the rut. I am of Goethe's opinion: one might say to oneself quite simply and gaily: "*Écrasons l'infâme*"'.[194] The *infâme* of an at once abstract and idolatrous morality that disregards all of 'the terrible conditions in which that which is most decidedly natural can be elevated to the utmost limits of what is possible to achieve' so as to be 'that which becomes [*der Werdende*]'[195] and which will claim as its own a creative life in whose name 'those who have denied all life in nature [. . .] hold that life up for imitation to art'—something we might well find 'strange indeed'.[196] And once more, it will be the infinite potential of a plastic nature that brings us back to Goethe's fantastic plant, in one of Delacroix's notebooks:

> Come—he [Goethe] added, showing a throng of plants and fantastic figures that he just outlined on paper while speaking—these are utterly bizarre images, utterly insane, yet they could be twenty times more bizarre and we might still wonder whether their kind didn't exist somewhere in nature. In drawing, the soul recounts a part of its own essential being, and the very deepest secrets of creation, as far as its basis is concerned, rest upon drawing and the plastic arts that it thereby fosters.[197]

If it is the 'basis' of the life of flowers that the painter addresses in sounding out the 'type' or the prototype of their inexhaustible effusions, the pictorial truth that militates in favour of 'taking out of circulation' the ideal mimetic notion of beauty[198] will be at once a *cosa mentale* and the *intensification* of Nature. How could one otherwise attain the production of that 'true ideality [*wahre idealität*]' and that opening of the world into the com-plicated self-ex-plication of Nature that Goethe had recognised in Lorrain's luminous and surreal work and at large throughout Italy, when 'a different nature and a vaster artistic perspective [were] revealed to [him]'?[199] '*Im Claude Lorrain erklärt sich die Natur für ewig* [In Claude Lorrain nature itself declares itself eternal]'.[200] 'As for colors, no one, to my knowledge, has ever attained such perfection. He treats the mist marvellously'.[201] The truth of painting is thus presented as the *terrestrial effect* of a 'turbidity' with an aesthetic valence (that 'vapor which is familiar to us only from the drawings and paintings of Claude Lorrain') and which determines 'in all its unity' the pictorial nature of the whole painting ('in which there was nothing not in conformity with it', says Eckermann, again) through the liaison at work within it between the very notion of landscape, when 'landscape as such only exists in the eye of its spectator',[202] and the practice of colour in its triumph over form, a practice that makes us see the phenomenon better than it is seen in nature.[203] 'These images', Goethe concludes, 'have the highest truth, but no trace of actuality'.[204] A colourist triumph of *image* over form that will not be unrelated to the 'faults that can be found with his landscapes' (swiftly pointed out by Goethe: his 'erroneous perspective', the 'clumsy' trees, the absence of 'details', etc.),[205] faults that must be considered in light of the fact that 'everything that is commendable in more than one artist in terms of technique, force, precision in the wielding of a brush, and presentation in general, is here almost absent'; so that, as Carus continues in his fifth *Letter on Landscape Painting*, if we 'consider [. . .] the treatment of individual objects [. . .] [it] is so curiously inert, almost clumsy, that we might be looking at a child's drawing. Seen individually, the cloud forms are strange, heavy and unpleasant; Claude's sea seems, as painted, to be laboriously assembled from innumerable tiny brushstrokes. But look again at the painting as a whole, and it displays such a cheerful aspect, such an intimate sense of natural

beauty [. . .] inept though the painter's hand might have been in itself'. It is as if 'mind has itself created a capability through which to impart form', the power of transformation—through the primacy of colour required by the construction of the World-Landscape (of which Claude Lorrain is, as we know, in and beyond the history of painting, an essential agent). Without this, we cannot understand why 'the hand is nothing'.[206] But then it is the totality of the world that is placed under the aesthetic condition of a *sui generis* optical system whose 'morphology' is mental no less than sensible in virtue of the very fact that it animates 'nature'[207] after the departure of the gods, and brings forth that which is given, empty of any fabulous scene, any content with a human face, as the 'transformation', the *inhuman imagination* of the visible. Like an event in the eye, where—to corroborate Delacroix's obsession with Baudelaire's decisive phrase—'*color acts unknown to us and thinks by itself*, independently of the objects that it clothes'.

Even farther removed from the lacklustre (*farblos*) German soil than Claude's Rome, it is this characteristic *salience* [*saillie*][208] of Delacroix's colourism (*saillie* is a word of which the painter is fond, and one that is not without a certain Goethean echo),[209] with its tremulous hatching, its flocculence, interwoven in its incendiary variations, that we must think, in the vibration of an eye that will come to trouble every single motif (classical and romantic alike) under which modernity had hitherto presented itself.

NOTES

1. Goethe's *Italian Journey* begins with a flight: 'I stole out of Carlsbad at three in the morning' (September 3, 1786); the *Journey* is a flight: 'For I must confess, [. . .] my journey was in the nature of a flight'. (September 8, 1786); and, as such, a '*salto mortale*' (December 13, 1786) leading to a 'rebirth, which is remolding me from within'. (December 20, 1786). J. W. Goethe, *Collected Works,* vol. 6, *Italian Journey*, trans. Robert R. Heitner, ed. Thomas P. Saine and Jeffrey L. Sammons (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 14; 20; 121.

2. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 425 (Rome, March 1, 1788): 'I have been making all manner of speculations about colors, which interest me very much because that is the area I have hitherto understood the least. I see that with some practice and sustained reflection I shall also be able to assimilate this beautiful and pleasant feature of the world's surface'.

3. Ibid., 42 (September 17, 1786) [translation modified]. And, in October 1787: 'Having tried for a year to escape the Cimmerian ideas and attitudes of the North'. . . . (344).

4. Goethe writes from Rome, on December 20, 1786: 'The rebirth, which is remolding me from within, is still in progress. I certainly expected to learn something worthwhile here; but I did not imagine that I would have to go so far back in my

schooling and unlearn, indeed relearn, so much in a thoroughly different way. Now, however, I am truly convinced and have submitted totally; and the more of myself I must renounce, the happier it makes me'. Ibid., 123.

5. Ibid., 293 (Rome, end of June 1787): 'My eye is being well trained, and with time I could become a connoisseur'.

6. J. W. Goethe, *Goethe's Colour Theory*, trans. Herb Aach, ed. Rupprecht Matthaei (London: Studio Vista, 1971), 168 (§763). [Matthaei's abridged translation, along with supplementary materials, also includes a facsimile of Charles Eastlake's less satisfactory 1820 translation of the text. Translation modified throughout—Translator's note]

7. Goethe, *Faust II*, trans. M. Greenberg (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 3–4 [v. 4692, v. 4715 and v. 4727] ('Day breaks grayly, slowly the world's revealed' / 'Then let the blinding sun shine at my back' / 'Our rainbow-hued life, it too's a reflection').

8. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 71 (Preface).

9. As Goethe affirms in an entirely remarkable sequence: 'The ear is mute, the mouth is dumb; but the eye can perceive and speak [*aber das Auge vernimmt und spricht*]'. J. W. Goethe, 'Paralipomena zur Farbenlehre', in *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften* (Leopoldina Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 321).

10. J. W. Goethe, 'The Collector and his Circle', in *Goethe: Collected Works,* vol. 3: *Essays on Art and Literature*, trans. Ellen von Nardroff and Ernest H. von Nardroff, ed. John Gearey, 121–159: 139.

11. According to Eckermann, Goethe often said: 'As for what I have done as a poet [. . .] I take no pride whatever in it. Excellent poets have lived at the same time with myself; poets more excellent have lived before me, and others will come after me. *But that in my century I am the only person who knows the truth in the difficult science of colours—of that, I say, I am not a little proud, and here I have a consciousness of a superiority to many*'. *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann* (London and Toronto: Dent, Everyman Library, 1930), 302 (February 19, 1826) (italics added).

12. Goethe, *Farbenlehre*, §361. [Section omitted from English translation—Translator's note]

13. J.W. Goethe, *Materialen zur Geschichte der Farbenlehre*, ed. D. Kuhn, in *Goethe. Die Schriften zue Naturwissenschaft* (Weimar: Böhlau, 14 vols), Section 6, 'Isaac Newton'. [A small selection of these *Materials for the History of the Colour Theory* is presented alongside Matthaei's translation; see also the selections translated as 'Researches into the Elements of a Theory of Colours' in Maria Schindler, *Pure Colour*, *Part 1. Goethe's Theory of Colour Applied* (London: New Culture Publications, 1946), 43–63—Translator's note.]

14. I. Newton, *Optics* (London: William and John Innys, 1721, third corrected edition) [Book II, Part III, Proposition 16]. See M. Élie's commentary, *Lumière, couleurs et nature. L'optique et la physique de Goethe et de la Naturphilosophie* (Paris: Vrin, 1993), 23–24. It is the musical analogy that governs the *seven* coloured rays in the prismatic spectrum, which will lead Schopenhauer, in his treatise *On Vision and Colors* [*Über das Sehen und die Farben*, 1816], to say, 'That even now opticians enumerate seven colors in the spectrum is the height of absurdity' (A. Schopenhauer, *On*

Vision and Colors, *with Philipp Otto Runge's Color Sphere*, trans. Georg Stahl [New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010], 75). For Goethe, 'Color and sound do not admit of being directly compared together in any way' (*Colour Theory*, 166 [§748]).

15. Goethe, *Materialen zur Geschichte der Farbenlehre*.

16. Ibid (section 2).

17. Ibid.

18. G. Simmel, *Kant und Goethe* (Berlin: Marquardt & Co., 1906), http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/35192, 29–30.

19. Schopenhauer, *On Vision and Colors*, 75 (§7).

20. Ibid., 100 (§13).

21. Ibid., 83 (§10).

22. Goethe, 'Paralipomena zur Farbenlehre'.

23. Letter from Goethe to Schopenhauer dated October 23, 1815.

24. Cited by Maurice Élie in his introduction to A. Schopenhauer, *Textes sur la vue et sur les couleurs* (Paris: Vrin, 1986), 18.

25. See *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, 125 (January 19, 1826): Goethe could well have said of Schopenhauer what he advances here in regard to 'the most celebrated German improvisatore, Dr Wolff of Hamburg': 'he has the general sickness of the present day—subjectivity'.

26. Ibid., 126–127. Goethe will confide in a letter of September 18, 1831 to Schultz: 'I am indebted to the critical and idealist philosophy for having made me attentive to myself, it is an enormous gain; but it doesn't reach the object'.

27. A. Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974, vol. 2), 180 (VII, §103).

28. Goethe, *Conversations with Eckermann*, 301 (February 19, 1829).

29. See Goethe's 'The Form of Clouds according to Howard' [1820] for the child gazing at the clouds (in the Preface) and for the poem that follows it ('In Honour of Howard') (original and English translation originally published in *Gold's London Magazine* 4 [1821] in the Frankfurt Ausgabe, Band XXV). Luke Howard had proposed a typology of clouds and an explanation of their transformations in a book entitled *On the Modification of Clouds, and on the Principles of their Production, Suspension and Destruction* (1803), which was translated and discussed throughout Europe.

30. Trans. G. Soane and J. Bowring, in D. F. S. Scott, *Luke Howard* (York: William Sessions, 1976), 26–27.

31. 'Excerpt from "Toward a Theory of Weather", 1825', in *Goethe: The Collected Works,* vol. 12: *Scientific Studies*, ed., trans. Douglas Miller (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 148. This text is reprinted (in part) in the Hamburger Ausgabe, where it is presented immediately prior to the *Farbenlehre*.

32. Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, 488 (following the numbering by thematic group in the Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 432).

33. Cf. Plotinus, *Enneads*, I, 6, 9 [1]: 'Never did eye see the sun unless it had first become sunlike' (Plotinus, *The Enneads*, trans. S. McKenna and B. S. Page [London: Faber, 1956], 64.) The editors of the Hamburger Ausgabe give a reference of Goethe to Plotinus where the latter is qualified as an *alten mystiker* (643).

34. 'The Fragment Project' in *Key Texts of Johann Wilhelm Ritter* [*1776–1810*] *on the Science and Art of Nature* trans. J. Holland (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 139 (§31). Ritter, who had worked on colour with Goethe, invokes an 'eye of the earth' in §340 (295). See Goethe's letter to Schiller, April 6, 1801: 'Ritter came to see me for a minute, and has among other things drawn my attention to the theory of colours. Herschel's new discoveries, which have been carried further and extended by our young naturalist, are very beautifully connected with that observation which I have frequently told you of [. . .]. I foresee that I shall this year write at least two or three chapters more in my theory of colours'. (*Schiller and Goethe: From 1794 to 1805*, trans. L. Dora Schmitz [London: George Bell, 1890, 2 vols.], vol. II, 375–376). Following another visit from Ritter, Goethe had written to Schiller (September 28, 1800): 'He is a very heaven of knowledge upon earth' (Ibid., 342).

35. Novalis, *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopedia: das Allgemeine Brouillon*, trans., ed. David W. Wood (New York: State University of New York Press, 2007), 183. It is in 1798 that Novalis first encounters his 'dear Plotinus', whom he judges 'more after [his] own heart than Fichte and Kant', in Diedrich Tiedmann's *The Spirit of Speculative Philosophy*. In the essay 'On Goethe' in the same year, Novalis has no qualms in writing that 'Goethe is the first physicist of his age—indeed [. . .] his work is epoch-making in the history of physics' ('On Goethe', in *Philosophical Writings*, trans., ed. M.M. Stoljar [New York: State University of New York Press, 1997]).

36. In his 1802–1803 conferences on the *Philosophy of Art*, Schelling commits himself to a vigorous anti-Newtonian stance by authorising 'Goethe's modern views': 'Goethe's modern views on this theory [on the origin of colours]', Schelling emphasises, 'are based on both the natural and the artistic effects of colors. In them one sees the innermost harmony between nature and art, whereas in the Newtonian theory there was absolutely no way of combining the theory itself with the actual principle of the artist'. F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, ed., trans. D. W. Stott (Minneapolis, MI: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 121–122 (§84).

37. Ibid., 104 (§49).

38. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 431–436 (Part Three: The Second Sojourn in Rome, *Report* on March 1788). Goethe introduces this long extract with the phrases: 'I must not pass over the aforesaid pamphlet in silence: it had resulted from our conversations, which Moritz had used and formed after his fashion. Besides, it possibly has some historical interest, showing what thoughts occurred to us at that time, which, when subsequently developed, tested, applied, and circulated, coincided well with the attitudes of the century'.

39. In the middle of the *Sturm und Drang* epoch, in a 1722 text entitled 'German Architecture [*Von Deutscher Baukunst*]', Goethe argued that art as 'a living whole' depends upon its action, which 'springs from a sincere, unified, original, autonomous feeling [*aus inniger, eigner, selbständiger Empfindung*]' irreducible to any principle of knowledge and any form of explanation. 'German Architecture' in *Goethe: The Collected Works*, vol. 3, 3–9: 8; Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, *Schriften zur Kunst und Literatur*, 13.

40. See Karl Philipp Moritz, *Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen [On the Formative Imitation of the Beautiful*] (1788); also his *Bestimmung des Zwecks einer Theorie der schönen Künste* [*Determination of the Purpose of a Theory of the*

Fine Arts] (1789), in particular §14: '*The born artist* is not satisfied with looking at Nature, he must imitate it, strive towards it, and form and create, just like it does'.

41. This is the expression proposed by P. Lacoue-Labarthe and J.–L. Nancy in the 'Overture' to their *The Literary Absolute* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 27. For the critique of this Heideggerian-influenced thesis, see O. Schefer, *Poésie de l'infini*. *Novalis et la question esthétique* (Brussels: La Lettre volée, 2002), 65–79.

42. The celebrated declaration 'I call the classical *healthy*, the romantic *sickly*', in *Conversations with Eckermann* (April 2, 1829). But we should read on:

> In this sense, the *Nibelunglied* is as classical as the Iliad, for both are vigorous and healthy. Most modern productions are romantic—not because they are new; but because they are weak, morbid and sickly. And the antique is classic—not because it is old; but because it is strong, fresh, joyous, and healthy. If we distinguish 'classic' and 'romantic' by these qualities, it will be easy to see our way. (Goethe, *Conversations with Eckermann*, 305)

43. C. Rosen, H. Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism: The Mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art* (New York: Norton, 1985), 24. To the effect that, in the felicitous formula put forward in this book, 'The history of romanticism is—to a far greater extent than the history of any other artistic or philosophical movement—a history of redefinitions' [16]).

44. F. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Classics, 1990), 113, §49 ('Untimely Wanderings'). Nietzsche had already placed at the head of his *Second Untimely Meditation: On the Use and Disadvantages of History for Life* a manifesto-phrase of Goethe's that concluded his critique of Kant's anthropology: '[] I hate everything that merely instructs me without increasing or indirectly rousing my activity' (to Schiller, December 19, 1798, *Schiller and Goethe*, 182). For the Nietzschean critique of romanticism as an '*impoverishment of life*' (Schopenhauer, Wagner . . .), see *The Gay Science* §370 ('What is Romanticism?').

45. P. Wat, *Naissance de l'art romantique. Peinture et théorie de l'imitation* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998), 126.

46. This is Goethe's analysis in *Conversations with Eckermann*, 33–34 (January 2, 1824).

47. In *Maxims and Reflections*, number 815: 'Mannerism is an ideal *manqué*, a subjective ideal. That is why it is generally not devoid of spirit'; and again, in *Maxim* 814: 'Why do we take mannerism to task with such violence, if not because we are convinced that it is impossible to get back on the right path once one has become involved with it' (Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 480). But is not Goethe himself this *revenant* of the impasses of Wertherism's preoccupation with genius?

48. These citations are excerpted from the article 'Simple Imitation, Manner, Style' (1789) in *Collected Works*, vol. 3, 71–73; *Einfach Nachahmung der Natur, Manier, Stil* (Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, *Schriften zur Kunst und Literatur*, 30–34).

49. Ibid., 71–2 (concerning *Manner*); 72 (on *Style*; translation modified).

50. J. Lacoste, *Goethe, Science et philosophie* (Paris: PUF, 1997), 173.

51. As Goethe argued, on the basis of proposition XXIV of the fifth part of the *Ethics* ('*Quo magis res singulares intelligamus, eo magis Deum intelligimus*'),

particularly in his long letter to Jacobi of June 9, 1785 ('I seek the divine *in herbis et lapidibus*') and in the study on Spinoza ('A Study Based on Spinoza', in Goethe, *Collected Works*, vol. 12, 8–10; 'Studie nach Spinoza', in Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 7–10). In *Italian Journey*, Goethe recalls that 'Herder often taunted me for having learned all my Latin from Spinoza, for he had noticed that this was the only Latin book that I read' (82 [Venice, October 12, 1786]). On the Goethean reading of Spinoza and the transformation of 'the observation of things' into a true pantheist-inspired *contemplation*, see Dilthey's important essay, 'Aus der Zeit des Spinozastudien Goethes [From the Time of Goethe's Spinoza Studies]', in W. Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften II: Weltanschauung und Analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation*, ed. G. Misch (Leipzig and Berlin, 1914), 391ff.

52. As we read in another of Goethe's letters to Jacobi, dated May 5, 1786, 'You say that one can only *believe* in God, but I respond to you that I prefer *visual perception*, and when Spinoza, speaking of the *Scientia intuitiva*, writes: *Hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adaequata idea essentiae formalis quorandam Dei attributorum ad adaequatam cognitionem essentiae rerum* [*Eth.* II prop. XXXX, scholium 2], these are precisely the few words that encourage me to dedicate my whole life to the perception of things'.

53. We know how the young Schelling started out by reversing Spinozism, defining the 'absolute self-power' of the absolute I on the basis of the categories of substance (*Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie* [1795], §XI–XV) so as to locate the archetype of Nature in the Self. For the philosopher, it will then be a matter of 'translating' the (Fichtean) proposition that 'Ego is All' into a new proposition: 'All is Ego'.

54. C. D. Friedrich, 'Äußerungen bei Betrachtung einer Sammlung von Gemählden von größtentheils noch lebenden und unlängst verstorbenen Künstlern', *Caspar David Friedrich. Kritische Edition der Schriften des Künstlers und seiner Zeitzeugen* I, vol, XVI, ed. Gerhard Eimer and Günther Rath (Frankfurt: Kunstgeschichtliches Institut der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, 1999). On the romantic hesitation between the two poles incarnated by Goethe and Friedrich (who had not made the journey to Italy), see Wat, *Naissance de l'art romantique*.

55. See T. de Duve, *Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade*, trans. D. Polan (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press, 1991).

56. The expression is Thomas Young's, in the *Quarterly Review*, January 1814; cited by J. Lacoste in 'Goethe et la science anglaise', *Revue Germanique Internationale* 12 (1999), 85.

57. Newton, *Optics*, 230, 236 [Book II, Part III, Proposition 7]: 'It is not impossible but that Microscopes may at length be improved to the discovery of the Particles of Bodies on which their Colours depend'. In its general form, the Proposition states: 'The bigness of the component parts of natural Bodies may be conjectured by their Colours'.

58. Cited at length in the *Materials for the History of the Theory of Colours* (first section), the Aristotelian theory of the *diaphane* (defined in the second book of the Treatise *On the Soul*) is opposed to physicists' *reifying* concept of light (as 'particles' in movement).

59. Following Theorem 1 of the first of the 'Fundamental Propositions' of Newton's *Optics*: 'Lights *which differ in Colour, differ also in Degrees of Refrangibility*' (Newton, *Optics*, 16).

60. According to the title of Proposition 9, Problem IV, Book I, Part I, of *Optics*: 'By the discovered properties of Light to explain the Colours of the Rain-bow' (Newton, *Optics*, 147).

61. For 'there exists everywhere *but one single nature*', as Goethe recalls in announcing his novel *Walverwandtschaften* [*Elective Affinities*] in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stande* of September 4, 1809.

62. G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature: Part Two of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences* [1830], trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 197, 198.

63. Goethe, 'Confessions of the Author' (from the *Materials for a History of the Colour* Theory), in *Colour Theory*, 199.

64. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 177 (§814–815).

65. Goethe, 'Diderot's *Essay on Painting*' (1799). And following this, 'If there is harmony, it is not because the rainbow and the prism show it to us. The reverse is the case: these phenomena are harmonious because there is a higher universal harmony'. ('Diderots Versuch über die Malerei', Sämtliche Werke, band 31 [Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1977]). This comes in the guise of a commentary on Diderot's declaration: 'I have no intention of overturning, in art, the order of the rainbow' ('Notes on Painting' in *Diderot on Art,* vol. 1: *The Salon of 1765 and Notes on Painting*, trans. John Goodman [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995], 200 [translation modified]).

66. Goethe, 'Confessions of the author', *Colour Theory*, 199.

67. Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections* (*Maximen und Reflexionen*, 719 [Hamburger Ausgabe, Band XII, 467]): 'Das Schöne ist eine Manifestation geheimer Naturgesetze, die uns ohne dessen Erscheinung ewig wären verbogen geblieben'. One will be reminded here of Novalis's dictum: 'Only an artist can decipher the meaning of life'.

68. Goethe, *Maxims*, §746 (H.Aus. Bd XII, 470).

69. Ibid., §538 (H.Aus Bd. XLL, 438).

70. Goethe's continuing interest for all phenomena of 'metamorphosis' (and his constant opposition to the Linnaean type of classificatory paradigm) is well known. The study of botany entitled *Attempt at an Explanation of the Metamorphosis of Plants* (1790), closely followed by a didactic poem on the same theme (1799/1800), along with its counterpart on *The Metamorphosis of Animals* (1827), crowns the studies in comparative anatomy in which are announced the principle of connections (the basis of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's theory of analogies 'which have an immense importance for science'), manifesting under the 'Goethean' name of *morphology* a kind of structuralism *avant la lettre* combined with the construction of a model that allows one to give an account of the metamorphoses, the trans-formations, of a creative nature [*der bildenden Natur*]. The object of *morphology* is none other than the 'phenomenon of organic structure' [*das Phänomen der organischen Struktur*] as it realises the totality of its dynamical force: its form, its formation, which expresses the 'laws of nature' through progressive differentiation in an endless plasticity, to the detriment of the stability of functions (Cuvier). It is thus not without reason that

Claude Lévi-Strauss will celebrate *The Metamorphosis of Plants* as the true origin of structuralist thinking.

71. Goethe, *Paralipomena II*.

72. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 174 (§805).

73. Ibid., 139 (§517).

74. Ibid., 177 (§813).

75. Ibid., Introduction [paragraph omitted in English translation—Translator's note].

76. Newton's experiment with the prism is not an *experimentum crucis* in the Baconian sense: it is only valid if combined with a corpuscular hypothesis concerning the nature of white light. See M. Blay, *La conceptualisation newtonienne des phénomènes de la couleur* (Paris: Vrin, 1983), 79–85.

77. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 168 (§760).

78. Ibid., 73 (Introduction).

79. Which comes down to saying that one can only speak of a 'transcendental' in Goethe *on the basis of a physiological foundation proceeding on the plane of Nature*. This 'procession' marks Goethe's distance from Schopenhauer's *pure transcendentalism,* as a passage (formulated in Kantian terms) 'from the objective to the subjective'. Recall how Kant explains, in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that 'tastes and colours are in no way necessary conditions under which alone objects can become objects of the senses for us. They are linked with the appearance only as contingently added effects of the special character of our organs'. I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1996), 83 [*Transcendental Aesthetic*, §3, A28–29].

80. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 174 (§808). Note that here Goethe's 'Aristotelianism' goes far beyond the Greek's 'receptive powers of the eye'. On the 'diaphane within the eye' see Aristotle, *On Sense and the Sensible*, 438 B 7–11.

81. Schelling, *Philosophy of Art*, 122.

82. See *Theory of Colours*, 86 (§59) (a passage to which we shall return).

83. Goethe, *Materials* (sixth section, 'Newton').

84. See the beginning of book III of *On the Soul*.

85. 'Colours are the degrees of darkness *within* light', writes É. Escoubas in the Goethean part of her *Imago Mundi. Topologie de l'art* (Paris: Galilée, 1986), chapter III, 'Preamble: "L'oeil du teinturier"', 154. The contrast between light and shadow will for this author be the announcement of 'ontological difference' (the difference between Being and beings).

86. Goethe, *Theory of Colours*, 148 (§591).

87. See §277–278 of Ritter's *Posthumous Fragments*, where Ritter comes extraordinarily close to Goethe's argument.

88. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 418 B 4–5r.

89. See Rudolf Steiner's explanation in the *Note to §150 and §151 of the Farbenlehre*: 'Light, seen through a troubled milieu, gives yellow—shadows, seen through a brightened milieu, give us blue'. And, according to Kandinsky's free citation in his *Bauhaus Courses*: 'Original phenomenon of colour—birth of yellow: tainted light; birth of blue: clarified darkness'. On the importance of Goethe's principle of yellow/blue polarity for Mondrian and Kandinsky (through the intermediary of Steiner),

see G. Ballas, *La couleur dans la peinture moderne. Théorie et pratique* (Paris: Adam Biro, 1997), 186–241; on their dependence upon Steiner's *Goethenaismus* and the theosophical mysticism of colour centred on the notion of 'abstract vibration' (*gegenstandlosen Vibration*), see S. Ringbom, 'Art in 'The Epoch of the Great Spiritual'. Occult Elements in the Early Theory of Abstract Painting', *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*, vol. 29 (1966), 386–418. It is this genealogy that is implied in Kandinsky's insistence, in a letter to Will Grohmann on November 28, 1925 (the year of the scenic composition of *The Yellow Sound*), that 'the meaning, the content of art is romanticism'.

90. Translator's note: *Purpur* (fr. *pourpre*), literally 'purple', was the term used by Goethe for a red with neither yellow nor blue admixture and thus regarded as pure ('Here we are to forget everything that borders on yellow or blue. We are to imagine an absolutely pure red'), the complementary of middle-green. In *Colour Theory* he specifies that the colour originally specified by the ancient term ('*der Purpur der Alten'*)—the Tyrian purple obtained from the secretions of the murex sea-snail, closer to the colour we are accustomed to call 'purple'—contained more blue than the colour he intends. Goethe describes his *purpur* as being closest to fine carmine, and situated between the tones of French and Italian scarlet dyes, which tend, respectively, towards the yellow and the blue. He retains the word *purpur* for his 'chief color' in part because of its venerable symbolic association with 'high dignity' ('*hohen Würde*') (Goethe, *Colour Theory* 172 [§792], 173 [§799–800]); see also W. Jervis Jones, *German Colour Terms: A Study in their Historical Evolution From Earliest Times to the Present* (Amsterdam and Philadelpia, PA: John Benjamins, 2013), 244–246.

91. See *Colour Theory*, 157–158 (§693) on the 'emphasis' (the *colores emphatici*) that must be ascribed 'to all color phenomena, assuming they are exhibited under the purest and most perfect conditions'. Goethe connects this, under the general title '*The Force of Color* [*Wie energisch die Farbe sei*]', to 'the dark nature of color, its full, saturated quality [*Die dunkle Natur der Farbe, ihre hohe gesättigte Qualität*]', which is 'what produces the grave and at the same time fascinating impression we sometimes experience' (158 [§694]). We should note here, with Maurice Élie, that Goethe's intensification becomes 'elevation' in Kandinsky, losing in *saturation* what it gains in *luminosity*.

92. For, as Goethe explains in the 'Polemical Part' of the *Farbenlehre* (§506), 'What Newton designates at the extremity of his scale of colours as being red is in fact only yellow-red'. See Goethe, *The Unveiling of Newton's Theory* (second part of the *Colour Theory*, omitted from the English translation; *Zur Farbenlehre. Polemischer Teil*, ed. Horst Zehe (Weimar: Verlag Hermann, 1992)). Let us cite the conclusion of this important paragraph:

> Among his primitive colours, we find not one single pure red. But this must be the case with all those who distance themselves from Nature, who make of what is most distant the most near, who raise that which is derivative to the rank of the originary, who bring down the originary to the rank of the derivative, who designate the composite as simple and the simple as composite.

93. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 177 (§814).

94. Goethe, *Colour Theory,* 168 (§763).

95. Remember that Goethe evokes the 'actions' and 'passions' of light (in the Preface to the *Farbenlehre*: '*Die Farben sind Taten des Lichts, Taten und Leiden*') (Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 71 [translation modified]).

96. Goethe, *Colour Theory* 92 (§102).

97. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 74 (Introduction). One is reminded of the famous lines of the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right* where Hegel writes that 'philosophy paints its grey in grey'.

98. Ibid., 74 (Introduction).

99. Ibid., 79 (§21).

100. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, §28 [omitted from English translation—Translator's note].

101. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 80–81 (§31).

102. Ibid., 81 (§38).

103. It will have been noted that the *Subjekt*-subject is absent from the polarity described in §38.

104. Goethe, *Diderot's 'Essay on Painting*', 221.

105. Goethe, *Materials*.

106. Goethe, *Diderot's 'Essay on Painting*', 220–221.

107. *Colour Theory*, 181 (§851–§852) [the passage quoted is omitted in the English translation—Translator's note]. Chiaroscuro, bright-dark, is opposed to colour because it implies the subordination of tints (hue) to brightness: it is the regime of saturation, conducted by way of 'half-tints'. These paragraphs on chiaroscuro are immediately followed by an argument on '*Tending toward color*' (182 [§862–866]). See again 'Diderot's "Essay"' on the improper confusion of colours with chiaroscuro, and the notice 'Anton Raphaël Mengs' in the *Materials* (sixth section), where Goethe explains that, for the latter, 'colours were [. . .] but isolated tones, through which one specified the surfaces of bodies that must be subordinated to bright-dark and to tone in general, without exactly being able to claim to produce between them a harmony and a totality'.

108. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 86–87 (§61).

109. Goethe, 'Contribution to Optics (1791)', in Schindler, *Pure Colour*, *Part 1. Goethe's Theory of Colour Applied*, 21. Goethe would later retitle these *Contributions* as *Contributions to Chromatics* (*Beiträge zur Chromatik*). And indeed, the opposition between a Chromatics and an Optics is the best way to sum up Goethe's anti-Newtonianism.

110. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 87 (§69).

111. In the *Materials* (fifth section), Goethe translates a long passage of Kircher's work *Ars Magna lucis et umbrae* (1646). 'This was the first time', he writes, 'that it had been explained clearly and in a detailed fashion how light, shadow, and colour must be considered as being the constitutive elements of life. [. . .] In his work, we encounter the science of Nature more joyously and brilliantly than in any of his predecessors'.

112. Just as in botany, we must '[see] into the secret inner life of the plant, into *the stirring of its powers*, and [observe] how the flower gradually unfolds itself'. *Conversations with Eckermann*, 13 (October 21, 1823) (italics added).

113. As we read in Charles Blanc's *Grammaire des arts du dessin* (1867); *The Grammar of Painting and Engraving*, trans. Kate Newell Doggett (Chicago: Griggs and Company, third edition, 1891), 139.

114. G. Roque, *Art et science de la couleur. Chevreul et les peintres, de Delacroix à l'abstraction* (Nîmes: Jacqueline Chambon, 1997), 67.

115. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 173 (§798).

116. Ibid., 158–159 (§699).

117. Ibid., 166 (§746).

118. For Goethean *Naturphilosophie* directed its attention 'not toward the stability of beings and things, as would have been dictated by the mechanistic attitude, always concerned with establishing the permanence of the Same, but toward the renewal of forms in virtue of a universal dynamism' (G. Gusdorf, *Le savoir romantique de la nature* [Paris: Payot, 1985], 89). Introducing his morphological sketch, Goethe will thus oppose the form in its living actualisation, in its permanent formation (*Bildung*), to the dead form (*Gestalt*) isolated by analytical research (see Goethe's essay entitled 'He [the author] presents his sketch', written in 1807 in Jena). Philipp Otto Runge, whose *Farbenkungel* had preceded by a few months the publication of the *Farbenlehre* in 1810, will, for his part, speak of a *Gestaltmetamorphose*.

119. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 111 (§305).

120. Ibid., §336 [omitted in English translation—Translator's note].

121. Ibid., §335 [omitted in English translation—Translator's note].

122. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 83 (§50).

123. Ibid., 86.

124. Ibid., 174.

125. Cf. J. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1996), 64: in common with the whole of the eighteenth century, Newton's *Treatise on Optics* 'sought with all its might to neutralise the distorting power of the medium [. . .], and this could be done if the properties of that medium were mastered intellectually and thus rendered effectively transparent through the exercise of reason'. It is thus particularly interesting to recall that the term *trüb* can suggest 'the obscurity that comes from the confusion of the mind and the disorder of thoughts'—as Lacoste notes, *Goethe, Science et philosophie*, 125–126.

126. D. Cohn, *La Lyre d'Orphée. Goethe et l'esthétique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999), 179. The thesis of 'reequilibriation' has been developed by T. Todorov in the direction of an 'intersubjective' modernity that would ensure the overcoming of the classic/romantic antinomy in the form of a 'lateral transcendence' (Introduction to J. W. Goethe, *Écrits sur l'art,* ed., trans. J.-M. Schaeffer [Paris, Garnier-Flammarion, 1996; second edition 1983], 51–71).

127. See Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, §2.

128. We borrow from Danièle Cohn the expressions 'morphological monism' and 'morphological intensification'.

129. *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, Leopoldina Ausgabe, Bd. I, 395. This troubled medium being situated between light and darkness (*Colour Theory*, 101 [§175]), it follows that 'by increasing the degree of turbidity in the medium, we can

deepen a bright object from the lightest yellow to the intensest ruby red. Blue, on the other hand, increases to the most beautiful violet, if we dilute and diminish a semi-opaque medium, itself lighted, but through which we see darkness' (*Colour Theory*, 139 [§517]). On intensification towards red, see 158–159 (§699–701). Schopenhauer will describe turbidity as 'the '*menstruum*' of the chemical penetration of light and darkness' (*On Vision and Colors*, 102).

130. See Plotinus, *Enneads* II, 4 [12]: this is the so-called Treatise of 'the two matters'—one Platonically 'evil', the other more so. In regard to the latter, we must cite the conclusion of J.–M. Narbonne's Introduction to the Treatise: 'A fitting matter [. . .] to authorise a teleological and speculative physics—that is to say, a *phusis* for which the distinction between object of thought and object of experience or sensible object remains in reality secondary, or in any case posterior; in brief, a conception of matter tailor-made to inspire a Goethe, a Novalis or a Schelling' (Plotinus, *Les deux matières*, trans. J.–M. Narbonne, [Paris: Vrin, 1993], 270).

131. See the letter from Goethe to Runge, dated October 18, 1809: 'I would appreciate your publishing your treatise as rapidly as possible, to allow me to refer to it. It contains nothing that disagrees with mine, nothing that, in one way or another, does not intersect with my exposition. I see, here and there, in your work, a complement to mine'. To the extent, as Goethe will again write, that 'You will find in my *Farbenlehre* almost word-for-word citations of many pages in your Essay, a commentary on certain others—and I count, with your permission, on using a certain number, for I cannot express better than yourself the convictions that we share' (cited in E. Tunner's Introduction to O. Runge, *Peintures et Écrits* [Paris: Klincksieck, 1991], 34).

132. Runge, *Color Sphere*, 124.

133. Runge, letter to Goethe in Weimar (postmarked November 21, 1807), 171.

134. This is the first phrase of the *Color Sphere or Construction of the Relations of all Color Mixtures and their Complete Affinity*: 'The diagrams in this booklet that supposedly illustrate the construction of the spherical relation of colors conclude with the sphere itself' (Runge, *Color Sphere*, 123).

135. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 273 (§218).

136. Runge, *Color Sphere*, 128.

137. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, §221 (276–278) and §224 (281). This last paragraph (§224) is introduced by the following observation: 'Nowadays the danger that lies in trying to see things as simpler than they really are is often greatly exaggerated. But this danger does actually exist to the highest degree in the phenomenological investigation of sense impressions. These are always taken to be *much* simpler than they are' (author's emphasis). As we know, for the second Wittgenstein, the grammar of the statements that we make about phenomena will be phenomenology (impossible qua science of the gaze as it bears upon phenomena) continued via other descriptive means.

138. J. Lacoste, '*Le voyage en Italie' de Goethe* (Paris: PUF, 1999), 27 (and the whole of chapter 2: 'Plantes et roches [Plants and Rocks]'). For it is during the Italian journey, in Naples on March 25, 1787, that Goethe mentions for the first time the 'originary' (or 'primitive') plant, the *Urpflanze*, as his 'illumination in botany':

'Please tell Herder that I shall soon have figured out the primeval plant. Only I fear that no one will be willing to recognize the rest of the plant kingdom in it' (Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 181).

139. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 214 (April 17, 1787). Goethe ceases to consider the primitive plant as something actual, to conceive it instead as 'rich and productive like an ideal' (as will be declared in a conversation with Chancellor von Müller, in July 1830—cited and discussed by E. Cassirer, 'Goethe and the Kantian Philosophy', in *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, trans. James Gutmann, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Princeton University Press, 1970), 76.

140. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 214 (to Herder, April 17, 1787).

141. See Goethe's 'anti-Kantian' diagnosis in regard to the prohibition on intuitive understanding, in the short text entitled 'Faculty of Intuitive Judgment (Anschauende Urteilskraft)', published in 1820 (Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XIII, 30–31). It may be that, in the intellectual domain, 'through the contemplation of an always creative nature [*durch das Anschauen einer immer schaffenden Natur*] we could render ourselves worthy of participating, through the mind, in its productions'. This, for Goethe, would amount to courageously undertaking 'the adventure of reason [*das Abenteuer der Vernunft*]'—according to Kant's expression in the *Critique of Judgment* (trans. S. Pluhar [Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1991]), 305 [§80], which is thereby *turned against him*. In his text on Kant and Goethe, Georg Simmel was able perfectly to shed light on the difference of 'temperament' from which all of this derives: Goethean mechanist-vitalist unity versus Kantian epistemological delimitation, recognising only mechanistic unity—see Simmel, *Kant und Goethe*, 21–25.

142. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 86 (§60).

143. See Goethe's assessment at §56 (84): 'We have hitherto seen the opposite colors producing each other successively on the retina: it now remains to show by experiment that the same effects can exist simultaneously'.

144. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 87 (§61).

145. M.–E. Chevreul, 'Mémoire sur l'influence que deux couleurs peuvent avoir l'une sur l'autre quand on les voit simultanément [*Memoir on the influence that two colours may have on each other when they are seen simultaneously*]', *Mémoire de l'Académie des Sciences*, XI, 1832 (read April 7, 1828). *De la Loi du contraste simultané des couleurs* [*The Law of the Simultaneous Contrast of Colours*] was published in 1839.

146. Doubtless, this is not unrelated to the fact that Goethe's name is not mentioned in Chevreul's earlier writings. Roque points out that in his 1879 *Compléments d'études sur la vision des couleurs* [*Additional Studies on Colour Vision*] Chevreul indicates 'that the concept of complementary colours cannot figure in Newton, even if Newton's theory contains its possibility' (Roque, *Art et science de la couleur*, 78). On the use that painters made of these notions, through a misinterpretation of Chevreul's rather classical intentions, see chapter 2.

147. Goethe, *Colour Theory* 86 (§59).

148. Joseph Goerres's *Les Heures du jour* (*Tageszeiten*), comprising four vast panels symbolising Morning, Day, Evening, and Night (a 'plastic symbolism', according to the expression proposed by Goerres, whose admitted *hermeticism* was not exactly

to Goethe's taste). It would be Runge's 'desire to *paint'* (as he emphasises in a letter at the beginning of 1803) the four original engravings (realised in May 1805) that would lead him to elaborate his theory of colours. The execution of this set of engravings, 'treated like a symphony', was interrupted by Runge's premature death in 1810, the very year of the publication of the *Farbenkugel*.

149. On the Rungian concept of landscape, see E. Décultot, 'Philipp Otto Runge et le paysage. La notion de '*Landschaft*' dans les textes de 1802', *Revue Germanique Internationale*, 2/1994, 39–58.

150. Recall that for Schelling, in *Philosophy of Art*, it is the portrait that is 'the final and most perfect object of painting' (146), and not, as in the classical thinkers, history painting. With the human *form*, 'art steps into a realm in which for the first time its absolute products begin, and its true world unfolds itself'. In this way, 'in the higher forms of art the true artist will scorn the impulse to lend his picture more charm by the addition of a landscape, since the completely adequate object for him is the human figure in its sublime meaning and infinite significance' (146–147).

151. Celebrating the teleological march of the history of art, Alexander von Humboldt can thus write that 'the separation of these two species—historical and landscape painting—[. . .] [has] tended to favor the advance of art through all the various phases of its development'. A. von Humboldt, *Cosmos: Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe* (vol. 1), trans. E.C. Otté (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 83.

152. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 73.

153. According to Runge's expression, in his long letter to Goethe on July 3, 1806, reproduced by the latter in the *Annex to the Theory of Colors*, before the summary of the 'Didactic part', 'The painter who sees a beautiful landscape or who feels moved by some effect of nature, asks very naturally through what mixture of matters he can best render this effect. This at least is what incited me to study the properties of colours, the possibility of penetrating their virtues in order to understand the effect that they produce or that to which they react' (omitted from English translation; see *Philipp Otto Runge's Briefwechsel mit Goethe* [Weimar: Verlag der Goethe-Gesellschaft, 1940]).

154. See Schelling, *Philosophy of Art*, 129 (§87):

> The tendency of art, however, is not toward sense reality, but rather always toward *beauty elevated above all sensuality*. The expression of absolute knowledge in things is their form. Only by means of form do they elevate themselves into the realm of light. Form is accordingly the primary element in all things whereby they also are adapted for art. Color is merely that through which the *material side* of things becomes form. It is merely the higher potence of form. All form, however, depends on drawing. *Hence, only through drawing is painting actually art*, just as only through color is painting actually painting. Painting as such focuses on the purely ideal side of things. [italics added]

155. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant admits that colours 'can make the object vivid to sense'. But, he adds immediately, 'They cannot make it beautiful and worthy of being beheld. Rather, usually the requirement of beautiful form severely restricts [what] colors [may be used], and even where the charm [of colors] is admitted it is still only the form that refines the colors' (71 [§14]).

156. Goethe, letter to Christian Dietrich von Buttel, May 3, 1827.

157. See Hegel's letter to Goethe dated February 24, 1821 (G. W. F. Hegel, *Briefe von und an Hegel* [Hamburg: Meiner, 1952–1961], letter 381) and the synopsis of the Hegel–Goethe relationship given by Lacoste, *Goethe, Science et philosophie*, 200–211.

As for Schopenhauer, we know that he will reproach Goethe for failing to go beyond a 'systematic presentation of facts', for having believed that there is nothing to be sought behind the phenomena because 'fact is already theory'—see Schopenhauer, *On Vision and Colors*, Introduction, 44, 45 (and Goethe, *Maxim* 488: 'That one seek nothing behind the phenomena; they themselves are already the theory [*Man suche nichts hinter den Phänomen*: *sie selbst sind die Lehre*]', Hamburger Ausgabe, t XII, 432).

158. Schelling, *Philosophy of Art*, §87 (544–546).

159. Runge, text of February 1802.

160. Ritter, *Posthumous Fragments*, 145 (§42) (author's emphasis).

161. Ibid., 265 (§272) (translation modified).

162. Ibid.

163. See Ritter, *Posthumous Fragments,* 145 (§42), on the chemist: 'If he has *completely* understood the attempt, then he knows *nothing more* about the material.—' Just as Goethe would ceaselessly object against Newton.

164. Ibid., 142 (§254).

165. Goethe, *Materials*. Goethe prudently adds the following: 'For, if in their antique meaning these sayings do not contain what we have been able to put into them, they are nevertheless extremely rich in meaning'.

166. In an unpublished essay on the eye (*Das Auge*) written during 1806–1807, Goethe writes that 'painting is more true for the eye than reality itself. It presents to it what man wants to and must see, not what he usually sees' (*Zur Farbenlehre. Historischer Teil.* Leopoldina Ausgabe, Band I. 3, 437).

167. See Rudolf Steiner's two Introductions (1891 and 1895) to the *Farbenlehre* (included in translation in the French edition: *Théorie des couleurs*, trans. H. Bideau [Paris: Triades, 1980 (2nd Edition)]).

168. The expression is Danièle Cohn's.

169. *Colour Theory*, §54 [omitted from English translation].

170. In the *Introduction to the Propylaea* published in 1798, Goethe announced:

> We are making it our duty to present this theory [of colours] in a way that is useful and intelligible to the artist, hoping to do something that will be welcome to him. We will endeavour to deal only with phenomena that up to now he has used by instinct, [*Instinkt*], to explain them and to return them to their fundamentals. (*Colour Theory*, 67)

On the other hand, we should also remember that the two chapters entitled 'History of Colours' in the *Materials* were written by Johann Heinrich Meyer, a Swiss painter 'well-versed in the history of art' who had lived in Italy since 1784. In these chapters he initiates Goethe into what the latter calls the 'true practice' proper to that 'new education' demanded by his Italian 'renaissance'. Cf. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 357–359 (Rome, December 21 and 25, 1787).

171. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 425 (Rome, March 1, 1788).

172. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 86 (§57).

173. Lacoste, *Goethe, Science et Philosophie*, 151. The commentator had previously cited this phrase extracted from the 1820 essay on 'entoptic colours': 'It is in the most free world that we would have to ceaselessly pursue our lessons'. As for these paragraphs from the *Farbenlehre*, Lacoste has also noted that 'Goethe plays the part of a painter, and a curiously modern, almost impressionist painter, in his evocation' (120). He recalls that the explanation of these phenomena in the 1791 and 1792 essays ('Über das Blau', 'Von den farbigen Schatten') was still objective and realist; which, in 1800, would give rise to the following realisation: 'Objective explanation of a realist inspiration has long been an obstacle [. . .]. Intuition of the psychological part / The foundation, to be sought in the organ / Colored shadows placed under this rubric' (cited on p. 122).

174. Goethe, *Maxim,* 617, Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 449.

175. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 86.

176. Ibid.

177. Reprinted in J.–L. Binet, J. Roger, *Un autre Buffon* (Paris: Hermann, 1977), 137–149.

178. See *Colour Theory*, 102 (§182): 'As our senses, if healthy [*sind*], are the surest witnesses of external relations, so we may be convinced that, in all instances where they appear to contradict reality, they lay the greater and surer stress on true relations [*das wahre Verhältnis desto sichrer bezeichnen*]'.

179. The phrase is that of Carl Gustav Carus, in his eighth letter *On Landscape Painting*, strongly influenced by Goethe's thought (C. G. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, trans. David Britt [Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002], 125). The *Neun Brief über Landschaftmalerei geschrieben in den Jahren 1815–1824* was published in 1831. In his Letter-Preface (dated 1822) Goethe expressed the hope that these *Letters* should 'delight both artists and amateurs by opening their eyes to the manifold associative harmonies within nature' (Ibid., 79).

180. Goethe, 'Empirical Observation and Science [*Ehrfahrung und Wissenschaft*]' (1798), in *The Collected Works,* vol. 12, 24–25: 24. And again: 'The question as to the purpose—the question *Wherefore?*—is completely unscientific. But we get on farther with the question *How?*' *Conversations with Eckermann*, 388 (February 20, 1831).

181. Goethe-Schiller, *Xenien, 'Wissenschaftliche Genie*'.

182. Cf. Goethe, 'Fortunate Encounter [*Glückliches Ereignis*]', in *The Collected Works,* vol. 12, 18–21.

183. Against—it should be emphasised—the Heideggerian explication of phenomenology, where appearing is understood as a '*not-showing-itself*' (see M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson [Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1999], ¶7, 52). Leading to the divine *sur-prise* of an extra-*phenomenality*, this idea of phenomenology will, as we know, meet with great success in France (on this question, see the works of the late lamented Dominique Janicaud on the theological turn of French phenomenology, and Éric Alliez, *De l'impossibilité de la phénoménologie. Sur la philosophie française contemporaine* [Paris: Vrin, 1995]).

184. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 82 (§40).

185. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 71; on the 'camera obscura', see chapter 2.

186. In his essay on 'Goethe's Poetical Imagination', Dilthey could thus determine that it was 'from the physiological part of the *Theory of Colours* that Johannes Muller drew the foundation of physiological optics' (in W. Dilthey, *Selected Writings*, ed. H. P. Rickman [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976], 98–104).

187. As Wat explains, 'The less naturalist painting is, in the sense of its imitating the objects of nature, the more it is naturalist in the sense of imitating nature as a principle'—a productive, *creative* principle (Wat, *Naissance de l'art romantique*, 63). It follows that 'He to whom nature undertakes to reveal its secret feels an irresistible desire [*Sehnsucht*] for that which is its most worthy interpreter, art' (Goethe, *Maxim* 720, Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 467).

188. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 73 (Introduction).

189. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 189–190 (§915–918).

190. Goethe, 'On Realism in Art', in *Collected Works,* vol. 3, 77–78 [translation modified] [*Über Wahrheit und Wahrscheinlichkeit der Kunstwerke. Ein Gespräch,* Hamburger Ausgabe Bd. XII, 70, 72.] The essay appeared in the journal *Propyläen* 1:1, which included as its opening text an *Introduction to Propylaea* [*Einleitung in die Propyläen*] penned by Goethe. In it we read that the artist must learn to 'penetrate to the essence of objects as well as the depths of his own soul, which, however, is necessary if he wants to produce something that rises above the merely pleasing and superficially effective, if he wants to rival nature and create a spiritual-organic whole. If he is successful, his work will have such content and such form that it appears natural and at the same time seems above nature'. 'Introduction to the *Propylaea*', in *Collected Works,* vol. 3, 77–90: 81 (Hamburger Ausgabe, vol. XII, 42). Although the Winckelmannian resonance of a 'more than nature' [*mehr als Natur*] in regard to 'the most beautiful nature' [*die Schönste Natur*] to which these lines bear witness cannot be ignored, it is nonetheless difficult to group this set of texts—as has usually been done—under the general and simplified rubric of Goethe's 'classicism'. In 'The Collector and his Circle' (*Propyläen* II.2), Goethe uses Schiller's *Letters on Aesthetic Education* to show how 'man is not only a thinking creature, he also has feelings. He is a whole, an amalgam of diverse yet closely connected forces. And the work of art must address itself to the whole and must reflect this rich unity, this harmonious diversity in man' ('The Collector and his Circle', in *Collected Works,* vol. 3, 121–159: 143).

191. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, §920 ('Concluding Observations' [omitted from English translation]).

192. 'And that, through the contemplation of an ever-creative nature, we render ourselves worthy of participating through the spirit in its creations', according to Goethe's already cited proposition in the *Faculty of Intuitive Judgment* ('Anschauende Urteilskraft', *Hamburger Ausgabe* [Munich: Beck, 7th Edition, 1975] vol. 13: 30–31).

193. See Jean Clay's fine pages on Delacroix in *Romanticism*, trans. Daniel Wheeler and Craig Owen (New York: The Vendome Press, 1981), 234, 235.

194. E. Delacroix, *The Journal of Eugène Delacroix*, ed. Herbert Wellington, trans. Lucy Norton (London: Phaidon, third edition 1995), 66 (February 20, 1860).

195. Goethe, *Italian Journey*. In Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XI, 363; cited by J. Lacoste, *Le «Voyage en Italie» de Goethe*, 74.

196. According to J. G. Hamann's opinion (against Kant's 'morbidly illusory philosophy') taken up by Schelling in his speech at the Munich Academy of Sciences, October 12, 1807: 'The Philosophy of Art: An Oration on the Relation Between the Plastic Arts and Nature', trans. A. Johnson (London: John Chapman, 1845). In Schelling's lecture, Goethe is described as 'the most admirable connoisseur to whom the gods have endowed both the kingdom of nature and that of art'.

197. 'Supplement' in E. Delacroix, *Journal (1822–1863)* (Paris: Plon, 1996), 853. Goethe is cited from Blaze and Bury's Preface to the translation of *Faust.*

198. Delacroix copies out this passage of Goethe's in the Saint-Beuve article on Feydeau (which appeared in the *Moniteur* on February 20, 1860): 'Can someone finally have the courage to withdraw from circulation the idea and even the word beauty to which, once it is adopted, all false conceptions indissolubly attach themselves, and to put in its place, as is only right, truth in its general sense!' (Ibid., 764).

199. In Goethe's letter to Prince Karl-August, dated January 25, 1788,

> It is only when I arrived in Rome that I saw that in reality I had understood nothing of art, that up until that point I had admired and tasted in artworks only the general reflection of nature. Here were revealed to me a different nature, a far broader artistic perspective, I would even say that I had the impression of not being able to perceive the bottom of the mystery of art, toward which I directed my gaze with yet more pleasure than that with which I had already scrutinised the mysteries of nature. I abandoned myself to the impressions of my senses and thus I visited Rome, Naples and Sicily, to return to Rome on the day of the feast of Corpus Christi. These great scenes of nature had enlarged my soul, smoothed it out: I had learned to understand the dignity of landscape painting, I saw Claude and Poussin with new eyes.

200. See Goethe, 'Lanschaftlich Malerei', in Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 218; and again: '*Von Claude Lorrain, der nun ganz ins Freie, Ferne, Heitere, Ländliche, Feenhaft-Architektonische sich ergehet, ist nur sagen, daß er ans Letzte einer frein Kunstäußerung in diesem Fache gelangt*' (222). On the relation of Claude Lorrain to '*wahre idealität*', see *Conversations with Eckermann*, 321–322 (April 10, 1829).

201. J. W. Goethe, 'Two Landscapes by Philipp Hackert', in *Collected Works,* vol. 3, 68–70 ('Philipp Hackert—Nachträge über Landschaftsmalerei', in *Schriften zur Kunst*, Zurich, 1949, 618–619).

202. As Friedrich Schlegel writes in his *Theory of Art* (A. W. von Schlegel, *Die Kunstlehre* [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1963]; cited by É. Décultot, *Peindre le paysage. Discours théorique et renouveau pictural dans le romantisme allemend* [Tusson: Du Lérot, 1996], 258).

203. See the 'Roman' letter to Charlotte von Stein of February 19, 1787: 'Hovering over the ground all day is a vapor which is familiar to us only from the drawings and paintings of Claude Lorrain; but in nature the phenomenon is rarely seen as beautifully as here'. Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 142.

204. *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, 321 (April 10, 1829). In the guise of a commentary on Eckermann's affirmation that in Claude Lorrain 'each picture [is] a little world by itself, in which there was nothing not in conformity with it'. Ceding to the inevitable comparison with Poussin's 'grand manner'—of which 'he tired after a few days'—Goethe cites this statement of Claude's in his first article on landscape

painting: 'I sell my landscapes, but I give the figures and the cattle for free' ('Two Landscapes by Philipp Hackert').

205. Goethe, 'Two Landscapes by Philipp Hackert', 68–70.

206. Carus, *Nine Letters*, 111.

207. Alexander von Humboldt wrote, 'The grand style of landscape painting is the fruit of a profound contemplation of nature and of the transformation that takes place within thought'; and concluded, after citing Claude Lorrain among those 'eminent painters' who were able to surpass 'the limited element furnished by sensible perception': 'Thanks to this creative force, landscape painting has taken on a character that also makes it a sort of *poetry of nature*' (Humboldt, *Cosmos*) (italics added).

208. Translator's note: The root meaning of the word *saillie*, to which we owe the English *sally* and *salience*, is 'to leap forth' (from the Old French *salir* and Latin *salire*). In modern French, the word retains this meaning but it also means to protrude, project, or jut out. The word is therefore dynamic and propulsive, with a certain suggestion of animality, and indeed sexuality (the word *saillir* is used for a bull 'servicing' a cow). In the following chapter on Delacroix, these connotations are mobilised in the invocation of a *saillie* characteristic of Delacroix's painting—a vigorous rendering of corporeal obtrusion. Yves Sjöborg writes of this Delacrucian *saillie* as a 'sense of volume from within', as 'that through which a body affirms itself in space, and opposes itself to other bodies', adding that (as we shall see in the following chapter) '[Delacroix] sought it not by way of the outline, like Ingres, but from within, like the ancients, like the Renaissance painters, like Michaelangelo' (Y. Sjöborg, *Pour Comprendre Delacroix* [Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1963]). Since this key term is not straightforwardly translatable in any consistent way, its use is parenthetically indicated here and in the following chapter.

209. 'To love ceaselessly'—the motto inscribed in an enamelled heart set with jewels sent by Goethe to Charles-Auguste, from Milan. On Goethe and his loves, see the anthology put together by J.-P. Lefebvre at the end of his *Goethe, modes d'emploi* (Paris: Belin, 2000), 237.

Delacroix, *Oriental Horseman Holding a Sword and Shield*, *in Combat,* undated
Graphite on vellum paper, 27.5 × 19.9 cm
Paris, Musée du Louvre

Chapter 2

Delacroix and the Massacre of Painting

> The future is all blackness.
>
> —Eugène Delacroix, *Journal*, 7 April 1824

> I must have something new, though the world's run dry.
>
> —Jean de La Fontaine, cited by Théophile Gautier

> The most curious events and revolutions take place beneath the firmament of the skull, in the close and mysterious laboratory of the brain.
>
> —Charles Baudelaire, Salon of 1846

> The viewer's imagination makes the picture that he sees.
>
> —Eugène Delacroix, Letter of Thanks, undated

1

A history painter, but of a history so far from being academic that is 'always yet to be made',[1] and a colourist; an accursed or triumphant painter, yet an 'official' one, despite the scandal of the *Death of Sardanapalus*, and well before his arduous and belated admittance to the Institute; a painter involved in public commissions that call for the cementing of some far from republican friendships and reward him with more of the same, as he creates those great 'machines' in which surges forth the vibrating enormity of the Sublime

that haunts him (and has done ever since 1822's *Dante and Virgil*) and which he will soon transpose into the lowest Gothic of a frenetic literature (*The Execution of the Doge Marino Faliero*, shown at the 1827–1828 Salon). . . . Delacroix enters, to say the least, *contradictorily* into what is usually known as the History of Art—all the more so in light of the eventual consecration of a flamboyant oeuvre that will never have relented in its détournement of Fables submitted to the greyish model of the Davidian formula and the 'serious painting'[2] of Horace Vernet and his heir Paul Delaroche, precociously elected to the chair that the painter with the 'drunken broom', 'the representative of the new painting', will finally go on to occupy for a few very short years.

With Delacroix, *the only way is via* Baudelaire and the 'immediate conclusions' to which he aspires, which mimic art history's narrative of origins only so as better to distance him from it. From this angle, we might tell the story as follows: brilliant heir to Titian's and Veronese's 'feeling for colour' combined with Rubens's 'fury of the brush', admirer of the English innovators in their break with 'uniform tint', but also an impeccable analyst of the black execution of Géricault's *Anatomical Fragments*[3] as they sever themselves from any transcendence or narration whatsoever—proof if any were needed that 'the original painter does not always require a subject'[4]—Delacroix, through the medium of a colour that '*thinks for itself*, independently of the objects that it clothes',[5] redefines the very material space within which the painter works as a 'festival for the eyes'.

That this painting is done with pigments, oils, brushes and pencils, with that whole 'cookery' of colour inherited from his forebears, and which he documents meticulously in the pages of his *Journal*—not without denouncing the loss of this tradition in 'the moderns',[6] to whom he opposes the most literal definition of painting, that of 'the imitation of volume [*saillie*] on a flat surface'[7]—does not prevent him from renewing the practice of colourism to such an extent that even his most fervent admirers would more than once be baffled by the 'explosion of colours' of which Baudelaire speaks.

There can also be no doubt that this painting which, under cover of 'History Painting' (a label with which Manet would still reproach Delacroix), reveals itself in the very generation of colours, having no reality other than that of a visible vouchsafed to 'the incredible power of the imagination' (praised by Goethe, upon seeing the *Faust* lithographs, as having surpassed his 'own vision');[8] that this painting which delivers the visible from 'that infernal facility of the brush'[9] so as to render 'the art of the painter [. . .] all the nearer to man's heart because it seems to be more material',[10] allows us glimpse from the inside the '*true thought*' that animates it as the 'truth in painting'.[11]

Starting from the middle [*par le milieu*], in Delacroix's notes for a *Dictionary of the Fine Arts*, dated January 25, 1857: 'I have said to myself a hundred times that materially speaking, painting is nothing but a bridge set up between the mind of the artist and that of the beholder'. From the beginning, October 8, 1822: 'When I have made a painting, I have not given expression to a thought! This is what they say. What fools people are! They would strip painting of all its advantages'. And on June 22, 1863, when the end is near: 'The first quality in a picture is to be a festival for the eyes. This does not mean that there need be no reason in it'. Delacroix dies on August 13, the following year.

And how could we not immediately recall that this *thinking of painting*, in which colour cannot be reduced to the 'the role of sentiment'—whether or not the latter is subject to reason—has no precedent other than the profound mutation that Goethe had introduced into the philosophical apprehension of the visible when he sought to render the world through the naturing play of colours that inhabits the eye of the painter? Do we not read, in the entry *Liaison* in Delacroix's planned *Dictionary of the Fine Arts*, of 'the effect of atmosphere and reflections that bring objects of the most incongruous colours into one whole'[12]—with Delacroix insisting, against his great rival, that 'Ingres does not understand that everything is reflected in nature and that all colour is but an exchange of reflections'?[13]

In refusing to comply with the imitative laws of academic optics and the neoclassical principles of a wholly linear mannerism, an entirely literary immobility, Delacroix delivers us to a surface effect that escapes both the legislative power of *ideal beauty*, that moral allegory of an art of drawing-design (*dess*[*e*]*in*—according to the 'intelligent formulation' recalled by Charles Blanc),[14] and the pure *pathos* of romantic hearts, of those who will soon come to be called the *apes of sentiment*. It is not in the intimacy and the pure exaltation of sentiment that the event of the world will be perceived, as the insufferable worn-out romanticisms traced from the theatrical rhetoric of Emperor Hugo[15] claim to believe (the '*rococo* of romanticism', as Baudelaire has it);[16] neither will it emerge in the presumed exteriority of the narrative distribution of identities, as the school of David would have us believe, compensating for the sculptural fixity of its iconographic programme with the precise drawing of descriptive detail. With Delacroix, *thought* must take on the most violent of corporeal struggles in order to render tangible the convulsive unity of a world in which 'what is the case here is the case for all';[17] in order to render visible 'the torsion, the serpentine sinuosity of forms filled with living energy'[18] whose perpetual vibration impresses upon 'the inexhaustible variety of nature, always consistent yet always different',[19] a

becoming as remote from the coarse stability of objects as from the constancy of our intentional schematisation (and remote also from the 'beauty' that is of a piece with its cramped horizon, never denounced better than by Hugo in the *Preface to Cromwell*: 'The fact is that the beautiful, humanly speaking, is merely form considered in its simplest aspect, in its most perfect symmetry, in its most entire harmony with our organisation'[20]). In light of this thought, then, Delacroix will offer up the *petty world* of man to the salience (*saillie*) of an animality that is present even in the 'drawings that the sea hollows out in the sand, and which recall the stripes of tigers'.[21] Those tigers in which *ground and figure are as one*—a true obsession, from 1850 onward, for the painter with 'the eyes of a wild animal' and skin 'brown, tanned, lithe, folding into itself like that of a lion'.[22]

It is this animated world to which Delacroix dedicates himself, unleashing this explosive impulse of History, this 'storm of forces' that neoclassical representation claims to capture in 'the petrified lesson of marbles'[23] (*Laocoon suffers, but does not cry*). Whence the brutal contraposition of Ingres's *Apotheosis of Homer* and *The Death of Sardanapalus* in the Salon of 1827–1828, which would inspire some bitter comments from Delacroix—in a letter to his friend Charles Soulier on February 6, 1828—concerning the 'abominable effect' produced 'at first sight' by his 'damn painting hung alongside those of others', an effect which 'entirely strangles it'. . . . Although the conditions of this rude displacement in the order of the painting can only be gauged precisely with reference to the 'restored' dogma of the Academy, it is nevertheless clear that, despite the virulence of the critique (a whole life '*thrown to the lions*'), the Institute had not dismissed from the outset all possibility of assimilating this not immediately contradictory oeuvre into its hierarchy of genres: in order for them to do so, Delacroix, in his strategy for conquest, had only to present himself as a 'promising' history painter of subjects compatible with the discipline. Think of Gros, 'the painter of the Bourbons'—after having been the historiographer of the Emperor—to whom Delacroix owed his first official exhibition, and who would offer to bring him into his studio to prepare him for the prix de Rome (Delacroix refuses); or of Gérard, whose 'courtly eclecticism' was mocked by Baudelaire: these barons believed that they espied something of themselves in the nascent oeuvre of the painter, and recognised in his impulsiveness the teaching of the Venetians and the Flemish painters; and of Rubens, above all (whom they idealised, without breaking, for all that, with the classical tradition of form), to the rhythm of the curves of whose Nereids Delacroix 'cut loose' (*Nereid*, Copy after Rubens [around 1822]).

And indeed, *Dante and Virgil in Hell*, painted in a single bound for the 1822 Salon before he had even completed the official curriculum, this 'stroke of luck [that he] tried out', adopting the strategy of public exhibition, and to which he owes the recognition of his name, eulogistically compared by Gros

with 'a subdued Rubens',[24] still participates in certain of the School's plastic and literary exigencies. Seen through the romantic prism of the Dantéesque *Hell*, antique beauty (evoked by the name of Virgil) is placed in the service of an execution entirely in relief, and whose virtuosity, together with the uneven light in which the whole painting is bathed, guarantees the 'pieces' of painting sufficient favour to gain the respect of an influential part of the jury, who show the painting in the Salon Carré of the Louvre.[25] Bought immediately by the state for the newly created Museum du Luxembourg, the painting reveals on first glance that its rather classical composition, with its pyramidal mass structured around the two central figures, is already, in the absence of any clearly defined linear perspective, not so much architectural and geometrical as expressionist and rhythmic. 'A true signal of revolution'[26] set off by the play of very apparent materials in which a visible, sometimes broken touch departs from the smooth, glossy, *polished* aspect of neoclassical paintings. The wave of the image accentuates yet further the undulating movement that progressively takes hold of the whole painting, beginning with the frightful dance of the bodies flung into the waves.[27] Pushed to the very limits of the monstrous, the miserable souls wear like stigmata drops of water rendered in a brilliant white, with the half-tint expressed in a green, the reflection with a yellow stroke, and the shadows cast in red—as the young Delacroix discovered his technique as a colourist by understanding 'the importance of reflections in animating colours' and by profoundly reinterpreting Rubens's technique in the direction of a first flamboyant utilisation of complementary colours.[28] (A dramatic canto of greens complementary to the 'Phrygian' red of Dante's hood and the red glow of the burning city.) Accentuated by the close-up effect and the feeling of instability produced by the structure of the painting, this experimentation with colour takes on the status of a manifesto, short-circuiting all codification of the various 'elements' of painting (composition, drawing, touch, colour . . .). 'The style of this painting', as Charles Paul Landon writes, is decidedly 'foreign to the productions of our school'.

In this Antiquity *blackened* under the funerary sign of the *Aeneid*, with Dante now electrified,[29] 'light and colours are no longer used to define form, they come together to create an incantatory chant, in which the oppressive sadness of the cold grey and blue tones is torn by the painful cry of the reds, just as the heavy, livid mist shutting off the space beyond is rent by the ruddy glow from the infernal city in flames'.[30] That this infernal colourist choir representing 'the paroxysm of the living even in the land of the dead',[31] testing the limits of the art of painting in its 'most material' aspect, could have been denounced by two former students of David is only to be expected;[32] but the fact that the spirit and the style of their attacks should inaugurate a discourse which, *from Delacroix onward*, will accompany the entire history of painting, is far more remarkable.

Here is Landon:

> Seen from far enough away that the brushwork is not at all apparent, this painting, whose colour is a little on the grey side, nevertheless produces a remarkable effect. It owes this to the character of the composition, which displays nerve and originality. Seen from close up, its brushwork is so rough, so incoherent, that, as free of timidity as it may be, one can hardly credit, given the point to which the talent for execution has developed in our school, that any artist could have adopted such a singular way of working, one found, at most, only in certain tempera paintings.

And here is Delécluze, faithful follower of Quatremère de Quincy and spokesman of the Davidian disciplines, from whom we shall select only one remark: 'This painting is no painting; it is, as we say in the studio, a real *tartouillade*'.[33]

In the following Salon, that of 1824, the *Scenes from the Massacres of Chios* will meet with a *succès de scandale* that is faithfully summed up in the words of Gros, horrified to discover the influence of his masterpiece *The Plague of Jaffa* in what immediately appears to be a 'system of ugliness'[34] designed by a 'barbarous painter'[35]—words according to which, as far as massacres are concerned, here it was above all a matter of a 'massacre of painting'. The traitor would not hesitate to recognise his debt, adding: 'I have muddied Gros's palette, but we must not say so'.[36] This being said, in order to understand the revulsion of one who had been his most prominent supporter, we cannot stop, with Dumas, at a characterisation of the Baron as 'a blazing fire extinguished in a puddle'. Nor does the horror of the subject and its 'modernity' (as the catalogue of the Salon indicates: 'see the newspaper reports of the time') suffice to explain the *casus belli* that Delacroix had become, having been elevated to leader of a school at twenty-five years of age—'leader of the modern school', as Baudelaire emphasises—only to burn his bridges upon entering into a 'new earth'.[37]

The *massacre of painting*, then, whose initial effects show themselves when so little of the slaughter itself is shown (the foremost plane is *empty*).

And so it is that one critic—more than one, all, or almost all—saw 'painting' as the true subject of the *Massacres of Chios*,[38] the occasion for which was furnished by the war of independence of the Greeks against the Turks that broke out in 1821, and the massacre of the population of the island of Chios by an expeditionary Ottoman corps (April 1822), which would elicit profound unease ('devastation, massacres, conflagrations . . .').[39] A painting in which a 'corpse of a sky' vies with a 'leprous terrain' over the 'pestiferous pallor' suffusing the flanks of dead bodies,[40] in such violent hostility to the antiquarian tradition of Winckelmann-Mengs-David-Ingres that we must

see the *Massacre of Chios* as a *Massacre of the Greeks* executed by a painter whose aesthetic commitment falls on the side of the Turks and of the Orient. (This is at odds with his political engagement: Delacroix is a 'liberal'.) A massacre of imitation, a massacre of the *false* Greeks, as Charles Blanc says; but a massacre of the Greeks *all the same* if painting, decked out in all the marvels of colour, 'is essentially a modern art'[41] that must not be dependent upon the profile of the *eidos*, the grace of the outline, the 'sculptor's drawing',[42] and upon the statuary that the Davidian painter introduced even into his documentary usage of colours in 'those theatrical heroes who seem to be all costume'.[43] The assemblage of these components, as Delacroix explains, does not make a painting: 'Isolated portraits, however perfect, cannot form a painting'.[44] In its supposedly organic composition, in the guise of a serenity of line, this theatrical painting, this *mute poetry* (for it is a poetry without *inspiration*) proposes an abstract art of life that it fixes on the canvas, starting out by killing it (an entomologist's art, according to Eugène Véron), by cutting it off from sensibility, from the logic of the senses that alone could furnish the basis of a freedom whose inimitable rigour must be invented by painting, as an art where *ground carries away form* [*le fond emporte la forme*][45] in favour of the expression of 'the superior truth of life'.[46] Here, we are far from the Greece of the neoclassicists: form no longer involves an outline that will be filled out with colours drawn from a neutral and cold spectrum that never strays too far from grey. Far from this mythical Greece whose utter falsity had been revealed by the Parthenon reliefs (1815), the life of forms *fuses* [*se fond*] with the expressions of colour, a colour relative to the oppositions of tones and the contrasts of forces that it brings to bear: a moving, modulating, rhythmic, and caloric colour, rather than a form cut out by the yardstick of the Idea, an invariable Ideal-type frozen in its statuesque whiteness.

In which case 'What is Delacroix?', as the Baudelairean formula has it, if not the man of the Massacre, of the *Massacres of Chios*? And where is he, if not *in* that hardened soldier on prancing horseback who takes the denuded captive, moving 'like a serpent in the hand of a pythoness' (according to the expression forged by Delacroix for himself), announcing the putting to death of the Odalisque in *Sardanapalus*? Delacroix, Delacroix-Thought, cannot be set in motion without the triumph of this sumptuous Turk who restrains his rearing mount, holding in suspense an action that constitutes the sole apparent movement, the unique *incident-peripeteia* (the knight drawing his sabre) of a painting in which all the other figures (who hardly even exist any longer) are arrested, deposed, atonal, lacking any narrative relation to one other, dying, and dead.[47] Like the 'acrid foam of a magnificent wave' rising from the indifferent splendour of the Oriental who, with his silent force—the absolute opposite of the sickly humanity of Bonaparte visiting the plague-stricken in

Jaffa as a healer of scrofula—appropriates to himself something of the 'calm grandeur' and the Winckelmannian 'noble simplicity' of the neoclassicists (who Delacroix *recuperates*, through the Germany of Madame de Staël,[48] by détourning David's Bonaparte 'calm on a fiery horse': *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*). The features and the posture of the Oriental will also introduce a curious play on Géricault and the two icons of the 'new school' that are *Officer of the Horseguard* and the *Head of an Oriental* (also called *Portrait of Mustapha*, Musée de Besançon): by giving us to see the Head of the Oriental (transposed by Delacroix) as the historical truth of the Hunter who turns towards us 'in thought', a man interiorised yet absent from himself (and from the world), in a kind of 'requiem for the Empire',[49] this Officer whose dreamily gloomy posture, addressed to a world in ruins (Hell is now among us) Delacroix reverses without losing any of its corrosive suspense. In this *afterwardsness*, which is not without resonance with a certain definition of the sublime ('a sort of tranquility tinged with terror'),[50] what is Delacroix, then, if not a Turk, 'the only living creature in this troupe of phantoms'[51] (these Greeks painted with the most lugubrious possible brushstrokes, and with whom one could not possibly identify: see the absolute ugliness of the old woman)?[52] And this for reasons that owe nothing to the exoticism of costume or to the Orientalism of a visual repertoire which Gros's brush, celebrating the Egypt campaign, repressing the very real massacre of the Turkish prisoners by the Napoleonic army, had introduced into the Academy, renewing an aesthetic tradition that was a product of the preceding century; for reasons which, quite inversely, stem from Delacroix's contempt for 'reasonable painting'[53] and his anti-Davidianism in principle, emphasised by the composition's discontinuous surface and the abrupt cuts of the frame. All of this means that the question of the romantic school—'Who will deliver us from the Greeks?'—will, after the *Massacres of Chios*, admit of only one possible response: Delacroix and the diurnal spectres of another massacre.

It is around David, scenographer of the severe Greco-Roman ideal, that the School had arranged the space of the painting as a theatrical scene of architectural dimensions, a scene whose ground it had enclosed the better to submit it to the cold plasticity of plaster figures. David imposed the precision of statuary and the antiquising dramaturgy of postures upon pictorial art. Contradicting the Greek freedom which Winckelmann himself had had to acknowledge in his historical project, and knowing nothing of the Cecrops, which, to the most official Quatremère de Quincy, seems a 'model made flesh', painting will from this point onward consist—as Delacroix will say in his article on Prudhon—in 'giving every isolated figure the appearance of a statue' (an 'art of the antiquary' which he opposes to the 'true spirit of antiquity'),[54] in *copying a plaster cast*. Painting becomes an ascetic exercise in academic idealism, aiming to achieve the blank precision of the immaculate subject in the smooth

intemporality of marble. To introduce into painting the precision of sculptural relief, by carrying out a decolouration with raw lighting that reduces the richness of the living to the contours of civic virtues alone (according to the model of the *exemplum virtutis*), to reduce it to the public instruction of a civilising whiteness and a regular *antique*—such is the exclusive perfection of David in this 'return to the pure Greek' (in the words of the painter), which the post-1800 antiquomaniacs, masters of the *chic* and the *poncif*, turn into genre scenes and into the bric-a-brac of an affected propmaster: the Empire style. Where 'there is no more interest in the head than in the drapery or the chair'.[55] And the rule of this 'sculptural painting',[56] not so much an imitation as a tracing from the antique 'with the piety of a man who kisses his father's old slippers?'[57] To command the artist, as Michel Thévoz writes in his *David*, 'not to impart life to marble, but to marblize life'.[58]

With no nerves or veins to interrupt its forms, the Beauty of the Ancients thus finds itself *devitalised* in a painting which, by presenting itself as 'the most generalized representation' of beings and things,[59] by consigning itself to frozen poses and to the characteristics of supposedly universal models 'in their Sunday best',[60] cannot fail to run aground on the 'desiccation, emaciation, and aridity' that are the inevitable lot of factitious idealisation. 'A strange system', continues the author of this anti-Davidian manifesto copied out at length in the *Journal*, 'which suppresses life through fear of its excess'. And then,

> No sooner had it fallen than we learned, almost without thinking about it, with no need for genius, and without Winckelmann, what was the true law, the first condition of this art that had been pursued for so long. It was quite simply life, life in its true measure, in perfect equilibrium with order and rule, but first of all life; so that every work of art from which life is absent, regardless of what its structure, form, and traits may be, is Greek only in name, and is not of the time of Greece—this we can say with utmost certainty.[61]

In these lines of Louis Vitet, Delacroix most certainly rediscovers that quasi-Dionysian aspect of Greek art celebrated by Rubens in his *De Imitatione Antiquarum Statuarum*, and rediscovered by Roger de Piles in his struggle against those who, 'instead of imitating flesh [. . .] only represent marble tinged with various colours'.[62]

But Delacroix had to encounter this 'sentiment of life' that inhabits antiquity, along with 'the considered fullness of forms',[63] in vivo, on the Orient, during his voyage to Morocco: 'Imagine, my friend', he writes from Tangiers, 'what it is like to see lying in the sun, walking in the streets, mending old shoes, consular characters, Catons, Brutuses, lacking not even the disdainful air that those masters of the world must have had [. . .]. There is nothing more

beautiful in antiquity'.[64] Here we can take the full measure of the distance between this living antiquity and the antique coldness of David's painting:

> His complete subjection to the posed model is one of the causes of this coldness, but it would be more reasonable to think that the coldness lay in his own nature. It was impossible for him to discover anything beyond what was offered to him through the imperfect medium of the little piece of nature before his eyes, and he seems to have been satisfied when he had imitated it well. His audacity consisted wholly in placing beside it fragments cast from the Antique, such as a foot, or a leg, and in bringing his living model as near as possible to the ready-made ideal of beauty presented by the plaster cast.[65]

If beauty is not to be obtained through a 'set of recipes' founded on the statutory purity of the outline, if there is no readymade beauty, provided by the model who 'draws all to him' and leaves nothing to the painter,[66] but only beauty *in the making*, a beauty that 'exits the womb with sorrow and wrenching, like everything that is destined to live';[67] if, 'even when we look at nature, our imagination constructs the picture',[68] so that 'without daring, without extreme daring even, there is no beauty';[69] if the Beautiful thus becomes, through imagination and through this extreme daring, the index of the *new*, of 'newness' in so far as it is—as Delacroix emphasises in his marginal notes on the development of the *Massacres*—'in the mind of the artist who creates, and not in the object he portrays', because it is nature itself that 'has stored up in great imaginations yet to come more new things to say about her creations than she has created objects for their enjoyment'[70]—then from this Romanticism under a Dantéesque and Goethean influence[71] is *unleashed* a world whose first breath can be detected in a reflection inspired in him by the *Massacres of Chios*. It is mapped out on a page where the painter discovers that he is Serpent, Python: 'My picture is beginning to develop a torsion, a powerful spiral momentum. I must bring *it* to completion'.[72]

Bring *it* to completion?

Let's continue: 'To do *it* I need to keep this proper black, this felicitous dirtiness, and these limbs that I know so well'.

This 'torsion' is born of bodies inhabited by a violence that undoes them, de-forms them from within, like plague victims haunted by an intimate blackness: the *Plague Victims of Chios*, as Baudelaire writes.[73] It breaks up the formal unity of the picture by contaminating with 'this felicitous dirtiness' the hierarchy of the actors in the drama that their arrangement in the foreground, as if on a theatre stage, cut into two powerful architectural masses, would classically demand. Which only serves to emphasise once again, in comparison to the preparatory watercolour, the opening up of the ground (closed down by David) that frees the gaze from the perspective grid structured by

a logical point locally distributing tonal values according to the modelling of forms and the sections of outlines ('the *French defect* of using *line everywhere*').[74] For the closed space of representation can only be replaced by a new space 'with neither limit nor centre' if it is opened through and in colour, colour being that which dissolves the architecture of forms and the determinations of local tone, the finish of the subject, into air and light. A space where colour 'is nothing unless [. . .] it increases the effect of the picture through the power of the imagination'.[75] Considering that, without this augmentation whose principle lies in variations of intensity, without this intensification by colour analysed in all its molecular complexity (which Delacroix, according to the anecdote, right up until the moment of hanging, and under Constable's influence,[76] continued to seek, with broken and 'carpetlike' brushwork inspired by Oriental dress), there can be no escape from Guérin's studio, from the chromatic reform of classical ideals, from the plane section that isolates outlines (present right up to Géricault, in this respect 'closer to David [. . .] than to Delacroix', as Schneider notes).[77] And that without it one cannot make one's own the 'unity that results from some creative power whose source is undefinable'.[78] But its immediate effect is to permit a response to the injunction noted on this same day, May 7, 1824: 'That all this should hold!', producing an effect of general palpitation, unleashing a luminous vibration 'independent of any subject and any imitation',[79] which is none other than the vibratory unity of the world and the molecular constitution of all things. In its violent pictorial expressionism, Delacroix's painting, in doing so, abolishes the correct distance of classical representation: it demands to be seen both *too closely* (as the Davidian critique had anticipated) *and from too far away*, as Baudelaire will say, 'if one is to understand either its subject or its lines'.

Of the thirteen works exhibited by the painter at the 1827–1828 Salon, we shall pause only, for a moment, over the *Still Life with Lobsters*: to indicate the pedagogical and as if hyperbolic function of this unlikely hunting scene, where the crustaceans accentuate the colour contrasts of the foreground by making the reds and greens of the pheasant resonate with the tartan patterns of the plaid—a scene situated in a landscape inspired by Constable, populated by a few hunters in red habit as if plucked from the most vibrant of plumages, heightening the 'ochre, yellow, beige, green and blue streaks' that compose the space of this *still life*. Alongside paintings as important as *Christ in the Olive Garden*,[80] *Faust in his Study*, the highly plastic and lunar *Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi* (an homage to Byron, who had died two years earlier with the Greek insurgents), and the dazzling liquid craftsmanship (echoing 'English' chromatism) of the 'gothic' *Doge Marino Faliero* (double scandal),[81] the *Still Life with Lobsters* would be totally eclipsed by the scene considered as the most provocative work ever painted in this 'draughtsman's century', a picture that the painter himself would define as an 'Asiatic feat

against the Spartan pastiches of David'—that is, to cite it once again, '*Massacre no. 2*': *The Death of Sardanapalus*. 'I became'—as he will confide in 1854—'*the abomination of painting*'. Which makes some sense from the point of view of a *rhyparography* (or 'painting of the sordid')[82] that attacks the historical genre by professing a view as illegitimate as the following: 'The most beautiful pictures that I have seen are certain Persian carpets' (to Maxime du Camp).[83]

The subject of this 'gigantic painting' (395 × 495 cm)—in Dumas's words—originated in Byron's play *Sardanapalus*, dedicated to Goethe and published in 1821 along with *The Two Foscari* and *Marino Faliero*, which would also inspire Delacroix. In *Sardanapalus* the painter stages the suicide of the last Assyrian king with his mistress, the Greek Myrrha of Miletus, in the manner of a mortuary orgy that drags women, slaves, horses, jewellery, precious vessels and gold in the wake of the self-worship of a cold star. . . . The reader of Byron and of that 'already frigid' libertine Barbey d'Aurevilly, nicknamed 'Sardanapale-Barbey' by his friends and author of a treatise *On Dandyism*, will doubtless recall lines of Baudelaire which evoke in their turn 'a mysterious institution, no less peculiar than the duel: it is of great antiquity, Caesar, Catiline and Alcibiades providing us with dazzling examples', 'the last spark of heroism amid decadence' the 'distinguishing characteristic' of whose 'beauty consists above all in air of coldness which comes from an unshakeable determination not to be moved; you might call it a latent fire which hints at itself'.[84] In *Sardanapalus*, what Delacroix paints is the *manners* of this latent fire. Which he can only do by setting fire to the colours—in so doing confirming (the massacre of painting) and invalidating (the painting of massacre no. 2) Barbey d'Aurevilly's observation, 'Manners are the fusion of the movements of the mind and body, and one does not paint movements'.[85]

As for this movement, which is at the same time the radical deformation of the virtuous image of the deathbed (the *exemplum virtutis* of David's *The Death of Socrates* [1787])[86] and its transformation into a bed of colour (a Delacrucian expression), here is its libretto:

> Death of Sardanapalus. The rebels besieged him in his palace. [. . .] Lying on a superb bed, atop an immense pyre, Sardanapalus orders his eunuchs and palace officers to slit the throats of his women, his pages, and even his horses and favourite dogs; none of the objects that served his pleasure should survive him. [. . .] Aisheh, a Bactrian woman, couldn't bear that a slave should kill her and hung herself from the columns supporting the vault. [. . .] Baleah, Sardanapalus's cupbearer, finally set fire to the pyre and threw himself in.[87]

From the upper corner occupied by the Impassible, draped in a white robe amid a hotbed of depravity, dominating the scene of the massacre with a

gaze of ‘divine’ (Baudelaire) insensibility—‘like a spider at the heart of the threads she has stretched out, in which her victims are struggling convulsively’[88]—the painting, saturated down to its tiniest crevices, is structured by a great sustained swirling red diagonal, sweeping along in its violent path the indescribable scramble of bodies, to the extent that the whole scene seems to topple outward. ‘On what ground is the scene secured?’ the columnist of the *Moniteur* will ask, deploring the absence of any firm base, which contributes to the confusion of planes, the unintelligible amassing of objects, thereby echoing the general sentiment, as expressed by the inevitable Delécluze: ‘The intelligence of the viewer could not penetrate into a subject all of whose elements are isolated, where the eye cannot extricate itself from the tangle of lines and colours, where the primary rules of art seem to have been violated as a matter of principle’.[89] Starting with the criterion of unity of composition: here, the composition is cut into on all four sides, so that ‘everywhere the sense is interrupted by the frame’,[90] further accentuating the want of similitude in the juxtaposition of the groups of characters, all of whose figures, as we know from the memoirs of the perspectivist Thénot whose help Delacroix had sought, ‘had been drawn from the same place and from the same height, without his being concerned with the horizon in the picture nor in nature’. With the result, as Thénot emphasises, that ‘we see the top of the head when we should see the underside of the chin, and so on for all the other parts of these figures’.[91] One could not better express the effect of contrast between the ‘literary’ inspiration of this painting—‘the Byron of painting’, says Charles Blanc of Delacroix, and not without reason—and the counterperspectival, counternarrative character of the ‘action’ that takes place therein, tightening and twisting in a kind of low-angle shot whose ‘vanishing point’ is provided by the distant gaze of Sardanapalus, fleeing the scene to be lost in the blackness of the fumes of the blaze, heavy acrid coils that will suffocate all. . . . But this all, straight out of the night of a fabulous Orient whose entire firepower Delacroix seems to have amassed in one, ‘all the spells with which it is enchanted’, this nervous chaos, this undivided throng, this baroque multitude evoking an enormous horn of plenty draining towards a fictive depth, from whence did it spring forth if not from Sardanapalus’s waking dream[92] and from the sardanapalesque projection of the painter who places himself in the scene as such, right there, with no *trompe-l’oeil* (unless that of sheer phantasm) in the global, *all-over* effect of these modulated forms, tortured into the most sumptuous incoherence by painted colour? (A colour that was enhanced by the juxtaposition of the impasto of the pictorial matter with almost transparent glazes that lead one to guess at the tempera sketch painted on the picture itself: ‘as if the dynamics of oil were at work in watercolour’, Gautier will write, further insisting on ‘the magical whole’ thus produced.[93] This cannot fail to remind us of the facture of the English painters,

which Delacroix has in mind when buying his colours: 'more liquid than the standard colours'[94] so that the execution, 'getting the utmost effect from the particular qualities offered by the material means employed',[95] participates in the organisational modulation of the *overall* canvas.) But this 'tumultuous treasure of jewels and human flowers', from what blaze does it emanate if not from the 'caloric' violence of the contrasts between reds and blacks, detached from the phenomenal visible by 'the incredible force of the imagination', by those things with which 'our brains are prepared in advance',[96] by the *truth of a hallucination*[97] wherein all matter is animated and enflamed by the red/black 'thermic' pulsation which the golds and the fleshtones promise, only to dispatch it back to the blackness from whence it came?

Would we also be hallucinating, if we were to ascribe to he who will remain for the post-romantic generation the author of *Sardanapalus* a vocabulary whose intricacies will only be explored later on, in full contemporaneity with the official birth of modern art, curiously said to coincide with Delacroix's death (1863, the year of *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*)? Here we will recall Esquirol, since it is on the basis of his proposed localisation of hallucination, which separates it from the *illusions of sense*, that 'hallucination'—word and concept alike—come to 'occupy the foreground of the scene':[98] 'In hallucinations everything occurs in the brain' (adding specifically, 'the activity of the brain is so energetic, that the visionary or the hallucinatory gives body and actuality to images that the memory reproduces, without the intervention of the senses').[99] Then arises the question that this inevitably opens up, one that was tirelessly reprised during the 1840s, after the Académie de Médecine had proposed 'hallucination' as the subject of an essay competition: *Can hallucination coexist with reason, or is it a sure sign of madness?*[100] Brierre de Boismont's response, in a work published in 1845 and widely read (including by Baudelaire), is still celebrated: 'If all hallucinations were to be regarded as the products of the delirious imagination, then holy books would be nothing but an error'.[101] Basing his views upon what would soon, in its visual instances, be called quite simply *artistic hallucination*, but more generally upon the 'imperious need the mind has to conceive its ideal in visible forms and to endow it with immortal life only on this condition', Brierre de Boismont is led to develop the idea of a 'physiological hallucination' distinguished by its difference in intensity from ordinary 'mental representation'. In other words, as he affirms, drawing on Taine's article on Balzac, '*intensity of hallucination* is the unique source of the truth' of the artist's *vision*.[102] With Delacroix so steeped in all the debates of his time, which engage and nourish his work, his art participates in this movement. Apart from the presence in the *Journal* of the 'brain', which marks the new alliance of nervous imagination with a reason 'that must be present in all our deviations'[103] (a reason 'embellished by genius'),[104] we must refer to the unanimity of those 'art critics' closest to

Delacroix—and the best informed, thanks to his 'tremendous colloquys'—on a point that involves nothing more or less than a new aesthetic we have every right to qualify as *post-romantic*. (*Post-romantic* because the identification of the 'modern character of the arts' with 'the expression of melancholy and that which rightly or wrongly is called romanticism' is *behind us*: Beethoven;[105] but the surpassing of romanticism that Delacroix seeks is at the same time associated with the sublimating transformation of a large part of its heritage.) For all of them, in one voice, felt compelled to relate his 'brush, strange, magical, fascinating, [producing] on artists an effect unknown before him: [. . .] the vertigo of colour',[106] 'these mirages that dazzle us and whose magic is produced by the play of colour',[107] to what Charles Blanc calls 'the prism of a thought [that] always interposes itself, in Delacroix, between reality and the viewer'.[108]

Although the Baudelairean resonance of these themes is incontestable, it is Théophile Gautier who the poet of *Les Fleurs du Mal* (dedicated to him) credits with having been the first to have subtracted art, *from within*—and *through Delacroix*—from romantic sentimentalism (from those whom the soldier of *Hernani* now denounces as 'lovers of delirium'). Baudelaire recognised that it is Gautier to whom we owe, along with the evocation of the 'dark hallucinations of the Apocalypse' engendered by Delacroix, the denunciation of the *ut pictura poesis* as an 'old folly',[109] as well as the insistence on the British way of painting and the love of painting in its materially sensible attributes. For, it is Gautier, 'the first to have spoken highly of this English school',[110] who describes Delacroix as *the first of the modern school*; Gautier again who opposes him to the naturalists because of the 'figures of this invisible population that moves within him', for 'his colour, before arriving at the eye at the end of his brush, has passed through his brain and has there taken on nuances which may at first seem bizarre, exaggerated or false'; and it is Gautier, finally, who celebrates Delacroix as the *mime of painting* whose easel paintings are 'sketches or rather dreams of pictures' that seek gesture and sacrifice outline to it, raked by a lion's claw 'rendering the fantastic more true than reality'.[111] Thus, we see that Baudelaire will have begun by making his own the programme of an art whose aim 'is not the exact reproduction of nature, but instead the creation, through the medium of the forms and colours that it delivers to us, of a microcosm wherein the dreams, sensations, and ideas that the aspect of the world inspires in us can emerge and live'.[112] A programme that was Goethean from the outset, and now tends towards hallucination,[113] one upon which Gautier imprints the 'ocular rhythm' of his sentences,[114] and which Baudelaire hitches to the intensity of a supernaturalism so as to express the superior force of the creator over creation, the superior force of the *creative imagination,* identified in all its intensity *with the intimacy of the brain*, with the 'divine orders of the brain' that command the servile profession of

the hand,[115] projecting with this 'quasi-musical' painting, 'like sorcerors and magnetizers, [. . .] his thought at a distance'. Think of the 'strange existence like the reality of dream'—a verse borrowed by Baudelaire from Théophile's *Compensation*—like the truth of an intimate vision, of a contemplation-possession, of a *hallucination* in which is reflected the life of this colour that '*thinks for itself*, independently of the objects which it clothes'.[116] This complicated movement of Baudelairean turns 'through the type of rambling and the incomprehensible that mixed itself with his conceptions' (which are not those of Delacroix's mind)[117] will be abruptly summed up in a formula in the 'Salon of 1859', which decisively distances from dream that which is entirely spontaneous:[118] '*The imagination is the queen of truth*'. This means that, since it created the world, the imagination rules it (creative imagination); that 'a good picture, faithful and equal to the dream that gave birth to it, must be produced as a world' (constructive imagination—a bad one being the sure sign of 'the absence of construction'); that Delacroix, the first incontestable painter of the world-picture—of the 'world-aspect' of the picture (anticipating the declaration of 1845: 'M. Delacroix is decidedly the most original painter of ancient or of modern times')[119] is 'the representative of the new painting' (in Gautier's words)—that is to say, the painter of the new, in virtue of an intensive conception of painting capable of expressing 'the intimacy of the brain' (Eugene Delacroix's *speciality*); and that the world-picture surpasses the categories of subject and object since it is not content to 'form a world within the world, a creation within creation'[120] but posits '*the infinite within the finite*' as Dream—and, as Baudelaire specifies, 'by this word I do not mean those riotous Bedlams of the night, but rather the vision that comes from intense meditation, or, with minds less naturally fertile, from artificial stimulants'.[121]

Vision will be the very ancient and very modern word in which will be condensed the threefold question of the 'Salon of 1846', when Baudelaire reinstates to romanticism the metaphysical imagination of its origins so as to relaunch it like an arrow, transformed, into the present age: I. *What is Romanticism*? (Against its principal sectarians: since 'to call oneself romantic and to systematically gaze at the past, is to contradict oneself', to see oneself as a romantic *means to see in the present, affirming the necessity of modern art*). II. *What is colour?* (If the molecular revolution of colour allows us to discover in the supposed unity of form a multiplicity of relations of force, then *to see is to make use of the magnifying glass to make oneself a colourist eye*). III. *What is Delacroix? Far from all delirium, Delacroix is the visionary required by the work of the true hallucination of colour* (as 'a harmony of blood flares up on the horizon, and green turns richly crimson': 'red sings the glory of green!').[122]

This 'festival for the eyes' of the world-picture from which reason cannot be absent in so far as this reason *has an ear* and is thus not the most evenly

distributed thing in the world among those with 'dull and false eyes' which 'see objects literally', these nuptials of the eye and reason upon which, in 1863, the *Journal* concludes,[123] Baudelaire had invested them, and Baudelaire will thus very truly have hallucinated them, as 'veritable *festivals of the brain* when the senses are keener and sensations more ringing, when the firmament of a more transparent blue plunges headlong into an abyss more infinite, when sounds chime like music, when colours speak, and scents tell of whole worlds of ideas'.[124]

And so, as the poet concludes, Delacroix's painting seems to him to be clothed in that 'intensity, and its splendour is privileged. Like nature perceived through ultra-sensitive nerves, it reveals supernaturalism'.

And then the verse of *The Beacons* (*Les Phares*), reminiscent of *Dante*:

Delacroix, lake of blood, the evil angels' haunts
Shaded within a wood of fir-trees always green;
Under a gloomy sky, strange fanfares pass away
And disappear, like one of Weber's smothered sighs.[125]

These festivals of the brain that project all creatures touched by the painting into 'strange fanfares'[126] of tones nervously linked to them by 'ultra-sensible' threads, this hallucinatory texture that takes every form in the stellations of an encephalon so that 'the viewer's imagination makes the picture that he sees',[127] finds an unexpected relay in the encounter with those fabrics whose inexhaustible richness Delacroix discovers on the occasion of his trip to Spain, Morocco, and Algeria in the first six months of 1832.[128] What he then notices—in this year which is that of Goethe's death and of Édouard Manet's birth—through writing, drawing, and watercolour, and through what he paints afterwards, in the work of remembering, in ideally concentrating the experience, 'as if beyond the subject itself',[129] about the dazzling effect of a light that only ever allows to subsist coloured patches, relayed by those cloths of the Orient that weave their motley accords and which, extending the life that penetrates into the irregularity of their folds, is so far from belonging to the category of Orientalist 'fantasy' (or embroideries on the colonialist 'text') that it has instead been spoken of in terms of 'the agitation of a hallucinated soul', 'the implacable, nomadic spirit'[130] that draws the eye to its ruin in the weft of drapery and carpets by immersing the world in movement and colour. Élie Faure will thus say of Delacroix that 'he had order in his brain' that obeyed 'a continuous rhythmic leaping'. So that the least of objects, in being painted, is unravelled, set in motion, 'its lines waver and the core of expression bursts forth alone, brilliant, hallucinatory'.[131]

Such is the bewitching figuration of *Women of Algiers (In Their Apartment)* (shown at the 1834 Salon), whose decorative indefinition makes us

wander from accord to accord, all the way to the extreme right of the canvas where the lines of Arabic writing begin to pulsate, responding rhythmically to the vegetative motifs of the large curtain.

('Think about Arabic', Delacroix had written in his dream of Egypt, when he promised himself to 'live materially'.[132] A proposition that is, to say the least, excessive in relation to the pictorial Orientalism that cannot help but 'think textually' a picturesque informed by French imperialism.)[133]

Everything in this painting undulates, and the whole of the large canvas (180 × 229 cm) behaves like a flowing matter enveloping in a general tonality the colour harmonies belonging to each of the four figures posted along practically one and the same continuous line, heightened by the black servant standing on the right. Even the section of wall on the left is set in motion by the shimmering of the tiles rendered unsteady by their Persian geometry, while on the floor, the flagstones are shattered and pitch under the weight of the cushions and carpets, bathed by a soft penumbra just perfect for hallucination, for the enchantment of the shisha held by the woman on the right, her eyes half-shut under the gentle warmth of the hashish. Observe now the fabric of the translucid blouse worn by the woman slightly off-centre in the painting. It is run through by hesitant brushwork of undecidable status: powdery, barely visible lines of silvery blue that we perceive in the same way as these volatile motifs that disappear without our ever truly having been able to be assure ourselves of their existence. A virtual shimmering whose entirely optical mixture belongs more to our eye and our brain than to the painting properly speaking, which seems to be sucked in by the background shadow emphasised yet further by the reflections of the inclined mirror, with its one single white patch on black. Between the character who evades her central position—for there is, in truth, no longer any principal figure other than the dominant colour—and the woman nonchalantly leaning on a deep cushion, our gaze wanders over diverse accessories enveloped in a halo proper to those dark rooms draped in fabrics billowing in the breeze within which the harem is installed—as Cézanne felt, faced with the *Women of Algiers*, when he declared to Gasquet: 'We are all there in this Delacroix'—'The tones enter one into another, like silks [. . . .] Everything is sewn, woven together. And that's why it works': between cold tones (green, blue and grey) and warm tones (oranges, reds and browns). With 'a fever, which is lacking in the old masters',[134] in its iridescent texture of flesh and jewellery, in its vibrant contrasts of powder and satin, *Women of Algiers* 'dissolves the subject into an ambiguous reverie',[135] complicit with the internal exile of the cloistered women who disorient ('western') representation and mobilise all the forces of painting in its reaction to an unknown Orient. So that the harem becomes *haram* (meaning 'sacred') in the troubledness of the at-once transfixed and prohibited gaze of the Stranger-Painter who forgets and makes us forget the

('Orientalist') convention of his ('voyeuristic') motifs by setting in movement (an overall movement, a modulation, a continuous vibration) the very fabric of the canvas (an Oriental carpet transposed into the defenestrated space of the painting). Gustave Planche, in his Salon of 1834:

> This canvas is, in my view, M. Delacroix's most dazzling triumph to date. To deal with painting reduced to its own resources alone, without the help of a subject who is interpreted in a thousand ways and too often distracts the eye of superficial spectators so as to occupy only their thought, which will appraise the painting according to their dreams or conjectures, is a difficult task, one in which M. Delacroix has succeeded.[136]

It remains only to bring in Baudelaire, in this passage aptly cited by Chesneau in relation to these same *Women*, so as to re-establish the iridescent conception proper to the strange painting: 'Just as a dream inhabits its own proper atmosphere, so a conception which has become a composition needs to move within a coloured milieu that is peculiar to itself'.[137]

René Huyghe relates this passage to the second, smaller (85 × 112 cm) version of the canvas (*Women of Algiers In Their Apartment* [1847–1849]) shown at the 1849 Salon, which heightens further the rupture with the light in which the viewer bathes, outside of the painting, by accentuating the oneiric darkness that surrounds and envelops the scene, 'the dense nucleus of a nebula', stripped of the picturesque appearance of the apartment: 'The whole scene appears distanced, withdrawn into a different and precarious world, one that may at any moment withdraw into itself and escape us'.[138] From the inside—but then it is also painting, painting with less audaciously colourist facture, that withdraws into the cloistered shadows of the *Women of Algiers*.

It should come as no surprise that the celebration of 'painting reduced to its own resources' in the interweaving of tones, by designating the site of a greater complexity of the painter's palette and of a virtualisation of colour blended with all the 'means of coloration [. . .] pushed to a maximum of splendour and intensity' (Charles Blanc) would soon come into contact with Chevreul's experimental aesthetics. A coincidence of dates: having presented his *Memoir on Simultaneous Contrast* in 1828, Chevreul's 1834 course at the Gobelins tapestry factory would be published over three issues of the *Magazine pittoresque* during the same year, the very year of *Women of Algiers*. It advocates the study of skeins of wool to better appreciate the effects of colour contrast.

According to a longstanding critical tradition inaugurated by Charles Blanc and reprised by Paul Signac in his manifesto-book *From Eugène*

Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism (1899), a tradition that developed precisely in relation to this practice of painting (by excessively systematizing it),[139] the new 'French' take on the law of simultaneous contrasts would translate into the privileging of a hybrid, heightened form of painting using broken tones, which Delacroix incarnates in his use of the *linkages* [*liaisons*] produced between objects 'by the air that envelopes them and through all sorts of reflections that make each object, in a certain sense, participate in a sort of general harmony'. What Blanc calls 'the modulation of colours', relating this 'oriental' principle to the French colourist,[140] depends upon the correct employment of *half-tints*, obtained through the optical mixing of complementary colours ('whence the green shadows in the red', as Delacroix concludes). To the detriment, then, of the essential principle of classical painting, namely 'local colour'—that is to say, the consistency of the 'natural' colour of each part of the object as isolated by the precise drawing of the model, to which black is added so as to produce shadows according to a subtle gradient of chiaroscuro that 'picks out' objects through relief alone. ('In colouring'—explains Jean-Baptiste Oudry—'one looks at two things: the local colour that is natural to each object, and chiaroscuro, which is the art of intelligently distributing light and shade': through the progressive addition of white and black to local colour.) Local tones, uniform colour, the flat tint of the object, will now be subject to what takes place *between* the primaries/secondaries: they multiply and oppose each other according to their influences and their contrasts, diluting, in their newfound intensity, the supposedly common tints. As far as the evaluation of colour is concerned, such a displacement of seeing leads to an investment in the *expressive forces* of this multitude of relations to the detriment of *descriptive terms*, which end up being ceaselessly modified and derealised—in an example which again involves Delacroix, yellow considered as a primary colour is associated with violet and becomes more intense. Thus, *more* yellow results, but also *more* violet, according to a pure virtuality that overdetermines the colours thus heightened, and which unfolds as their *resultant*. Just the opposite, then, of local tone qua vector of resemblance: anchored in the objective consistency of things, spliced into the structure of their essence, local tone preserves the classical certainties of form amid the play of colours, their placing-in-tension and the dynamic of their relations; it prohibits that colourist imagination that Goethe had explored in the *Farbenlehre* with the question of *coloured totalities* trans-formed by the contrasts between complementaries. Local tone functions as the introduction of a limit, a barrier that will fix for each colour its partition (*cloison*), its thingly place. Whence a painting in which the brushwork will avoid half-tints, except to indicate zones of light and shadow, holding in contempt that haziness to which Delacroix will devote himself, under the influence of Rubens, and which will lead him to grasp and deal with forms as colour

through and from the 'middles' (*par les milieux*), in exploring the capacities of half-tints—all the way to the 'flochetage' of the late work.[141] Thus, rather than beginning with drawing and the outline, Delacroix will modulate his figures starting from the *middle*, pushing colour to the extreme point of its possibilities, finding no limit, no line of separation between two tints except provisionally and hazily.[142] In this way, he will contradict the iconographic principle of a localisation of colour necessary to the project of a mimetically 'complete' painting. For how could one seek such completeness if it is on the basis of their (complementary) polarities that colours inform an interacting totality within a system (the chromatic circle) . . . ? Now, it is precisely this system that emerges from a 'sensorial strata anterior to the object'[143] that is affirmed immanently by the *suggestive* power of colours, between Goethe and Delacroix, as the new field of forces identified with intensity and with the autonomy of pictorial experience.[144]

Under the anti-classical sign of Goethe, the post-romantic sign of Delacroix, we are thus party to the birth of an aesthetic that decisively distances itself from the mysticism of colour and from the precept of the inner eye so dear to the romantic painters: an aesthetics that invests *the very phenomena of vision* (that is to say, as Roque emphasises, not that which the eye sees, but *how* it sees it)[145] *in so far as the latter forms a machine with the 'centre of the imagination' of the brain.*

That this aesthetics can lead to abstraction through the 'dynamogenic' consideration of relations and contrasts between colours become absolutely independent of objects, is incontestable as a matter of fact—as is no less the 'Spiritual Turn' of an Abstraction that takes up colour symbolism again so as to 'purify' the chromatic hallucinations of the past: Kandinsky.

2

Let's take up the thread we dropped all too abruptly above.

Associated with the name of Chevreul and with his major work entitled *The Law of Simultaneous Contrast of Colours*, published in 1839[146]—less than five years, that is, after Delacroix's experience of the fabrics that swathe the *Women of Algiers* with their hallucinatory charge—the textile question shifts onto a new plane, one more 'scientific' from the outset. Having been charged, as a renowned chemist at the Gobelins Manufactory, with resolving certain issues relating to dyeing, Michel-Eugène Chevreul discovers that the problem submitted to him, concerning the problem of the stability of certain colours (in particular, the blacks used for the shadows in blue and violet hangings), was in reality not of a chemical but rather of a *psychophysical* order. As he

summarises, 'I saw that the want of vigour alleged against the blacks was owing to the colours contiguous to them, and that the matter was involved in the phenomena of the *contrast of colours'*.[147] There is thus a purely virtual coloured/colouring 'manifold [*variété*]' whose *variations* remain inexplicable so long as we think in terms of local colours with consistent properties. As to the cause of these virtual phenomena, it is 'certainly at once both psychological and psychic':[148] it owes to the 'effect that would be produced upon the organ of vision by the juxtaposition of two given colours'. For 'no colour is perceived as it is really when it is found alongside another'.[149] In the first paragraph of his *Memoir On The Influence That Two Colours Can Have Upon Each Other When They Are Seen Simultaneously*, read at the Academy de Sciences in 1828, Chevreul gave his first formulation of the law: '*In the case when the eye sees at the same time two colours that touch, it sees them as being as dissimilar as possible*'. From this statement, which would be reprised almost verbatim in the seventh paragraph of the book, he draws the following conclusion: 'Two colours in juxtaposition, *o* and *p*, will differ from each other in the greatest possible degree when the complementary of *o* is added to *p* and the complementary of *p* is added to *o*'.[150] *And in the case of simultaneous contrast, each of the two contiguous colours adds its complementary to the other*.[151] In this case, the complementary of one being identical to the other, 'it will be seen that their colours acquire a most remarkable brilliance, vivacity, and purity'.[152] This vivacity is not inscribed within things. It is not realised in the flat matter of colour. It is not related to local tone, but to its delocalisation in a vision whose structure is essentially hallucinatory. The half-tint thus opened up between solid colours brings to light a virtual underpinning that textile printing exacerbates according to a life in the folds to which we shall soon return.

Furthermore, in the *Memoir* we read, yet more clearly: 'What my experiments demonstrate is how colours are embellished through their being brought together, reinforcing and purifying one another [. . .]. It is therefore because one is always sure of producing a pleasing effect by bringing together complementary colours [. . .] that I have prescribed their preferential assortment to any other for the distribution of the flowers of the garden, for the upholstery of furniture, uniforms, and liveries'.[153] Note that, although Chevreul still adopts 'the language of painters',[154] granting that the seeing of colour in itself produces an evident pleasure (above all when it is arranged harmoniously),[155] the aesthetic considerations he discusses *do not* concern painting. This is also the case in Chevreul's masterwork, with its example of wainscoting, which excludes all imitation from the outset:

> The eye has an undoubted pleasure in seeing colours, independently from the design and every other quality of the object which displays them. A suitable

> example to demonstrate this, is the wainscoting of an apartment in one or more flat tints which only attract the eyes and affect them more or less agreeably, as the colours are well or badly chosen.[156]

Is it because, faithful to the inherited ideal of classicism, Chevreul still considers pictorial works to be subservient to the academic model of the harmonious imitation of nature (the imitation of the model), that he does not imagine applying to them a technique designed for the decoration of fabrics—seeking thereby to hold in abeyance the plastic paroxysm that would be unleashed by applying the phantomatic fringe of fabrics to painting? Would this explain why he immediately recommends that the painter pursue 'harmonies of similar colours' in place of the 'contrasting harmonies' brought about by the juxtaposition of complementary colours?

Following Georges Roque's precious, indispensable analysis, it must be admitted that the recognition of complementary colours, far from leading to the suggestion that they should be used in painting so as to accentuate contrast, as was practised by the (neo-)impressionists on the basis of a total misinterpretation of Chevreul's actual theory, was meant, 'on the contrary, to permit one to anticipate the effects of contrast the better to be able to master them, that is to say most often to attenuate them'; since 'the phenomenon of contrast being produced in every way in nature, in seeking to reproduce it on a canvas or an tapestry, one risks exaggerating it'.[157] 'For a painter ignorant of the reciprocal influence of blue and red, convinced that he must represent what he sees, will add green to his blue, and orange to his red. [. . .] And then what will happen to him? *His imitation will not be able to be faithful*, it will be exaggerated, supposing, of course, firstly that the painter has perfectly grasped the modifications of the model, and then that, if he suspects his imitation of exaggeration, he does not rework it sufficiently to obtain an absolutely faithful effect. If he has arrived at this latter result, it is obvious that it will only be after more or less numerous attempts, since ultimately he will have to have effaced what he did at the beginning'.[158] This is why the painter who does not observe the law 'will reproduce, not an absolute copy of the model, but an overcharged version'.[159] Which would please only *those who know nothing about painting*.

In fact, as Chevreul explains, 'The eye is so powerfully influenced by colour, that frequently those who are strangers to painting can only conceive a colourist to be skilful whose tints are vivid, although his works may evince a want of observation'.[160] This is the whole meaning of the recommendation Chevreul makes to the painter: 'To imitate the model faithfully, we must copy it differently from how we see it',[161] avoiding introducing into the canvas broken tones, which, through their interference, would risk giving rise to virtual fringes, surplus to requirements in regard to what the eye perceives

directly in nature—an overcharged effect. Thus, for example, 'in imitating a rose, we can employ red shaded with a little yellow, and a little blue, or, in other terms, shaded with orange and violet; but the green shadows which we perceive in certain parts arise from the juxtaposition of red and normal grey'.[162] This first principle of painting otherwise than one sees brings with it a second, more general in its positivity: that '*we only know* THE CONCRETE THROUGH THE ABSTRACT';[163] or again: 'the *fact* is a precise *abstraction*'.[164] For the 'fact' is not given through a passive mechanism of reception but constructed as an abstraction whose proper logic necessitates that we acknowledge the cognitive autonomy of the visual system (the Brain-Eye) in regard to the 'model'. Here we are both very close to and very far from Goethe, since in Chevreul it is under the aesthetic rubric of a *structural mimetism* that the principle of local colour obedient to the principle of the constancy of the object's colour is called into question. This coincides with the refurbishment of the relativity of pictorial truth, and gives rise to the observation of the object's instability from the point of view of *true or absolute colour* defined as 'the faithful reproduction in painting of the *modifications* that light enables us to perceive in the objects taken for models'.[165] From which it follows that the painter 'must know, before anything else, how to *see* the modifications'.[166] To see them, to understand them so as to limit them carefully, and prevent them from proliferating and haunting the picture with a virtual dimension that would 'overcharge' it.

We can thus understand how 'the painter'—beginning with Delacroix—was able, inversely, to opt for accentuated contrast, for the overcharged effect and for the exaltation of complementaries, thereby rediscovering Goethe's intuition within his own practice *by painting the very phenomenon of vision* so as to maintain the hallucinating privilege of the brain-eye and of its 'coloring sensations', and to prevent it from being 'discharged' from its corporeal and creative function through the objective-scientific re-presentation of the law of the simultaneous contrast of colours: a law that aims definitively to limit the hallucinatory effects of contrast so as to 'abstract the disruptive factors of vision' (in Meyer Schapiro's words);[167] a law in which Chevreul, a chemist by education, sought to remain faithful to the physical principles of Newtonian optics. Which would give us again to understand why Chevreul's ideas were initially received most enthusiastically within the decorative and applied arts: free of any imitative function, these arts were able to abandon any concern with representation and to concentrate on the eccentric effects whose 'charge' referred to the system of the eye alone the contrasting combinatory of colours thus hallucinated, for the sheer pleasure of coquetry.[168]

As to the anecdote reported by Maxime du Camp according to which Delacroix used skeins of wool as a reference for producing 'extraordinary effects

of coloration' which could not but evoke an 'abstract colour',[169] it illustrates and reveals the decisive break made by the painter when he unexpectedly applies this decorative model within the pictorial field, thereby anticipating the technique of the weaving of colours in Scots tartan that van Gogh would explore in his painting.[170] The whole of the painting will be fabricated using the interweaving made possible by the use of colours that are intermediary and as if intermittent, setting Delacroix's oeuvre on the road to confrontational, organised dissonance. A painting, in this sense, designates the result of a struggle, a battle of uncertain outcome that pits two colours against each other in their reciprocal action, a battle in which the antipodes of colour penetrate each other, maintaining within this tension a 'delirial' charge attenuated by median, mediating colours. The painter thus brings to life a 'transitional' space wherein colours respond to each other without dialectically discharging this tense life, this *élan vital* between complementary polarities, containing the conflict within a 'completed' work.

This harmony pursued by the painter is decidedly not that of the eclecticism incarnated by Victor Cousin's philosophy under the influence of a neo-Christian Hegel;[171] and one will perhaps recall at this point Delacroix's savage polemic against Ravaisson's observations on the harmonics of the Beautiful during a conference at the Louvre that he attended.[172] When the painter, speaking of abnormal states of the soul, cites Maine de Biran,[173] very close to him in many ways, he does so because he recognises in de Biran's work the flexuous character of his own painted figures, something they share with even the most common of men, each of whom is 'a compound of *bizarre* and inexplicable contrasts, and this is what the writers of novels and plays will never understand'.[174] To Delacroix's mind, it is not a question of resolving differences within an eclectic syncretism such as is negotiated in the Concept, opportunistically understood as an infinite power of the neutralisation of opposites. Instead, Delacroix participates, in France, in the birth of a movement from which will emerge an investment in difference as real and living difference, in the form of the constitutive *differential* of colour grasped at the level of the 'cerebral sensations' it induces, an investment that Impressionism will heighten to the optical limits of 'the school of nature'—before the latter explodes into an almost informal expressionism: that of Vincent van Gogh, as he systematically explores the 'starry' dimension of broken tones (*Starry Night*, 1890) in an avowed fidelity to Delacroix's teaching in painting, which he projects beyond Impressionism.[175] The harmony in the order of colour that Delacroix thinks cannot be achieved without contrasts and other abrasive dissonances evoking unprecedented *turpitudes*[176] (hardly an 'impressionist' word) in relation to his forebears who sought harmony in the nuances of a chiaroscuro that ensured the homogeneous softening and buffering of the encounter of colours, leading 'to the equivalent of a monochrome painting',[177]

consigned to the grisaille of the ONE in accordance with the (neo)classical dogma of the unity of contrasts.

The academy of chiaroscuro puts into place between colours leaden graduations that establish unity, bringing about a dialectical reconciliation in which everything perishes in the absolute grisaille of differences that have become indifferent. For Delacroix, on the contrary, accord comes to express the differential relation of colours to one another; it runs through the gnarly agglomerations of broken tone in a clashing of green and red that gives birth to the work as a kind of *mongrel*.[178] Here, it is no longer a matter of saving the appearances at the price of their difference, through a muting of chiaroscuro that reduces the whole to a monochrome calm; or, inversely, through a relative negation of half-tints that rise towards white or fall into blackness. The transitional space of the picture no longer withdraws before *discord*; it affirms and seeks out disparity through the use of the folds in the fabrics buffeted by its discords, or more generally through the technique of modulation which crafts an apparent unity, a living, fragmentary unity that now makes colour vibrate in the same way an Oriental carpetmaker does. Delacroix thus drives painting to turn away from the 'monotony' that French culture had cultivated in philosophy, as introduced by the conciliatory spirit of Cousin under the authority of German reason, so close to the Davidian discipline in its call for a modern imitation of the Greeks.

Delacroix does not follow the Greek, nor the Roman—he never made the voyage to Italy (although he associates the latter with the 'purer sky' of Danté's homeland rather than with the antiquarian ideal of the prix de Rome and the Villa Medicis);[179] it is the Oriental that he brings back from his trip to Morocco, where the most vibratory colours confront one another without being resolved into the monochrome monotony of chiaroscuro. Thus Delacroix's painting is entirely one of *quivering* [*tressaillement*], of the braiding [*tressage*] of a complex surface. Oneness, unity, at that 'correct distance' from the picture that the Academy demands and theorises, becomes an error, a distant and illusory appearance, whereas difference is made truth.[180] This is a transvaluation of all the categories related to local tone that had dominated classical painting, the 'unity' of which will now rhyme with 'illusion', while the 'truth in painting' will be sought in the multiple and in becoming, in modulation, and in the manifold of half-tints. The true has sunk towards the halfway, towards the transitional and the middle [*milieu*], and the false is aligned with the one, the whole, and local tone. Unity is but an impression that is realised at a distance, an appearance which in reality is backed up by a quivering depth that is like the birth of a third colour between all the others, in the middle and in their milieu, a supplementary and indefinable tone, hallucinated rather than averred, 'which the eye perceives but which language cannot name with precision':[181] a 'mute charm',[182] as Delacroix says, which

is no longer a matter of the concept submitted to the logic of writing. It is the event of the encounter that rises up here with all its force in the interlacing of colours; an event that Charles Blanc, informed by Chevreul's 'mixed contrast', calls an *optical mixture*. That is, a mixture that takes place in the eye, in the immanence of its chromatic circle, and which inaugurates a virtual depth, a quasi-hallucinatory shimmering effect in painting. Knowing that hallucination, impression and expression, and mirage will now make truth [*vérité*] coincide with the manifold [*variété*], with the diverse colours of a cashmere shawl:

> If at a distance of some steps, we look at a cashmere shawl, we generally perceive tones that are not in the fabric, but which compose themselves within our eye through the effect of the reciprocal reactions of one tone upon another. Two colours in juxtaposition or superposed in such and such proportions will form a third colour that our eye will perceive at a distance, without the weaver or painter having *written* it.[183]

Note once more that it is under this same rubric that Chevreul announced the idea of a 'mixture by crosshatching', which consisted in intercalating the weave of differently coloured threads;[184] a hatching we find also in many of Delacroix's works, beginning with *Massacres of Chios* and *Death of Sardanapalus* (which one critic compared explicitly to a Persian carpet). The fact that the dates of these paintings preclude any direct relation to Chevreul's work makes this all the more intriguing: for Delacroix's celebrated phrase, 'The most beautiful pictures I have seen are certain Persian carpets', announces the pictorial conditions that will preside over Chevreul's conscription of the juxtaposition of complementaries into the colourist paradigm.

(A colourism of the play of complementaries that, as such, already belongs to an 'incomparable science of colour'. So that we might read either *with or without Chevreul* that 'colour, far from losing its cruel originality in this new and more complete science, is always bloody and terrible'. 'This weighting of green and red pleases our soul', concludes Baudelaire in 'Salon of 1845', in reference to *Last Words of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius*. Delacroix models, modulates, with colour: as he explains, 'If the light is red and the shadow green, it means discovering at the first attempt a harmony of red and green, one luminous, the other dark, which together produce the effect of a *turning*'.[185]

The involuntary artisan of this operation in regard to the history of art, Charles Blanc will not fail to relate the law of simultaneous contrast to 'a great lesson [which] we learnt in our time through a simple comparison. The violent contrast that the splendour of Oriental fabrics pose to the coldness and the crudity of the western palette should have been enough to make us

understand the laws of decoration, as far as the art of painting, tapestries, and carpets is concerned. For we learned then that the harmony of colours must be sought not by attenuating them, but by raising them to their highest power'.[186] Now, it is this very procedure that Delacroix had managed instinctively to master during his voyage to Morocco—well in advance of coming into possession of those 'mathematical laws' that Chevreul formulated 'scientifically and fundamentally'.[187] Thus, at the bottom of a page of a Moroccan notebook we find the following note, accompanying a chromatic triangle where the primary and secondary colours face each other, forming three complementary contrasts (red-green, blue-orange, yellow-purple):

> Of three primitive colours are formed three binaries.—If to the binary tone you add the primitive tone that is opposed to it, you annihilate it, that is to say you produce the necessary half-tone of it.—thus, to add black is not to add the half-tone; it is to muddy the tone, whose true half-tone is found in the opposite tone as we have said—whence the green shadows in red. The head of the two little peasants. The yellowish one had purple shadows; the more ruddy, redder one, green shadows.[188]

Starting with the three primary colours, the mixing of blue and yellow gives green, a secondary (or 'binary') colour. Adding red, which completes the play of primaries, leads to a grey effect ('annihilation') through the mixing of the dominant tone with its complementary. There is nothing very specific here—and nothing that specifically announces Chevreul's 'laws'. But the most interesting thing in Delacroix's reasoning is that the coloured shadows belong to the general phenomenon of simultaneous contrast, whereby colours engender each other mutually in the eye (hence the *changing* nature of these shadows);[189] and it is indeed in this way—as we can see, for example, between the scarlet flag and the dark emerald sky of *Christ on the Cross* (1846)—that red exerts a vertiginous attraction on green, producing a set of intermediary effects that stem from a purely optical mixture, of which juxtaposed half-tints designate the highest expression. Or better, as Delacroix himself sets it out:

> The more I think about colour, the more convinced I become that this *reflected half-tint* is the principle that must predominate, because it is this that gives the true tone, the tone that constitutes the value, the thing that matters in giving life and character to the object. Light, to which the schools teach us to attach equal importance and which they place on the canvas at the same time as the half-tint and shadow, is really only an accident. Without grasping this principle, one cannot understand true colour, I mean the colour that gives the feeling of thickness and depth and of that *radical difference* that distinguishes one object from another.[190]

What prevails is the virtual thickness, more hallucinated than sensed, that opens up a new depth between things, and which cannot be unrelated to 'the radical difference that distinguishes one object from another', irreducible once we assume the half-tints that bring to bear the three binaries (violet, green, orange) without which nothing can exist, composing them optically through separate brushstrokes of these same three colours. This proposition is set out in the 'Dieppe Notes' dating from 1854—on how 'the three mixed colours are found in everything'—a proposition that renders maximally legible/visible the 'massacre of painting' to which the name of Delacroix is attached:

> Here is found that law that always applies in nature [. . .]. The most obvious law of decomposition is the one that first struck me as being the most general, in objects that gleam. It is in these sorts of objects that I noted the presence of three united tones: a cuirass, a diamond, etc. Then there are objects such as draperies, linen, certain landscape effects, and first and foremost the sea, where this effect is very marked. I unhesitatingly perceived that in the flesh this presence is striking. Finally, this convinced me that nothing exists without these three tones. For when I find linen with a violet shadow and a green reflection, did I say that it presented only these two tones? Is not orange perforce also in it, since there is yellow in green, and red in purple?[191]

Delacroix operates a delocalisation of local tone—colour with all of its virtualities subtracted in order that it might collaborate with the ideally separative principle of the outline—such that painting as a whole finds itself displaced (and intensified) in favour of reflections rendered entirely in half-tints, those constantly interfering tones that allow to *come up for air* the primary colours that had been considered as objectively determined and therefore manageable terms, when in truth they are but fragile identities separated out by spectral analysis. Here, we discover that the image is born between the stitches of the fabric when, putting paid to any clean breaks that would cut out forms, it accedes to that obscure region of sensation that grapples with the movement of all possibilities so as to bring out the figure of its new matter and allow it to be seen in all its *intimacy*. The massacre of painting, attributed by Gros to Delacroix, is the massacre of a painting compartmentalised [*cloisonné*] by its consideration of primary colours in terms of 'value', using flat tones 'that remain raw, isolated, cold, gaudy'[192] because they remain unbroken. Because half-tint, as understood by Delacroix in the light of what he takes to be *true colour*, is nothing other than the preservation of the tension of warm and cold, of which the play of complementary colours is a privileged example—even if, thanks to Baudelaire and Blanc, its use was exaggerated by making it into a veritable system[193]—and he takes up this 'law of opposition'[194] in such a way as to free the field of forces of colours through the use of tempera and

the optical mixture of juxtaposed and graduated touches.[195] And because, in consequence, the accidents of matter become what is essential ('Accurately speaking there are no such things as shadows. There are only reflections'),[196] the colourist imagination here sets forth its first manifesto: *colour for colour's sake, with no other pretext*.[197]

Thus, a painting must arouse the beholder's enthusiasm in the same way that a palette 'freshly set out with the colours in their contrasts' arouses the enthusiasm of the painter.[198] We know very well how Delacroix's palette breaks with the 'earthy colours' and the greyness favoured by the Academicians' chiaroscuro. 'The enemy of all painting is grey'; 'Ban all earthy colours' in favour of the 'lively and bold colours' of nature, which must always be pictorially enhanced and overcontrasted—that is to say, intensified and *deterritorialised*—so as to set the tones at play. Thus, one must beware of mixing pigment lest colour return to earth. One must prevent red and green from being neutralised into the grey of their synthesis and, in order to do so, one must keep them at a distance, contain them; the tension that attracts them, the differential potential that imparts to them their force, their living effect, must be kept active. Does it not offer to vision a multiplicity of inactualisable virtualities, inexhaustible even when 'the effect is produced' by contrast alone,[199] implying for each painting a lack of finitude, a constitutive blurring, a perpetual adumbration, and a kind of 'superficial finish'?[200] Whence this 'general law: the more opposition, the more striking'; 'The half-tint, that is to say all tints, must be exaggerated', and so on.[201] The paradox is that Chevreul's oeuvre will hereafter be associated with a painting elaborated on the basis of pure colourist precepts, taking its lead from Delacroix's theory of colours.

Before returning to the critical fortunes of the tradition of the paradigm of complementary colours to which Charles Blanc and Paul Signac afforded such importance, we will transcribe, following Émile Bernard in his article 'Eugène Delacroix's Palette and his Quest for the Absolute of Colour',[202] the following two statements of the painter, to which our study of Goethe will have sensitised the reader: 'Realism is the opposite of art'; 'Nature is a dictionary, but just as he who copies the dictionary does not make a poetic work, so the painter who copies nature misunderstands; he does not make a work of art'. It will be noted immediately that the dictionary's value lies in its absence of linear narration, its fragmentary form of exposition with a 'constructivist' intent, which obliges one to invent syntaxes in order to combinatorially link its entries. In this sense, it offers the freest syntax in which to express the active multiplicity of a palette that varies points of view across every part of a subject, privileging tension over resolution, struggle over its outcome,[203] just as the entries in a dictionary are not unified into an irreversible concatenation of discrete units within the systematicity of

the logical concept. The *Dictionary of the Fine Arts* planned by Delacroix the day after his election to the Academy, as it exists in the form of entries arranged in the parataxic style of the *Journal,* corresponds perfectly to the mobility and instability of colours, to that *breaking of tone* that the painter instigated: ‘A dictionary is not a book [. . . .] In this way [it] can avoid the transitional passages, the labour of linking together the various sections of the work, and the problem of arranging them in proper order’[204] in favour of a composition, or better, a *construction* (the word is Delacroix’s before being Matisse’s) whose juxtapositions are no longer traced from the cold harmony of classical discursive beauty—a construction according to an order of contrast that is to be created through improvisation, ‘as his work proceeds’,[205] rather than being imitated, respecting the graduated scale of brightness. ‘You see a picture at a glance’, according to a juxtaposition of parts which clash as they are combined, whereas the book, in the classical sense, is presented according to the hierarchical ordering of its editorial parts, in ‘portions of moving pictures following one after the other, so that it is impossible to take them all in at once’.[206] The dictionary thus presents itself not so much as a book,[207] whose support owes to a successive relation of proximity, as something like a tableau of *detached thoughts* [*pensées détachées*], like an abstract machine in which entries are superimposed, repeated, and cross-referenced with no transition other than that discovered by an entirely transversal reason. Thus, the *Dictionary of the Fine Arts* must *theoretically* make the case for Delacroix’s ‘sketchy’ style (from the Danteesque ‘tartouillade’ onwards); for these rough drafts/debaucheries [*ébauches/débauches*][208] whose violent scansion tortures forms ‘with an indecisive, impatient and rudimentary brushstroke’[209] and which alone can save a ‘vision’ of painting capable of placing in resonance the ‘vibratory’ accords of pure colour relations.

And it is indeed because ‘colour is phrase, is style’—as the painter confides to Charles Rivet[210]—that Delacroix can invent the form for his colour according to a type of diagram or dictionary in which the most materially various significations abut onto each other, from the rawest to the most broken, in a physical and abstract violence that subordinates the plane of content to the trans-forming plane of expression. Consequently, Charles Blanc cannot be said to be entirely wrong when he observes:

> In the *Death of St John the Baptist*, a dark pink flag has been draped over the banister of the staircase, solely so as to present an opposition to the complementary tone of the muddy yellow that covers the walls of the palace or prison.[211]

This flag, like the tricolour flags that Delacroix uses in other works (for example, in *Boissy d’Anglas at the Convention* [1831]), realises a discordant

whole that brings forth harmony from the distribution of its folds. We might think here of this brief note:

> The other morning as I was standing on my balcony in the sunshine, I noticed the prismatic effect of the thousands of tiny hairs in the cloth of my grey jacket. They were sparkling with all the colours of the rainbow, like little pieces of crystal or diamond. Each separate hair being glossy, it reflected the most brilliant colours, which changed whenever I moved.[212]

It is the movements of the folds of the jacket that connect up the monadological crudity of each 'hair', reflecting its colours in the juxtaposed form of diverse expressions in which the eye strives to rediscover the continuity that courses through its folds, tries to imag(in)e the unity of colours that the fold violently superposes along the sketchy line of its uncertain movements. 'It has been observed—and it was the painter Ziegler who first made this observation—that the [tricolour] flag spread out horizontally presents a discordant whole; but through the effects of the folds [. . .] one colour dominating another, harmony is produced'.[213] Think here of the flag held by one of the *Fanatics of Tangiers*, painted by Delacroix in 1838 and compared by Théophile Gautier to a phenomenon 'as strange as can be, such as one might meet in a nightmare on a summer's night',[214] as if the hallucination sustains itself through the mobility of the folds of clothing that run through the whole crowd 'at the densest of this whole hooded mob [*tourbe*]'[215] to render the 'turbulence of movement', the rhythm of exacerbated passions, 'the living, startling sublime that courses through the streets here, and'—adds Delacroix in a letter to Pierret written from Tangiers on February 29, 1832—'that assassinates you with its reality'. The convulsion that takes hold in Tangiers is realised in the very current that animates the fabrics by allowing all of the figures to be linked together by means of a fluttering, a variation, a speed of contagion impossible to suggest by any other means. Whipped up by a 'ferocity of the brush that no one has surpassed',[216] the fabric functions like a *turban* whose frenetic envelopment produces an animal force, a critical mass electrified by the light of the Orient in its effects of variegation, effects that will beat out the rhythm of 'the convulsions of sacred epilepsy' through the propagation of a motion common to the colours of the palette in the clashing of all of its possibilities. If, as a general rule, '[as] Ziegler has observed [. . .] "the wind that agitates the stuff in varied undulations makes the three colours pass through *all the attempts at proportion* that an intelligent artist can do"',[217] here it is the superposition of the three coloured bands of the blue sky, the white walls coloured with shadows, and the crowd wherein are multiplied turbulences of tones dominated by the ochre of wild animals and the streams of red, a point of which will heighten the green flag with

the deliquescing emblem[218] and rekindle the muddy white in the foreground, that will modulate the mobile diagram that is Delacroix's palette so as to produce these 'extraordinary effects of coloration', these vibrations induced by 'the carpetmakers of Asia'. A chromatic diagram, a mode of *chromometry* (according to the expression proposed by Roque) placed in the service of a *quivering* [*tressaillement*] of colours: a braiding [*tresse*] which decidedly cannot be unconnected to Delacroix's dream of being appointed Director of the Gobelins.

Must we repeat that such an unbridled practice of fabrication whose furious folds convey an unlikely convulsive communism[219]—in the 1857 reprise, it will carry along in its flow even the weft of the verticals and horizontals that secure the scenery—is antipodal to Chevreul's mimetic academicism and scientism, which here find themselves subverted in the hallucinatory wake of the exaltation of colours and the shock of contrasts which they try to account for solely in terms of the play of complementary colours, the systematism put in place by Blanc? To overcharge the effect by heightening complementary colours . . . Nonetheless, this exaltation of colourism proper to Delacroix, to 'this essentially, uniquely, purely modern genius',[220] remains too ambiguous in Blanc's eyes since

> the predominance of colour at the expense of drawing is a usurpation of the relative over the absolute, of temporary appearance over permanent form, of physical impression over the empire of the soul. As literature tends to its decadence when images are elevated above ideas, so art materialises itself and inevitably declines when the mind that draws is conquered by the sensation that colours; when, in a word, the orchestra, instead of accompanying the song, becomes the whole poem.[221]

And this because

> in the colourists [. . .] colour, even in spite of them, commands the composition. It is obliged to assure its empire at the expense of form, and this preeminence of colour—gained necessarily through an act of usurpation—is precisely what makes for the inferiority of the colourist, when he is nothing else, when he does not have, as in Delacroix, qualities of another order.[222]

Although this 'other order' would culminate ideally in an 'optical mixture' whose supposed dematerialisation rests in the last analysis on a properly scientific exploration of the laws of colour that guarantees 'the absolute knowledge of the phenomena',[223] the colourist *deformation* is ultimately bound up with the exigencies proper to the decorative arts. So that, as the aesthetician will write, 'Delacroix was an incomparable colourist, a thinker of abundant and distinguished inventions, a splendid and impassioned decorator, but that was all he was, and it was a great deal'.[224] If this credo can also almost be

perceived in Paul Signac's manifesto[225] crediting the neo-impressionist *division*, and it alone, with the achievement of the 'reform of colour' *initiated* by Delacroix,[226] couched in terms of a *scientific aesthetic* wherein 'only the brain and the eye of the painter have a part to play',[227] what we are left with above all is this strange *a contrario* effect whereby Blanc's warning against the consequences of the colourist 'revolt', taken to its acme 'by the imagination and through the nerves' of the painter, will end up stimulating the researches of an Impressionist generation. The diagnosis could not be more fitting:

> [For the colourist] everything is subordinated to the brilliance of his tints. Not only must the drawing bend to it, but the composition is dominated, restrained, forced by the colour. To add here a purple tint that will overexcite this yellow cloth, one must make a space for this tint, invent a perhaps useless accessory. [. . .] So what do our colourists do? They take themselves off to the Orient.[228]

Brought to light by Chevreul so as to give artists the scientific means to a more faithful imitation of nature, the laws of contrast will now produce precisely the opposite effect, standing for themselves on the exclusively pictorial plane of an autonomous plastic beauty and of a diagrammatic expression free of subjective sentiment. As if Delacroix's brush had rediscovered Goethe's teaching[229] when the colour palette, the fan of the chromatic circle, projected itself into the contagious life of fabrics 'which one would think had been traced with the hesitant hand of a sleepwalker', 'with a feverish hand [which] has affronted all the lines, misplaced the bright colours, scrambled the shadows, and transformed these currencies, which are worth a thousand times their weight in gold, into effigies struck with the mint of the barbarians'.[230]

3

Contagion, fever, affront—these are the marks of a truth in painting whose effectiveness is gauged by the hallucinated exaltation of colours (an *overexcitation* then—in Signac's word—worthy of a *truly* pictorial hallucination)[231] and which this exaltation, beyond the quarrel of Romanticism with the School of David, sets upon the path of a beauty that supplements the moderns' imitation with a barbarous art in which fabrics and men are mixed with animal furies. This 'frenetic life', this 'animal force where life concentrates and fuses' (Huyghe) in the most intense struggles and the most bloody embraces exposed to the Moroccan sun since the *Encounter of the Moorish Horsemen* (1834)—the painting pits against each other not so much men as 'fighting horses'—will culminate in the demented torment of the great *Lion*

Hunt, painted in 1855. The latter may be considered to be the final version of the massacres of his youth, whose effect was concentrated in the contemporaneous *Death of Sardanapalus* and *Combat of the Giaour and the Pasha* (1826–1827).[232]

Violently attacked even by a critic who was favourable (by conviction) to the work brought together in the *Exposition universelle*,[233] the 260 × 360 cm painting, whose top third was destroyed by fire (!)—but of which we possess a second version finished in 1856, a third executed in 1858, and a last in 1861, and above all the great oil sketch of 1854 in which we see an indescribable treacly mass of violent colours—breaks with any kind of realist description of animals[234] or of nature, to provoke a 'true explosion of colours' (Baudelaire) erupting from the 'most frightening pell-mell of lions, men, horses': 'a chaos of claws', continues Gautier, 'of teeth, of cutlasses, of lances, of torsos, of the kind of buttocks that Rubens loved'.[235] In this work of 'almost raging madness' where 'harmony itself is neglected, for all the tones have the same value' like 'a vast colour logogriph which no words can describe',[236] or a 'chaos of red, green, yellow, violet tones, all having the same tonal value, [which] makes *Lion Hunt* resemble a tapestry',[237] we encounter not one single form described by a dividing outline, but only an incessant movement of hybridisation of bodies, resulting in a multitude that animates even the landscape, given the radical uncertainty of the planes into which the eye is plunged ('the eye does not know where to rest; one gets the impression of a fearful struggle').[238] The uncertainty of line that Delacroix had lamented in Rubens is, in his *Lion Hunt*, pushed to its visual limits by a composition whose colourist modernity implies the most extreme deformation of classical organisation. Whence the *incomprehensibility* of the composition, deplored by the critics,[239] whom the painter countered in advance by claiming that 'the outline is [. . .] as ideal and conventional in painting as in sculpture'; a composition that confirms, more than any other work, the Dionysiac allure of Delacroix's distinction between drawing and colour, where the latter takes the prize of modernity in painting.[240] Because 'the colourists, who are those who bring together all the parts of painting, [. . .] must grapple with colour as the sculptor does with earth, marble or stone'.[241]

There is no Idea in this whirlpool of colours, which begins by *amassing* organisms into one and the same undulating body, if by Idea we mean the edge that encircles the profile of a form carved out on the basis of a 'culture in outline', thereby pinning down its movement in a definition, a drawing. 'For drawing demands that desire hold back its leaping on the prey, so that the latter may be seen, recognised, not as prey but as being a plane where it, drawing—this knowledge of contours, signifying aspects—works: a plane which is therefore that of language, that is to say of social exchanges, of shared thought and, in sum, of the good, of respect for the other'.[242] But in

Lion Hunt we can no longer recognise anything, and the line just seems to be the limit of the movement of the internal mass, the tangible result of the plural movement it describes: it is no longer anything but a serpentine movement of lineaments forming an indiscernible skein from which figures can only extract themselves with great effort. Lions, horses, and men are swept up on lines of such speed that 'forms are crumpled like the inconsistent stuff'[243] from which they emerge extravagantly, entangled in the warlike chaos. ('The hunt is but a type of battle', notes Blanc.)[244] But it is in the celebrated sketch of 1854, with its boisterous line animating a sinister bouquet of colours, that *Lion Hunt* attains the pictorial fact proper to it. Its truth is that of a relation between speeds of colour that modulate the movements running through the multitude according to a common motion, a rhythm that *flattens* men onto horses and wild beasts. No doubt it is this terrible community that allows us to perceive the traversal of the living that renders the line so monstrous, 'riding' forms whose furious expression transgresses the partitioning of spaces at every point. What eye could distinguish the limbs attached to the torso of the man who, in the foreground, blends with the upturned body of the horse, seized by the roaring lion whose colour is so close to that of the stallion that rears up behind it? The whole painting is swept up in one and the same rage. The same intoxication, the same vertigo: men carried away by the savage force of the nature that they confront, on rearing horses that drool, tumbling onto the green of plants and the red of blood which fuse in the orange-red of the wild beasts' pelts. All of the outlines of this tumult remain in an embryonic state, in the sense in which Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, having observed the impossibility of distinguishing the lines of evolution at the first moments of life, posits that animate beings must be, in principle, 'unformed and ambiguous beings', calling for the transformist hypothesis in order to account for the 'prodigious variety of animals'—in the words of Delacroix, wondering at 'the movement that the seeing of all this has produced in me' after a visit to the Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle.[245] As is confirmed by the strange, 'quasi-mannerist' painting *Young Women Attacked by a Tiger* (1856). Here, a kind of continuity is established between the tiger and the woman by a single, striped, broken arabesque, without any perceptible resistance from the woman's body, prone, abandoned, almost caressing the striped pelt with her fingers. Uniting plants with zebras,[246] one and the same stirring, propagated even into the folds of the red cloth that falls from the ecstatic victim. A hallucinatory menagerie whose close connection with comparative anatomy has been demonstrated by Stéphane Guégan since

for one who, along with Barye, would copy the wild animals, dead or alive, of the Jardin des Plantes, such anatomical resemblances would afford an understanding of how this or that man was close to this or that animal. All the

more so in that it does indeed seem that Delacroix, like Balzac [and before him, Goethe . . .] was acquainted with Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's evolutionary theory.[247]

An inspection of *Lion Hunt* testifies to such an apparent *unity of plane of composition of the multiple* that gives free rein to the expression of mobile traits encircled by no outline to cross over the partitions between species and to undo the regularity of organisms, so that these lines combine with colour in a mutual exaltation in which all embryonic forms are mixed.

Thus,

> there are lines that are monsters: the straight line, the regular curve, and above all parallels. As soon as man establishes them, the elements consume them. Foam and accidents break the straight lines of his monuments. A line all alone has no meaning; it needs a second to give it expression. A great law. For example: in the accords of music a note has no expression, but two together make a whole, expressing an idea [. . .]. It would be interesting to verify whether regular lines exist only in the human brain. Animals do not reproduce them in their constructions, or rather in the sketches of regularity presented in their works, such as the cocoon, the alveolus. Is there a passage that leads from inert matter to a human intelligence that can conceive of perfectly geometrical lines? And how many animals, on the other hand, work doggedly to destroy regularity.[248]

Animalised, vegetablised, the line is a braid, a tangled set of differentials melting into embryonic space, already full of infinitesimal outlines: 'Each object is in itself a complete world [. . .] a *little world.* [. . .] It is the same with the waves, which are themselves divided into smaller waves and then subdivided into ripples, each displaying the same accidents of light and the same design. Huge waves [. . .] are composed of millions of smaller waves', phenomena which 'we find repeated in the most diverse and different objects, such as the outlines that the sea makes in the sand and which recall the stripes of tigers'.[249]

This affair, verging on a quasi-'fractal' intuition, was of a most Goethean bent in its origins and in its reasoning alike:

> As I was walking along the Soisy road, about four o'clock, to give myself an appetite, I came upon a trail of water in the dust that looked as though it had been sprinkled from the spout of a funnel. It reminded me of observations which I made some time ago in other places on the geometric laws governing such phenomena, which are generally supposed to be accidental.
>
> Take, for instance, the furrows in fine sand scooped out by the sea, which you can see on the beach at Dieppe, where I noticed them last year, just as I did

> when I was in Tangiers. In their irregularities, these furrows displayed the return of similar forms, but whether by the action of the water or the nature of the sand which received the imprints they seemed to take on a different appearance according to where they were. Thus at Dieppe, where the marks took the form of stretches of water on very fine sand broken up here and there or enclosed by small rocks, they gave a very good representation of the waves of the sea. If one had copied them with the right colours they would have given an idea of that movement of the waves that is so difficult to capture. At Tangiers, on the other hand, where there is a flat beach, the receding tide left upon the sand the imprint of small furrows, so closely resembling the stripes on a tiger's skin that they might have been mistaken for the object itself. The trail of water that I found yesterday on the road to Soisy looked exactly like the branches of certain trees after the leaves have fallen; the main branch was the wide water and the little twigs that were intertwined in a thousand different ways were produced by the crisscross splashes which separated and came together from right to left.
>
> I have a horror of the usual run of scientists. I have said elsewhere that they jostle one another in the anteroom of the sanctuary where nature hides her secrets [. . .] no telescope has been invented to show them the *relationship between things.* (italics added)
>
> Scientists ought to live in the country where they are close to nature. [. . .] In the forests and on the mountain tops there are natural laws to be observed, and you cannot take a step without finding something to wonder at.
>
> The world of animals, vegetables and insects, the earth, and water, is proper food for the student who wants to record the diverse laws that govern all such creatures. But these gentlemen do not consider such simple observations worthy of their talents, they like to go further, and work out systems in the depths of the offices that they call their observatories.[250]

Every thing, seen immanently, is a little world, which, in its very accident, contains the entire universe, so that everything communicates with everything else: the tiger's fur, the broken surface of the sea, and the branches of certain trees, according to a multitude of *sketches* that necessitate a hybrid type of unity-in-continuous-variation of the multiple which the imagination of the painter configures: 'There is in us an echo that responds to all impressions: either we have seen that elsewhere, or else all the possible combinations of things are in advance in our brain'.[251] But where would we have seen this universal transformation, and according to what advance in relation to common perception? As a function of what virtual image would our brain have at its disposal so many visual echoes, were it not a matter of a vital form of perception that Leibniz, whose monadological intuitions Delacroix rediscovers, would have qualified as 'orderly dreams',[252] and which one might understand—at the risk of disordering his intention—as a *true hallucination of the effects of the perception of the universe that cannot be explained from without, but only from within the folds of a matter in movement*? And it falls

to the artist to make seen these primitive images, this uncommon sensation of a continuous development of form become matter of expression of the forces of the earth.

As if a world line [*ligne d'univers*], an errant line, links together all forms before they even become perceptible, extending itself into the brain where the hallucinatory imagination of a 'genius' will be able to unfold its arabesques. Each fibre of the brain fuses with the whole of the universe, of which it is but a particular fold, but one that runs through all the others and communicates intimately with them. This is Swedenborg's principle, summed up by Baudelaire as follows: 'That everything, form, movement, number, colour, scent, in the *spiritual* as in the *natural*, is significant, reciprocal, converse, *correspondent*'.[253] Something that Delacroix, in common with his whole generation, keeps in mind when he adopts the theosopher's idea that 'a feather is composed of a million feathers'.[254] Just as a line only comes to life through the convergence of multiple traits in which the whole universe is implicated and, so to speak, embryonic, deploying on the pictorial level a vague touch, tangled like the truth that discovers its belonging to the multiple in a centreless world. 'Whence it follows that the true in every question cannot be absolute'.[255]

Beauty is thus no longer thinkable as the result of a clear outline, establishing the cut, the discontinuity of a closed form, with the sharp edges of its perfect excision. Such lines, championed by the most classical habits of painting, are illusory. The line shades off into the quivering of an infinity of tiny traits that vaporise it. So that beauty must be considered as a monadological fusion of creases lost in infinity, fused into the colour in which they are immersed and in which they multiply:

> This famous quality, the beautiful, which some see in a curved line and others in a straight, all are determined to see in line alone. But here am I, sitting at my window, looking at the most beautiful countryside imaginable and the idea of a line does not enter into my head. The larks are singing, the river is sparkling with a thousand diamonds, I can hear the rustle of the leaves, but where are the lines to produce such exquisite sensations? These people refuse to see proportion and harmony unless they are enclosed by lines. For them, all the rest is chaos, and a pair of compasses the only arbiter.[256]

We could not have said it better: having renounced all compass, it is into such a chaos that *Lion Hunt* plunges. In it, Delacroix explores the fluxuous disintegration of a quivering line that is braided and mixed according to the affinity and exaltation of colours, the invention of a first expressionism in the catastrophe of forms confronted by the sketch. This is done to the point of acceding to the torment of the informal that the painting will invest, will

control, conferring upon the gesturality of colour powers of vibration sufficient to organise the plastic plane of composition that will from now on be known as the plane of *construction*.

The beautiful is not, as in Kant, a *sentiment*[257] whose universality, very classically, privileges drawing to the detriment of 'colours that illuminate the outline' and which 'belong to charm'. For, as the philosopher states, if the latter 'can indeed make the object itself vivid to sense, they cannot make it beautiful and worthy of being beheld. Rather, usually the requirement of beautiful form severely restricts [which] colours [may be used], and even where the charm [of colours] is admitted it is still only the form that refines the colours'.[258] Against the Kantian conception, the beautiful will be defined pictorially as an *art of colour*[259] considered as a field of forces and tensions, as an autonomous field endowing 'taste' with a physical reason, a material exaltation, a spectral overexcitation that is above all that of colours in relation to one another. Colours are not the occasion (*Veranlassung*) which for the genius yields 'rich *material* for products of fine arts [. . .] so that it may be used in a way that can stand the test of the power of judgment', a usage that can only be that of 'shallow minds [who] believe that the best way to show that they are geniuses in first bloom is by renouncing all rules of academic constraint, believing that they will cut a better figure on the back of an ill-tempered than of a training-horse'.[260] It is precisely the propositional structure of taste that is disqualified here, and along with it the very basis of Kantian aesthetics qua critique of the subreption through which the object can be accorded that which can only properly belong to the subject; a critique without which one could not conceive *beauty as a symbol of morality* (the title of §59 of the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*). Now, let's not forget that it is absolutely essential that taste, in Kant's sense, should possess a propositional structure: it founds and is founded upon the vertical movement of judgement, on that transcendence inscribed into the most intimately subjective immanence, and which raises it to the universal point of view and to the a priori upon which 'the judgment of taste rests' (the title of §12: *Das Geschmarksurteil beruht auf Gründen a priori*). Again, in order for this to be the case, we must detach taste from the 'horizontal' displacement of *sympathy* developed by the English philosophers,[261] and prevent a 'ruleless' freedom of the imagination from following every 'transversal' movement of empathy by limiting, in decor ('designs *à la grecque,* the foliage on borders or on wallpaper, etc.') and in the grace of natural formations ('as in pheasants, crustaceans, insects, down to the commonest flowers') any manifestation of a *free beauty* (*pulchritude vaga*) in the 'harmonious combination

of colours' and lines—associated by Kant with 'all of music without words'.[262] In the third *Critique*, we may well discern certain paths that lead outside of the judiciary framework of Kantian aesthetics *stricto sensu*—for example, in the idea of a 'merely aesthetic painting' relating to the art of landscape gardening, or those free formations of nature that adopt the paths of a 'fluid [. . .] matter' on the basis of which 'animal bodies' are composed;[263] and we might consequently regret that 'Kant's aesthetics came too early'.[264] We could place in juxtaposition to 'the *formal* aesthetic of taste' a '*material* meta-aesthetic [. . .] of contents, colours and sounds' testifying to a Kantian romanticism, a 'nascent romanticism'[265] that is not that of sentiment sustained in the intimacy of the flesh (*Gefühl*).[266] Nevertheless, it remains that it is not to the Kantian theory of genius, wherein 'the work is not defined by its communicational status but by its paradoxical ontic character',[267] but to the 'genius' of Delacroix, that it falls to associate rigorously painting, in all its precise novelty, to that which, for Kant, does not even have any relation to the broader sense of painting[268]—namely, the art of colours as it is expressed in living and not symbolic (i.e., propositional) fashion[269] in the pictorial hallucination of free matters of nature which animate and animalise man himself, by freeing beauty from all 'adherence' to the 'concept of an end, which determines what the thing must be'.[270]

This is attested to by the terrible close-quarter combats and hunts (*The Combat of the Giaour and the Pasha*, *Arab Horseman Attacked by a Lion* . . .) and the anatomical studies 'recounted' by Delacroix to Hippolyte Taine, who tells the story in a lesson on Leonardo da Vinci:

> For a long time, with the sculptor Barye, he had drawn animals at the Museum; they had been given a flayed lion, which they lit at night with lamps. Delacroix had drawn it from every position, trying to understand the play of the least muscle. What struck him most was that the back paw of the lion was the monstrous arm of a man, but distorted and reversed. According to him there were therefore, in all human forms, more or less vague animal forms that it was a matter of extricating; and he added that, by pursuing the study of these analogies between animal and human, one discovers in the latter the more or less vague attitudes through which its intimate nature is linked to this or that animal. If now we examine these paintings, you will notice the result of these studies and these zoological divinations. [. . .] It is through revelations of this sort that even the least of his paintings is most striking and has a real impact on us. Goethe thought about the same things, and this he had in common with almost all great men.[271]

At his closest to Goethean morphology, Delacroix appears here as the painter *who attacks man*, who renders *vague* (*vagus*) his intimate nature,

according to a general principle that tends to undetermine every thing in regard to its adhesion to a judiciary system that it suspends along with the narrative subject, to the point of animalising every being in a vibratory tremor of colour that mixes man and horse with wild beast (the *Hunt*s), pelts, and foliage (*Lion Stalking its Prey*, around 1850) and even the whole landscape (*Lion Ready to Pounce*, 1863), etc.—but also men tearing each other apart like predators (*The Battle of Taillebourg*, 1837). For there is no longer any soul (*anima*)—any 'vivifying principle'—except an *animal* one, and every one of Delacroix's paintings results, in this sense, from a *polyzoism*, a *zoological divination* and *hallucination* that acquires the status of a veritable *aesthetic Idea* (as defined by Kant, even if the philosopher inevitably privileges poetry, to which he awards 'the first rank among all': 'through the expression aesthetic Idea I understand that representation of the imagination, which gives us much to think, without any determinate thought, that is to say *concept*, being able to be adequate to it and in consequence *no language can completely express it and render it intelligible*').[272] Now, doesn't the scandal of *Sardanapalus* stem primarily and above all from the fact that this celebrated painting presents the complete protocol of the Idea of such a zoological hallucination? What visitor to the Louvre has not *seen* the delirious pell-mell of bodies swirl around the enormous head of an elephant, which, lacking any 'ground' that would serve to secure the scene, pins down the royal bed in the centre of the canvas, in this contrast of red and flesh that expires on the horse with 'an almost human eye', its 'mane meticulously braided like a woman's plait' (Huygue), led, hauled up, and soon to be massacred by the black slave whose gaze expresses a strange solicitude? And to what motifs will Delacroix then devote himself, if not to those animal motifs he studied in the Jardin des Plantes and which will give rise to the lithograph *Royal Tiger* (1826), its eye transfixed as if set hallucinating by the landscapist undulations of its own stripes, and to the extraordinary 1830 *Study of Two Tigers* (also called *Young Tiger Playing with his Mother*) where the wild animals' anatomy is shot through by the tremulous dance of striped pelts upon which thick and vibrant touches confer a rhythmic unity whose disordered amplitude joins with the elemental forces of an obscurely 'charged' sky. . . . An animalist line, Delacroix's decorative line, liberates a *powerful nonorganic life* that leads the painting, the whole painting, 'to the degree of harmony where drawing and colour combine to form a single effect',[273] beyond the organic representation of 'describing [*Schilderung*] nature beautifully',[274] because this effect is that of a *struggle against oneself*, a 'process through which a force is enriched, by separating itself from other forces and by joining in a new whole, in a becoming';[275] the degree where the *imbrication of line and colour* betokens the discovery of a thinking, a nervous cerebrality, that is properly pictorial (i.e., proper to painting freed from its academic conventions). And how could the latter not

be irreducible to the 'relation of representation between object and subject' that permits Kant to posit the anteriority of judgement,[276] since Delacroix's entire oeuvre tends precisely to replace the universal communicability of feeling (and its moral interest, its *suprasensible* destination)[277] with the communication or *communion* of sensible forces and qualities, excluded from the domain of the Fine Arts and Aesthetics alike because of their materiality; with the pictorial hallucination of colours placed in the service of the 'irresistible need to express, in everything, that which is most extreme and most violent' (as Delacroix writes of Michaelangelo)? How could it be otherwise for the man who boasts of making 'his society that of bears and panthers',[278] and who will soon be able to find rest only in his 'portraits of flowers' in attitudes so startling that one day a flower will become a woman, a flower-woman, in the form of the *Turkish Woman Bathing*, dated 1854, the year of the *Hunt*,[279] or the *Young Woman Attacked by a Tiger* (1856) mentioned above, whose gracious movement, in its resonance with the tall water plants, is bordered by a coiling red?

Of crimson [*pourpre*], this deep or pure red, this blood of painting, which, as even the least experienced eye can testify, in almost every one of Delacroix's canvases mysteriously heightens the cavalcade of colours that the tints interlace to the point of giving his painting 'the fleecy aspect of a tapestry seen from behind', of the crimson that evokes purification by fire and the transmutation of matter, Goethe affirmed that it was 'the colour that contains all the others'. As if, in the darkening of yellow by blue, in the muted life of a mixture weaving its texture out of day and night, crimson reduces all of colour to itself, to produce the most violent, the most 'troubled', and the most 'prominent [*saillante*]' heterogenesis of colour; colours can hardly be distinguished, and the conflagration, a reddening reflection, is already propagated by the explosion of a *necessarily abstract* pure red. In the first act of the drama, it is ideally Dante's red hood detaching itself from the green of his robe which agrees audaciously with the orange-brown of Virgil's cloak, it is this purest of reds contrasting with the hypnotic white trim and the red glow of the infernal city that makes us see the world in 'a terrible light' (*ein furchtbares Licht*, as Goethe wrote); and then, beyond *Sardanapalus*, when all outlines are torched in *The Abduction of Rebecca* (1846), the brilliant red of the saddle upon which the fainting heroine is placed by the two Africans, this red taut on the bluish rump of the prancing horse whose fury animates a blue-grey sky, devoured by the coils of smoke from the burning castle of Front-le-Boeuf. . . . But what Delacroix discovers above all, is that *there is crimson* (*pourpre*, *purpur*) *wherever there is something black*, '*an entirely black ground to content',* as the painter writes of his intimate black; crimson being that 'something between decay and phosphorus' evoked by Artaud at his greatest proximity to the painter.[280] And how could it be otherwise if 'in

its most luminous state, colour is something dark',[281] and if this darkness from which it proceeds is something in ourselves that commands us through its hallucinogenic power[282]—'we [who] are shut up together higgledy-piggledy, animals, men and plants, in this vast box that they call the universe'.[283] Crimson, or the turbulence of the world as the subject matter, the extroverted intimacy, of painting.

Crimson is the effect of colours breaking with one other by intensifying all of their possibilities. It manifests all possibilities in a virtual intensification touching on a psychophysical extremity where it becomes impossible to say what belongs to the subject and what to the object, what to perception, and what to things—for it is the reflection (*Schein*) that has raised itself to the level of the most pure colour, bringing with it the heterogenesis of the world and of the brain in the Passion of painting. This common membrane, this line containing an infinity of colouring traits, which Delacroix marries with the pictorial imagination, and which belongs to the crucible of every image, finds its most intense vibration in the terrible movement that the painter braids into the very fabric of the *Lion Hunt*, blinded by the idea 'that there is more in painting than accuracy and an exact representation of the model',[284] for *exactitude is not truth*.[285] That the *Hunt* paintings themselves could have been considered as mere drafts, as sketches, is a result of a richness of possibilities which the painter does not *untangle* because he is borne above all by the 'intensive imagination' (according to a locution, which, for Taine, is synonymous with 'hallucination'),[286] because the 'process of idealisation happens almost without [his] realizing it, when [he] makes a tracing of a composition that comes out of [his] head'.[287] Whence, also, the fact that 'the sketch of a picture [. . .] must have a stronger effect on the mind in proportion to what our imaginations have to supply',[288] given that 'our imagination [. . .] enjoys *vagueness*',[289] enjoys lines in which the whirlpool of possibilities remains virtually inscribed, animating the variegation of the colours of a life wherein is manifest at every point the excess *of* the visible. The life 'from the middle [*par les milieux*]' that Delacroix will seek in what he called the 'system of eggs', 'drawing by "boules"', or 'ovic drawing', as opposed to drawing with outlines. For 'the sketch—the egg or embryo of the idea, so to speak—is nearly always far from complete (finished); it contains everything'. The sketch is an activation of the set of possibilities that the finished painting must avoid reducing in an arrested form, composed 'of successive pieces of *patchwork* with each separate piece carefully finished and neatly placed beside the rest'; it is a world line [*ligne d'univers*] conveying the whole, like a monadological sketch ensuring the 'subordination' of details 'to the great sweeping lines which come before everything else',[290] stimulating and demanding hallucination so as to render the pelt of lions and the instep of horses in their mutual community.[291] No surprise, therefore, that Delacroix,

reporting the observations of his cousin Riesener, cannot hide his preference for the sketch, thereby avoiding the 'pursuit of a certain finish in my small paintings which seems to make them lose a great deal compared with what a sketch affords'.[292]

In the *Sketch for the Lion Hunt*, everything breaks down towards the retinal crimson of an eye that is repelled, as if blinded by the red tint uniting the fibres of the visible on the basis of what Delacroix calls a sensible hieroglyph, a diagrammatic key for every painting, and which here is none other than a fiery *Turkey red* cloth.[293] But every single one of the paintings unfolds between its colours a play of expressions that has nothing to do with the way in which language articulates heterogeneous significations. Their regimes of expression *construct* an accord, a whole—'the artist [. . .] invents a unity'[294]—in ways that announce a foreign and mobile form of truth in painting whose content is not of the order of sense as it is encountered in narration, but of '*the effect of a thought that the sketch can produce*' (emphasis Delacroix's), something that would be impossible to render in literary form ('on the impossibility, in literature, of making a sketch').[295] ('A painting that demonstrates nothing and which only gives pleasure', as Delacroix writes to Baudelaire;[296] an *intelligent drug* for the eyes). The milieu of painting becomes the invention of a material multiplicity whose harmonics are the fact of colours, of relations of colours and tones confronting each other and being composited not so much per spectra as per mass, according to transitions and ruptures that figure so many troubling occasions in regard to 'impressionist' accidents of light.[297] For construction will be the expression of painting alone qua putting into play of coloured masses:

> A picture should be laid-in as if one were looking at the subject on a grey day, with no sunlight or clear-cut shadows. Fundamentally lights and shadows do not exist. Every object presents a colour-mass, having different reflections on all sides. Suppose a ray of sunshine should suddenly light up the objects in this open-air scene under grey light, you will then have what are called lights and shadows but they will be pure accidents. This, strange as it may appear, is a profound truth and contains the whole *meaning* [*entente*] of colour in painting.[298]

Here is the commerce of a meaning, of a truth of colour whose matter of expression is the last sign, the sole essential form, that brings together the whole of the visible (in the accident of essence)—it is Heliodorus's treasure, violating the mysteries of the temple, offending the Chapel of the Holy Angels with 'its green shimmering tones' and the 'barbarism of expression' of its vertiginous combinations of colours which seem to issue from the folds of the crimson cloak in the foreground.[299]

As is announced by the crimson of *Death of Sardanapalus*, as if extracted from a mollusc stretching out its tentacles: this is the low materialism of

colour, its *tangible* excess over any epiphany of light. An excess in virtue of which the entente between eye and brain must be projected according to a dispositif 'that poetry and music cannot deliver': because with expression through colour—the 'animal side of art' according to Ingres—it solicits the hallucinatory power of painting 'to the point of mysterious emotions, of which these forms are, so to speak, the hieroglyph, but a hieroglyph far more eloquent than any cold representation, the mere equivalent of a printed symbol'.[300] Such is the *power of painting* when gauged (with no fear of exaggerating its difference from judgement) by its reversal of Chevreul's proposition, in §1010 of *On the Law of Contrasting Simultaneous Colours*: '*the brain sees ideas and judges them as it judges colours*' (author's emphasis). For it is *colours* that the brain sees, and raises to the thought of their hallucinatory presence so as to produce the modern idea of painting.

(Delacroix as antidote to Kant: 'Success in the arts does not at all consist in abbreviating, but in amplifying, if possible, in extending sensation, by any means necessary. [. . .] Thus one can understand all I have said about the *power of painting*'.)[301]

'Take away Delacroix', writes Baudelaire in the 'Salon of 1846', 'and the great chain of history is broken and slips to the ground'.[302] And, a year earlier: 'M. Delacroix is not yet a member of the Academy, but morally he belongs to it'.[303] As if it were not enough to hystericise great antiquarian history in order to exit it in one bound. Therefore, the poet of the *Phares* will have to confer upon Delacroix the status of an artist so 'unique' that he will no longer—in truth—have either *forerunner* or *successor* in the historical chain, given that 'revolution' which makes of him *the true painter of the nineteenth century* in his singular position as both conclusion and elect. . . . We can agree that this projection—hardly that of a historian—comes at the price of a deafening silence as to the name of Manet, whom the art critic must ignore even while foreseeing the danger Manet represents for his '*cult of images*'. But precisely: Manet is in no way a successor to Delacroix—and, as we shall see shortly, it is difficult to regard Manet's 'century', the essential quality of the present that is his own, as being 'the same' as Delacroix's, when for Manet it can no longer be a matter of introducing at any price—that of a 'massacre' if necessary—the painting of modern life into *great painting*; when the question to which Manet introduces us, in full resonance with his times, is a very different one, as acutely observed by Baudelaire in a celebrated formula, that of the 'decrepitude' of his art. Nonetheless, this will all pass Delacroix by, since with him everything takes place as if the '*power of painting*' were slipping 'into the traditional artistic frameworks all the better to pervert, one by one, their formal and iconographic elements'.[304]

NOTES

1. *Historical note (1)*: Here Delacroix cites Sainte-Beuve, citing Villemain—'who said of history: "History is always yet to be made, and every distinguished mind, with the aid of the progress in ideas that it adopts or struggles against, discovers in events recounted by others new lessons and insights"'. The painter's commentary, on August 23, 1850, reads as follows: 'What Villemain says could be said of everything. Not only can I find in these narratives further material for new narratives that are interesting from my point of view, but even my own narrative which I have just written, I could rewrite in twenty different ways'. Eugène Delacroix, *Journal (1822–1863)*, Introduction and Notes by A. Joubain, Preface by H. Damisch, edition reviewed by R. Labourdette (Paris: Plon, 1996), 265. [The existing English translation, cited above, *The Journal of Eugène Delacroix*, ed. Herbert Wellington, trans. Lucy Norton (London: Phaidon, third edition 1995) is abridged. Where cited passages appear in the translation, page references to this edition are given; references to the French edition are given in square brackets. Translation modified throughout—Translator's note] A history which can hardly be said to be academic, then, given its absence of fixity and the want of cleanness in its outlines, a history whose

fragmentary aspect leaves it open to the investment of the imagination's endless variations: History, like any other narrative, is the site of an absolute relativism open to constant metamorphoses. Something that the Palais-Bourbon library cycle, which will occupy Delacroix between 1838 and 1847, explores to the point of vertigo, *dislocating* the interpretation of each scene on the basis of the inclusive disjunction Orpheus/Attila, before/after, which sets the spectator's gaze in motion. See Norman Bryson's magisterial analysis in *Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), chapter 6: 'Desire in the Bourbon Library'.

2. *Serious painting* abides by Vernet's lesson: 'All skies are blue, all trees are green, all trousers are red [military uniform]'.

3. Analysing Baudelaire's relative silence on the subject of Géricault, Claire Brunet has been able to show the profound affinities between Géricault and Delacroix, notwithstanding Géricault's supposed 'realism', from an entirely Baudelairean point of view. See Claire Brunet, 'Le silence de Baudelaire', in *Géricault*, ed. R. Michel (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1996), vol. 2, 841–867.

4. Delacroix, *Journal*, 361 [615–616] (January 13, 1857). Here Delacroix refers to 'Géricault's painting of arms and legs' (*truncated* limbs). Jean Rousseau, in his review of the 1859 Salon: 'The time is near—if Delacroix does not recover—when he will no longer strive to do anything but produce tones without bothering himself about representing anything, and will make bouquets in which one will not even be able to find any flowers' (*Le Figaro*, May 10, 1859).

5. Baudelaire, 'The Exposition Universelle, 1855: Eugène Delacroix', in *The Mirror of Art: Critical Studies*, trans., ed. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 216. In a letter to T. Thoré of November 30, 1861, Delacroix compares Bonington's works to 'some kind of diamonds which flatter and delight the eye, independently of any subject or any imitation'.

6. Delacroix, *Journal*, 353 [608] (January 11, 1857). 'The tradition entirely lost in modern painting. Hence bad results, neglect of preparations, canvases, brushes, execrable oils, carelessness on the part of the artist. David was responsible for this carelessness, because he affected to despise material means'.

7. Delacroix, 'De l'enseignement du dessin', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, September 1850: reprinted in *Oeuvres littéraires*, ed. É. Faure, vol. 1, *Études esthétiques* (Paris: Crès, 1923), 14. He adds: 'Before doing poetry with painting, one must have learnt to bring the objects forth'.

8. *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, 135–136 (November 29, 1826): '"I confess", said Goethe, "I myself did not think it out so perfectly. [. . .] We can see that Delacroix knows the very foundation of life [. . .] for the more perfect imagination of such an artist constrains us to think the situations as beautiful as he conceived them himself. And if I must confess that M. Delacroix has in some scenes surpassed my own notions, how much more will the reader find all in full life and surpassing his imagination!"'

9. Delacroix, *Journal*, 50 [91] (July 20, 1824). He concludes: 'To make matter stubborn so as to conquer it with patience'.

10. Delacroix, *Journal*, 7 [29] (October 8, 1822). He goes on to explain: 'In painting, as in external nature, proper justice is done to what is finite and to what is

infinite, in other words, to what the soul finds inwardly moving in objects that are known through the senses alone'.

11. This 'Cézannian' motif has been pointed out by Hubert Damisch in his Preface to the *Journal* (and in the further developed version of this text entitled *La peinture en écharpe*. *Delacroix, la photographie* [Brussels: Yves Gaevert, 2001]).

12. Delacroix, *Journal*, 354 [609] (January 13, 1857).

13. Reported by George Sand in *Impressions et souvenirs* [1873] (Paris: C. Lévy, second edition 1896), 77. Delacroix may have in mind this motto of Ingres's: 'The reflection, this little sir who must wait on the edge of my canvas and only enter when called for'.

14. Charles Blanc, *Grammar*.

15. *Hugolian note*: Nothing angered Delacroix more than being proclaimed 'the Victor Hugo of painting'. For 'to utter the great, simple truths and to impress them upon men's minds, there is no need to borrow the style of Victor Hugo, who never came within a hundred miles of truth and simplicity'. *Journal*, 99 [189] (April 5, 1849).

And yet, relations between Delacroix and Hugo are more complex than this in the *longue durée* of French romanticism(s). For in the *Preface to Cromwell*, published by Hugo in 1827 (the year of *Sardanapalus*), a manifesto of romantic literature if there ever was one, Hugo seeks to show how 'the distinction between beauty and ugliness in art doesn't correspond exactly with that in nature', that 'what we call ugliness is a detail of a vast pattern that extends beyond our comprehension, and harmonises [. . .] with the whole of creation', and that 'nothing is "uglier" [in the most trivial sense] than all the Greek and Roman profiles, the patchwork ideal beauty emitted by the second-rate school of David, with its fluffy purplish colouring'. (Victor Hugo, 'Preface to Cromwell', in *The Essential Victor Hugo*, eds. E. H. Blackmore and A. M. Blackmore [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004], 24, 29). These phrases, many equivalents of which may be found in Delacroix's *Journal*, are inscribed in a context that sees Hugo define modern drama by way of the opposition between *life* and *history*, the *chronic* and the *chronological*, whereby it is no longer a matter of recounting, but of *painting what society thinks*. . . . And Baudelaire will be no less implicated here than Delacroix. Forty years on, the scene will have changed to a remarkable extent, since, during a discussion with Arthur Stevens concerning Delacroix in 1868, Hugo criticizes the painter for having sacrificed beauty to expression, exclaiming quite *classically*: 'The passion is there, yes; but why not the face? How would it diminish the gaze if the eye were beautiful? How would it diminish the cry if the mouth were beautiful? How would it diminish thought if the forehead were large?' (Charles Hugo, *Victor Hugo en Zélande* [Paris, 1868], 209–216).

Finally, we should recall that it was Hugo—along with Balzac—who introduced into French literature, around 1830, a notion to which Delacroix could not remain indifferent: the notion of *hallucination*. Identified, quite romantically, with phantasmagorical visions of madness 'which distort every outline, agglomerating objects into unwieldy groups, dilating things into chimeras', this hallucination would intensify the alternative between dream and reality by dramatising the question of the return to reason (*Notre-Dame de Paris*). May we suggest that many things are in play here, for Hugo as for Delacroix, whose research would intersect with an entirely different

inquiry put forward by the Faculty: *Can hallucination coexist with reason, or is it a sure sign of madness?* We shall take up this question below in its proper context.

16. Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1846, II. What is Romanticism?', in *The Mirror of Art*, 44. Baudelaire concludes: 'Thence it follows that there is an obvious contradiction between romanticism and the works of its principal adherents'. See, in the same *Salon*, 'XIII. On M. Ary Scheffer and the Apes of Sentiment', Ibid., 104–108.

17. Where 'even a part of an object is a type of complete unity': a development of the theme of the man-microcosm ('man, it has been said, is a *little world*')—see *Journal*, [448] (August 5, 1854).

18. J.-P. Guillerm, *Couleurs de noir. Le Journal de Delacroix* (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1990), 113.

19. Delacroix, *Journal*, 432 [779] (April 12, 1860).

20. See M. Souriau, *La Préface de Cromwell* (Paris: Bolvin, 1897), 207. We shall discover below the properly vitalist conditions of Delacroix's reappropriation of the 'beautiful'.

21. Delacroix, *Journal*, [449] (August 5, 1854). We find the same observation dated May 7, 1852 (164 [298]), following an argument on the law of analogies governing the microcosmic forms of nature: 'At Tangiers [. . .] where there is a flat beach, the receding tide left upon the sand the imprint of small furrows, so closely resembling the stripes on a tiger's skin that they might have been mistaken for the object itself'. See section 3 of the present chapter.

22. According to the famous descriptions of Gautier and Dumas. We might also cite Maxime du Camp, who writes in his *Souvenirs littéraires*: 'Eugène Delacroix, whose sunken eyes and enormous jowls made one think of a leopard's muzzle'. (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 15, 1882, 250), or Charles Blanc: 'His person [. . .] presented the strange contrast of a lion's mane on a skinny body', C. Blanc, *Un Artiste de mon temps. Eugène Delacroix* [1864] (La Rochelle: Rumeur des Ages, 1998), 8. And finally, Baudelaire: 'The tiger intent on his prey has eyes less bright and muscles less impatiently a-quiver than could be observed when the whole spiritual being of our great painter was hurled upon an idea or was struggling to possess itself of a dream' ('The Life and Work of Eugène Delacroix', in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans., ed. J. Mayne [London and New York: Phaidon, 2012], 58).

23. See R. Huyghe, *Delacroix*, trans. Jonathan Griffin (London: Thames & Hudson, 1963), chapter 2.

24. An expression that indicates well enough the Baron's restorative projection, expressing here no more or less than 'his personal ambition as a painter'. See S. Allard, *Dante et Virgile aux Enfers d'Eugène Delacroix* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux [RMN], 2004), 83 (catalogue of the exhibition at the Louvre, April 9–July 5, 2004). We are therefore very far here from the 'Rubens manqué' with which the *Battle of Taillebourg* in 1837 would be met (*Le Temps*, March 31, 1837). Returning to Gros in his 1846 article, Delacroix will write of him: 'This child of Rubens who did indeed, unfortunately, have the courage to resist all of the magic to which he was secretly inclined' (E. Delacroix, 'Prud'hon', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, November 1846). Gros killed himself after the resounding failure of *Hercules and Diomedes* at the Salon of 1833.

25. In this same Salon Carré had been shown, three years before, Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* (1819 Salon), for which Delacroix had posed in 1818, and against which he had chosen to measure himself with his *Dante and Virgil in Hell*.

26. Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1846, IV. Eugène Delacroix', in *The Mirror of Art*, 52.

27. In what seemed like the only reasoned article on Delacroix's *Dante*, and a truly elegiac one, Adolphe Thiers wrote of Delacroix that 'he flings his figures onto the canvas, he groups and contorts them at will, with all the boldness of Michelangelo and all the fullness of Rubens' (A. Thiers, 'Le Salon de 1822', *Le Constitutionnel*, May 11, 1822. See Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1846', in *The Mirror of Art*, 51–52). In the chapter 'Eugène Delacroix' in his *Histoire du Romantisme*, Théophile Gautier observes: 'It is to the eternal honour of the statesman to have surmised the genius of the painter' (in a note, he cites the passage of Thiers's article on Delacroix).

28. Allard, *Dante et Virgile*, 89–91. The author notes that 'no other painting of Delacroix's had displayed such flamboyance in the dramatic and complementary use of red and green' (12).

29. In Delacroix's own words, in the *Journal*, 230 [394] (December 24, 1853): 'The best head in my picture of Dante was brushed in with tremendous speed and excitement while Pietri was reading me a canto from Dante, one which I knew already, but to which his voice gave an energy that quite electrified me'.

30. Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 112.

31. Blanc, *Un artiste de mon temps*, 11. He continues: 'One admirable and absolutely unexpected thing, then, was the terrible harmony of colours that ran across the whole composition and made it vibrate like a drama—or rather, this lugubrious harmony was the very basis of the tragedy'.

32. See Ten-Doesschate Chu, ''A Science and an Art at Once': Delacroix's Pictorial Theory and Practice', in *The Cambridge Companion to Delacroix*, ed. B. S. Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 100.

33. C. P. Landon, 'Salon de 1822', *Annales du Musée et de l'École moderne des Beaux-Arts*, 1822, vol. 1, 87; E.-J. Delécluze, 'Salon de 1822', *le Moniteur universel*, May 18, 1822 (emphasis added) [*tartouillade*—a painting made with a thick slapdash melange of colours and with little regard for line and composition—Translator's note].

34. Where we once more meet Landon and Delécluze: the first evoking 'a marked system of ugliness' ('Salon de 1824', *Annales du Musée et de l'École moderne des Beaux-Arts*, 1824, vol. 1, 54), the second a 'talent for making things ugly' ('Exposition du Louvre', *Journal des Débats*, October 5, 1824).

35. From the pen of the Davidian critic A. Chauvin: 'Misfortune to the barbarous painter whose deregulated imagination gives birth only to hideous wounds, contortions, and agonies, and who seems to think he can never spill enough blood, cause enough casualties!' (*Salon de 1824* [Paris, 1825], 13). Must we point out the influence of these critiques upon Delacroix's Baudelairean writing, itself a result of the reprise, in painting, of this theme of the 'barbarous'?

36. This line is found in Alexandre Dumas's *Causeries sur Eugène Delacroix et ses oeuvres* (Paris, 1865: republished Paris: Mercure de France, 1996), 50.

37. Alexandre Dumas again, speaking of the *Massacres of Chios*:

> Oh! This time, the die is well and truly cast, the war well and truly declared, the Rubicon well and truly crossed: the young painter breaks with the school of the Republic

> and the Empire; broaching this new earth, Delacroix, like Fernand Cortès, has burned his bridges. [. . .] From this moment on, a rare thing at twenty-five years old, Delacroix would be proclaimed a master, becoming a trendsetter, and would have not students, but disciples, admirers, fanatics. (44)

At the 1824 Salon, Ingres presented the *Vow of Louis XIII*, considered as the 'master's first public victory' (Henri Delaborde).

38. In spite of everything, the painting would be acquired, after much resistance, by the state, under the 'renovationist' pressure of the Comte de Forbin, director of administration of museums and already responsible for the purchase of *Dante and Virgil in Hell*.

39. Baudelaire, 'The Life and Work of Eugène Delacroix', in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, 59.

40. T. Gautier, 'Exposition du Louvre', *La Presse*, March 22, 1838. See also the description provoked by the canvas at the Universal Exhibition of 1855: 'Under a blue sky streaked with yellow, in the middle of the deep azure pales a naked, ravaged, terrain, strewn with the dead, frozen over with clots of blood, where the sun seems to foment the plague amid corruption, the last vengeance of cadavers' (*Le Moniteur Universel*, 1855).

41. Delacroix, 'Des variations du Beau', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1857; republished in *Propos esthétiques* (La Rochelle: Rumeur des Ages, 1995), 61.

42. In the sketch for a letter to Thoré, around 1840, Delacroix wrote: 'They seek in painting only the sculptor's drawing; and this mistake, upon which the whole School of David was based, is still all-powerful'. Citing Guizot's '1810 Salon', in his *Aesthetics* Eugène Véron took up at length the opposition between Ingres's and David's 'sculptural drawing' in its obedience to the ideal of Greek art, and the 'pictorial drawing' that aimed to reinstate 'life and movement'. See E. Véron, *Aesthetics* [1878], trans. W. H. Armstrong (London: Chapman and Hall, 1879), 255–257.

43. Eugène Delacroix, 'Le Poussin', *Le Moniteur universel*, June 30, 1853; republished in *L'Ennemi*, 1986, 64.

44. Delacroix, *Journal*, 425 [766] (February 22, 1860).

45. See Delacroix, *Journal*, 24 [49] (January 26, 1824) [translation modified]: 'In music [. . .] the form carries away the matter. In painting it is just the reverse'.

46. Véron, *Aesthetics*, 254 [translation modified].

47. *Historical note (2)*: According to Le Brun's description:

> This learned painter [Poussin] had shown that he was a true poet, having composed his work according to the rules that the art of poetry had laid down for theatrical plays. [. . .] One can see how these groups of figures, carrying out various actions, are like so many episodes serving what are called *peripeteia*.

'Conférence sur *Les Israélites recueillant la manne dans le désert* de Nicholas Poussin' (November 5, 1667), reprinted in *Les Conférences de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture au XVIIe siècle*, ed. A. Mérot (Paris: Ensba, 1996), 112. We find this term 'peripeteia' again in the assault launched by Chauvin against Delacroix, where he complains of its absence. One is reminded here of the commentary of the anonymous journalist of *La Gazette de France* against *Justice of Trajan* (1840): 'Unity of action is the principle for which M. Delacroix cares the least. Disorder,

exaggerated effects, a rashness in drawing, outrageous colours, here this artist falls from the sublimity of conception into the ridiculousness of a bizarre and overwrought form' ('Exposition des ouvrages des artistes vivants', *La Gazette de France*, April 1, 1840).

48. See Mme de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, II, chapter 4: 'Winckelmann developed true principles now admitted in the arts on the ideal, on that perfected nature whose type is in our imagination and not outside of us'. The Winckelmannian definition of artistic beauty—'*edle Einfalt und stille Größe*'—figured in his *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and in the Art of Sculpture* (1755). Greece was then still under Turkish rule.

49. The reader is referred to Régis Michel's analysis of *Officer of the Horseguard* in 'Le nom de Géricault, ou l'art n'a pas de sexe mais ne parle que de ça', *Géricault*, ed. R. Michel (Paris: RMN, 1992), vol. 1, 6–7.

50. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford and New York: Routledge Classics, 2008), 134.

51. Gautier, 'Exposition du Louvre'.

52. See Régis Michel's observations on the *Massacres of Chios* in the catalogue *Posséder et détruire. Stratégies sexuelles dans l'art d'Occident*, ed. R. Michel (Paris: RMN, 2000), 151–152.

53. Delacroix, *Journal*, 39 [78] (May 7, 1824):

> I who have no love for reasonable painting [. . . .] There is an old leaven working in me, some black depth that must be appeased. Unless I am writhing like a serpent in the coils of a pythoness I am cold. I must recognize this and accept it, and to do so is the greatest happiness. Everything good that I have ever done has come about in this way.

54. Delacroix, 'Prud'hon'. Making reference to the *Lettres écrites de Londres à Canova*, published by Quatremère de Quincy in 1818 (three years after Europe had discovered the Elgin marbles in London), the correspondence from which the above citation is taken, Léon Rosenthal writes: 'Through a remarkable historical paradox, it is at the very moment when the Davidian school was faltering that the Greek antiquity it had advocated, without really knowing anything of it, was revealed to Europe' (L. Rosenthal, *Du Romantisme au Réalisme. La peinture en France de 1830 à 1848* [Paris, 1949; republished Paris: Macula, 1987], 93). The celebrated book by Hittorff (who Delacroix knew) on *Greek Architectural Polychrome* was published in 1831.

55. Delacroix, *Journal*, [644] (February 25, 1857).

56. Recall this thought of Ingres's: 'We do not proceed materially as sculptors, yet we must do sculptural painting', in *Notes et pensées de J.A.D. Ingres*, ed. H. de Laborde (republished Brionne: Gérard Monfort, 1984), 126.

57. E. Delacroix, 'Projet d'article sur le Beau' (the first version of an article that appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 1854, entitled 'Questions sur le Beau'), republished in *Propos esthétiques*, 33.

58. M. Thévoz, *Le Théâtre du crime. Essai sur la peinture de David* (Paris: Minuit, 1989), 40.

59. Quatremère de Quincy, *Essai sur la nature, le but et les moyens de l'imitation dans les Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Treutel et Würtz, 1823), 227.

60. *Endimanchés*: This word of Diderot's can be found in 'Questions sur le beau', 41.

61. L. Vitet, 'Pindare et l'art grec', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, February 1860: copied out by Delacroix in the *Journal* on February 3, 1860 [762]. Undoubtedly, it was in these lines that Delacroix discovered the key idea of his article on Poussin and the spirit of his attack against the 'academic genre' centred on 'the capital pretention of the famous Mengs'. In his 'Salon de 1840', discussing *Trajan*, Prosper Haussard had already written: 'This Trajan, this young cloaked lieutenant, these adolescents wound around the shaft of the column, are of the race of antique statues, but set adrift from their poses and their folds, *flung down from the pedestal into life*, acting upon our blood and our emotions' (*Le Temps*, March 13, 1840) (emphasis added).

62. See Roger de Piles, *The Principles of Painting* (London: J. Osborn, 1743), 87.

63. Delacroix, 'Prud'hon'.

64. Letter to Pierret, February 29, 1832; *Correspondance générale d'Eugène Delacroix*, ed. A. Joubin (Paris: Plon, 1935–1938), vol. 1, 319.

65. Delacroix, *Journal*, 383 [644] (March 7, 1857).

66. See in the *Journal*, dated October 12, 1853, the long argument entitled 'On the Use of the Model' (207–209 [365–367]); and, in the article on Poussin, the genesis of the 'academic genre' from the model erected as the 'tyrant of the composition'.

67. Delacroix, 'Questions sur le Beau', 39.

68. Delacroix, *Journal*, 415 [744] (September 1, 1859).

69. Ibid., 136 [254] (July 21, 1850).

70. Ibid., 42–43 [82] (May 14, 1824).

71. We know that it is in 1825 that Delacroix decides to illustrate *Faust* (the lithographs will be published in 1828; the painting *Mephistopheles Appearing to Faust* will be executed in 1826–1827 and presented at the Salon of 1826–1827).

72. Delacroix, *Journal*, 39 [78] (May 7, 1824).

73. Specifying in a note that 'I write *plague victims* instead of *massacre*, to explain to the critics those flesh-tones to which they have so often and so stupidly objected' (Baudelaire, 'Salon de 1846, IV. Eugène Delacroix', *The Mirror of Art*, 53n).

74. Delacroix, *Journal*, 398 [687] (October 29, 1857).

75. Ibid., 177–178 [318] (January 2, 1853).

76. Delacroix learns from Constable, some twenty years later, that 'the superiority of green of his fields came from the fact that it is composed of many different greens'; see the supplement to the *Journal* [881] (September 28, 1846).

77. M. Schneider, *Un rêve de pierre. Le Radeau de la Méduse. Géricault* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 19: 'no muddled lines, no disjointed spaces, but clear traits, adjoined planes, a light that serves to clarify, not to make one dream'.

78. Delacroix, *Oeuvres littéraires*, vol. 1, 64; cited by Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 130.

79. Delacroix, *Correspondance*, November 30, 1861, to T. Thoré, vol. IV, 286. Delacroix refers to Bonington, and particularly his watercolours.

80. Of which Louis Vitet writes: 'M. Delacroix has just proved that he has not inevitably decided to dedicate his talent exclusively to the cult of the ugly and the bizarre' ('Salon de peinture de 1827', *Le Globe*, November 10, 1827).

81. Delécluze will evoke 'the excessive libertinism of the brush. Thus, this *painting* is but a brilliant sketch', etc. (*Journal des Débats*, December 20, 1827). For his

part, Charles Blanc wonders 'why the artist neglected such an occasion to renounce his uglinesses' (Blanc, *Un artiste de mon temps*, 25). On Delacroix's appropriation of this 'popular' gothic (Byron, Scott, Lewis), see N. Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 'Eugène Delacroix and Popular Culture', in *The Cambridge Companion to Delacroix*, 48–68.

82. A 'genre that died out in antiquity because of the name it was given, a genre become so dear to modern times, one wherein objects of a vulgar nature, everything base and ignoble in the state of society, finds so many admirers, since the senses ask of the arts nothing more than an enjoyment of matter': see Quatremère de Quincy, *Essai sur la nature*, 94. A rhyparography that Quatremère de Quincy (in 1823) could not imagine tackling the 'genre of *historical* subjects' because of 'the truly materialist spirit' that characterises it.

83. Cited by Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 164–165. Delacroix's statement appeared in an argument relating to his 'abstract colour'. This perhaps makes it all the more difficult to claim a *costruzione legittima* that aims to open a 'window' (Alberti), given that the model of the 'carpet' proposes a most radical alternative to the latter.

84. C. Baudelaire, 'The Dandy', in *The Painter of Modern Life*, 26–29. Recall that in a footnote Barbey d'Aurevilly cited certain 'divine lines' of Byron's *Sardanapalus* (Barbey d'Aurevilly, *Of Dandyism and of Beau Brummell*, trans. Douglas Ainsley [London: J. M. Dent, 1897], 124n [*Du Dandysme et de George Brummell* (1845) (Paris, Rivages, 1997), 106]).

85. Barbey D'Aurevilly, *Du Dandysme*, [51—footnote omitted in English translation] (emphasis added). It falls to Théophile Gautier to have celebrated Delacroix as a painter of movement. See, for example, his 'Salon de 1837': 'Among all current painters, M. Delacroix is the one who possesses the most feeling of life and of movement: everything he does breathes and moves with a singular energy and ardour: no one knows how to contort a battle or make a festival whirl like he does' (*La Presse*, March 9, 1937).

86. See D. Johnson, 'Delacroix's dialogue with the French Classical Tradition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Delacroix*, 114–116. In his article published in the same collection, James H. Rubin presents *Sardanapalus* as 'one of the most violent political and extreme sexual fantasies of its times' (J. H. Rubin, 'Delacroix and Romanticism', in *The Cambridge Companion*, 33).

87. Trans. Walsh, in Lee Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugene Delacroix: A Critical Catalogue 1816–1831* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), vol. 1.

88. Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 177.

89. E.–J. Delécluze, 'Exposition au Louvre', *Journal des Débats*, March 21, 1828.

90. L. Vitet, 'Beaux-Arts', *Le Globe*, March 8, 1828.

91. J.–P. Thénot, *Les règles de la perspective critique* (Paris, 1853), 18.

92. Claude Jaeglé has observed that 'the massacres that surround him seem to be a flamboyant image of his own dreams' (C. Jaeglé, *Géricault, Delacroix, la reverie opportune* [Paris, Éditions de l'Épure, second edition, 2005], 22).

93. T. Gautier, 'Eugène Delacroix', *Le Moniteur universel*, November 18, 1864 (reprinted in his *Histoire du Romantisme* [Paris, 1874]).

94. This phrase concludes the order made with Haro on October 29, 1827.

95. Delacroix, *Journal*, 373 [628] (January 25, 1857): under the entry *impasto* in the *Dictionary*.

96. Delacroix, *Journal*, 313 [535] (September 11, 1855).

97. Identified with external perception, 'true hallucination' is a key expression of Hippolyte Taine's, employed against the idealist philosophy of knowledge in his 1870 work *De l'Intelligence* [*On Intelligence,* trans. T. D. Haye (London: L. Reeve, 1871)], which will be the object of many arguments in the following chapters. But this formula was used by Taine in 1857 in a polemical book entitled *Les Philosophes français du xixe siècle*, or, according to the modified title of the third edition, which we consulted, *Les Philosophes classiques du xixe siècle en France* (Paris: Hachette, 1912): 'External perception is a true hallucination' (44). Here, what matters is not so much the inversion (between perception and hallucination) as what it signifies: namely, *a minima*, the centrality of this notion of 'hallucination' as it was developed, from the 1830s onward, by distinguishing it from the category of 'sensory illusions'. Permitting, as a logical and historical consequence, as we shall shortly see, the locution we have ventured of a *truth of hallucination*. A hallucination now distanced from the *picturesque* of a *delirious imagination*, to be deployed at the cutting edge of a 'physiological psychology' leading from Esquirol to Brierre de Boismont.

98. Tony James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

99. E. Esquirol, *Aliénation mentale. Des illusions des aliénés. Question medico-légale sur l'isolement des aliénés* (Paris: Crochard, 1832), 2. It is in the article 'Hallucination' in the *Dictionnaire des sciences médicales* (vol. 20, 1817, 64–71) that Esquirol proposed this first 'scientific' definition of the word: 'A delirious man who has the intimate conviction of an actually perceived sensation, when no external object capable of exciting this sensation is in the reach of his senses, is in a state of hallucination'.

100. James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness*, 77.

101. Brierre de Boismont, *Des hallucinations, ou Histoire raisonnée des apparitions, des visions, des songes, de l'extase, des rêves, du magnétisme et du somnambulisme* (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1845), Preface, vi.

102. This artistic development of 'physiological hallucination' finds its place in the third edition, published in 1862, of *Des hallucinations* . . . All of these citations are given by James in *Dream, Creativity and Madness,* 160–164 ('Brierre de Boismont's "Artistic Hallucination"'). In Taine's article on Balzac we read that 'imaginary beings are not born, do not exist, and do not act, except under the same conditions as real beings. They are born of a systematic agglomeration of an infinity of ideas, as others are from the systematic agglomeration of an infinity of causes'. The paragraph concludes with the phrase cited: 'The intensity of hallucination is the unique source of truth' (reprinted in H. Taine, *Nouveaux Essais de critique et d'histoire* [Paris: Hachette, 1865], 77).

103. Delacroix, *Journal*, [574] (April 6, 1856). One might be reminded here of that citation from Voltaire's *Questions encylopédiques*, given in the *Supplement* to the *Journal* (undated): 'It is the rarest thing for reason to be joined with enthusiasm' [849].

104. Delacroix, *Journal*, 100 [190] (April 7, 1849). In 1824 Delacroix proposes this far from romantic observation: 'What moves men of genius, or rather, what inspires their work, is not new ideas, but their obsession with the idea that what has already been said has not been said enough' (*Journal*, 41 [80] [May 15, 1824]). And far later, under the rubric 'Inspiration—Talent—(*For the Dictionary*)': 'The principal attribute of genius is to coordinate, to compose, to assemble relations, to see them more correctly and more tightly' [*Supplement*, 872]. As if 'The terrible is like the sublime—we must not abuse it' (*Journal*, [623] [January 25, 1857]). Something we might associate with a French dandyism, following 'one of the guiding threads of the nineteenth century'—see Huyghe, *Delacroix*, chapter 5: 'French Dandyism'.

105. See Delacroix, *Journal*, 70–71 [136] (March 1, 1847).

106. Dumas, *Causeries*, 52.

107. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 50.

108. Ibid., 30. Having cited certain texts where Delacroix appears like, and presents himself as, an *artist-thinker*, Léon Rosenthal concludes: 'What is essential in our artist is thought' (*Du Romantisme au Réalisme*, 123–124).

109. T. Gautier, 'Chronique des Beaux-Arts', *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1836. See also the article in *La Presse* on November 22, 1836. 'An idea in painting has not the least relation to an idea in literature'.

110. C. Baudelaire, *Théophile Gautier* (1859), 695.

Note on a *ménage à trois* (Baudelaire/Gautier/Delacroix): In this text, which opens with the young poet's visit to the 'illustrious man' with a 'gaze full of feline reverie', Baudelaire credits Gautier with having given to '*all young people* [. . .] *the love of painting*'. Reading this homage constructed around the opposition between the 'sensibility of the heart' and the 'sensibility of the imagination', which 'knows how to choose, to judge, to compare, to fly from this, seek that', a homage to 'sobriety', to the 'need for order', to the *idée fixe* of Beauty and to the worship of antique Beauty 'in full romantic exuberance', one cannot help thinking that Baudelaire constructs an *Ideal type* in which Gautier's and Delacroix's *image-ideas* end up fusing 'on the wing of an oriental wind'—albeit very much a westernised one. This proximity is not unconnected to the jealous distance that Delacroix manifested more than once in regard to Gautier, whose anachronistic *hugolatry* he found all the more intolerable. See in particular the page of the *Journal* dated June 17, 1855, where Gautier's articles on the English School are criticised—with a strong insistence that 'it was not his observations that gave me the clue to the feelings which I have expressed here'. This deserves our attention in view of the sentence that follows: 'He should have had the courage to demonstrate the beauties of the English School by comparing them with paintings by French artists considered to have similar qualities, but I can find nothing of this in his articles' (301 [515]). The courage to praise the English *on the basis of Delacroix!* Upon whom, according to the interested party, the writer had managed to write some 'splendid articles'. As a sign of recognition, in 1851, Delacroix had offered to Gautier his *Lady Macbeth Sleepwalking*. Knowing of the close relation between studies on somnambulism and the question of hallucination, and hallucinations brought about by hashish, one might see this as an allusion to the 'visions' of Gautier's 'Club des hachichins' (which appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*,

February 1, 1846) and to the article on hashish published in *La Presse* (July 10, 1843)—reprinted in the *Annales médico-psychologiques* (November 1843) and reproduced in J.–J. Moreau de Tours's work *Du hachisch et de l'aliénation mentale: Études psychologiques* (Paris: Masson, 1845). The article concludes as follows: 'To recount an entire hashish hallucination would require a large volume, and a serial writer cannot allow himself to relive the apocalypse!' An obligatory echo of the 'sombre hallucinations of the Apocalypse' engendered by Delacroix, given that the whole 'being' of the poet, under the domination of the drug, 'was injected with colour'? In a last twist, it will be recalled that in 1851 Baudelaire publishes 'Du Vin et du hachish' (in the *Messager de l'Assemblée* on March 7, 8, 11, and 12), the conclusion of which cites this statement of a 'musical theorist': '"The great poets, philosophers, and prophets are beings who through the pure and free exercise of will attain a state in which they are at once cause and effect, subject and object, magnetizer and sleepwalker". I think exactly like him' (343). As does Delacroix.

111. See T. Gautier, 'Exposition du Louvre', *La Presse*, March 22, 1838; 'Salon de 1839', *La Presse,* April 4, 1839; 'Salon de 1841', *Revue de Paris*, April 18, 1841; 'Exposition de 1859', *Le Moniteur universel*, May 21, 1859; 'Eugène Delacroix', *Le Moniteur Universel*, November 18, 1864. All of these texts are collected in C. Baudelaire, T. Gautier, *Correspondances esthétiques sur Delacroix* (Paris: Éditions Olbia, 1998). See also the catalogue edited by Stéphane Guéguan, *Théophile Gautier. La critique en liberté* (Paris: RMN, 1997). The influence of the painter Émile Deroy on Baudelaire's artistic education is generally recognised. See J. Ziegler, 'Émile Deroy (1820–1846) et l'esthétique de Baudelaire', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, May–June 1976. In addition, Georges Roque has proposed a convincing comparison between passages on colour in the 1845 and 1846 Salons with the work of painter and chemist J. F. L. Mérimée (*De la peinture à l'huile* [Paris, 1830]); see G. Roque, *Art et science de la couleur. Chevreul et les peintres, de Delacroix à l'abstraction* (Nîmes: Jacqueline Chambon, 1997), 219–221.

112. Gautier, *Delacroix*. These conclusive lines of the 1864 obituary best sum up Gautier's 'aesthetic' and his 'vision' of Delacroix.

113. Tony James recalls that in the new version of his book *Des Hallucinations . . .* , published in 1862, Brierre de Boismont cites (through the intermediary of an American book by Blanchard Fosgate, *Sleep Psychologically Considered with Reference to Sensation and Memory*, 1850) 'an example from Goethe who, on closing his eyes and lowering his head, caused a flower to appear in the visual field; it did not remain immobile, nor was it like a real flower, but it gave rise to moving kaleidoscopic images' (James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness*, 159).

114. 'Myself, I believe that in the sentence one must above all have an *ocular rhythm*' (Gautier, in the *Journal des Goncourt*, 1862).

115. See Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1846', *Mirror of Art*, 57.

116. See Baudelaire, 'Exposition Universelle of 1855', Ibid., 216. In the 'Salon of 1845' we find the following statement, in reference to the *Sultan of Morocco*: 'We appeal to the honesty of anyone who knows his Louvre to mention a picture by a great colourist in which the colour has as much *spirit* as in M. Delacroix's picture' (Ibid., 7) (emphasis added) [translation modified]. 'Contemplation is possession', as Baudelaire will write in 1859.

117. Even though 'his metaphysics and his inquiries on the soul and on future life are most singular and give us much to think about', Delacroix, *Journal* [582] (May 30, 1857).

118. '*Revery, which is utterly spontaneous*', as Hugo wrote in *Les Misérables*.

119. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1845', *The Mirror of Art*, 3.

120. Gautier, 'Salon de 1839', *La Presse*.

121. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1859, III–V', *Mirror of Art*, 252. In one of his texts on Gautier, Baudelaire evokes the 'riot of sentiment', opposing it to the poetic unity of the idea and expression—for, in the words of the influential critic, '*There are no inexpressible ideas!*'

122. *Mirror of Art*, 46. See Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1846, II. What is Romanticism? III. On Colour'; 'IV. Eugène Delacroix'—a section introduced by these words: 'Romanticism and colour lead me straight to Eugène Delacroix' (Ibid., 50).

123. This is the last page of the *Journal*, dated June 22, 1863, less than two months before Delacroix's death: '[Written in pencil in a small notebook.] The first quality in a picture is to be a festival for the eyes. This does not mean that there need be no reason in it; it is like poetry, which, if it offends the ear, all the meaning in the world will not save from being bad. They speak of *having an ear* for music; not every eye is fit to taste the subtle joys of painting. The eyes of many people are dull or false; they see objects literally, of the exquisite they see nothing' (444 [translation modified] [808–809]).

124. Baudelaire, 'Exposition universelle of 1855', *Mirror of Art*, 218.

125. Charles Baudelaire, *The Flowers of Evil*, trans. James N. McGowan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23.

126. But observe that, in Delacroix, music is absent (see above) in the place we would have most expected it.

127. Delacroix, undated letter of thanks (not included in the *Correspondance générale*, cited in Roque, *Art et science*, 225).

128. See the long description of fabrics with which the story of the discovery of Tangiers opens: Delacroix, *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans le Maroc*, manuscript, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ed. L. Beaumont-Maillet, B. Jobert, and S. Join-Lambert (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 98–99. The passage ends with these lines: 'This description, which perhaps seems a little lengthy, is absolutely necessary in order to comprehend the kind of enthusiastic happiness that I felt upon seeing such an unexpected spectacle'. In his notes, Delacroix relates this phrase of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's: 'There are only two principal divisions among men: long habits and short habits' (130). It is generally thought that this manuscript dates from 1842 to 1844.

129. Guillerm, *Couleurs de noir*, 141–142.

130. É. Faure, *History of Art: Modern Art*, trans. Walter Pach (New York and London: Harper, 1924), 307.

131. Ibid., 310, 316.

132. Delacroix, *Journal*, 34 [69] (April 20, 1824).

133. See P. Vauday's excellent remarks in *La Décolonisation du tableau. Art et politique au xixe siècle (Delacroix, Gauguin, Monet)* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 29sq, against the particularly reductionist analysis of T. Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire. Art in the Service of French Imperialism, 1798–1936* (Princeton: Princeton University

Press, 1998), chapter 4, where the author *applies* to Delacroix the deconstruction of Orientalism prosecuted by Edward Said.

134. Joachim Gasquet, '*What He Told Me . . .* ', in *Conversations with Cézanne*, trans. Julie Lawrence, ed. P. Michael Doran (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001), 141.

135. S. Guéguan, *Delacroix* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998), 37.

136. G. Planche, 'De l'école française au Salon de 1834', *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, April 1834.

137. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1859', *The Mirror of Art*, 239–40.

138. Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 286.

139. 'The orange blouse of the woman lying on the divan gives us a glimpse of the edge of its satin blue lining; the dark violet silk skirt is striped with gold. The negress wears a loincloth of a deep striped blue, a blouse of bright blue and madras orange, three tints which strengthen each other and contend against each other, to the extent that the latter, rendered yet more startling by the negress's dark skin, had to be cut with the background colors, so as not to detach itself too violently. These contrasts, as we can well see, owe to the juxtaposition of complementary and similar colours'. (Blanc, *Delacroix*, 45) Blanc continues: 'A few steps on from *Women of Algiers* we have the *Jewish Wedding in Morocco*. Here the theme changes. Two dominant tones, complementary to each other, red and green, will be the sole focus of the picture' (Ibid., 46). See Signac's almost complete paraphrase in P. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', trans. W. Silverman, in Floyd Ratliff, *Paul Signac and Color in Neo-Impressionism* (New York: Rockefeller University Press, 1992), 193–286: 231–234.

140. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 48.

141. [*Flochetage* is a term invented by Delacroix for the technique used in his later works, often regarded as a precursor to neo-impressionist divided touch and *tachisme*. The paint is applied in multiple unblended spots and broken strokes of contrasting colour, producing an interlaced and broken complex of colour—Translator's note.]

142. See, for example, the *Journal* of January 13, 1857. On the question of starting from the middle, see M. Imdahl*, Couleur. Les Écrits des peintres français de Poussin à Delaunay* (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1996), chapter 7.

143. Ibid., 111.

144. A letter from van Gogh to Theo reports on this movement with the greatest economy of means: 'That saying has a broad meaning—don't paint the local tone—and leaves the painter free to seek colours that form a *whole* and are related to one another, which comes out all the more through contrast to another range of colours'. http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let537/letter.html#translation [translation modified]. This phrase ('*do not paint the local tone*') is Charles Blanc's; his 1864 obituary of Delacroix opens with these words. Recall that in his *Grammar* (published in instalments between 1860 and 1866) Blanc associates the names of Goethe and Delacroix with the law of simultaneous contrast (C. Blanc, *Grammar of Painting and Engraving* 155 [533]). According to John Gage, Charles Blanc would have become conscious of the didactic part of the *Farbenlehre* by way of its English translation by Charles Eastlake, published in 1840 (see J. Gage, *Colour and Culture* [London: Thames & Hudson, 1993], 205).

145. Roque, *Art et science*, 155–156.

146. M.–E. Chevreul, *The Laws of Contrast of Colour and Their Applications to the Arts of Painting, Decoration of Buildings, Mosaic Work, Tapestry and Carpet Weaving, Calico Painting, Dress, Paper Staining, Printing, Military Clothing, Illumination, Landscape, and Flower Gardening, &c.*, trans. John Spanton (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, new edition 1861) [*De la loi du contraste simultané des couleurs, et de l'assortiment des objets colorés, considéré d'après cette loi dans ses rapports avec la peinture, les tapisseries des Gobelins, les tapisseries de Beauvais pour meubles, les tapis, la mosaïque, les vitraux colorés, l'impression des étoffes, l'imprimerie, l'enluminure, la décoration des édifices, l'habillement et l'horticulture* (Paris : Pitois-Levrault, 1839)].

147. Chevreul, *Laws of Contrast of Colour*, preface, xiv.

148. M.-E. Chevreul, 'Sur la généralité de la loi du contraste simultané: réponse de M. Chevreul aux observations de M. Plateau', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Sciences*, vol. 58, 1864, 101; cited by Roque, *Art et science*, 128.

149. Ibid., §16.

150. Ibid., §17.

151. Ibid., §325.

152. Ibid., §38.

153. Ibid., §139.

154. Ibid., §76.

155. Ibid., §174.

156. Chevreul, *Laws of Contrast of Colour*, §166, 46–47.

157. Roque, *Art et science*, 143. The author concludes that 'Chevreul is clearly more conservative in his aesthetic ideas than in his epistemology' (126).

158. Chevreul, *Laws of Contrast of Colour*, §332 (italics added).

159. Ibid., §333 [translation modified].

160. Ibid., §311, 86.

161. Ibid., §321, 91 [translation modified].

162. Ibid., §322, 93.

163. M.–E. Chevreul, *De la méthode* a posteriori *expérimentale et de la généralité de ses expliations* (Paris, 1870), 4.

164. M.-E. Chevreul, *Lettres addressées à M. Villemain sur la méthode en général et sur la définition du mot fait relativement aux sciences aux lettres, aux beaux-arts, etc.* (Paris, 1865), 64. Here we should recall Goethe's *Maxim* 487, cited in the first chapter: 'The most important thing to remember is that all fact is already theory' (Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, Hamburger Ausgabe, Bd. XII, 432).

165. Chevreul, *Laws of Contrast of Colour*, §301, 82 (emphasis added).

166. Chevreul, *De la loi du contraste simultané,* §324 [omitted from English translation].

167. Cited by Roque, *Art et science*, 247. In this intervention, published in *Problèmes de la couleur*, ed. I. Meyerson (Paris: École Pratique des Hautes Études, 1957), Schapiro affirms that 'if we read Chevreul carefully, we can see that it has nothing to do with Impressionism or Neo-Impressionism. . . . It is not necessary, indeed, to put some orange into a green that is close to a blue, for the proximity of these two colors will induce this disruption anyway' (248).

168. See the anecdote reported by Roque in chapter 11 of his *Art et science de la couleur*: 'Horace ou Madame Vernet?'

169. See Huyghe, *Delacroix*, 165–166.

170. 'When the weavers weave those fabrics that I believe they call cheviots, and also the singular Scottish multicoloured tartan fabrics—then they try, as you know, to get singular broken colours and greys in the cheviots—or to get the very brightest colours in balance against one another in the multicoloured tartans so that, rather than the fabric clashing, the overall effect of the pattern is harmonious from a distance'. Letter to Theo, April 30, 1885, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let497/letter.html.

171. Victor Cousin's eclecticism had been the 'official philosophy' since the 1830 Revolution. Taine dedicates no less than five chapters (of particularly vigorous tone) to Victor Cousin in his *Philosophes classiques du xixe siècle en France. . . .*

172. Delacroix, *Journal*, 190–191 [337–338] (May 4, 1853).

173. Delacroix, *Journal*, [653–655] (March 29, 1857).

174. Delacroix, *Journal*, 228 [389] (December 7, 1853) (emphasis added).

175. A beyond, which, to van Gogh's eyes, is Delacroix's 'natural' place.

176. Stéphane Guégan introduces the concept of 'turpitude' in reference to Delacroix's red, in his *Delacroix*, 113.

177. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 43. Let us remark, however, with Guila Ballas, that Chevreul includes in *l'art du clair-obscur* the treatment of colour according to the laws of simultaneous contrast and reflections—and that in this, non-academic, sense, 'Delacroix also may be classified among the painters of chiaroscuro' (Ballas, *La couleur dans la peinture moderne*, 42). In this light, see again *Women of Algiers*.

178. See Guégan, *Delacroix*, 106.

179. But he did make the voyage to England. . . .

180. This is what comes out of Delacroix's remarks on the pre-eminence of *liaison* over outline in his *Journal*, January 13, 1857.

181. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 49. Hence, 'what makes for the beauty of this industry [painting] consists above all in the things which speech is not adept at expressing' (letter from Delacroix to George Sand, November 20, 1945).

182. Delacroix, *Journal*, 278 [477] (September 23, 1854).

183. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 49 (emphasis added). The example of *Women of Algiers* follows. The passage reappears with very slight variations in the *Grammar*, 162 [537].

184. Chevreul, *Law of Contrast of Colours*, §378 [omitted from English translation].

185. Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1845, Delacroix. 2. Last Words of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius', *Mirror of Art*, 5 (815–816) (Baudelaire's emphasis) [translation modified].

186. C. Blanc, *Grammaire des arts décoratifs. Décoration intérieure de la maison*, new edition, with a new introduction on the general laws of ornamentation (Paris: H. Loones, 1882), 124. Cited by Roque, *Art et science*, 234. Baudelaire had observed that 'Delacroix's pictures have something of the colour proper to oriental landscapes and interiors' (*Mirror of Art*, 327). Paul Signac, who cites this in his manifesto—*From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism*—adopts from Charles Blanc an 'orientalist' approach to Delacroix: the painter's (1832) voyage to Morocco 'was to be still more rewarding to him than his visit to England [where he had discovered Constable and

Turner]. He came back dazzled by the light and intoxicated by the harmony and power of Oriental color. He studied the colors of carpets, fabrics, and faience' (228).

187. See Blanc, *Delacroix*, 41–43. Roque observes quite correctly that this scientific basis saves Delacroix (partly) from the discredit into which colour had fallen in the opinion of this partisan of Ingres, and from the masculine stability of drawing (chapter 14). This is the great principle according to which 'drawing must retain its preponderance over colour. If it were otherwise, painting would risk its ruin; it would be lost through colour as humanity was lost through Eve' (Blanc, *Grammaire*, 53 [passage omitted in English translation]). As for Delacroix's direct knowledge of the works of Chevreul, we have no trace of it prior to the painter's acquisition of a book of notes taken by an anonymous audience-member during the conferences given by the chemist at the Gobelins during winter 1847–1848 (anonymous manuscript, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des dessins [Ms. I d 80]).

188. E. Delacroix, *Album de voyage Espagne, Maroc, Algérie*, manuscript, Musée Condé, Chantilly, 1834 (Ms. 390). Max Imdahl quite legitimately relates Delacroix's triangle to Goethe's schema (Imdahl, *Couleur*, 109).

189. This is what John Ruskin claims in his *Elements of Drawing* (1857): 'The only certain fact about dark sides is, that their colour will be changeful, and that a picture which gives them merely darker shades of the color of the light sides must assuredly be bad' (*The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. Cook and A. Wedderburn [London 1903–1910], vol. 15, 55). Ruskin's work is treated at length in chapter 7 ('Testimonies') of Signac's manifesto; Signac belatedly completed the translation undertaken by Cross. But the French public had been able to encounter Ruskin's theory of colour—with his argument on optical mixing and divided colour—in Ogden Rood's work *Modern Chromatics*, translated in 1881 under the title *Théorie scientifique des couleurs*.

190. Delacroix, *Journal*, 244 [418] (April 29 1854) (emphasis added).

191. E. Delacroix, *Oeuvres littéraires*, vol. 1, 71–72. Roque highlights 'the hypothesis of optical mixing' on the basis of the 'law of decomposition' (Roque, *Art et science*, 209–211).

192. In the words of Delacroix, in reference to Ingres's *Stratonice* in a conversation with Chopin in 1841, terms reported by George Sand in his *Impressions et souvenirs* (Paris, 1873); cited in Guillerm, 168.

193. The shadows of *Women of Algiers* contain no complementaries of the dominant tones.

194. In the *Journal*, on November 3, 1850:

> It would seem that the warmer the lighter tones, the more nature exaggerates the contrasting grey, for example, the half-tints in Arabs and people with bronzed complexions. What made this effect appear so vivid in the landscape was precisely this law of contrast. I noticed the same phenomena at sunset, yesterday evening [. . .], it is more brilliant and striking than at midday, only because the contrasts are sharper. The grey of the clouds in the evening verges on *blue*; the clear parts of the sky are bright *yellow* or orange. The general rule is, *the greater the contrast, the more brilliant the effect*. (146 [269])

195. Recall that Delacroix had reported many times before the strong 'impression' made upon him by Constable and his gradations of tone at the time when he was painting the *Massacre of Chios*. 'Constable says that the superiority of green of his

fields came from the fact that it is composed of many different greens. What makes the greenery of common landscapists lack intensity and life is that they ordinarily use a uniform tint. *What he says here of the green of fields can be applied to all tones*' (Delacroix, *Journal*, [881] (September 23, 1846) (emphasis added) [omitted from English translation]). Hence 'everything depends on the beholder standing at a proper distance to look at the picture. At a certain distance touch blends into the whole effect, but gives an accent to the painting which the blending of colours alone cannot produce' (356 [612] [January 13, 1857]).

196. Delacroix, *Journal*, 352 [607] (January 11, 1857).

197. See Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 82. We leave entirely aside here the question of whether Signac's neo-impressionism realises this programme. . . . More than a few words in response to this question follow in chapter 4.

198. Delacroix, *Journal*, 135 [253] (July 21, 1850).

199. Delacroix, *Journal*, January 1, 1861: 'Although this went against the law that demands cold highlights, the contrast of the yellow on the violet tone produced the effect satisfactorily' (438 [798]).

200. Delacroix, *Journal*, 396–398 [687] (October 29, 1857) [omitted in English translation].

201. (All of the citations given are from Signac.) Otherwise, as in David, paintings appear 'earthy, bleak and lifeless. *Earth you are and to earth you shall return*'. And, as Delacroix explains,

> The tones which Rubens produced with strong, fresh colours, such as brilliant *greens*, *ultramarines*, etc., David and his school think they can reproduce using *black* and *white* to make blue, *black* and *yellow* for *green*, *red ochre* and *black* for *violet*, and so on. And again, David uses earth colours, *umber* or *Cassel earths*, *ochres*, etc. Each of these near-greens and near-blues plays its part in this attenuated scale of colour, especially when the picture is seen in a strong light which penetrates the molecules of paint and brings out all the brilliance of which they are capable. If the picture is in shadow however, or placed in oblique lighting, the earth colours become earthy once more, and the tones *no longer play*, so to speak. (Delacroix, *Journal*, 400–401 [691] [November 13, 1857]) (Emphasis in the original)

202. Article published in the *Mercure de France*, February 1, 1910; reprinted in É. Bernard, *Propos sur l'art* (Paris: Séguier, 1994), vol. 2, 240–250.

203. On this point, see the remarks of Michele Hannoosh, *Painting and the* Journal *of Eugène Delacroix* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 90–92.

204. Delacroix, *Journal*, 362 [617] (January 13, 1857).

205. Cf. Delacroix, *Journal*, 64 [124] (January 27, 1847).

206. Delacroix, *Journal*, 362 [617] (January 13, 1857).

207. See again, in the *Oeuvres littéraires* (vol. 1, 88): 'It seemed to him [the author of the *Dictionary*] that a dictionary was not a book, even when it was all written by the same hand'; and in the *Supplement* to the *Journal* (undated): 'There are so many books that one does not read because they wish to be books. The excessive extent, the length, is tiring. Nothing is more important for the writer than this proportion. When,

like the painter, he presents his ideas successively, a bad division, too many details, belabour the conception' [867].

208. A term used by Paul de Saint Victor on the occasion of the exhibition of the second *Abduction of Rebecca* in the 'Salon of 1859'.

209. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 36.

210. Cited, after Piron, by George P. Mras, who connects the phrase with this passage from Diderot's *Salon of 1761*: 'Colour is in the picture what style is in the piece of literature' (G. P. Mras, *Eugene Delacroix's Theory of Art* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996], 120).

211. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 38. The *Death of Saint John the Baptist* belongs to the cupola of *Theology* in the library of the Palais Bourbon (completed in 1847). Concerning the *Massacre of Chios*, Blanc already noted that 'a *sabretache* has been put in the corner solely because in that place the painter needed a mass of orange' (Blanc, *Grammar*, 168 [541]).

212. Delacroix, *Journal*, 398 [688] (November 4, 1857).

213. Blanc, *Grammar*, 161.

214. Gautier, 'Salon de 1837'.

215. Delacroix, *Souvenirs d'un voyage du Maroc*, 100.

216. Gautier, 'Exposition Universelle de 1855'. Gautier writes of the *Convulsionnistes* (sic) *de Tanger*.

217. Blanc, *Grammar*, 160–161.

218. Compare with the 1832 watercolour in the album made for the Comte de Mornay.

219. Which would terrorize Delacroix during the events of 1848 and dispose him to a very actively 'counter-revolutionary' attitude; see the letter to Mme de Forget, dated July 1848.

220. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 62.

221. Blanc, *Grammar*, 169 [543] (emphasis added) [translation modified]. We read in the 'Principles' of the work: 'Drawing has this [. . .] advantage over colour, that the latter is relative, whereas form is absolute' [54—omitted from English translation]. In his *Aesthetics*, Eugène Véron skewers the 'byzantinism' of this 'doubly false' argument: 'That which is relative is not colour, *it is our eye*': 'This modification is equally applicable in the case of form' (Véron, *Aesthetics*, 250n1).

222. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 38.

223. Thus, 'By knowing these laws, by having studied them profoundly, after having intuitively divined them, Eugène Delacroix became one of the greatest colorists of modern times, one might even say the greatest' (Blanc, *Grammar*, 166 [534] [translation modified]).

224. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 22.

225. See, for example, *From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism*, Part II, 12:

> If the casket shines more brightly than the jewels it is because Delacroix has made the smallest surfaces of the fabrics, the door-curtains, the carpets, and the ceramics shimmer, by adding to them numerous minute details and little adornments, in multiple coloring which either calms down or stirs up these areas of the painting. (Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 234)

226. Charles Blanc wrote of this 'reform of colour' that it was 'entirely due to Eugène Delacroix' (*Delacroix*, 21).

227. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 214 (Part I, 9).

228. Blanc, *Grammar*, 168–169 [541] [translation modified].

229. It did not escape Blanc that colourists 'exaggerate the importance of landscape' (Ibid., 169 [542]).

230. Blanc, *Delacroix*, 22.

231. After Moreau de Tours (and Théophile Gautier), cerebral 'excitation' is considered as *the essential cause of hallucinations*. See James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness*, 108–109.

232. *The Combat of the Giaour and the Pasha* had been rejected from the Salon of 1827–1828. Yet more furious, the 1835 version shows an extraordinary combat of horses.

233. See T. Gautier, *Eugène Delacroix*, 1864: 'From this solemn and triumphal date, critics were silenced: it became bad taste to deny such obvious genius'. Above all, it became 'counterproductive' to attack head-on a painter who was recognised as a 'national treasure' by Napoleon III. In its 'universal' form, the Exhibition of 1855 was the very opposite of the 'democratic and revolutionary institution' recommended by the republican Delacroix in *La Liberté* in the 1830s: 'Here there are artists and electors both, which necessitates, at a certain point, an account of the conduct of their representatives; as deputies who wish to know what has been done with the blood and sweat of a people' (E. Delacroix, 'Exposition. Ceux qui veulent savoir ce qu'on fait du sang et des sueurs d'un peuple', *La Liberté. Revue des Arts*, January 15, 1833). We can better understand then how Delacroix could have been regarded as the 'Proudhon of colour' and the 'Robespierre of art' (*Liberty Leading the People* is shown at the 1831 Salon). Again, we read in the *Journal*, on February 5, 1849, that Baudelaire 'jumped to the subject of Proudhon, whom he admires and calls the idol of the people. His views seem exceedingly modern and progressive' (91 [175]).

234. See the *Journal*, 355 [610–611] (January 13, 1857), in the entry *Horse, animals* in the *Dictionary*: 'Should not be treated with the accuracy of a zoological drawing, especially when the painting or sculpture is in the grand manner. Géricault displays too much learning. Rubens and Gros are superior. Barye's lions, poor'.

235. Gautier, 'Exposition universelle de 1855'.

236. Maxime du Camp, *Les Beaux-Arts à l'Exposition universelle de 1855* (Paris, 1855), 115–116.

237. P. Petroz, 'Exposition universelle des Beaux-Arts', *La Presse*, June 5, 1855.

238. Delacroix, *Journal*, 59 [121] (January 25, 1847).

239. As Pierre Petroz writes,

> If [. . .] the union of order and movement is the necessary condition of every truly beautiful work of art, *Lion Hunt* possesses none of the elements of beauty. The almost incomprehensible composition leaves one to guess at two men on the left and an upturned horse below a lion which is rather clumsily attacking a cavalier mounted on a mettlesome horse; another cavalier directs his lance against a lion crouched at the rump of another horse. This strange confusion completely lacks M. Delacroix's usual qualities. (Petroz, 'Exposition universelle')

240. On this point, see Jacques Le Rider's remark in *Les couleurs et les mots* (Paris: PUF, 1997), 170.

241. Delacroix, *Journal*, [292–293] (February 24, 1852). Eugène Véron cites this passage from Théophile Syvestre in an argument on Delacroix's 'vocation': 'What would you think of a sculptor who, having a medallion to produce, a head in profile, should execute it by simply drawing the features upon his board, and then filling in the circumscribed space with clay! He could not really convey, with his traced line, the real projections of the living figure' (Véron, *Aesthetics*, 265). Sébastian Allard produces an interesting parallel between Delacroix and Rodin at the end of his study on *Dante and Virgil in Hell* (*Dante et Virgile*, 96–103).

242. Y. Bonnefoy, 'La couleur sous le manteaux d'encre', in *Dessin, couleur et lumière* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1995), 216; cited by J. Le Rider, ibid.

243. P. Mantz, 'Exposition Universelle, Le Salon de 1855', *Revue française*, 1855.

244. Blanc, *Grammar*, 225 [translation modified].

245. It is with the account of this visit to the Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle that the *Journal* begins again, having been interrupted in June 1832, on January 19, 1847 (57 [117]). It would be of singular interest to develop further the relation to the zoological 'revelation' of the *fauve* couplet Matisse-Derain. Matisse will in fact propose to 'abolish the visit to the School [the *École des Beaux-Arts*] in favour of a long visit to the Zoological gardens', explaining that 'the students would there learn, through constant observation, the secrets of embryonic life, of the first stirrings. There they would acquire little by little that fluidity that true artists possess'. H. Matisse, reported by A. Verdet in *Prestiges de Matisse* (Paris: Emile-Paul, 1952); reprinted in H. Matisse, *Écrits et propos sur l'art*, ed. Dominique Fourcade, revised and corrected edition (Paris: Hermann, 1972), 81n8.

246. According to Rembrandt's teaching, which has not been sufficiently emphasised as the source of inspiration for Delacroix's *hunt*s: 'With Rembrandt indeed—and this is perfection itself—the background and figures are one' (*Journal*, 252 [444] [July 29, 1854]). Gautier will write in his posthumous homage: 'In art, we know of only Delacroix who had this profound and indissoluble unity. This is owing to the fact that both great masters created through a sort of interior vision, which they had the gift of rendering visible through the means that they possessed, and not through the immediate study of the subject'. T. Gautier, 'Eugène Delacroix', *Le Moniteur universel*, November 18, 1864.

247. Guégan, *Delacroix*, 91. We should cite at least these lines of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's:

> The species is not fixed, and reappears in the same form, like its parents, only by virtue of the maintenance of the conditional state of its ambient milieu: for, given the importance of the latter, and under its influence, there are almost no changes that are impossible in its regard. I dedicated to the demonstration of this principle, and communicated in March 1831 to the Academy of Sciences, an extended memoir. [. . .] In this writing as in previous ones [. . .] I seek the ways and means of the metamorphosis of organs. (Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, *Études progressives d'un naturaliste* [Paris: Roret, 1835], 107)

248. Delacroix, *Supplement* to the *Journal*, undated (867).

249. Delacroix, *Journal*, 257, [448–449] (August 5, 1854) [some parts of the cited passage are omitted in the English translation; translation modified].

250. Delacroix, *Journal*, 164–165 [298] (May 6, 1852).

251. Delacroix, *Journal*, [535] (September 7, 1855).

252. Leibniz, 'The New System of the Nature of Substances', in *Leibniz's 'New System' and Associated Contemporary Texts*, ed. R. S. Woolhouse and Richard Francks (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 18 [translation modified]. Leibniz specifies, it is true, that these internal perceptions 'are in the soul itself [qua created firstly by God] *and not in the brain* or in the subtle parts of the body' (Ibid.). Here Leibniz participates in the classical world that he transforms, carrying out the greatest deformation of it. For how are we to read 'the soul, *or any other real unity*'? (Ibid., 17).

253. Baudelaire, 'Reflections on my Contemporaries, 1. Victor Hugo', *The Mirror of Art*, 705. *Correspondence* is the central notion of Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*.

254. Delacroix, *Journal*, [697] (November 21, 1857). That is, the same year in which Swedenborg's *Treatise on Representations and Correspondences*—the true key to the *Arcana Coelestia*—appeared in a translation by J.-F.-E. Le Boys des Guays. We should point out that in his scientific works preceding the decisive vision of 1745, Swedenborg associated the cerebral cortex with psychic activity; in the *Treatise*, see the 'Correspondence with the Brain and the Cerebellum in The Great Man' (art. 4039–4237 of the *Arcana Coelestia*). http://www.swedenborg.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/swedenborg_foundation_arcana_coelestia_05.pdf.

255. Delacroix, *Journal*, [709] (February 23, 1858). In his *Philosophical Lectures in Transcendental Philosophy (1800–1801)*, Friedrich Schlegel had similarly written, 'One cannot admit of absolute truth'.

256. Delacroix, *Journal*, 105 [199] (July 15, 1849).

257. A *sentiment* which Kant writes in French. For example, in *Reflection* 782: 'The property which a man has of not being able to judge (*beurteilen*) of particular except in the universal is *sentiment*'.

258. I. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. W. S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1987), 71 (§14).

259. Refer to §51 for the distinction between the *figurative arts*, which include painting, and the 'art of colours'—or the 'artistic play of visual sensations'—compared to music under the rubric of the 'art of the *beautiful play of sensations*'.

260. Ibid., 259 (§46).

261. On this point, see the convincing observations of L. Guillermit, *L'élucidation critique du jugement de gout selon Kant* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1986), 38–39.

262. Ibid., 76 (§16), 221 (§58).

263. Ibid., 192n59 (§51); 223 (§58).

264. O. Chedin, *Sur l'esthétique de Kant et la théorie critique de la representation* (Paris: Vrin, 1982), 243.

265. See G. Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneaopolis, MN: Minnesota, 2003), 57. J.-M. Schaeffer recalls quite rightly that the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgement* is inscribed 'within an *already* partly preromantic artistic conjuncture' (J.-M. Schaeffer, *L'art de l'âge moderne* [Paris: Gallimard, 1992]), 29.

266. See Guillermit, *L'élucidation critique*, 39: 'Thus, as paradoxical as the affirmation may seem when one takes the words literally, it is precisely to distance himself from *Gefühl* that Kant introduces the French word "*sentiment*"'. Commentary on *Reflection* 782, cited above, dated between 1772 and 1777, an essential milestone on the road to 'the critical invention of aesthetics'.

267. Schaeffer, *L'art de l'âge moderne*, 65.

268. 'In painting in the broad sense I would also include [along with gardening] the decoration of rooms with tapestries, decorations, and all beautiful furnishings whose sole function is to be *looked at*' (Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 192 [§51]).

269. See *Critique of Judgment*, 169 (§42):

> The charms in beautiful nature, which we so often find fused, as it were, with beautiful form, belong either to the modifications of light (in coloring) or of sound (in tones). For these are the only sensations *that allow not merely for a feeling of sense*, but also for reflection on the form of these modifications of the senses, *so that they contain, as it were, a language* in which nature speaks to us *and which seems to have a higher meaning*. Thus a lily's white color seems to attune the mind to ideas of innocence, and the seven colors [of the spectrum], from red to violet, [similarly seem to attune it, respectively, to the ideas of] (1) sublimity, (2) courage, (3) candor, (4) friendliness, (5) modesty, (6) constancy, and (7) tenderness.

270. See §16 on the difference between the 'two types of beauty: free beauty (*pulchritude vaga*) and mere accessory beauty (*pulchritude adhaerens*)'.

271. H. Taine, 'Léonard de Vinci', *Revue des cours littéraires*, May 27, 1865: republished in *Philosophie de l'art* (Paris: Fayard, 1985), 478–479.

272. Kant, *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, 181 (§49): 'On the Powers of the Mind Which Constitute Genius'. On poetry, see §53: 'Among all the arts *poetry* holds the highest rank. (It owes its origin almost entirely to genius.)' (196).

273. Delacroix, *Journal*, 389 [663] (May 16, 1857).

274. Which stands in Kant for a definition of '*painting proper*' (*Critique of Judgment*, 192 [§51] [translation modified]).

275. G. Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (London and New York: Verso, 1998), Chapter 15: 'To have Done with Judgment' (on the difference between *struggle-against* and *struggle-between*).

276. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, §6 and §9.

277. See *Critique of Judgment*, §42.

278. In a letter to Villot on January 20, 1839, where Delacroix reveals to the 'philologist' his plan to paint 'Commodus expiring in the fangs of ferocious beasts. I pray, give me some details'.

279. See Huyghe's commentary, *Delacroix*, 470–471. We again cite Théophile Gautier who meets the *Basket of Flowers Overturned in a Park* and the *Vase of Flowers on a Console* presented at the 1849 Salon with the following:

> It is quite simply an orgy of the palette, a treat of colour, bestowed upon the eyes. What can also be praised in these two paintings, apart from the merit of the tint, is the printed style of the flowers, usually treated in an entirely botanical fashion, with no attention to their attitude, their allure, their physiognomy, or their character. Each flower has its own particular expression, there are gay flowers, sad flowers, silent, loud, impudent, modest,

bashful and lascivious flowers [. . .] all things that vulgar flower painters, obsessed with the details, fail to capture.

280. Before concluding: 'My favourite painter: Delacroix'. See A. Artaud, 'Le peintre le plus representative du genie de la race et le sculpteur' (1922–1924?), *Oeuvres completes*, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), 217–218.

281. Goethe, *Colour Theory*, §699 [omitted from English translation].

282. As will be recalled, what is lacking in the rainbow is the *essential colour*, pure red—see Goethe, *Colour Theory*, 177 (§814) [see also note 90, above].

283. Delacroix, *Journal*, 122–123 [234] (April 30, 1850).

284. Delacroix, *Journal*, 94 [182] (March 5, 1849).

285. Matisse, we should note, takes these formulae to the letter in an overall movement no less 'zoologically' inflected toward the '*rapprochement between vegetable-animal-human*' brought about by the identity of drawing and colour. See E. Alliez, J-.C. Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse, Portrait de l'artiste en hyperfauve* (Paris: Le Passage, 2005).

286. Letter from Taine to Flaubert, November 1866, published in *Correspondance de Flaubert*, ed. J. Bruneau (Paris: Gallimard, vol. 3, 1991), 1425–1426. The question posed by Taine was: 'Are there moments when you confuse the intensive imagination with the real object?' Flaubert responds by putting forward a continuity between the 'internal image' and the 'objective reality of things', since one is as 'true' as the other (Letter from Flaubert to Taine, November 1866, Ibid., 561–563). Paolo Tortonese, who cites these texts, indicates that we should perhaps read 'intensive image' rather than 'internal image'; see P. Tortonese, 'Au-delà de l'illusion: l'art sans lacunes', in *Les arts de l'hallucination*, ed. D. Pesenti Campagnoni and P. Tortonese (Paris: Presse de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2001), 36–38.

287. Delacroix, *Journal*, 209 [366] (October 12, 1853). Here, we read that 'the true painter is one whose imagination speaks before everything else' (207).

288. Delacroix, *Journal*, 192 [341] (May 9, 1853).

289. Delacroix, *Journal*, 216 [375] (October 26, 1853) (emphasis added).

290. Delacroix, *Journal*, 239–240 [414] (April 23, 1854). And in conclusion: 'Here, it becomes even more obvious that the disadvantages of giving too much interest to details by grace of charm in execution is that at a later stage you bitterly regret having to sacrifice them when they spoil the whole effect'. See also *Journal*, 70–71 [137–138] (March 1–2, 1847): 'When I come to put in the details, how am I going to preserve this impression of unity that results from very simple masses?'

291. A remarkable insight into the community of horse and wild animal can be found in the Moroccan tale of the two warhorses—see Delacroix, *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans le Maroc*, 117–119: 'It was a beast as ferocious as a tiger, in the form of a horse'.

292. Delacroix, *Journal*, 398 [350] (May 21, 1853). The Genius of Rembrandt who 'did not require his swiftly moving point to give a heavy rendering even in essential passages'.

293. On the tinctural procedure used to obtain 'Turkey red', see M. Brusatin, *Histoire des couleurs* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996), 127.

294. Delacroix, *Journal*, 266–267 [461] (September 2, 1854).

295. Delacroix, *Journal*, 237 [408] (April 4, 1854).

296. Delacroix, *Correspondence générale*, vol. 4, 276.

297. Note that photography itself ends up becoming one of these troubling occasions for the painter, who had sketched a great deal from photographs and who preferred the imperfections of the calotype to the precision of the daguerreotype (but what he notes in his *Journal*, dated September 1, 1859, applies to photography *tout court*: 'The most striking photographs are those in which certain gaps are left, owing to the failure of the process itself to give a complete rendering. Such gaps bring relief to the eyes' [415 (744)]). Let us also cite this remark by Dutilleux:

> I possess an album composed of model's poses, men and women, which were taken under his direction, seized under his eyes by the lens. . . . An incredible phenomenon! The choice of nature, the pose, the distribution of light, the torsion of the limbs are so singular, so intentional that one could say of many of these prints that they were taken after the very originals of the master. *The artist is in some way sovereign master of the machine and of the content*. The influence of the ideal that he bears within him transforms into vanquished heroes and dreamers, nervous and panting nymphs, models who cost three francs per session. (Cited by H. Zerner, 'Delacroix, la photographie, le dessin', *Quarante-huit/Quatorze* 4 [1992], 11)

298. Delacroix, *Journal*, 163 [297] (May 5, 1852).

299. On these Saint-Sulpice paintings considered to be Delacroix's last testament, see Hannoosh, chapter 6, 'The Treasure of the Temple: Saint-Sulpice'.

300. Delacroix, *Journal*, 213 [372] (October 20, 1853). Delacroix wrote: 'This type of emotion proper to painting is *tangible* in some way' (author's emphasis).

301. Ibid. (author's emphasis).

302. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1846', in *The Mirror of Art*, 67.

303. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1845', Ibid., 4.

304. Allard, *Dante et Virgile*, 59.

Manet, *The Chair* (illustration for *The Raven*, 1875)
Proof on China paper, 29 × 27.6 cm
Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Paris

Chapter 3

On the New Path of the Contemporary

The Manet Plane

> If, nevertheless, anxiety is stirred by I don't know what shadowy reflection, hardly separable from the surface available to the retina—it attracts suspicion: the pundits among the public, averring that this has to be stopped, opine, with due gravitas, that, truly, the tenor is unintelligible.
>
> —Mallarmé, 'The Mystery in Letters'

> Everything effective in history is interrupted, there's little transfusion.
>
> —Mallarmé, 'Catholicism'

> The truth is that we have no duty other than to extract from our epoch that which it offers to us.
>
> —Manet, comment reported by Antonin Proust

1

Given the renewed esteem for still life in the New Painting,[1] there would be nothing extraordinary in painting a bunch of asparagus, as Manet did in 1880, had the painter not produced an extra spear of asparagus that adds to the triviality of the painted bunch—as Thierry de Duve has quite rightly observed—'without any of the artifices that, even for Chardin, still gave it class and distinction'.[2] The painter bestows this spear on the buyer, Charles Ephrussi, reminding him that, since he paid over the asking price, 'there was one missing from your bunch' (*Bunch of Asparagus*, 1880, 46 × 55 cm;

Asparagus, 1880, 16.5 × 21.5 cm). Had Ephrussi meant with this overpayment to manifest the excess of 'pure' painting-value ('without any of the artifices') over exchange value and its numeration? In any case, what the buyer will get for his money, along with and over and above the *whatever* that had just made its entrance onto the pictorial scene,[3] is not so much one more painting as a *painting of painting* that completes the first only in so far as it proposes a radical voiding of it—and thus the stripping bare/throwing into crisis of The Painting as such—at the same time calling attention to the link between painting and monetary economy through the formulation of a lack which the extra sign—a spear of asparagus foreign to the nicely bound and *complete* bunch offered for sale—makes appear *inside and outside of the traded painting*. Accompanied by the painter's remark, the monetary sign is thus rendered legible as whatever value, while painting accedes *in fact* to its 'whatever' status only by way of a supplementary sign locating the painting's value in a pictorial ideality reduced to an object to be seen which de-idealises the commercial exchange. Lack and excess: the buyer will always remain indebted, and whatever he pays, the painter will always give him more even as he gives him less in terms of representative image (through the *mise en abyme* of the image within the painting). Or, to put it differently: since the supplement exposes painting-value to the *full extent* of a monetary exchange whose supposed lack it will make up for through an addition that cannot but remain external to it—in the double impossibility of the use-value of what is represented and the exchange-value of the artwork stripped bare—the single asparagus spear, in its artificial value disjoined from nature and from its commerce alike, was decidedly one too many to be included in the bouquet.[4]

'Apotheosized'[5] by Manet in a magnificent *Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé* (1876) with a Nietzschean moustache that draws the spectator's eye towards the blank sheets upon which the poet's hand rests, a cigar (in place of the 'scribe's plume') 'burning with much artifice'[6] between his fingers, Mallarmé will announce, will formalise this *blank operation* as 'Prose', separating from garden beds the irises and the lilies trimmed, 'ordinarily', 'with a clear contour'—'this breach'.[7] Since 'everything is summed between Aesthetics and Political Economy'.[8] we must proclaim the 'unique time in the world' of an unprecedented century in which everything is a matter of commodity and currency, a matter of 'the highly vain universal deity with neither exterior nor pomp';[9] and must consequently renounce 'her ecstasy' before the 'sepulchre' wherein lies Beauty fated to Nothingness 'by too tall gladioli' that veil its name.[10] Distanced from the vivacious and beautiful day by the abstraction of the Aspect that tears flowers from their simple life so as to bring their Idea before the power of artifice, the rose must no longer

name anything but 'the absence of all bouquets' in the hardness of the fragment from which it draws its substance, in a 'volatile reduction' of its name, rendered foreign to the models of common language by the *Divagations* of 'a total word [. . .] almost incantatory'. The poem thus holds fast to the will to isolate the 'least ephemeral rose'. in a definition of exile as singular as the evocation of lips 'against crystal';[11] the poem *decides* on the subtraction of the rose from the bouquet, so as to introduce it to a *being* that is no longer the being of a nature that has taken place.[12] Rather, it will be a question of a non-place operating quite apart from the spoken journal of the empirical and its commercial destiny, wherein the rose, which is also 'the too tall gladiolus' and 'every flower spread out enlarged at no word that we could recite',[13] will be posited in itself, will stand for itself, in a universe where the romanticised description of objects set before representative consciousness is no more: 'indifferent simultaneously to the theme of the subject and the object', as a great reader of Mallarmé writes.[14] Like those last roses of Manet, plucked from their element, laid out on a marble surface (*Two Roses*, 1882), affording 'no opportunity for Manet to delight us with his skill in catching the play of light' or the water in the transparent vase;[15] or this asparagus spear captive within the scant confines of a bizarrely shrunken frame that magnifies it out of all natural proportion, subtracted, a-pathic, from nature. But with this advantage of the painting over the poem: that it lays out the Aspect qua visibly constructed *by and for the gaze* (*ad-spectus*), whereas Mallarmé, not yet having taken writing to the letter of its total expansion on the blankness of the page (for this he will have to depend on the analogy of his own critical quest with that of Manet)[16] is constrained to translate the Aspect into a language that will have to reassert itself 'faced with the fall of mere sound',[17] and to (a)void narrative in order that 'all speeches' might 'efface themselves before sensations'[18] by cutting out the profile of an unprecedented figure (a figure without model).

Participating like no other still life in that 'element of vague raillery' that Bataille associates with 'these indifferent objects',[19] the one asparagus spear too few/too many that Manet offers us is no longer one that we can tie up with those picked from the garden, fusing it into a serried bouquet to take away and place on a bed of greens (*A Bunch of Asparagus*). Pointed in the opposite direction, as if escaped from the bunch, it is placed upon what seems to be a marble slab (used previously in several other paintings). But the framing is so close and the table so out of frame that it could just as well give the *impression* of an immense empty desert, the colour of sand, from which the asparagus spear can barely detach itself—like a halo that '*parts it from the garden bed*'. . . . A dreamed asparagus spear, gripped in the blankness of abstraction; its raised tip seems to extract itself from this desert with great difficulty, while

the end of the stalk hangs lightly over the edge of the slab from which it might roll and fall—an aspect of asparagus come forth from nowhere, and which finds in the canvas its sole receptacle, the only space that can bear it. There is no depth in this space that doubles the plane of the painting, the colouration of which consists of a gradient of reddish beige, heightened at the tip of the vegetable with a few touches of more lively colours that pick it out and draw it up slightly from the plane upon which it lies. All of this as if the support upon which the asparagus spear is de-posed had to expose it at the risk of its dissolution, at the risk of the dissipation of its representation into the materiality of the painted, as it finds itself flattened onto the plane, or as it rolls right to the table's edge, which matches exactly the curvature of the vegetable in its woody aspect. The effect is considerably accentuated by the fact that the bluish markings indicating the marble's veins, one of which is visible in the thickness of the edge, are parallel to the asparagus and not to the oblique side of the slab. At the top of the painting, a narrow brown-beige band defines a zone that cannot be defined in terms of representation, but only as a properly pictorial plane (a plane in and of painting) since, being parallel to the top edge of the canvas, it cannot delimit the other end of the table nor constitute the representation of any ground for it. And although its colour also precludes it from belonging to the table, the long grey stroke that straddles this zone seems nevertheless to depict/paint [*(dé)peindre*] a vein of the marble which is thus, in its turn, shown to be a mark exclusively of painting. All of this indicates that an operation has taken place, an operation underlined—or overlined—by the 'M' of 'Manet' that pins everything down, aligning the plane with the verticality of the canvas. The point where the asparagus spear crosses the slab (beyond which there is *nothing*, nothing but blackness)—the only incident and the only incidence in the picture (the only thing in the way of any kind of narrative), as the asparagus stalk and the edge of the slab are superposed to form an angle that holds them together in their distance—suggests the pictorial crossing of substances upon a canvas whose length is that of *one* 'real' asparagus spear, the one that appears/disappears in the economy of painting. There is no background to establish the ground (plane), to provide it with a setting for something that might become a scene.[20] The space here is that of the paradoxical de-framing of a ground that encloses the gaze (the small format of the painting is not unconnected to the sensation that *there is nothing behind it*) and renders futile any will to locate oneself, any possibility of taking up a position external to this plane made of one sole continuum that does not compare itself with anything else, 'in the vanishing trace of a precarious ideality'.[21] We no longer know how to situate this portion of space, existing in itself beneath an enclosing gaze that isolates it, in relation to any vicinity whatsoever. We are condemned to make do with the Aspect posited in itself, existing in itself only for itself, in the neutral white of the spear as it fades on

its support, becoming indiscernible from the canvas, no longer existing except as a sandy colour, this lacunary colour that is the colour *of* the picture qua dissolution of the 'subject' (which is 'whatever'), a non-imitation of things, *a lost ground* (even though the ground-slab is what is presented in the painting). In the absence of any bunch in which it could be counted, here indeed is an *untradable* spear of asparagus that has nothing to do with the domestic commerce of subjects and objects within the theatre of the world. A Sahara-effect, 'between the eclipse of the subject and the dissolution of the object',[22] this delocalisation is the sign of a rupture that draws Manet, with his motto according to which 'one must be of one's times, do what one sees',[23] towards the modern and contemporary paths for which the aspect is the only *point of view*. This means that, as Mallarmé's 'Prose' demands, once parted from garden beds, charged '*not with mere visions but with sight*',[24] expelling imaginary figures indexed to the theophanic register of an invisible beyond, the aspect *demonstrates* the crisis of pictorial narrativity, by bringing the material means into accordance with the artificiality of that which the harsh indifference of a seeing wrested from the grip of the symbolic brings into view.

Furthermore, when 'the noble visionaries of other times, whose works are the semblance of worldly things seen by unworldly eyes [. . .] appear as kings and gods in the far dream-ages of mankind',[25] when we are separated from the imaginary gardens of these visionary times—then Manet becomes *the painter of separation*; and in doing so, becomes for Mallarmé (in the words of Thadée Natanson) 'he to whom none other can be compared'. ('Edouard Manet is, for Mallarmé, the painter. Meaning he to whom none other can be compared'.)[26] From this we should understand that for the poet he is the Painter of Crisis, since it is by way of Manet's 1876 article entitled 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', from which the above phrases are drawn, that the word 'crisis' enters into his prose, poised for its declination into the *Crisis of Verse* in the 1897 collection.

That the pictorial plane, the plane-of-painting, in no way belongs to a 'verisimilar' or 'imaginary' representation, but well and truly to an aleatory construction (in the sense that, being founded on *nothing authentic*, it must renounce any form of re-cognition)—no one better than Manet (and no one before Manet in so deliberate a manner) has advocated the precise, exclusive critical exigency of this conclusion.

This refusal to envisage painting as an ideal mimesis of the world achieved by way of a theatricalised repertoire of models (David, Ingres), coupled with an equally adamant refusal of the romantic 'magnetizing' of painting through the excessive difference of everything from itself in its constitutive relation to the imagination (painting as an intensive extension of the movement of life: Delacroix) is sufficient reason for the canvases sent by the artist to have been rejected by the Salon largely on account of their *unintelligibility*. For the

indisputable originality of Édouard Manet lies in a new appreciation of the Aspect of what a painting is, the mental operation that establishes it in its most material framing. The painting can only be a window, a transparency, an opening onto the outside, on condition of sublimating the externality proper to the picture, its surface, its plane: that two-dimensional planarity, horizontal and vertical, upon which Renaissance perspective imposes its great oblique lines as the law of its humanist depth. Once this 'mixture of geometry and symbolic figuration' (Francastel) is submitted to the Davidian dictatorship of the 'ideal type' (Duret), painting will no longer take place unless it is reclaimed from the form of its (ideal but not real) effacement by an art that *speaks* ('To paint as the Spartans spoke', in Diderot's words).

It is worthwhile our turning to the passage with which Théodore Duret introduces his discovery of Manet's paintings at the 1870 Salon. All the more so in that our critic is the first to recognise that 'the school of David and Ingres [has been] irrevocably vanquished' by a 'modern school' whose 'naturalist talent [. . .] does not feel at all like a pastiche of the masters who paved the way'—Rousseau, Corot, Millet. . . . So, 'We walk through the Salon, we pass before hundreds of well-painted, well-executed canvases, neatly done, agreeable in subject; but all of this is lacklustre and monotonous, and nothing grabs us. Then all of a sudden, on the contrary, we arrive at the works of M. Manet; and here, detaching itself from the uniform ground of the whole, something strikes us and stops us in our tracks'.[27]

(But let us insist immediately, as if at a right angle to and against the intention of the critic, that this 'something' projects us beyond everything that Impressionism was able to develop and accomplish.)

Manet, the 'formidable intruder'—addressed to the 'Painting Jury for 1874', these words of Mallarmé's are penned in a context of Crisis. The 'exquisite' crisis of literature that will soon make itself heard in *Crisis of Verse*, but also the more immediately 'fundamental' Crisis of the Visible and of its Art, Painting, caught up in the general crisis of representation ('ideal crisis', 'social crisis') 'in a time that has outlived beauty'.[28] These words designate Manet: in the subtraction of the painted subject from the allegories of the world, in the isolation of the subject who paints in a confrontation with the material space of the canvas, Manet is not just a 'danger' to the theatrical convention of painting in the same way as Delacroix, with his instigation of a crepuscular hypertrophy against an anaemic art; he is the 'public danger' *of/in* the painting that he abruptly opens up onto a modernity that he *demonstrates* to be discordant by rendering visible the *definitive crisis of representation* in a time of industry and finance when nature can no longer (re-)present itself as (imaginarily) naturing in 'a great form in continuous development' animated by 'the moving matter of a continuous variation'.[29] (Mallarmé: 'Nature has taken place; it can't be added to';[30] Manet: 'For nature only ever gives you

details'.)[31] A danger that is so far from being romantic, so incompatible with any romanticist reform whatsoever, even one animated by the denunciation of the 'simpleminded cult of nature', that Baudelaire will glimpse in Manet '*the first in the decrepitude of* [*his*] *art*'.[32] Decrepitude—the word is indeed entirely fitting in what it laterally indicates: that painting must be decrepitated in order to exhibit its operational dimensions and in order to bring forth from the flatness of the painting the simplified play of surfaces and colours that will free the picture plane from its academic effacement and its supernatural hypertrophy alike. *And this without lapsing into an art that can only oppose the humanitarian to the imaginary*.[33] To undermine the illusion of depth in favour of the silent autonomy of the *foreground*, in this sense, amounts to decrepitating the image by introducing into modern painting a new articulation of the plane that projects it *forward*—a joint between horizontal and vertical lines that will from now on be realised as a right angle, cut off from the 'spiritual' animation of a background. (This is the 'cruciform composition so dear to Manet' mentioned by Françoise Cachin in her commentary on *The House at Rueil* [1882]. In this 'typically Impressionist' subject, 'there is no sky', but only a façade whose strict frontality prohibits an opening onto any beyond whatsoever . . .)[34] Whereas Renaissance perspective produced its plane by articulating it around acute and obtuse angles, thus privileging the diagonal that bound the image up with the presence of a backworld incorporating an internal light into the painting, and whereas Impressionism adopted the principle of an aerial perspective capable of evoking an impalpable *plein air* atmosphere, Manet projects a flat architecture between the lines of the painting, which cross over one another in such an extremely shallow manner that elements taken from the visible world seem to be abruptly juxtaposed. Whence the 'rebus' effect produced by his works, which drastically voids anything that might seem like 'the visible translation of any impression whatever'.[35] This effect is indissociable from another characteristic mark of the painter: the frontal lighting that comes from outside the canvas to strike it perpendicularly.[36]

How can the painter show that which classical painting feigned, or that of which it was able to feign ignorance? No longer, like Velasquez in *Las Meninas*, by painting himself into a play of gazes so complex that the spectator competes as subject of the picture with the monarch and his wife reflected in the mirror on the far wall; but by returning to the labour of painting, to the construction of the plane in its most lacklustre guise, and by scrutinising this latter in a *face-to-face* between characters and spectator that contradicts the closure of the work by making any kind of mediation impossible.[37] As a result, it was generally felt, even by Baudelaire himself, given the fact of an operation that involves the visible in the *dis-integration of the seen* (in regard to both the re-presentative function of perception and its sublation by the

imagination), that Manet never went beyond sketches, studies, rough drafts; that he was unable to succeed in painting, marred by an inability to finish anything . . . and that consequently he was an 'incomplete' artist, 'painting in too rapid and hesitant a manner'.[38] A rather banal reproach, we might say, one that Diderot had already levelled against Chardin, and which, in truth, up to and including Delacroix being *thrown to the lions*, was ever used against those who have the air of 'artist-researchers' (the term is Duret's)—to the point where a certain Duchamp will adopt the motif of a 'definitive incompletion' (and of a no-less definitive *completion and destruction* [*achèvement*] of painting, according to a long-dominant *doxa*). Except that 'Monsieur Manet', regularly depicted as a *psychorigid* type (his *abominable and flat oil caricatures*[39] attesting to an unprecedented rigidity), has, on top of this, 'the honour of being a danger', as Théophile Gautier says. A formula rediscovered by Mallarmé when he explains that 'M. Manet, for an Academy [. . .], is, from the point of view of execution *no less than that of conception* of these pictures, a danger'; indicating that what is dangerous here is the mutation of an apparatus that has broken with the habits of representation through a 'simplification brought about by a seer's gaze—much appreciated—to certain painting procedures whose principal fault is that they veil the origin of this art made of unguents and colours'.[40]

We should be wary, however, of the Impressionist refrain that depicts Manet as the champion of 'pure painting' and of 'the intrinsic quality of painting in itself' (largely invented and propagated by Duret, the great defender of *peinture claire*),[41] since this view was still conditioned by the notion that painting involved the rendering of a 'personal impression' of natural effects sublimated on the canvas. In its much-decried hardness,[42] Manet's painting instead declares itself as a return to matter, to the materials of painting placed in the service of the construction of a plane without which there could be no presentation, within the picture itself, of the material properties of the canvas and the operations of the painter. For the unguents of painting, in order to *hold*, must fill out its two dimensions, producing an architecture solid enough to stand up for itself in the elaboration of a picture plane that owes less to 'direct painting before nature' than to this Aspect that 'isolates things', and 'which only exists by the will of the Idea, yet constitutes in my domain the only authentic and certain merit of nature' (that is, its *last remaining merit*—but of what 'nature' and of what 'authenticity', when the ideal necessity of both has been posited 'by the will'?); as is indicated, once again by Mallarmé, in the conclusion of his important text, the very title of which poses a problem (albeit only through its obvious inversion of the real priority): 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet'. Aspect—this, it seems to us, is the primary *question* Manet poses to us in the modernity of his art; a question whose Mallarméan amplification makes it necessary to demarcate

and attend to each of the terms 'isolated' here (idea, nature) once it is foreseen that 'the word *authentic*, which was, for many years, the sacramental term of the antiquarian, pretty soon will be meaningless'.[43] For it involves extracting ourselves from any unveiling of being in a beauty-in-itself, as sought by the Ideal-type of the Academy even as it occulted the procedures that bring it to visibility; and, rather than effacing the construction of the image that mobilises pictorial visibility, even in the name of the greatest fidelity to 'observed' nature (from which not even Japanese art, with its 'striking fidelity', would escape!),[44] on the contrary affirming the artifice of painting by following closely all of its possibilities, all of its effects, holding as closely as possible to the construction of its surfaces. This autonomy, this auto-position of the work developed against the integration of seeing into representation, leads painting onto a terrain which is that of a *space of thought* opened up by Crisis once we no longer *recognise* the visible form of the world (*tout court*, and in any signifiant *meaningful* image). The seeing that the painter strives to create is no longer an indexical, referential seeing that seeks to attain a real, an ideal, a truth . . . situated above the painting, behind the easel which, in *Las Meninas*, made Velasquez's head turn, withdrawing from his work, to look towards us from the other side of the canvas that we cannot see; but neither is it, in truth, a vision that participates in an 'instinctive beauty' seeking to *render the impression* of things in order to render it *to the things themselves* in the daylight of their appearing, as 'painting moves towards a phenomenism'[45] induced by the optical simplification of the 'school of the eyes'. (Impressionism, explains Camille Mauclair in the first great synthesis dedicated to the movement, is 'an art of painters that barely admits of anything except for immediate vision'. *So there is no way that Manet could be its 'true pioneer'.*)[46] What Manet seeks, in fact, in the conjunction of the pictorial apparatus and the critical apparatus, in this fiduciary age which no longer wagers upon absolute values, is the *event of the visual* as proof of visibility, and as proof of the visibility of modernity itself, now that beings can no longer be rendered visible in pictorial form except through an operation of cutting and montage that *imprints* them onto the canvas by *bringing to the fore* the hallucinatory aspect of the plane. But then it is the whole plane of consistency of painting that eludes conventional and natural perception, in favour of a cerebral materiality that is more than 'thingly' (and to the detriment of the 'modelled surface' indispensable to Impressionism).[47]

Let us now return to the knotting point of Mallarmé's article, which opens with the announcement of 'deductions' that are 'new from the point of view of art', only to immediately observe that the 'new and contemporaneous path', the *new path of the contemporary* that Realism opened up 'around 1860' with its 'exclu[sion] of all meddlesome imagination'—was not without influence upon 'what we call today Naturalism'. For *today's* naturalism

is no longer that of the young Zola who affirmed in the Salon of 1866, in defence of Manet[48] and Monet, that 'the word 'realist' means nothing to I who proclaim a subordination of the real to temperament'—who celebrated naturalism as an 'window opened onto nature' by a 'temperament'—concluding that '*A work of art is a piece of creation seen through a temperament*'.[49] Zola, therefore, is dismissed from the very outset ('yet too young to then define that which we to-day call Naturalism').[50] For, according to Mallarmé, naturalism is bent on 'follow[ing] the quest, not merely of that reality which *impresses* itself in its abstract form on all, but of that absolute and important sentiment which Nature herself *impresses* on those who have voluntarily abandoned conventionalism'.[51] An effect-of-the-real and an effect-of-nature partially, *obscurely* coinciding under the auspices of a term (*to impress*) that seems 'destined to dissipate the illusory clarity of doxic certainties and of conventions' linked to a catch-all term such as 'Impressionism'[52] . . . which had promptly been associated with Zola's celebrated definition. For the 'absolute sentiment' impressed by 'Nature itself' does not come *in-the-place-of* that 'abstract form' that impresses itself 'upon all', as if *to give it an aspect* that would replace it; it *adds* itself to that abstract form, as its paradoxical complement. (Are we to understand here that the deconventionalisation of the 'real' by the [discontinuous, abstract] Aspect would allow us, paradoxically yet logically, to appreciate the non-subjective character of the impressive force of nature—a play of impressive forces that has *nothing to do* with phenomenal impressions—to which the Aspect's effect-of-the-real renders itself adequate? Let us keep in mind the extreme problematisation of the notion of Impressionism that would follow from such a conclusion.) Contributing to what Pascal Durand quite correctly describes as a 'strategy of obscuration' through the *détournement* of and overinvestment in the motifs of *impression*, the same term (*to impress*) had appeared at an earlier stage to trouble the usual conception of Realism as the exact representation ('sound and complete')[53] of things themselves: for it is also its *name* ('the name of Realism') which, from Courbet up to the literary movement to which it was attributed, 'sought *to impress itself* upon the mind [of the public?] by the lively depiction [or representation] of things as they appeared to be'.[54] It is in this context linked to the 'decline of the romantic school', whose bifacial sublation (Realism/Naturalism) announces the 'crisis' of painting and the anticipation of the aspectual reality of impression, it is 'in the midst of this', between the Realism that has just been introduced and the Naturalism it will serve to redefine, that another name strides forth in capital letters—that of ÉDOUARD MANET. A 'preacher' 'persistent in his reiteration, unique in his persistency', not only are his 'curious and singular paintings' 'laughable to the many': they are 'very disquieting to the true and reflective critic'.[55]

For, with Manet, everything is always more complicated ('one of the most reticent painters of recent times, whose work is exceptionally difficult of access', concludes Bataille at the end of his book)[56]—and it is not the least merit of Mallarmé's article that it gives us to grasp this through the often abrupt turns of his prose (even more so when translated into English!) Thus, in an example from the great study of the painter, which goes right to the heart of the matter, if impression enters the studio to go out into *plein air*—but in that case it is not so much a matter of a 'space to paint in' as of a 'space to paint'[57]—only then to reenter the studio having once more been exposed to a deluge of air that 'derealis[es] figures, capturing to its own profit the reality of the subject that it evaporates',[58] this profit is itself highly paradoxical, since 'the environing atmosphere' seems to 'plunder reality from the figures in order to preserve their truthful aspect',[59] according to a regime of the *as if* which puts '*plein air*' in the service of the aspect, and in close dependency (we shall return to this) with a 'witchery of art' that confers upon it its 'enchanted life'.[60] What is more, this profit can only be realised in the autonomy of an eye that has succeeded in detaching itself from the individual who has been taught what he must see, so as to explore an impersonal, neutral visuality, cut off from both subject and object intertwined in the acquired habits of seeing and its personal and sensible impedimenta. The picture plane must now tear itself away from all of the eye's memories ('It should abstract itself from memory')[61] and set itself to floating alone, in the absolute independence of an 'image' that will have to rid itself of both the eloquent pretensions of illustration and narration and the sentimentality of feeling, in order to reach the 'new atmosphere' of a space that exists only *in relation to its own limits*. ('From the initial conception of the work, the space destined to contain the atmosphere has been indicated'.)[62] An image prepared on a plane whose two dimensions do not refer back to a world that is given, ordered by the third dimension, and to consciousness as the centre of perspective, to the metaphysical point, or to the world perceived by an innocent eye—but to a *new science of the cutting of the picture* ('in an absolutely new science, and in the manner of cutting down the pictures'), which prepares it like 'that which is embraced at one glance of a scene framed in by the hands',[63] a scene wherein is woven an image as foreign to the constitution of depth and to its transformation in the morphological point of view of the 'subject' as it is to the immediate sensation of an effect. Beyond Mallarmé's formula, the resonance with the Cézannian gesture of a *labour of topological realisation* of which space is not so much the visual support as the material resultant in the form of a plane[64] renders particularly problematic any idea of a 'natural perspective' (as opposed to 'this entirely and artificially classical science, which makes of our eyes the dupes of a refined education')—a 'natural perspective' that Mallarmé evokes only to associate it (!) with 'that artistic perspective

which we learn from the far East—Japan for example'[65]—since the construction precedes and conditions the expression of that which appears, impressing itself in this way for the first time ('seeing only that which it looks upon, and that as for the first time').[66] For, as Mallarmé once more assures us, 'each work should be a new creation of the mind'.[67]

It follows that what goes for the eye goes also for the hand, which must undertake an 'impersonal abstraction guided only by the will, oblivious of all previous cunning'.[68] As we can see in the *Self-Portrait with Palette* (around 1879), where the *left* hand (inverted by the mirror) is fused into the pictorial mass of a coarsely painted arm, wielding a brush whose extremity is nothing but a truncated patch—a pose entirely the inverse of that of the painter of the *Meninas*, who delicately clasps a fine brush with the tips of his fingers in a gesture that emphasises the skill of the man of art.

Eye and hand set out to conquer an 'isolated' pictoriality. There must be *isolation*, cut and cut-out, an eclipsing of self and world, in order to establish the image outside of all reference, on a plane whose construction is, so to speak, the work of no one. This anonymous gaze attests to an event, a visual experience whose autonomy is that of a free indirect style, a 'coordination of widely-scattered elements'[69] within a whole that gives the *impression* of 'psychological disaggregation'—Pierre Janet's key expression, rightly seen as a kind of *idée fixe* of modernity.[70] An impression that is necessarily composite and indirect, foreign to any point of view that would order its (re)presentation, just as it is impossible to situate the narrator of a poem that no longer aims to formulate eloquently that which takes place (Hugo). The impression is a sensible isolate that opens up along the seam of an absent eye and a deliberately distracted hand. So it is that the desolation of the eye, in those years of the discovery of the phenomena of *agnosia*, the clinical observation of which links 'flat' perception to 'symbolic' disidentification with the object,[71] is such that in the oblivious hands of Manet, painting discovers a plane of silence, a vision mute as the nameless death of a man of fifty-one afflicted by locomotor ataxia. If Manet must receive an honorary title, might we suggest that it should be that of *painter of silence*, the painter who allows us to *see* silence in the Latest Fashion? Deploying across borders the silence that comes to puncture the journalism of language and to confront it with whites and blacks, Manet—with all due respect to Malraux—does not lend it his *voice*. Greatness of Manet: Because the New Painting will in no way be excepted from 'the agony of the vast domain of fiction', the critical idiom will be introduced into Mallarmé's prose in the 1876 article by way of this Aspect that will have 'rudely thrown him at the close of an epoch of dreams in the front of reality'.[72]

Manet cannot situate himself anywhere but on the edge of a void that his hand will come to occupy, drawing with the brush directly onto the canvas, constantly rubbing out, leaching his works with *savon noir* to the point where,

from large brushed areas, there emerges a planisphere or a plane-space that is none other than the excess, everywhere, of an absolute eye that 'distinguishes to itself the things it perceives with the steadfast gaze of a vision restored to its simplest perfection'.[73] No discourse, no signifiance slipping in between things, imposing upon them the tight mesh of those judicative linkages apprehended by Kant in the guise of the originary functions of the imagination, in the form of linguistic syntheses with overcomprehensive terms and overprecise logical boundaries—syntheses that one cannot unlearn in a world always already opened onto the flesh of the voice.

Contre-Jour (1). To enter into the universe of Manet, who recognised in Goya some kind of precursor, we must imagine how a deaf man might perceive the world in the aftermath of a shipwreck. This is how we understand Manet's declaration: 'When I enter the studio, it seems to me that I enter into a tomb'.[74] The silence of death, making of the world a kind of exile in the *afterwardsness* of painting (something else absolutely than Malraux's celebrated 'pictorialization of the world'), where all that remains perceptible is the deaf dullness of colour, detached from all eloquence of the unworld [*immonde*] in a reaction against 'the black painting of the degenerates of romanticism' (in Camille Mauclair's words,[75] echoing the black legend of Baudelairean *spleen*).[76] The painting of silence from the tomb of deafness—this, as Bataille confesses, is what is most striking in *The Execution of the Emperor Maximilian* (1867–1869),[77] so close to Goya's *Third of May* in its composition, except that here the isolation of the figures attains a plane of abstraction that renders unthinkable any expression in the *character* (or 'emotional beauty') of some (passional, dramatic) trait of humanity: as Michael Fried notes, Manet 'deliberately blurred [the] features' and the countenances of the victims so as to *flatten all psychological depth*.[78] Along with a use of black as far from romantic as can be (black being the anti-Impressionist colour par excellence, here—to use the words of Spuller in 1867—a 'black, heavy colouration'),[79] this neutralisation of the expressive function will lead Bataille to claim that 'Manet deliberately rendered the condemned man's death as if he had chosen a fish or a flower for his subject'.[80] And in fact, whether he takes as his motif a body on the point of collapse (*Execution*) or disrupts an everyday scene through the instantaneous moment of it that he shows us (*Luncheon, The Balcony, The Railway, On the Beach at Boulogne* . . .), his art, in its rejection of narrative in painting, will remain no less imbued by the silence of still life. With Manet the everyday comes up against the forgetting of all habitual syntax, the extinction of all depth of field, the blockage of every vanishing point that would yield a meaning, that would ensure the resumed fabrication of the signifying film of relations between things and bodies on the scene of the world. In Manet's universe we find the

projection of a plane of nonsense that precedes, exceeds, and succeeds all donation of sense, all *prevision*, *allowing us to see* in a kind of insensibility, isolation, and deaf desolation that removes the world's voice, renders it over to the indifferentiation of space (a space without place because it has taken place, a space in which the world loses its regular temporalisation). Manet, or the apathic spectator of a new Reality prohibiting 'any interference on the part of the imagination',[81] an insensible automaton submitting painting to a kind of autopsy in order to extract from it a vivid yet numb plane that recalls the incipience of an anaesthetic or the violation of a saw ('its verjuice colours, sour and acid, penetrate into the eye like a surgeon's saw into flesh');[82] Manet, sleepwalker in a tomb haunted by still lifes that seem to come forth from nothingness into the empty blankness of a plane that is exclusively visual and thus deaf-mute. Like the neutral autoposition of the *Spear of Asparagus* as it draws itself up from the undertow of brushstrokes.[83] Like those elements of still life in the paintings of people, which make us ask: 'Is this not as much a still life with figures as a painting of figures with a still life?'[84] Unless it is *a still life of people*? As Gotthard Jedlicka observes, 'One could not possibly be at a greater remove from nature than he is in his still lifes'.[85]

Paul Mantz, in his 'Salon of 1868': 'Nature interests him little; the spectacles of life do not move him. This indifference will be his punishment'.[86] This indifference indicates more clearly than anything the opposite of the Impressionist image of painting.

Contre-Jour (2). Manet's painting distils doses of absence which establish the picture on a model other than that of presence in the world, and which introduce silent relations between strangely stifled things, as if the soft pedal of a piano were conferring upon the whole the thickness of a 'playing card' (like the tarot card from which *The Fifer*, 1886, apparently derives), not without bringing about an inaudible clarity as cold as the ether. This impression is already produced by *The Old Musician* (1862), where the characters are perfectly asyntactic. No sound could possibly break through from one to the other, no voice could tear them from their isolation. They are pasted together there as if by chance, isolated by the internal silence that encloses them in an idiocy to which the empty gazes of the two children testify—the idiocy of the singular, of the intransitive singularity that bears down with all its weight to confirm the impossibility of any exchange, any communication. Detachment, in the sense of distantiation and disconnection, gives each of them a mute, incisive outline with an intemporal, spectral, ghostly transparency. This sense of vitrification innate to a properly abstract existence culminates with *The Balcony* (169 × 125 cm), dated 1868–1869.

The balcony, of course, is a portal to the outside, an opening that leads outside from the internal space of an abode. But it also determines the possibility of a gaze that, inversely, gives access (albeit very partial) to the interior of the inhabited room. It constitutes an intermediary space between inside and outside, a limit upon which Manet sets up the membrane of the canvas—which he flattens in the extreme by endowing it with an architecture of horizontal and vertical lines. Between the raw green railing whose painting has an 'industrial' aspect about it, and the shutters in the same strident green whose execution, it was said, 'rivals the work of house painters', space and volume are completely absorbed by the working of flattened forms, strongly signified and accentuated by the crosses of the balustrade whose geometrical 'schema' presents in vertical—and thus totally *flattened*—form the most classical optical diagram, that of perspectivism (made perceptible by the fact that *we are being watched through the window* and that, from this window, Manet proposes the materialisation of the invisible plane of classical painting, whose codes he inverts). The cutting out of the balcony, in the foreground plane, accentuates this (staging) effect wherein the 'artist's point of view' on the 'represented' scene is *in every way* impossible (a 'monumental artifice', as George Mauner says)[87] in such a frontality and with such a close-up view (one storey up and suspended by nothing more than the picture plane). Extending the artifice, the shutters may also very well open towards the (very dark) interior, so that we would no longer be able to see outside without being *glimpsed* (against the light, *à contre-jour*), accentuating yet further the singular rhythmic effect that they impose on the rest of the canvas even as they horizontalise and verticalise the space to provide the framing for this 'hallucinated painting'.[88] As if suspended in the *abstract compass* of the architectural elements which alone 'colour' the picture, the black and white figures—three artists for two white notes and one black: the painters Berthe Morisot and Antoine Guillemet and the musician Fanny Claus (in the darkness, a young boy bears a tray)—have the air of being detached from the direction of their gaze, of having lost the depth of field of their vision in 'breaking out from a salon whose conversation has palled'.[89] Their 'points of view' seem to be absorbed into the wave, the void of absence that implies the most extreme divergence of gazes and the loss of all community of seeing, emphasised by the mad fixity of Berthe Morisot's widened eyes. For she does indeed escape the atonia of the two others, but only to evoke a hallucinatory phenomenon of which she is at once subject and object, clothed in a sumptuous white robe which takes on the appearance ('impressionist' *avant la lettre*?)[90] of a motion-blurred photograph, the better to emphasise its contrast with the rigidly geometrical structures of the balcony and the shutters. But we cannot focus our attention upon the latter, immediately captured by their exclusively anti-perspectivist apparatus, without hallucination overcoming them in turn

by mingling the disorientation of the shutters with the penetrating absence of the gazes, which thus become the gazes of the painting itself, the empty shutters allowing us to slide towards the black (non-visible) inside as much as towards the outside/before the light which presides in *contre-jour*, without making visible any of what is (not) seen in the (unrepresentable) outside of the picture where we, the 'viewers', are. Hence the feeling of idiocy, already observed in relation to the *Old Musician*, since the gazes addressed to us, in the absence of any commonly shared principle of interiority, cannot meet each other; but also the sensation, as Bataille observes, that 'the subject [the subject of the picture as well as the characters that haunt it] is, at the same time, given to us and withdrawn'.[91] This *suspense* of the subject, suspended on the edge of its own vision, as Claude Imbert writes, will be the unique protocol of the strange portrait of the *Woman with a Fan* (58 × 43 cm, 1872).

This is probably one of the least 'finished', one of the most indefinite paintings Manet ever made. Its general blurriness renders all indications of depth entirely contradictory. But within this painting is indicated most decidedly something that affects all of the gazes painted by Manet: the vague fixity of the eyes. The woman, who is, and could be, none other than Berthe Morisot, is presented here with her face partially masked by the positioning of the fan. We can just make out the young woman's eyes between its blades, without our being able to see precisely where her gaze is directed. Here, vision itself is hatched, splintered, and dismembered in the micrographic mesh of a fan-as-shutter. The spreading out of the fan from its position in relation to the eye functions as a metaphor for the field of vision flattened onto the plane, crowning the brain-head and offering to sight only variations on the black of which the dress is just another deployment; something that is also suggested by the correspondence between the grille of the fan's monture and the banisters of the chair. The monture-as-grille operates a forced filtering and framing of the gaze somewhat analogous to Mallarmé's 'scene framed in by the hands'; the monture-as-mask anonymises the gaze and radically depsychologises the face. Manet thus confronts us with the impediment of an intentional gaze, evacuated of all living substance that might be directly addressed to us, an obstruction that defines the conditions of possibility/impossibility of a gaze directed at his painting and which is the signature of all of his works: the widening of the eyes in which we hesitate to inscribe ourselves, and which urges us outside of ourselves by rendering tangible the difficulty of abandoning all forms of *reflection*, as if we came up each time against the grid of a fan, an impenetrable membrane, a 'veil of immobility'[92] always pressing us back onto the flat depth of a cerebral precinct. It is enough to see the excessive wide-eyedness of the *Portrait of Faure as Hamlet* (1877) to be convinced of this, without it even being necessary to evoke the cross-eyed *Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé* (1876) or the astounding left eye—with its completely

eccentric and dilated pupil—of the *Portrait of Berthe Morisot with Hat, in Mourning* (1874), where Morisot seems to be absenting herself from the 'expressionist' pose of deep mourning, as if mourning representation itself, taken 'almost to the brink of caricature' (Cachin).

(*To conclude, with and beyond Mallarmé.*) As if ceaselessly coming up against a fan—a fan that filters and freezes Manet's painting just as it haunts Mallarmé's poetry, in their common tension towards this play of aspects that do not resemble the things of yore—each painting leads back to this flat limit that renders penetration impossible and gives us, as the only possible thickness, the gaps of the encephalon, the blinds and shutters of the brain. Everywhere reign the intermittencies of a vision that opens neither onto the inside nor the outside,[93] but onto the granular, neuronal membrane, onto the 'mental canvas' of the painting, with the gaze implied as an amnesiac impression of what is *really there*, on the borders of the real, charged with a cognitive dissonance on the basis of which one can no longer discern the sense of what opens and closes. For, as Mallarmé understands it, impression is an imprint of the 'mental canvas', a vibrating capture of 'the noble phantom' emanating from a 'mental operation'. 'Daylight—that is space with the transparence of air alone' is no longer separable from these 'every day haunters of imagination'.[94] (The Berthe Morisot of *The Balcony* is the first one to appear, reappearing later—as Bataille will write—to 'invest the canvas with a fugitive presence [. . .] as if it were about to hasten away again and vanish with the winds'.)[95]

This is what the poet, gripped by the grace of this imagination in the full light of day (a non-romantic imagination) calls 'Impressionism', but only in cutting it from the natural order of the world so as to 'isolate things' in their Aspect (a critical Impressionism magnetised by 'the will to the Idea'); keeping out of shot all personal or sentient life, replacing it with a Life that is *animated, enchanted, by the 'witchery of art'* ('*an enchanted life conferred by the witchery of art; a life neither personal nor sentient*'), '*deluged with air*' *in order to strip reality of its forms and, through this very evaporation, 'to preserve their truthful aspect*'.[96] An Impressionism, then, no less than innocent in its initial anti-realism ('a peculiar quality entirely outside mere Realism')[97] and which has to think through a Naturalism whose *aspect* might be called '*scientific*',[98] given the modern syntheses of seeing that it brings to bear. An 'Impressionism' in Mallarméan scare-quotes that seals 'the transition from the old imaginative artist and dreamer to the energetic modern worker',[99] and which collapses the unknown process back into the very painting itself in its 'mental' becoming, but not without investing the latter with an insensible fixity, foreign to that 'child-like charm' that the poet nonetheless wishes to recognise in it—'the pleasure of having recreated nature touch by touch'[100]—even while positing that this art must be 'representative [. . .] of

a period which *cannot isolate itself from the equally characteristic politics and industry*'.[101]

Monet—and herein lies his whole difference from Manet—used the sensibility that is his unique mark to bring urban landscapes into the spectacle of nature. Thus, 'our artists', as Zola writes, as if in a eulogy to his *Gare Saint-Lazare*, 'have to find the poetry in train stations, the way their fathers found the poetry in forests and rivers'.[102]

2

Manet is not the Painter of Modern Life. He is—in an exclusive sense that remains to be substantiated—the *first painter of modernity*. When modernity invests the Painting-Form (which it consequently deforms) in order to show the world 'reduced to what it is', denuded of the theatricality of its prior format, *reduced to its modernity*. . . . So we could say that it is not 'painting' that enters into a reflexive relation to itself (rather it takes leave of such a relation, as a consequence of the break with romanticism); it is modernity 'itself' that enters into Manet's painting like a 'saw', to be reflected on the surface of the canvas into which it cuts (cf. the 'new science of the cutting of the picture' indicated by Mallarmé). Or else: *to see, in his grasping of the real, modernity at work; to see Manet, to see a Manet work, to see Manet at work*. This seeing will thus be less an affair of History (which would make it possible to judge a pictorial revolution in terms of a general context) than of interior Experience unfolded, disjointed, in the disarticulation of the perceptual enunciations of the visible. For, 'to see Manet' is, as a modern, to undergo the experience of that *impressive plane of disorganisation* of representation that reduces the whole humanist theory of painting to silence by attacking the narrativity of the image, by liberating the visible from the ancillary logic of sense. To see à la Manet is to become a contemporary of modernity, in the new alliance of impersonality and absolute singularity in which we are engaged, in which our existence as 'humanity without words' engages us.[103]

The trenchancy of this last proposition leads us to the brink of Bataille's *Manet*, in particular the very precise intuition that he develops therein of the 'contemporary' stakes of modern art (the end of man naturally integrated into the old world). For, after Mallarmé, Bataille is the thinker most able to give us to see in Manet *the abstract machine of modern art* in the manner of this impersonal plane that the painter explores by making manifest—as Bataille writes—its 'value as an operation', an operation testified to by the initial *illegibility* of its 'subjects'. Thus, the 'inner experience' of Manet/of a Manet leads the gaze towards a bizarre country, makes us see the bizarre everywhere in what is most banal, disquiets the banal with the whole weight

of operations silhouetted in the disquieting strangeness of the familiar. Up to the silence that each asparagus spear, just in order to become visible, must confront. . . . Now, this sensori-motor isolation that passes by way of the neutralisation of the eye and the anaesthesia of the hand—as contemporaries perceived immediately—is that of the annulling of the tradition of the Fine Arts, and the dislocation of the monumental history of beautiful works—of what the History of Art was up until Manet: a *religion of art*—but also that of the derealisation (of the referential illusion) of the naturalist realism that conceived of painting as the 'representation of real and existing objects'.[104] Blurring the lines between real and irreal by investing the painting's difference from the depicted world, and complicating it with an inevitable *depictorialisation* of that which it depicts (with respect to the codex of Great Painting), Manet *inaugurates the série noire*.[105] Bataille, who we paraphrase here, cites Duranty in 1870, trying to understand how Manet's picture detaches itself 'from all the rest' of the paintings in an exhibition: 'One is apt to laugh, for the effect is queer when a single thing differs from all the others'.[106] By which we should also understand, laterally, that modern art began when it was able to expose itself to 'that fundamental divergence of outlook which opposes present-day art to that of the past'[107]—because *it no longer resembles itself*, situating itself neither in the phenomenological apprehension of the world (the sensible deploying of a personal depth), nor in the imaginary of a fiction (a painting of *literary history*), but in an isolation characterised by idiocy, or by the *bizarre* as such.[108] Because it brings us to the limit of the empty form of the at-present/apresent, when the image has completely voided itself of all narrative to show being in its difference from representation in a nonsense that is the 'negation of the conditions through which all earlier ideas of human unity could be maintained within cultural expression'.[109] Because the difference of such a pictorial isolation supposes an experience of indifference, of absence, and perhaps of death (the 'cold truth' of death) in a diffuse excess whose absolute subtraction strips down the image, scrubbing it clean of all mythical deposits, all historical reference, all signifying traces, by posing it in the bizarre flatness of its insensible fanning out.

This is what Mallarmé, in his inaptly named 'poetics', called Nothingness ('Where there was god there is the void'), and this is what Bataille will grasp when he identifies it purely and simply with Manet's Silence. Thus, whereas Mallarmé claims to find a new 'impressionist' sense for Manet's work, Bataille, radicalising *on the plane of the image* the Mallarméan destruction of the Visions of Beauty, declares, 'Does Manet lie at the origin of Impressionism? Possibly, but all the same his painting arose out of depths of which Impressionism had no inkling'.[110] In saying this, Bataille cancels out Mallarmé's 'impressionist' torsion—his twisted Impressionism—by restoring to the forces that twist his phrase their initial aspect, foreign to all

presence in the world, *silent*. Thus, he delivers the Manet abstract machine in an effect of detachment that is the coenesthetic act of a pure seeing, rejecting the criteria of aesthetic quality for that which is seen, so as to be confronted with 'the *indifference* of beauty'.[111]

Given that there could have been no 'abstract machine' without content and expression having become, within it, indissoluble 'functives of a same function or materials of the same matter' (wings of the same plane) attaining their highest relativity, and given that abstraction thus defined has the status of an 'Abstract-Real',[112] we shall here call *Visual* this matter-function, which, under the name of Manet, assembles the set of conditions of the abstract machine of modern art upon one and the same plane of isolation (or isolate) that stands for an effacing of the signification of the Text[113] and of all the related modes of intentionality to which the image is subordinated (as site of resemblance or imaginary forcing). For the Visual is affirmed in what Bataille calls the 'negation of eloquence' as reality-condition of the autonomy of the gaze, in the reduction of representation to the mute image (an image/non-image) independent of memory and of 'personal sentiments and particular tastes' (Mallarmé). In this way, 'the negation of that kind of painting which, like language, expresses sentiments'[114] opens the play of the modern-contemporary through the equivalence that is posited in it, in the 'silence of painting',[115] between the disintegration of the subject (the subject is no longer integrated into the theatre of the world) and the negation of the sovereignty of the speaking subject. At the point of equivalence, there is a *suspension of the hand that speaks*, to adopt the terms of Arsène Houssaye's attack, 'Manet would be far superior if he had the hand. . . . It is by no means enough to have a head that thinks, an eye that sees: *one must also have a hand that speaks*'.[116]

According to Bataille, what is at stake here is the passage from an *eloquent painting* to a *hallucinated painting* 'the subject [of which] is, at the same time, given and withdrawn',[117] rendered indifferent to its objects through the material difference of a visual experience that brings together the insignificance of subjects with the absence of any unity of the objects described. (Or, as G. H. Hamilton will write: '*Motionless, we might say even emotionless before the object, his eyes sought only to record the visual experience in the fewest material terms*'.[118] We shall come back later to the photographic aspect of this *e-motionlessness*.) For this effect of hallucination—which explains the fortune of Paul Mantz's phrase: Manet is the 'prince of the chimerics' and the *anti-realist par excellence* (in relation to Courbet and those who preceded him)[119]—is linked to the first condition of the appearance of the Visual, namely its nonequivalence to the world of representation and to the art of self-presence, a nonequivalence brought about by the dislocation of any reference to things or to beings—a dislocation without which the

spectral materiality of this 'decrepit' painting could not be deployed. The latter takes on two modalities that were systematically criticised at the time, and whose conjunction is special to Manet: *incompleteness*[120] (a style of the draft [*ébauche*] and of *debauchery* [*débauche*], to adopt Thoré-Bürger's play on words, which renounces the 'merit of form'[121] and the narrative power of the image); and *flatness* (or flattening, not to say 'platitude',[122] in the sense of a tension towards the flat, a movement towards the surface, towards the plane: flatness thus means *planarity* as rejection of spatial depth—that is, a surface construction that makes the plane primary).[123] This hallucinogenic dimension of the plane, as foreseen in the singular aspect of the faces in *The Balcony*, marks a complete shift from the illusionist tradition of linear perspective (so much so that Gautier will urge Manet to consult a manual of perspective as soon as possible).[124] Breaking with all theatrical narrative effects through a frontal flattening, effects of superposition, collage, a 'disjointedness' between background and foreground, an absence of shadow and of modelling owing to the extinction of any internal light, the abolition of half-tints, abrupt juxtapositions of colour: all of these 'Japanese' characteristics are placed in the service of a cold physicality of the pictorial gesture wherein a simplification of form reminiscent of Guys's sketches is heightened yet further by the violence of the brush with its large touch, which then gives rise to veritable pieces of painting whose 'isolation' is always in excess in relation to the supposedly realist economy of the picture. How could we not cite Clement Greenberg here?

> Manet's became the first Modernist pictures by virtue of the frankness with which they declared the flat surfaces on which they were painted. [. . .] To leave the eye under no doubt as to the fact that the colors they used were made of paint that came from tubes or pots.[125]

But precisely: to the school of Realism will be opposed not a Formalism[126] but the materialist economy of the Visual defined as follows: in its manifestation as an isolate, the visual is indissociable from the visibility of its mode of production, in a painting whose reinstated materiality is that of a canvas exposed to the intra- and extra-pictorial operations that it captures.

And yet, since it prohibits painting from reducing itself to itself, as much on the formal as on the representational level, Manet's supposed 'formalism' has no intrinsic formal finality. It seeks not to produce but to radicalise the a-signifiance of representation (which presents itself already as dislocated). So that in Manet the end of representation comes in the same gesture as the impossibility of a formalist restoration of the picture in the modernist sense. In this sense, Manet is not the first modernist, but the first anti-modernist.

Cut off from the convention of perspective (always abstract in regard to the surface that is painted), a convention that only ever yields an illusion of depth that unfolds between the point of vision and the thing seen, Manet's construction of pictorial space lets us see the 'bizarre' reappearance of the visual within the materiality of the visible as it is deposed across the two dimensions of the canvas, without any distancing of seeing from that which is physically seen, interpenetrated, fused on a common surface so as to realise a kind of shortcut, a cut, a fulgurant transversal in the order of the visible thus assembled and flattened in the extreme.[127]

Here we must bring in all of Manet's work, in the least of its details, so as to attend to the flatness that entwines seen and seer on the most material plane of the canvas and of colours, subtracting them from all depth (even that of the flesh, that of the 'reflexive' transcendence identified by Merleau-Ponty). The coloured surface of the 'object-picture' (*tableau-objet*: the word chosen by Foucault to bring to the fore the 'material' properties of the canvas)[128] has no 'guarantor' other than the retinal planisphere of the eye—no Invisible, but only a blinding and total Visibility overexposed to the disintegration of the World that it makes seen. Conveyed by the detachment of figures and their encrustation onto a ground, close to the foreground (Courbet will compare *Olympia* to the 'Queen of Spades from a card game getting out of the bath'),[129] the hallucination of the paintings addresses us through empty gazes that not only signal the difficulty of penetrating any 'innermost heart' to which the widening of the eyes might give access, but affect the spectator himself, arresting his gaze and making of the subject-voyeur the very object of their disconnection, by introducing into the canvas a principle of uncertainty that 'deposes' the spectator's gaze even as the light comes in from the front, from where we are—which means that that it is our gaze that sheds light. Such is the Olympia-effect through which the spectator is commingled with the proposed spectacle's 'nothingness of clarity', becoming implicated in this nakedness that enlightens and returns to him the 'active indifference' (Bataille) of a gaze from which sight and seer have been suspended. The spectator-projector with the 'lampadophorous' gaze (Foucault) is turned into, is reflected as spectacle in the terrible face-to-face that is imposed upon him by *Olympia*; he sees himself seen and sees himself, led back to the voyeurism of his seeing that renders it obscenely bare under the mysterious gaze of a spectre conjugating the appearing of what is seen with the operation of he, non-visible rather than invisible, who makes it seen (hence the radical subversion of the classical representation that Foucault analysed on the basis of Velazquez's painting: 'The profound invisibility of what one sees is inseparable from the invisibility of the person seeing').[130] Actors and spectators alike are dependent on a spectre that they share and distribute, united in the spectrality of the pictorial plane and its flat tints struck head-on by a light come from Outside that plunges us

into the Night of the Inside ('Pale Venus emerges, and it is Night', writes Verlaine in one of his *Saturnian Poems* published in 1866). . . . An effect taken further by those 'group portraits' (e.g., *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, 1863; and the painting known as *Luncheon in the Studio*, 1868) whose protagonists, in their absolute isolation, evade any collective or individual grip on existence, as if placed outside of themselves in these expressionless gazes which suggest appearances reduced to the state of mannequins or mute actors, with neither depth of field nor any time other than that of the pose; figures projected into a world where the visual, the immanence of the visual, is the only value, prohibiting all narrative interpretation because the sensori-motor link is definitively broken by the flash of a fulgurant shot.

(Can we blame Nadar, then, for remarking that 'posing' is a common 'illness of the brain' that 'the romantics' hardly escaped, as they 'coughed languidly at us through their ashen cheeks?' Philip Ortel's commentary is merciless here: the hostility of writers to photography is a 'fear of being dispossessed of the Word'.)[131]

Thus, in *Luncheon in the Studio* (118 × 153cm, 1868), the emphasis on the elegant adolescent, cut off at the legs and so violently 'overexposed' that he could be seen as a 'young Chinese disguised as a European',[132] produces a powerful force of disconnection-decomposition in regard to the two other characters in the penumbra of the background and with a more sketchy facture (a man in a top hat smokes dreamily, leaning on a half-laid table; the servant brings—or carries away—a golden coffee pot while casting in our direction a gaze as vague as those of the other 'protagonists': the construction of the divergence of gazes reminds us irresistibly of *The Balcony*, yet to come). These two are not at all subordinated to the principal model, as would be the case in the highly classical type of composition here deconstructed, decomposed in all of its *topoi* (to the point where one no longer knows which is the subject of the picture). On this point, it is interesting to mention the fact that Manet had initially used the studio's panelled glass partition to form a continuous ground plane for the painting, but that in the final version he did away with this unifying motif in favour of the strangeness of a (de)composition where everything is arrested 'in a sort of glaciation'.[133] Despite the frontal lighting which can only come from that exterior in which we participate facing the painting, *Luncheon in the Studio* is the spectacle of a view that mortifies our 'point of view', suspended by the silence of a neutral gaze that is addressed to no one and that sucks us in, projects us into the foreign land of an image absent to itself: an arrested image frozen in its own immobility, flattened; an image voided by virtue of being overcharged and as if saturated with objects lacking any principle of organisation. It can present only the impassibility of a surface that absorbs the exteriority of gazes into a spectral plane, rendering us attentive to minute details, events of interest to no one,

strange things like the lemon peeled in a spiral or the fresh oysters laid out on a table where coffee is being served,[134] deposed in an instant, bearing witness to the isolation of a dead time and of an 'internal dislocation which breaks with realist tradition'.[135] Unmoored from any subjective point, this vision whose framing, whose shooting is carried out in the purest abstraction, is the image of a floating death. It is the principle of the timeless clarity of the blink of an eye, of a photograph taken with the instantaneity of absolute speed, transforming a young man into a spectre whose 'system of black and white colouration' cannot but trouble the spirit[136] (on this point, the similarity of the painting itself to its X-ray image is absolutely startling).[137] Michael Fried's *Stillness versus Speed* (indicating 'the rapidity of [execution] which is at odds with the static forms it describes')[138] must therefore be twice turned about: *Speed versus Stillness* (*versus*, from *vertere*, 'to turn', to turn *towards*).

This sentiment is shared by numerous contemporaries (from Zola to Mantz): Manet is, before anything else, following Thoré-Burger's observation in regard to Chardin, a painter of *still life*—the painter of an immobile, immobilised life.[139] Because he refused to afford any higher status to a face than to a piece of clothing, a ground, or a flower, we sense in each of his paintings the idea of a neutral life in 'a distant and silent world'.[140] But this transformation of the subject into still life also means that Manet accorded as much 'pictorial' importance to a piece of clothing, a background/ground, or a flower as he did to a head (since 'for him, everything is portrait')[141]—and sometimes more, when he stopped to concentrate on some indifferent detail, as the critic notes in reference to Olympia's bouquet,[142] since the painting itself is but 'a mere pretext to analyse', with no given meaning.[143] Because the facture does not dominate the aspect so as to communicate a vision, however, the result is a general effect of *over-painting* that does away with all distinction between genres and with the hierarchy of subjects traditionally governed by the superiority of history painting, in favour of what the Goncourt brothers called a 'material painting'.[144] This 'materialist art'[145] bases itself on still life—the least visionary art possible—as pure experimental assemblage of colours whose bouquets delivered from their in-itself are the flowers of the palette, bringing to light an anti-narrative art, an art of pure visuality then, escaping all historico-allegorical instruction and all concern for realism alike. Manet will thus be able to refuse both of the two symmetrically opposed sides of *mimesis* to materialise a paradoxical naturalism of artifice, at once sensualist and constructivist, coenesthetic in its effect,[146] and which seems at once to invite and to repel the Impressionist eye. A vague eye whose sensorimotor vacuity may lead to abstraction,[147] but which above all involves painting in the creation of a space governed strictly by the composite character of composition (Manet's 'absurd composition', as Thoré-Bürger says). But

is this 'term of art', *composition*, with its classical connotation of order and architecture of significations, still appropriate? It seems not:

> What is called composition does not exist for him; the task that he sets himself is not at all that of representing this thought or that historical act. And this is why he must not be judged either as a moralist or as a storyteller; he must be judged as a painter. He treats paintings of figures as it is permitted, in schools, to treat pictures of still life [. . .]: he has the talent—and this is his specific temperament—of a fine grasp of dominant tones, and is thus able to model things and beings in large planes.[148]

The still life aspect that emanates from all of Manet's painting (this painting 'in large planes') is the best expression of the radical displacement operated on the question of the narrative-subject, which classically determined both the closure of the picture, its pictorial unity, and the absorption of the spectator present-absent in the represented scene, by making him 'penetrate' into it, by making him in turn adopt the characters' absorption in a vague state or activity.[149] All of this gives us to think that Manet intended to make visible the operation by which the 'absorptive potential' of the subjects present on the canvas is neutralised; in his work, the subjects are literally flattened, extracted from any principle of existence in an internal duration. The feeling of flatness that comes from the paintings is thus immediately determined by the destruction of any kind of 'psychological depth'[150] and by the effacing of any 'expressive movements' in which the play of dark and light would collaborate as the support for a dramatic structure pleading the greatest of necessities and the veracity of representations.[151] Whence the sensation of unintelligibility, of illegibility, that comes to haunt the gaze of the spectator convoked into a theatre of absence that has broken with the sacrosanct principle of unity (of place, action, and time: the three forms of presence) that is the legacy of classical drama. By way of this withdrawal of time (of presence), the condition of the *contemporaneity* of painting is induced: the condition of an 'art to which time is refused. And with time, speech. . . .'[152] The result is this effect of hallucination, conjugating instantaneity and discontinuity with the a-signifiance of a 'vision purely retinal and completely silent, textless',[153] which cannot be unconnected to the saturated precision of the photographic and the spectral impersonality of its objective lens,[154] rendered in exemplary fashion by the 'shooting' [*prise de vue*] of *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and more generally by the 'group portraits' of which it has been written, indicating their absence of any index of humanity: 'no expression, no feeling, no composition'.[155] A condition that in turn is related to those *plein air* works that aim not so much to grasp, in a chromatic harmony, an aerial displacement, the indices and the imprints left in the atmosphere by the characters who threaten to evaporate like apparitions, molecularised into grains of light, as to take up the

atmospheric envelope in an effect that always mixes a certain coldness with the warmth of day. A perfect example of this would be *The Railway* (1873), with its railing implacably puncturing the (already inconsistent) atmospherism of the curtain of smoke by literally barring the way to Impressionism, the child seen from behind directing our gaze towards the door of Manet's studio, and the young woman, a perfect *model*, as indifferent to the spectacle as she is to herself.[156] It is a highly paradoxical *plein air*, then, that Manet practices, in what in fact most often remains a studio painting (as is the case with *The Railway*): in a reversal of the Impressionist drift of Mallarmé's argument (on what he himself conceives to be an 'obscure and delicate point'), Manet's *plein air* practice in fact consists in preserving in a natural milieu the artificial character associated with theatrical lighting. Daylight must be elevated to the intensification of an artificial luminosity that confers upon flesh the aspect of an 'apparition', as if it were a matter of a daydream 'haunted by a certain blackness'.[157] Whereas this hallucination fades when the actor turns away from the spotlights and leaves the stage, the *plein air* must intensify this spotlight effect, which it allies with opacity so as to give bodies their mental granularity, thus unleashing, in Mallarmé's words, 'this pollen of flesh', in a pictorial atmosphere amplified by the white patches of the canvas combined with grisaille. Thus is attained a 'mental canvas' drawing on the flat transparency of the air that comes to saturate every grain of flesh even as 'the flesh tones of a model keep their true qualities, being nearly equally lighted on all sides'.[158] It is this bombardment by a uniform light that elevates and removes the body thus requalified towards a region that is incorporeal by virtue of its being all surface—towards the same *effect* that Mallarmé seeks to produce in his poetry through the abstract spacing of flowers in the absence 'of all bouquets'. A feeling we get from *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1864)—from the intemporal clarity of the characters seated *to the fore* (even though in a secondary plane) and subjected to a frontal lighting, to the surreal appearance of the naked woman who is presented in a kind of absence and isolation—like an apparition capturing to its profit alone the resources of the light-air that strikes it head-on in an aesthetic of the 'shot' [*vue*] that evokes the painted grounds of photographic portraits. The air seems saturated by the uniform and excessive contrast of her flesh, which it *impresses* in the same way—the same uniformly excessive way—in which photographic film *fixes* the effects of light in its chemical solution by abolishing the internal model proper to the half-tint, bringing to the fore the boldest contrasts.

It is also in this *photographic—or over-photographic*[159]—aspect that the question of framing takes on its full importance and attains, as Mallarmé saw without ever making explicit its technical stakes, the status of an 'absolutely new science' that began with *the making visible of* the 'perpetual metamorphosis' of the air 'and its invisible action' in an '*aspect* at once solid and

vaporous',[160] an aspect dependent on those new laws of space and light of which Manet was well aware, given his frequent recourse to photography (which, it is said, 'took the place of working from the live model'[161]—but he was also known to make use of a photograph of one of his paintings as the basis for a watercolour).[162] This is a crucial question, and one that suggests that Manet cannot be placed at the origin of Impressionism (as Mallarmé argues) in his quest for a gaseous perception of an almost evaporated world without the 'photographic revolution'[163] insinuating itself into the argument by inscribing Manet and Impressionism, but in a very different way, in the wake of its light and surface effects. For the capture of bodies given over to the luminous, *mediumistic* transparency of the air (the air as *medium*: the word comes back twice a few lines apart in Mallarmé's article),[164] the radiation of what Mallarmé conceives of as a 'pollen of flesh', in so far as it depends upon this effect of capture, requires a plane external to the phenomenon depicted and yet not founded on any a priori: a reflecting surface or a *peculiar screen*[165] so that the modern painter can support himself on an axial plane of polarisation capable of capturing bodies 'with the promptitude just sufficient to impart truth'. 'He must find something', writes Mallarmé, 'on which to establish his picture, though it be but for a minute'.[166] One must set out a plane, arrange an instant of capture relating to a new perspective, a perspective that cannot but draw on the lesson of photography in its writing of the light of an image-world, in which the hand makes of itself an 'impersonal abstraction' (Mallarmé).[167] Now we begin to understand that, in its pictorialist deviancy, photography was only able to revisit the *topoi* of Impressionism because the latter had already had to assimilate a certain 'mighty will' that tended to 'push the means' of fixing the impression 'to their uttermost limits'[168] the better to combat on its own terrain 'the results of a material science' by opposing to industrial art 'the most ethereal and immaterial aspects of creation'. . . .[169] Informed by this insight, following the turns of Mallarmé's argument, detaching it from the Baudelairean ground that furnishes its uneven archaeology, and relating this 'will' to the painter informed by the optics of the photographic image that brings all of these 'means' to light (the light of an 'artificial retina'—Arago),[170] we perceive that Manet precisely *does* announce Impressionism, in this photographic effect that the latter will only exploit 'clandestinely' so as better to dissociate itself from it, since photography 'threatens the very humanity of images'[171] (Impressionism is the will to rediscover through painting, in the photographic age, the humanity of the natural beauty of the world). . . . Observe how this overphotographic opacity, without which his way of 'cutting down the pictures, cutting the canvas off' would be unable to associate the construction of space with the treatment of light, unable to extract from bodies the silence through which they can indifferently touch on the movement of an aerial incarnation through the extreme refinement of

a white robe or the overclarity of an aspect (Berthe Morisot in the *Balcony* conjugates both of these), does not so much liberate painting from the womb of the plane that closes in gazes behind the louvres of a fan, as lead it back *into the open air*. This, even in Manet's most 'impressionist' paintings, is what impedes the fan from mutating into a vibrant fabric that would animate bodies, making the faces lose their impassibility. Such is the indifferent apathy of the 'horribly surly'[172] woman in *Argenteuil* (1874), emphasised by the vertical stripes of her clothing[173] and by the neighbouring verticals of the masts and ropes, who addresses us with a fixed gaze met by that of the man by her side, whose 'animated body [. . .] finds echoes in the diagonals and curves of the neighbouring yacht'.[174] The horizontal stripes of his shirt contrast with the woman's vertical stripes, manifesting a *grid* effect which almost brings back to the *Balcony*[175] these characters 'posing so as to say nothing' (Théophile Véron)—unless in the impossible 'dialogism' signified by the absolute resistance of the verticals to the horizontals which represent on the fabric the weave, 'the material properties of the canvas'[176] (but, precisely, those of a fabric that does not weave itself). The isolation of Manet, the grave of the studio and his painting 'onto cave walls'[177] can thus be exposed to the open air without demeaning the flat isolation, the arbitrary purity, 'clear-cut, unique', cut from the 'ordinary series' . . . that would soon be recognised by Mallarmé as the condition of a poetics of the aspect, the condition of the Poem 'cut off exactly where it ceases to exist'. ('I believe'—he specifies—'there is no other poetry these days'.)[178] *Proof by Manet*: the plane, in its de-framing, so highly constructed (and so far from being Impressionist—and thus far from Degas, even if the latter's quite photographic 'strange insensibility' brings him closer to Manet) imposes silence, this phantomatic absence of a bouquet translated into the case of an isolated asparagus spear in the full light of the studio. 'This is the picture, and the function of the frame is to isolate it'—whereas the spectator 'half believes he sees the *mirage* of some natural scene'.[179]

The replacement of composition by (de-)framing, the presentation of a world shattered and atomised and referring to no totality either temporal or spatial, the 'mental operation' that seeks to extract a 'noble phantom' beyond any *person*, and even the investment of the air as *medium* of this 'operation' may remind us of Robert Wilson's photographic theatre. The drama of the gaze *faced with the objective lens*, the gaze of the deaf man cut off from the 'profound rhetoric' so dear to Baudelaire, has replaced the absorption of the *dramatis personae* who aim only to exclude the gaze by neutralising the presence of the spectator.[180] A play of the neutral: whereas according to the tradition of *mimesis* nothing exists for the gaze except on condition that one feigns to know nothing of it, it is now the face-to-face of a world-image *undone* that compels its monomaniacal gaze by the highlighting of the least detail, where 'every portion of the picture surface *face*[*s*] the beholder as never before',[181]

manifesting an absolute indifference that refers the subject back to his impossible relation to himself in front of the painting: an *in front of* with no *inside*. The surface effect (the effect of *flatness*, that phenomenon of flatness or planarity in which Greenberg condenses the emergence of modern art, to the detriment of colour)[182] is the phenomenal product of the *facing-up-to* whose function Michael Fried has explained in the following terms:

> One effect of Manet's strategy, and doubtless also a principal cause of the extreme provocation that his paintings typically offered to contemporary audiences, is that the beholder sensed that he had been made supererogatory to a situation that ostensibly demanded his presence, as if his place before the painting were *already occupied* by virtue of the extreme measures that had been taken to stake it out.[183]

But would one not also be staking one's life in this place, that of the man without qualities, displaced outside of the community of representation in a definitive solitude, and who must henceforth conceive the world according to the abstraction of a position that is derealised because deprived of any existence in duration, cut off from the civilities of the empirical, posed in a life become impassible before the impenetrability of that which is as never before (reduced to that which is, but which is no longer Nature as was)? This is the place of *a* nondescript life that has departed from the centring and completeness of the individual, suspended from a world reduced to the Aspect in which it participates by holding inordinately open the instants that the 'existential' thrust of time would immediately close up again (as Merleau-Ponty says of photography). A life with no 'grace' beyond that of a spectre[184] for which the world-image always finds itself *taken* [*tirée*] according to a priority that no longer tolerates any seeing, any seer except for impressions of nothingness; and *withdrawn* [*rétiree*], dismembered, in the metonymic mobility that will be captured by the ghostly enormity of the mirror of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. Édouard Manet is thus the painter with whose palette the image becomes autonomous in relation to the world, a world that *withdraws* into the surreality of 'new laws of space and light' with no relation to the presence of any point of view. This is what is indicated by the Visual: that the image is endowed with a *power of invasion* of space without representing anything from the point of anyone. Its power of modernity is reflected on the membrane required by the brain-eye to make seen, outside of the subject, the unworld [*immonde*] proper to it (i.e., the retreat of the world and of the imagination that governs it: cf. Baudelaire), and to which the visible relates as to its real condition of non-relation (because it involves a non-subject) 'till such time as the subject expected of the painter had ceased to be anything but an unexpected, an unforeseeable sensation, a pure, high-pitched vibration to which no particular meaning could be assigned'.[185]

Since Manet, the image has been the site of an in-between, a milieu independent of the terms that it places in (non-) relation, like the mirror in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, whose function is to confront the spectator with an in/sensible surface that we might qualify, taking up Raymond Bellour's expression, as a 'between-the images'.[186] If the image is not of matter, in the hard and solid sense of the thing, neither does it issue from its projection qua mobile and diaphanous (in so far as this is even possible in an arrested time), an artificially aerial milieu where everything is bound up with the volatile spectres of a present that does not pass because it is the contemporary of the world as something past. The image, we might say, is *a*spect: a spectacle that *a*presentation seeks, sealing the privation of subject and object alike. Aspect—which is to say that anonymous, autonomous spectacle which has no need of the specular dimension of the self or the panoramas of the depths of the world—mutates into a plane-spectre, into a snapshot, but one that is not the fixed profile of the thing, since it ceaselessly proposes itself as a cutting-out, a (de-)framing that appropriates the outlines of objects. In this sense, the image is 'the durable and clear mirror of that which lives perpetually' in the nothingness of things and of beings, an instantaneous cut into the infinite speed of pure phenomenal exteriorities so as to provide their eternal aspect. With and beyond the letter of Mallarmé, it is indeed the aspect that 'throws' us 'rudely [. . .] at the close of an epoch of dreams in front of reality'; a reality that alone can grasp 'the steadfast gaze of a vision restored to its simplest perfection'.[187] Thus, the image 'strips' us—by making us pass from the nocturnal, insular dream to the isolate of a perception *otherwise* exact, through the cut of a mirror the effects of which have become independent in the fixity of the plane where the aspect of the nameless phenomenon shows itself, once the visible in its entirety has passed over onto the side of the visual.[188]

3

Like a kind of testament, the impossible play of mirrors to which *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881–1882) gives rise, caught between the staging of obliqueness and the reality of the frontal plane of representation, building on the duel of perspectives put in place by Manet after the preparatory oil sketch (which strikes a somewhat Impressionist note),[189] delivers something like the hyperbole of this apparatus, which is that of the visual and its *dispars*: the 'consumer' reflected in the mirror like a cinematographic countershot *is* and *is not* placed before the waitress (who looks elsewhere), and the counter is a still life since it is indeed I who, in order to grasp/be grasped by/relinquished by his absent gaze, *must* and *must not* find myself facing the canvas/the waitress struck full-on by the light (refracted from all directions) and thus without

any face-to-face. But what is this spectator-I who will be identified, who will identify himself, in the reflection of a 'consumer' that *I am* (qua consumer of painting—this spectator signified in the 'life-size' painting by the electric irreality of the mirror image that occupies almost the whole surface of the canvas)—*and that I am not* (since I do not resemble the character in the top hat/in the form of Manet[190] whose reflection is shifted, according to the laws of optics, in relation to the place of the spectator[191] and who would thus have a point of view incompatible with the downward view of the consumer)? Doesn't it engage the '*aspect*ator' (of an a-spectacle) in the promotion of an aspect that is at play, with the aid of a mirror, and of the centralising eye of the monocular perspective, in a submission of the normative space that it governs to all sorts of displacements and distortions which have in common that they disqualify the point of view of the subject of representation? The question being not so much that 'standing in front of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* is not the same as standing in front of the bar at the Folies-Bergère',[192] as that of constructing a system of visual incompatibilities between vision and representation, a system that would have a reciprocal effect on a seeing prohibited from representing *and representing itself* (the whole apparatus of the mirror-picture of the *Bar* contributes to this forced identity implied by the prohibition of representation, and which we should beware of confusing with a prohibition bearing upon a represented subject. . . .). Thus, the construction of a visual space freed from representation is necessarily doubled by a kind of deconstruction of the apprenticeship of perception in the first of all perceptions, at the threshold of the visible world: the specular image in which my own *identification* is at stake. To retain only Lacan's famous title, it is *The Mirror Stage as (de-)Formative of the Function of the I.* Afflicted in its representation (according to Jules Comte's 'Salons of 1882', all of the commentator-spectators had described at length the *mirage* or *after-image* effect produced by a deceptive mirror [*miroir-menteur*] with its imprecise reference points, all of whose images suffer from a *default of identity* because of an optical undecidability that foils all efforts at interpretation, all attempts at narration),[193] the subject is reduced to being nothing more than the *imago* correlate of *effects-of-the-real* whose pictorial impression is affirmed by the hallucination of a mirror-picture. 'A kind of pictorial phantasmagoria'.[194]

To convince oneself of the hallucinatory play with painting to which the *Bar* gives rise, we might mention the following: the absence of seating on the floor under the balcony, the suspended effect of the reflection of the countertop and of the luminous white balls which float in the void and the chandeliers with no ceiling to hang from . . . ; the signature of the painter figuring as a *trademark* on the bottle of aperitif at the extreme left of the counter; but also, no less troubling, the disquieting resemblance (of the image) of the 'consumer' to (the reflection of) a spectator situated on the balcony,

positioned vertically above the signature-mark, who seems to watch me, as the painter might, as I look at the barmaid: the latter's reflection is (not) turned towards the client, and since the two faces are not on the same axis at all, it is hard to tell whether the abnormally fixed gaze of the man in the top hat is indeed addressed to her (the face-to-face is elided in 'its' reflection); as for the waitress 'herself', the absence of relief and modelling, the anti-realist effect of *flatness*, is so extreme that it makes of her a kind of insert introduced between the two planes of the counter and the mirror. Her more volumetric reflection thus seems endowed with a superior 'reality' to what appears to be the pure 'ob-ject' with no henchman [*suppôt*] (and thus a *girl*?) of a gaze reduced to the autonomy of the silent phenomenon to which it is confided[195] (in place of the conversation with the client, a '*phanein*', a lighting up without '*phainai*', saying, speaking), a properly aspectual superiority. For the aspect is not simply the promotion of a spectacle without assignable spectator. Here it designates the impersonal (de-)framing of a mobile image (technically obtained by the rotation of the mirror,[196] literally figured in the faceted sides of the bowl of oranges 'strategically' situated between the waitress and her reflection) that submits the point of view to constant displacements according to a kind of optical bifurcation sealing the triumph of the pictorial aspectuality of the visual over representation. Thus, the mirror that occupies practically the whole surface of the painting presents itself as a plane of decomposition, which cuts out and distributes incompatible points of view to such an extent that it extracts from them the incorporeal *aspect*, the event of a non-meeting between divergent immobilities (the waitress/the client—but there is also the divergence of the attitudes and gazes of the 'spectators' in the gallery, indifferent to the trapeze act cut off in mid-swing at the extreme top left of the painting: the negation of spectacle). The *aspect*, this abstract cut between what is seen in the mirror and what is normally supposed to be represented in it, is thus presented as a gap, a spacing wherein the visible reveals its ghostly character by *exposing*, by *demonstrating* the automat that is detained and that operates in the incision of each profile (the face-to-face of the incompatible angles of the profiles of the waitress and the client in the mirror, a face-to-face which appears to be a shifted montage of two images, of 'two photographic negatives').[197] It is this *automatic* spacing that determines the visible as visual in the 'cold constellation' (Mallarmé) of its *dislocated* apresentation—with neither natural place (the artifice of 'representation' is at its apex here) nor privileged point of view (the multiplicity of spectators figures the chaotic multiplicity of views without fixed points) nor common locality (elided by the absence of spectacle—the whole scene floats in the void, teetering on the edge of the painting . . .)—in relation to which the spectator will always be *displaced*.[198] Here, outside of representation, the view acquires its modern autonomy in the 'flat transparency' (Bataille) of the aspect, which

is the whole objectless/subjectless life of the image *qua visual*.[199] (It is only from a second point of view of the interpretation of the *scene* that one might introduce a temporal scansion running from before to after, permitting one to resolve the enigma: *then* the represented scene in the mirror could correspond to a neighbouring instant in time when the slightly stooping barmaid was engaged in some relation or other with the client, whereas she now faces the crowd of men whom she stands serving for hours, and whom 'she regards with her bored eyes',[200] etc. For our part, taking our cue from the non-relation of these two 'moments' and from the disconnection of gazes,[201] we prefer to stay with the head with its lost gaze, isolated by the black cordon of Olympia, overexposed by the lighting of a gaze come definitively *from here and from elsewhere*.) The visual is in this sense (a-)structurally animated by an automaton that opens up the *disidentification of the picture* by promoting not so much a simulacra-resemblance as an image without identification, a totally afocal image—an all the more radical and powerful generalised defocalisation in that, in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergères*, it plays with the central-decentralised presence of a figure around whom it turns. In the end, it seems as if the threefold system of incompatibilities scrupulously identified and analysed by Foucault to show that the painter/spectator/consumer *no longer has his place* as the subject of representation—'the painter must be here and he must be there; he must have someone here and he must have no-one there; there is a descending gaze and there is an ascending gaze'[202]—may be the outcome of a *shot* that owes its hallucinatory Aspect to the disparities of the Brain-Eye.

But what regime is obeyed by this image without identification that I cannot see in the mirror of Manet's last painting without perturbing the receptive mechanics of seeing and the seen so profoundly that the very notion of 'perception'—of a perceptual naturality and of natural perception, naturally receptive and perspective—is barely re-presentatively *evident* anymore? Answer: the regime of hallucination. *For the pictorial-aspectual view can only visually render representation impossible by making the supposed re-presentation that governs 'external perception' entirely subservient to a seeing whose common name is hallucination*.

It is this reversal, brought to its apex in the *Bar*, that 'works' Manet's whole oeuvre and pictorial practice in their performative dimension, opposed to all 'realist' representation. A way of *performing sight*, to take up the compelling expression of James H. Rubin,[203] who applies it marvellously to *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and to Victorine Meurent's doubled performance in that painting: as a 'bather' in a nature briskly daubed like a stage-set (deconstruction of the mythological model of the academic image); and as a 'nude', the model of a *tableau vivant* animated by its very featurelessness, and whose displaced, overexposed, hallucinated rather than dreamed aspect *desublimates* the world of art in its modern installation (the studio *of* Manet), addressing me as if from

behind a glass pane with her strangely fixed gaze[204] (construction of the picture-image as true hallucination). Her gaze positions me, without perspective, in the foreground occupied by a still life whose pictorial indifference to the course of the seasons indicates sufficiently that if nature has *taken* place, there is no longer any nature except as a motif cut out by and in painting—'modern image of its insufficiency for us!' as Mallarmé will write in *The Latest Fashion*.[205]

It is important to note that this rupture in regard to all natural or naturalist phenomenology of perception, in the continually reprised negotiation between its objective and subjective poles (the whole history of Realism in painting is condensed in this moment: from Courbet's manifesto upholding the individuality of the painter, to the 'temperament' promoted in Zola's *Salons*), between sensation and consciousness, a rupture for which even today Manet's *Déjeuner* is decried,[206] was contemporary, on the philosophico-scientific plane, with a particularly rich sequence leading from the advent of positivist psychology and physiology, which we can recognise in Helmholtz's *Physiological Optics* (translated into French in 1867), to Schopenhauer's discovery of,[207] and the increasing interest in, 'unconscious thought'.[208] A work by Hippolyte Taine entitled *On Intelligence* published in 1870 will propagate this movement among a wider public already well-prepared by prolonged debates on the nature of images in dreams and hallucinations: psychophysiological questions or questions of 'psychic physiology'[209] involving what were then called the 'unconscious movements of the brain'. Questions to which the world of modern art, with its 'nervous machine [. . .] at once overworked and insatiable',[210] was no stranger. At the heart of Taine's book lay the following proposition, a broadside against the idealist philosophy of knowledge, a proposition animated by a categorical reversal rigorously contemporary with the pictorial revolution brought about by Manet:

> Thus, external perception is an internal dream which proves to be in harmony with external things; and instead of calling hallucination a false external perception, we must call external perception a true hallucination. [. . .] Sensation, whether in the absence or presence of impulsions from without and of nervous action, produces hallucinations, and produces them by itself alone.[211]

This means that, at the level of the most immediate experience,

> In order to establish that external perception, even when accurate, is an hallucination, it is sufficient to observe that its first phase is a sensation. In fact, a sensation, and notably a tactile or visual sensation, engenders, by its presence alone, an internal phantom which appears an external object. Dreams, hypnotism, hallucinations strictly so called, all subjective sensations are in evidence as to this. [. . .] As soon as ever the sensation is present, the rest follows; the prologue entails the drama.[212]

Drawn along by this phantom logic—as 'the phantom materializes'—peonies or lemons emerge as aspects of a cerebral eye, aspects to which Manet lends the most vivid brilliance in the *Branch of White Peonies, with Pruning Shears* (1864), cut by the nerves in the camera obscura of the brain, sliced out of our optical centres in such a way that the pictorial cut reverses their ideal florality: a deposit of flowers—head down—arranged in favour of *the secant aspect of the Aspect* (see also, more trenchant still, the *Peony Stems and Pruning Shears* of the same year). Peonies cut from the garden to be inscribed on frosted glass, on a gown, a veil, or on that lace curtain that Manet sets behind the *Portrait of Jeanne Duval* (1862)—or *Baudelaire's Mistress, Reclining*—which sees Baudelaire's 'black Venus' enveloped in a robe with wide, spread-out violet and white stripes that 'phantomize' her emaciated, half-paralysed body, making of her simultaneously 'an idol and a puppet' (Félix Fénéon). What are these flowers, forming on the cold panes of a rigorous winter, or on the folds of some diaphanous fabric? So as 'to no longer receive an impression from without' in the abstraction that deposes them onto a transparent membrane, their objectal outlines are denaturalised into multiple aspects with no vegetable sap: flocculent nudes or phantasmagorical quarries of fabric emanating from the net interposed between the eye and the outside, between the point of view and the object, subtracted from the world and the self-voyeur alike, isolated upon this shutter that abstracts them, introducing some void into the universe, upon this curtain from which they detach themselves, floating. Since 'the notion of object, escaping, is lacking'[213] 'not having taken place in the same sense as other existing objects'[214] (Baudelaire), we will not be surprised that this phantom logic of sensation takes colour as its paradigm, extending, by way of Helmholtz's *Physiological Optics*, the modulation that led us from Goethe to Delacroix:

> The truth, however, is that all the colors with which the surrounding world seems decked are within us, and are sensations of our optic centres; the consideration of the sensations of sight we term subjective is sufficient to convince us of this. [. . .] Color is not in the object, nor in the luminous rays which spring from it. [. . .] The presence of the object and of the luminous rays contribute indirectly only to cause it to rise; its direct necessary and sufficient condition is the excitation of the retina, or which is more important of the optic centres of the encephalon. [. . .] Consequently, the color and visible figure are but internal events, which appear external. The whole of physiological optics rests on this principle.[215]

We must dare to edge closer to these internal events, these sensational phantoms, in order to grasp what appears as the pictorial emergence of a 'pure visual sensation', upstream of the identitarian experience of meaning and its

'visual atlas', and beyond the supposed difference between real landscape and painted landscape.[216]

> In this state, which is that of the person born blind immediately after the operation, the eye has the sensation only of variously colored patches more or less clear or obscure. [. . .] Colorist painters are well aware of this state; they revert to it; their art consists in seeing their model as a patch, the only element of which is the more or less diversified, deadened, vivid, and mingled color.[217]

In spite of his miscognition of the most 'modern and contemporary' painting (in Mallarmé's words), Taine enters into resonance with Manet when he identifies the 'deadened and vivid color' of the 'tachiste' experiment. To give a more precise shape to this association, let us add that the experiment is less 'naïve' than may appear: in its status as a paradigm of 'hallucinatory semblance' governing the 'Education of the Senses' (the title of the chapter), it is invested with a 'physiological' modernity that refers back to the vibratory planisphere of the eye as that first plane upon which are deployed the spectral patches and flowers that surface from the depths of a shipwreck—a shipwreck of *consciousness* that is 'not sufficient' because 'its illusions are many and invincible', a shipwreck of the *self* in favour of the *hallucinatory* weave of our mental life.[218] Here we must briefly mention the painting of uncertain date entitled *Reading* (61 × 74 cm, 1865–1873?), apparently executed in two stages, which is not far from showing the contrary of what its title announces. For the subject signified by reading, in so far as this activity involves the life of the self in the substitution of signs for images, is here submitted to an apparatus 'signifying' the hallucinatory invasion of the signs of representation by the image, which thus deregulates the descriptive writing of the painting. For what I *see*—and the effect is even increased at a distance—is a window *veiled* by drapes that threaten to invade the whole canvas, combining with/*mixing* themselves with the fascinating whiteness of the couch and the white muslin robe of the young woman (Suzanne Manet bathed in a play of whites) who is being read to (a young man—Léon Leenhoff—poses with a book in his hand against a black background at the extreme right of the upper half of the picture). The window opens onto a 'landscape' (pot plants and flowers on the balcony—one of them is visible between the drapes), seen through these invasive drapes with which it finds itself intimately entangled, giving us the feeling that the image belongs neither to the outside nor the inside (the left of the canvas is occupied by a green, indoor plant, identical to the others, so that 'the' plant is shown three times: outside, inside, and behind the drapes which thus entrap the outside and the inside) but to the milieu of this transparent membrane, which from *a* single diaphanous fabric emits plural plant-motifs (indefinite articles) like so many injections of the brain[219]

setting out its ideative Aspects and its sensational Phantoms. An impression accentuated, what is more, by the colour of the woman's eyes, troubled and gleaming, which establish a secret identity with the shimmering of the drapes. The drapes at the centre of the picture thus present themselves as an amalgam of outside and inside, as an encrustation that mixes the insertions of the landscape with the pleats of the tulle, indiscernible from a membrane calling the eye, recalling the retina that perceives them and serialises them (capturing even the hands of the pianist, whose fingers are reminiscent of leaf-tips).

It had not escaped Taine that the question of the 'subject' is profoundly renewed by the inner/outer experience of this hallucinatory weave whose analysis is deployed like an archaeology of the visible. Thus he notes:

> I find, then, by way of real elements and positive materials, to constitute my being, nothing but my events and states, future, present, and past. What there is actually in me is their series or web. I am, then, a series of successive events and states, sensations, images, ideas, perceptions, recollections, previsions, emotions, desires, volitions, connected together, [. . .] Now, all the events I attribute to myself have a common character; they appear to me as internal.[220]

From this formula, '*I am a series of events*', which of itself would justify a return to the *Bar*, we shall retain the suggestion that here the idea of self, 'illusory in the metaphysical sense', is deduced as that 'product' in relation to which 'inside and outside express only relations'.[221] The so-called *self* is in truth 'extracted from internal events', 'drawn' from a series, as the result of the setting in motion of the series and of its temporalisation, which checks and rectifies the 'automatic force' that predisposes every *image* (qua) *present* to 'complete hallucination'.[222] But the elements that compose this series must be conjoined somehow; and this conjunction can only be effectuated by the self, the result of the operation whose 'regular form' is acquired through an 'infinite number of possible deformations'.[223] Designated by the notion of the *aspect* in so far as it associates many points of space in one instant by linking together distanced intersections, this conjunction, or asignifiant synthesis, is the act of an automaton that rises up in the encephalus, forcing open a passage in the brain to induce an image without duration through an erratic line that serialises its elements, elements of which no self could produce a singular articulation. Beyond Taine, this is the abstract machine, the visual automaton induced by Manet's painting, in its practice of juxtaposition of the constituents of the painting—in both its raw materiality [*matièreté*] and its figurality—a practice which, in his work, is always equivalent to a *placing-into-tension* in the service of discordances and scenic paradoxes whose primary function is to render visible the visual as such.

Now, if the negation of any narrative concatenation of the elements amounts to giving each of them (in their non-relation) the status of an event,

to the detriment of the coherence and centring of the composition, its additive or adjective conception of isolated figures foreign to one another ends up constructing an *anti-structure* whose mobility results from the serialisation of all the elements on the basis of their most extreme singularity, without privileging any one of them (everything is equally painting, across the whole visible surface). What appears to me is thus the series, which, in its impure, mute phenomenality, objects itself to a subject-editor, an automaton whose only identity is a 'serial' identity, lacking in its place so as to be always 'displaced' in relation to itself. (This is how we understand Thierry de Duve's affirmation that Manet is *the Godard of painting*.)[224]

Manet ceaselessly made use of this serial function at every level of the production of his oeuvre; it can be described in terms of three movements:

1. The painter conceives his oeuvre in its totality as a great *serial composition* from which not one canvas can be removed. Thus he responds to Antonin Proust, who had planned to put one of his paintings into the Musée de Luxembourg:

> I do not wish to [. . .] penetrate into museums in pieces, I would like to arrive there in one piece, or not at all. [. . .] I would rather nothing [. . .]. Please, let's not speak of this. Could you promise me one thing, to never let me enter into a museum in pieces, at least not without protest. You see me at Luxembourg with one single canvas. *Olympia* or *At Père Lathuille's*. I would not be whole, and I wish to stay whole. For example: take one of Heim's crayons and stick it up on its own, amidst frames from all over. What would be the effect? Or rather lack of effect! On the contrary, bring the *series* together one day, in the right place, and that's a different kettle of fish.[225]

2. The production itself obeys an *economy of the series*, for—as Jean Clay says—'the production of every image, for Manet, comprises a potential declination into a whole set of practices: from drawing to engraving (of many types), from oils to lithography'.[226] To pastels, to watercolours executed after his paintings (staying within the series), not to mention the use of tracing and photography as a means of transfer. *End of the aura!* And an economy of the series in the additional sense that Manet reuses certain figures from one painting to another, directing, in almost photographic (if not already cinematographic) fashion—in new poses, in new roles and new scenes, new *installations*—the same models (Victorine Meurent, Berthe Morisot . . . the protagonists of veritable *tableaux vivants*);[227] models with whom he builds up a relationship not dissimilar to that of a film director with his stars.[228] All of this contributes to the feeling that 'Manet's oeuvre does not evolve: it displaces itself'[229] according to the absent itinerary of the automaton, to which responds the visual automatism of the spectator

rendered over to the idiocy of his captive gaze. This sensation is further reinforced by the fact that Manet has no style, *he has all of them* (*all flattened*, from the earliest *Espagnolades*), since no landscape or figure is ever painted twice in the same way, and each canvas must be a new view of the mind (according to the painter's aphorism, as reported by Mallarmé)—or a new *creation of the mind*. What visitor to the centenary exhibition did not momentarily have the impression of being at a *group show*?[230]

3. The totally unprecedented relation to the history of art developed by Manet is also part of this serial economy. We are no longer in the world of reverential inspiration and contemplation of the past; instead, we are swept up in a practice that is one of sampling and extraction, of reuse, collage and mixing: of montage. The Old Masters (Titian, Rubens, Raphael, Vermeer, Le Nain, Watteau, Chardin, David, Géricault, Delacroix, Courbet . . .) are transposed and reactualised, or better, *recycled*, to produce an 'effect-of-the-real' that is resolutely paradoxical, in so far as a prolonged observation of the painting makes them literally rise to the surface in their 'academic' or 'museal' difference. The 'absorption' of Titian's *Venus pudica* will be superimposed onto *Olympia* to make the latter appear yet more naked, more immodest, more blasphemous, since the sex that she hides is shown, at the centre of the composition, 'modelled, whereas the rest is flat';[231] the 'expressionism' of Goya's *Third of May* will render the *Execution of Maximilian* otherwise inhuman, confirming that the serial form necessarily operates, at the extreme, in the simultaneity of the hallucinatory effect of (at least) two series. With the production of the surface exposing the materiality of the support and of painting to the risk of the *informe*, the first tends towards the affirmation of the autonomy of a pure visual matter whose (virtual) 'elements' are caught up in the pictorial indistinction of the future Event, which, on the canvas, denounces the optics of representation through the *explosion of vision* into views (an agglomeration of indistinct patches, a black ground or a white wall: Manet-Lantier); while the second, functioning at the second degree, makes images-idols resurface like the representation of 'short-circuited' past events that overfly and *glide* [*planent*] over the figures (like doubles or understudies) without any effect of 'sense' ever resulting, except perhaps that of the perverse gap that results from placing the text of the tradition and of repertory *hors-texte*, as a kind of insert, in the productive gap of a dysgraphia (Manet/Titian; Manet/Goya; Manet/Raimondi . . .) that explodes the allegorical frame of painting. So that *present* hallucination, given what I know is (twice) a 'painting', is the common limit of these two series which doubly exceed the closure of the picture: there is thus a subversion, both through its matter and through its idols, of the represented image in regard to the structural identity of the object and in regard to the figural-recognitive

> unity of the subject of representation, in virtue of the material *and* ideal displacement of mimetic indications whose primary effect is to tear the spectator from every recognisable coordinate by delivering him to a veritable 'kaleidoscopic explosion' (Jean Clay).

Submitted to this setting in motion of series, the phenomenological pact of perception is broken in its formal apophantics (relayed in the syntax of the functions of judgement) so that each object, whose autonomous impact is captured as close as possible to the material surface of the canvas, makes of each work a new view, a new image of the mind delivered *in the present* to its (exploded-explosive) power of sensation. The mechanisms of illusion being thus doubly suspended (in regard to the play of perception and in regard to tradition), the object is *from the outset* an encrustation on the weave of an abstract curtain, a floating entity, apparently lost, cut out by the secateurs of the aspect. Having abandoned the natural language of 'the things themselves' that condition 'external' perception, the senses behave like that 'special power of illusion' (Mallarmé again) that *mobilises* the plane onto which one can project a 'detached' thesaurus of flower heads (see the flowered wall-hanging, made using a kimono, in *Autumn: Portrait of Méry Laurent*, 1881, which is a blue screen-plane upon which is painted a veil speckled with flowers phantomatically doubling Méry's silhouette; a profile portrait of she whom Mallarmé compared to a 'fragrant rose', one that is also *very much* inspired by the Italian Renaissance). These are so many flowers braided in the very retina of the eye, which receives upon its blank page volatile phosphemes, 'pollens of flesh' that one might compare to the 'seeds' that in winter polarise the orientation of crystals on a frozen pane, unfolding petals whose destiny is not to reproduce but to be assigned to the diaphany of a virtual landscape that evokes the decisive colourations of the brain (on the *very* blue ground of *Autumn*). One could not describe the effect and its logic better than Georges Duthuit, who writes,

> The model, irrefutable, striking, is no longer a model. This is something that provoked the laughter of contemporaries: memory, which, in those times, could still find itself contradicted, bore inscribed into its register nothing like this mouth springing from a paradoxical gamut of scarlet and black touches between which is inscribed—furtively, vehemently—the interstice of two lips.[232]

An interstice which is the louvre of a shutter, the blind, fan, or fold of a gaze engaging the eye in a commingling of the abstract flowers of the fabric with the vague patches of an 'impersonified' landscape. . . .

To light the mind like a wing instantly is to discard the syntaxes of description recorded in the register of memory: *as something other than petals known to man*. . . . When the eye is no longer the instrument of a phenomenology

of perception committed to the intelligibility of something given, but an epidermis saturated with sense cancelled out in the *nervous termination of the brain*; when the object is no longer a 'model' to copy and recopy, when it becomes 'subject' to the nakedness of what is seen, in an operation whose characteristic action is not to re-present but, according to Matisse's expression, to 'reach that state of condensation of sensations that constitutes a picture':[233] the psychophysiological insertion of a motif into the carpet or of a goldfish into a bowl that is undecidably in front of the window or placed in the street as the passage between exterior and interior, extends the encrustation of a phosphenal schema on the retina: 'like a play of intersections, cuts and indiscernibilities'.[234] *Les Folies-Manet*. Here is Duthuit again: Manet is

> the first for centuries [. . .] not to prejudge what he sees [. . .] So that his vision does not look back to, does not seek to ruminate over objects [. . .] These timbres, these touches call, and respond, and understand one another, to be verified afterwards, and requalified as subject.[235]

Requalified as subject, for, from the visual point of the Brain-Eye, the subject is (doubly a) terminal: since the painter no longer prejudges what he sees from his place to accompany the ascendancy of the colour of the object in a plane, the object, taken up in the explosions of colour, finds itself endowed with a presence whose regime of *afterwardsness* disqualifies any given. As stated by the precept of Mallarméan poetics: one will no longer paint 'the thing, but the effect that it produces' because this effect, far from being a 'subjective' or 'temperamental' translation, is ontologically primary in so far as it is formed through the relations of forces,[236] through *impression* as relation of forces. In other words, being modern, one does not in any way paint the effect that this thing produces upon me, but the effect that it impresses *without* '*me*'. Or, as Mallarmé, again, writes, 'the *effect produced*, without a dissonance, without a flourish, even an adorable one, which distracts—this is what I seek'.[237] One paints *an* effect (the Olympia-effect, the Maximilian-effect, the Mallarmé-effect, the Méry-effect . . .) as one paints *a* woman (with *a* Negress, *a* bouquet from *a* client, *a* cat as opposed to *the* dog, symbol of domestic fidelity in Titian) or *an* other (with *a* fur coat from chez Worth, which the painter wants to keep: '*This would make a tremendous background for certain things I'm thinking of*'),[238] *a* poet, *an* execution . . .—that is to say, the event of an (in-expressive) configuration whose relations are external to their terms (in-signifiance), independent of their subjects (a-pathy), and thus capable of projecting themselves and imprinting themselves onto 'the canvas in which there is something real'[239]—according to an indefinite article which, because of its impersonality, was able to render itself adjacent to the non-place of modern existence (*A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*). An experience that can only

be grasped as such, as an experiment of/in modernity, from the point of the event that it *is* in its resolute hardness, a point that can only be accounted for in terms of the plane of immanence that is impression as 'primordial fact'[240] of construction. This experiment of Impression—Construction,[241] of the construction of a broken series of impressions, is attained in its pictorial being by Manet through the sacrifice of the intermediary nuances of chiaroscuro (which traditionally lent coherence to the model and its transitivity of representation), through the maintenance of the unity of local tone (with which the Impressionist theatricalisation of apparition broke) placed in the service of the non-hierarchised juxtaposition of autonomous elements, through contrasts that remain unreconciled, through a difference of touch that induces the gaze to roam rhythmically, as in a squall of shocks, of blacks and whites, to grasp the effect produced as close as possible to its 'over-photographic' genesis, in the relations of forces between colours that have brought sensation to light/to the plane in the absence of all 'harmonious links'.

This is also why—and this is where Mallarmé enters with his article, whose snares we have ceaselessly skirted—the suspension of the objective/subjective order of representation immediately follows from the abandonment of the self, which engages the act of painting in the most rigorously non-existential ontological determination: '*Manet* [. . .] *determined either not to paint at all or to paint entirely from without himself.* [. . .] *Such a result as this cannot be attained all at once. To reach it the master must pass through many phases ere this self-isolation can be acquired, and this new evolution of art be learnt*'.[242] From without himself—which we must understand by bringing it together with the point of precipitation of this *isolate* (*self-isolation*)—it is Bataille's leitmotif that Manet/Mallarmé impose upon the work of painting: *an impersonal subversion*. And how could we not mention here Mallarmé's celebrated 'I am now impersonal, and no longer the Stéphane you knew'?[243] Or that phrase that conveys his entire politics of writing: 'Literature, like hunger, consists in suppressing the person writing'.[244] Hence 'the elocutory disappearance of the poet' and 'his death as such', 'Figure who No one is', once the 'poem [is] released from all apparatus of the scribe'. So that, rereading once again: '*and I, who have occupied myself a good deal in its study, can count but two who have gained it*';[245] not forgetting its relay in prose: '(I maintain that we were two)',[246] one may well think that this Two is the two of Mallarmé-Manet become indissociable in the double session of the poetic/plastic: 'poetise, through plastic art'[247]—in the double play of a weave that knows nothing of the sovereign subject converting his representations into a recognition of the 'things themselves'. Exposed 'to the primitive lightnings of logic', this twin procedure is a colourist procedure because of the mass of ink that seeps into it:

> Words, all by themselves, light each other up on the sides that are known as the rarest or meaningful only for the spirit, the center of vibratory response; whoever perceives them independent of the usual context, projected onto cave walls so long as their mobility or principle lasts, being what is not said in speech: all eager, before they are extinguished, to exchange a reciprocity of flames, or presented obliquely as a contingency.[248]

A hymen, *an* '*in-between*' two, two without one, as a membrane deploys its inserts, its encrustations which are neither those of memory nor those of the self, nor those of the logic of bodies nor of any external model, but are composed by the sovereign scintillating accident of a play of two with variable trajectories, launched from the depths of a shipwreck—that of *The Races at Longchamp* (1864–1867) whose 'kaleidoscopic' depth brings to the surface a title given by Manet to a lost painting, cut up in 1865: *Aspect of a Race at the Bois de Boulogne*.[249] For, turning to Pierre Schneider's analysis, 'Manet painted this *big bang* in the form of a throw of dice: in *The Races at Longchamp*, which may date from 1867, the explosion is produced at the heart of the pack, and makes the *membra disjecta* of the image flow forth in all directions. The creation of a work of art no longer takes its authority from the creation of the world by God or the demiurge: it results from an accident'.[250] (It is hard to imagine a greater contrast with Géricault's *Epsom Derby* and the celebrated analysis of it proposed by Merleau-Ponty in *Eye and Mind*: 'The horses of the Epsom Derby give me to see the body's grip upon the ground and that, according to the logic of body and world I know well, these "grips" upon space are also ways of taking hold of duration'.)[251]

There will be no more of these grips that '*I*' *know well*, even in the mode of an opening to things without any concept. '*Centre of vibratory suspension*', this is Igitur placed 'at the pinnacle of the self', whose 'impact becomes unsteady once more as it did before having had the perception of itself'. Mallarmé explains why: '*This time, no more doubt: certainty is mirrored in the evidence: in vain, the memory of a lie of which it was the consequence* [. . .] *the perfect symmetry of expected deductions gave the lie to its reality; no mistaking it, it was self-consciousness (for which the absurd had to serve as a place)—succeeding*'.[252]

Having denied, in the same throw, the perfect specularity of the *cogito* (the certainty of the subject) and 'the pretense of enclosing within expression the material of objects'[253] (the self-evidence of the object), since expression is before anything else an affair of de-framing, of disparity, and of the construction of impression, Igitur, in the version where he is said to throw the dice, 'once again becomes matter', which no description, no reportage can account for: 'He throws the dice, the move is made, twelve, the time (Midnight)—the one who created once again becomes matter, blocks, dice—'.[254] A matter

more than a substance, which designates the empty page upon which one sees the dice fall, 'hardly separable from the surface available to the retina', like so many flowers on an abstract curtain: a white matter to render visible the fall of phrases, interlocked trajectories rolling in the very 'white unease of our sail' ('Salut'). The abyssally folded page in which words are marked in masses of ink-like motifs on a picture that Mallarmé tears from the poem, 'writes black on white',[255] double and inverse of Heaven, through the act of writing in the inclination of a throw of dice whose formula was dictated to him by Manet's impassioned interrogation of painting. For the matter discovered by Mallarmé 'with the drawing of [his] text which is black and white'[256] is the white fold that a disaster without exception will have preceded, and which appears between all semantic series[257] and takes them to their figural/pictorial[258] limit in the spacing of the 'total word, new, foreign to language', 'adding up to a total rhythm, which would be the poem stilled, in the blanks' ('Crisis of Verse'). For 'unfailingly the blank returns, gratuitous earlier but certain now, concluding that there is nothing beyond it and authenticating the silence'.[259]

'From the depths of a shipwreck'—this is how the aspect stands, how it addresses us, after Manet, and with Mallarmé's 'critical poem', 'haunted with a certain blackness',[260] the aspect of an epoch that they set 'on a modern and contemporary path', in 'an empty place', elevating everything that rises from the depths to the artificial power of an event where the 'man without a vessel', 'a new man' with neither model nor lived [*vécu*], 'wagers himself entirely, every time'.

NOTES

1. The term used by Duranty in 1876; see E. Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture—A propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel* (Paris, 1876; republished in *Les Écrivains devant l'impressionisme*, collection introduced by D. Riout [Paris: Macula, 1989], 107–134).

2. Thierry de Duve, *Kant After Duchamp* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 329.

3. The question of the 'whatever' emphasised by de Duve had not escaped Georges Bataille in his 1955 work on Manet: G. Bataille, *Manet,* trans. A. Wainhousse and J. Emmons (New York: Skira, 1955), 64 [Paris: Skira, 1994].

4. This 'operation'—we shall see below the importance of this term in both Mallarmé and Bataille (in respect to Manet)—is in a certain sense already announced in Manet's first flower paintings, which show a 'single' flower alongside a vase, a flower posed on the table: *Branch of White Peonies, with Pruning Shears* (1864); *Peonies in a Vase on a Stand* (1864). . . .

5. The word is Verlaine's, in his Foreword to *Poètes maudits* (1884): see Verlaine, *Oeuvres en prose complètes*, ed. J. Borel (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), 636 (trans. Chase

Madar as *The Cursed Poets* [Los Angeles: Green Integer, 2004]). Painted in 1876, when Manet organised the exhibition of refused paintings in his studio, the portrait is reproduced as a frontispiece to the 'Mallarmé' chapter of Verlaine's book.

6. In one of Mallarmé's poems ('Toute l'âme résumée'), which appeared in *Le Figaro* on August 3, 1895. See *Oeuvres complètes*, text edited and annotated by H. Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 73. Translated by E. H. and A. M. Blackmore as 'All the soul that we evoke', in *Collected Poems and Other Verse* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 99.

7. Pertaining to those flowers whose 'site [. . .] / does not bear a name the gold / of the Summer's trumpet cites', the verse of 'Prose' reads

> And so immense they were, that each
> was ordinarily garlanded
> with a clear contour, and this breach
> parted it from the garden bed.

See Mallarmé, *Collected Poems and other Verse,* 53 [translation modified] [*Oeuvres complètes*, 56]. The poem appeared for the first time in January 1885, but the composition of 'Prose' in fact goes back 'at least to the 1870s' (C. P. Barbier, *Documents Stéphane Mallarmé* [Paris: Nizet, 1968], vol. 1, 31). This therefore separates the poem from its dedication to des Esseintes while also catching Huysmans in the net of the ironic strategy it develops.

8. Mallarmé, 'Music in Letters', in *Divagations*, trans. B. Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 197 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 656].

9. Mallarmé, 'Faits-Divers', in *Divagations*, 231, 255 [the epigraphs above are drawn from the same translation] [*Oeuvres complètes*, 1578 (on the Panama affair)]; and 'Or' in 'Grandes Faits Divers' [*Oeuvres complètes*, 398].

10. These are the last two verses of 'Prose' (*Collected Poems and Other Verse*, 53 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 57]):

> The child, already dextrous
> in the ways, sheds her ecstasy
> and utters 'Anastasius!'
> born for scrolls of eternity
>
> before a sepulcher chuckles 'Ha!'
> beneath its forebear any sky
> to bear the name 'Pulcheria!'
> veiled by too tall gladioli.

11. As in the 'Verre d'Eau' in *Vers de Circonstance* [*Oeuvres complètes*, 131]:

> Your lip against the crystal
> sip by sip composes there
> the vital reddish memory
> of the least ephemeral rose.

12. 'That which *is* all the more for its having not taken place', as Jean-Claude Milner writes in his *Mallarmé au tombeau* (Lagrasse: Verdier, 1999), 81.

13. Mallarmé, 'Prose' (*Collected Poems and Other Verse*, 53; *Oeuvres complètes, 56*):

> Yes, in an isle the air had charged
> not with mere visions but with sight
> every flower spread out enlarged
> at no word that we could recite.

14. A. Badiou, *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, trans. A. Toscano (Stanford University Press, 2004), 30.

15. G. Mauner, 'The Last Flowers', in *Manet: The Still-Life Paintings* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 2000), catalogue for the exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay (October 9, 2000–January 7, 2001) and Walker Art Gallery (January 30, 2001–April 22, 2001), 144. The author notes that the isolated flower with no vase had become 'something of a signature' of Manet's.

16. Mallarmé's meeting with Manet took place in Spring 1873. In his autobiographical letter to Verlaine, in 1885, Mallarmé writes of having, 'seen every day for ten years [his] dear Manet, whose absence today seems incredible!' But it is certain that his discovery of the painter's work considerably precedes this first encounter. The date of 1862 has often been suggested, because of Baudelaire's publication in September of that year, in a journal read by Mallarmé (*Le Boulevard*), of a first reflection on Manet (entitled 'Painters and Watercolourists'), whom the poet credits with an 'uncommon boldness'.

17. Mallarmé, 'The Mystery in Letters', *Divagations*, 234 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 385].

18. Mallarmé, letter to Henri Cazalis, October 1864. 'We avoid narrative', emphasises Mallarmé in the Preface to the *Coup de dés* (trans. A. Hartley in *Mallarmé* [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965], 210).

19. Bataille, *Manet*, 106: 'An element of vague raillery, perhaps stemming from the momentary aggressiveness of his style, nevertheless enters into these indifferent objects'.

20. On this difference between ground and background, see P. Schneider, '"Du fond d'un naufrage": Mallarmé regarde Manet', *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 65 (1998), 18: 'The marvellous Renaissance theatre that painting had been for some centuries', Schneider indicates, 'was taking on water at every seam at the time Manet was working in it'. Also see, by the same author, the article entitled 'Figures, fonds, frontières', *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne* 55 (1996), 5: 'I call ground what there is when there is nothing behind'.

21. J. Rancière, *Mallarmé: The Politics of the Siren*, trans. Steven Corcoran (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), 12.

22. Badiou, *Inaesthetics*, 30.

23. A. Proust, *Édouard Manet, Souvenirs* (Paris: L'Échoppe, 1996), 10 (first published in *La Revue blanche*, May 1897.) And according to the remark reported by Antonin Proust, used as an epigraph to this chapter: 'The truth is that we have no duty other than to extract from our epoch that which it offers to us' (38).

24. See Mallarmé, 'Prose', *Collected Poems and Other Verse*, 53 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 56]; and Rancière's commentary, in *Mallarmé*, 14–15.

25. S. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', trans. George T. Robinson, in Charles S. Moffatt, (ed.), *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1986), 27–35: 33. A translation (authorised by Mallarmé himself) of this text, the original French manuscript of which has been lost, was first published in *The Art Monthly Review*, September 30, 1876—that is to say, a few days before the painter began his portrait of the poet.

26. T. Natanson, *Peints à leur tour* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1948), 63.

27. Duret, 'Le Salon', 38, 30, 42.

28. Mallarmé, 'The Phenomenon of the Future', *Divagations*, 12 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 270].

29. This is the fundamental innovation of Romanticism, as summed up by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1987), 340.

30. Mallarmé, 'The Music in Letters', *Divagations*, 187 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 647]. Baudelairean man, on the contrary, must 'reform' nature.

31. Remark reported in G. Jeanniot, 'En souvenir de Manet', *La Grande Revue* xlvi (August 1907), 854.

32. C. Baudelaire, Letter to Édouard Manet, May 11, 1865. Admittedly, this phrase is extraordinarily ambiguous in the context of the dynamic of Baudelaire's correspondence with Manet, who has just complained to him of 'insults rain[ing] down on [him] like hail'. The expression nevertheless holds a certain *weight* for the painter who had included Baudelaire in his 1862 *Music in the Tuileries*. It is in his 'Salon of 1859' that Baudelaire denounced the 'simpleminded cult of nature', expressing his regret at 'seeing the role of the imagination in landscape more and more reduced'.

33. It is with this term 'humanitarian' (reviled by Delacroix) that Jules-Antoine Castagnary, in his *Salons de 1857*, endorses the 'naturalist' turn.

34. *Manet* (New York: Abrams, 1983), catalogue of the exhibition at the Grand Palais (April 22, 1983–August 1, 1983) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (September 10, 1983–November 27, 1983), 495–496 [cat. 218].

35. Théodore Pelloquet, *L'Exposition: journal du Salon de 1863*, July 23, 1863:

> Monsieur Manet does not know how to compose a picture, or rather he does not take account of what is called a picture. [. . .] I do not ask of him a philosophical lesson, but the visible translation of some impression. I seek this in him but I do not find it; instead there is an oversized rebus that will never be solved.

36. See M. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, trans. Matthew Barr (London: Tate, 2009), 59. The French edition, ed. Maryvonne Saison (*La Peinture de Manet* [Paris: Seuil, 2004], 34–43), documents the proceedings of a 2001 colloquium—'Michel Foucault, un regard'—concerning the lecture given by Foucault at the Tahar Haddad club in Tunis on May 20, 1971. A first transcript had been published in the *Cahiers de Tunisie* 149–150 (1989), 61–89 (this is the version we initially used). Foucault's lecture was given once before in Rome, in 1967.

37. This 'aspect' has been very strongly brought to the fore by Michael Fried in his book on Manet: M. Fried, *Manet's Modernism, or The Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996).

38. As is declared, once more, by Théodore Duret, in *Peintres français en 1867* (Paris: 1867), 111. Duret returns to this assertion in the section on Manet in the 'Salon de 1870' (Duret, 43).

39. Albert Wolff, writing about the *Portrait of Eva Gonzales*: 'Of a pretty young woman he makes an abominable and flat oil caricature' (A. Wolff, 'Salon de 1870', *Le Figaro*, May 13, 1870).

40. S. Mallarmé, 'The Painting Jury for 1874 and Monsieur Manet', trans. Jeanine Parisier Plottel and Jane Mayo Roos, in *A Painter's Poet: Stéphane Mallarmé and His Impressionist Circle*, ed. Jane Mayo Roos (New York: Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery/Hunter College, 1999), 32–35: 32 [translation modified].

41. T. Duret, 'Edouard Manet', untitled Preface of a *Catalogue de tableaux, pastels, études, dessins, gravures par Edouard Manet*, for a sale at the Hotel Drouot, February 4 and 5, 1884; reprinted in *Critique d'Avant-Garde*, 72. See H. Loyrette, 'Manet: The New Painting and Still Life', in G. Mauner (ed.), *Manet: The Still Life Paintings* (New York: Abrams, 2000), 159–160. In May 1878, Duret published a first brochure on *Les Peintres impressionnistes*, and in 1906 his *Histoire des peintres impressionnistes*.

42. That Manet's painting is unnecessarily 'hard' is a commonplace of criticism. See, for example, Louis Etienne, *Le Jury et les exposants. Salon des Refusés* (Paris: 1863): 'Let us be serious, *The Bath,* the *Majo,* the *Espada* are good rough drafts, I concede. . . . But what then? Is this drawing? Is it painting? M. Manet thinks he is being firm and powerful, but he is only hard'. We will limit ourselves here to observing that 'hardness' is a clichéd *negative* term frequently employed against the photographic image; see Baudelaire, for example, in a letter to his mother, December 23, 1865: 'The HARDER an image is, the happier they [photographers] are'.

43. Mallarmé, 'Exposition de Londres. Deuxième saison, de mai à octobre 1872', *Oeuvres complètes*, 684.

44. A protestation that was to become the Impressionist leitmotif. Thus, Duret concludes, 'The unfortunate impressionist may well protest at his perfect sincerity, may declare that he only reproduces what he sees, that he remains faithful to nature, but the public and the critics condemn him. They do not care to know whether what they find on the canvas corresponds to what the painter really observed in nature' (T. Duret, *Les Peintres impressionistes* [Paris, 1878; republished in *Critique d'Avant-Garde*, 54]). On Japanese art perceived as being 'of a striking fidelity', see 'Qu'on demande à ceux qui ont visité le Japon', 52.

45. G. Geffroy, *Claude Monet, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Paris, 1924, 2 vols.; republished Paris: Macula, 1980), 124–125.

46. C. Mauclair, *L'Impressionisme. Son Histoire, son Esthétique*, *ses Maîtres* (Paris: Libraire de l'Art ancient et moderne, 1904), 19–20. 'It is Claude Monet who is its true initiator; it is in parallel with his ideas and his works that Manet will proceed to his second artistic period'. Mauclair will later explain that 'even in his second manner' *Manet is not really* an Impressionist.

47. Geffroy, *Monet*, 133. This, in the eyes of the friend of Monet, signifies Impressionism's independence with regard to Japanese art.

48. Zola, who saw Manet as a Naturalist ('a man directly attacking nature'), would be painted by the artist in 1868 and exposed to a far from 'naturalist' apparatus: the *Portrait of Émile Zola*.

49. É. Zola, 'Mon Salon' [1866] in *Écrits sur l'art*, ed. J.-P. Ledux-Adine (Paris: Tel-Gallimard, 1991), 118, 122, 125 (emphasis in the original).

50. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 28.

51. Ibid.

52. See P. Durand, *Crises. Mallarmé via Manet (De 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet' à 'Crise de vers')* (Leuven and Paris: Peeters and Vrin, 1998), 24–28.

53. Paraphrasing Champfleury, in the last lines of his article on 'Courbet in 1860': 'It is the history of Courbet, and it is the history of 'realism' which [. . .] delivers sound and complete products in proportion to the talent of the artist' (Champfleury, 'Courbet en 1860', *Grandes figures d'hier et d'aujourd'hui. Balzac, Gérard de Nerval, Wagner, Courbet* (Paris, 1861); reprinted in *À propos de Gustave Courbet. Du Réalisme et autres textes* (La Rochelle: Rumeur des Ages, 2000), 77.

54. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 28.

55. Ibid., 28.

56. Bataille, *Manet*, 121.

57. See Durand, *Crises*, 49. This is something that Mallarmé cannot ignore: the 'plein air' productions soon come back into the studio.

58. Ibid. In the guise of a commentary on Mallarmé's passage concerning *Hanging out the Wash* (1875), with its outlines 'consumed by the hidden sun', and so on.

59. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 30–31. In a 'Fine-Art Gossip' that appeared in the *Athenaeum* of April 1, 1876, Mallarmé wrote, on *Hanging Out the Wash*: 'The young woman's body is entirely bathed, as if absorbed, by the light which leaves of her only an *aspect* [Mallarmé's emphasis] at once solid and vaporous, as is desired by the *plein air* painting that everyone in France pursues today' (Mallarmé, *Écrits sur l'Art*, 304). It is precisely this absence of *solidity* that sometimes poses a problem for Mallarmé: for example, when faced with a Sisley (according to an anecdote reported by Bonniot—see Draguet's note in *Écrits sur l'art*, 399n).

60. The phrase that follows reads: 'Air reigns supreme and real; as if it held an enchanted life conferred by the witchery of art' ('The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31). To cite Yves Peyré's commentary: 'Mallarmé has said everything and even more, he has pushed his dear Manet toward what the latter violently refused, *plein air*, all the better to place him at the centre and at the outset. For the supreme genius of Manet was undeniably in the *as if*. No *plein air*, but *aspect,* yes, this alchemical stripping of the terrestrial for yet more of the terrestrial (and is not washing, in this sense, the primordial act?)'. Y. Peyré, 'Une singulière attraction', in *Mallarmé 1842–1898. Un destin d'écriture* (Paris: Gallimard–RMN), catalogue of the exhibition at Musée d'Orsay, (September 29 1998–January 3, 1999), 93.

61. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 29.

62. Ibid., 31. See Draguet's presentation, 'D'écume et de silence', in *Écrits sur l'art*, 55.

63. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31.

64. On the Cézannian plane, see our final chapter: ‘Ten Variations on Cézanne’s Concentric Eye’. ‘The intrepid M. de Césane’ (*sic*) appears fleetingly in Mallarmé’s article (33).

65. Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Edouard Manet’, 31.

66. Ibid., 29.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. See on this point Jonathan Crary’s important work *Suspensions of Perception. Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1999), 96.

71. See Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 94*sq*.

72. Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Edouard Manet’, 34.

73. Ibid., 34. This is the very last phrase of the article, which expresses what Mallarmé ‘took’ from Manet with this Aspect that properly belonged to the art of the poet.

74. Cited after J.-L. Chalumeau, *Manet* (Paris: Le Cercle d’art, 1996), 5.

75. Mauclair, *L’Impressionisme*, 15.

76. The homage rendered by Mallarmé to Baudelaire, ‘our last great poet’, as that ‘enlightened amateur’ who had somehow had the ‘foresight’ to ‘love’ Manet (Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Edouard Manet’, 28), can be read as a recognition of debt in regard to his own discovery of the painter (which in all likelihood came via Baudelaire’s 1862 article—see above). A homage also, of course, to the explorer of ‘modern life’, if we replace Manet with Constantin Guys. . . .

77. Three versions of this painting exist, one left in sketch form, one lithograph, and a small oil sketch. The third and last large-format version of the *Execution* (1868–1869), the definitive version of the work, is in Mannheim. Upset by the strongly political content of the picture (the abandonment of Maximilian by the French military forces that had placed him upon the Mexican throne), the government of Napoleon III made it known to Manet that the canvas would be refused by the jury (of the 1869 Salon), and had printing of the lithograph prohibited.

78. Fried, *Manet’s Modernism*, 355.

79. E. Spuller, ‘M. Edouard Manet et sa peinture’, *Le Nain jaune*, June 8, 1867.

80. Bataille, *Manet*, 84.

81. Mallarmé, ‘The Impressionists and Edouard Manet’, 28: ‘V*igorously excluded all meddlesome imagination*’. In clear opposition to Baudelaire and his ‘Government of the imagination’ inspired by Delacroix (in ‘Salon of 1859’: ‘I ceaselessly claim the application of the imagination’). Which is what precipitates Mallarmé’s homage, at the beginning of the article, to that ‘great movement’ to which literature will attach ‘the name of Realism’, and which will coincide, around 1860, with the exhibition of Courbet’s first canvases and the agonies of the romantic school ‘just then expiring under the hands of landscape painters’ (ibid.). A most ‘everyday’ imagination, which ‘claims the light of day’, and which will return later on in Mallarmé’s article.

82. A. Géronte, ‘Le Salon de 1865’, *La Gazette de France*, June 30, 1865. The saw had already seen service with an anonymous writer in the same *Gazette de*

France when *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* was shown at the Salon des refusés in 1863: 'The sharp and irritating colours [. . .] attack the eye like a steel saw'. Bataille recalls that public rumour attributed the statement to Delacroix. Let us point out this exclamation of Michel Foucault's, in a 1975 interview: '*Everything in his work saws into me*'; and his conclusion, after having mentioned 'the aggressivity of the ugliness' and 'the inexplicability' of his paintings: 'Manet did in painting a certain number of things in relation to which the 'impressionists' were absolutely regressive' (M. Foucault, 'A quoi rêvent les philosophes?' *Dits et Écrits* [Paris: Gallimard, 1994], vol. 2, 706).

83. It is to be noted that, in his work on still life, Charles Sterling evokes the 'impassive Realism of Manet', regretting that the latter 'was never to truly unite the object with the ambience of the place where it is found. He would never make truly domestic still lifes like those of Chardin. It would be the Impressionists who would make this their business'. C. Sterling, *Still Life Painting: From Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 123.

84. G. Mauner, 'Manet and the Life of *Nature Morte*', *Manet: The Still Life Paintings*, 14.

85. G. Jedlicka, *Manet* (Zurich: Rentsch, 1941); cited by Mauner, ibid., 47.

86. P. Mantz, 'Salon de 1868', *L'Illustration*, May 16, 1868.

87. Mauner, 'Manet and the Life of *Nature Morte*', 34.

88. G. Bataille, *Manet* [74—this sentence is unaccountably omitted from the English translation].

89. C. Imbert, 'Les droits de l'image', in M. Foucault, *La Peinture de Manet*, 153.

90. The appellation 'impressionist', which dates from the first exhibition of the group in 1874, was invented by Louis Leroy in a hostile article in *Charivari* where it was used as an accusation against Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* (L. Leroy, 'Exposition des impressionistes', *Le Charivari*, April 25, 1874).

91. Bataille, *Manet*, 95.

92. S. Mallarmé, *Mallarmé on Fashion: A Translation of the Fashion Magazine* La Dernière Mode *with Commentary*, trans. P. N. Furbank and A. M. Cain (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 174 [translation modified] [*Oeuvres complètes*, 821]: 'Any picture [. . .] casts a sort of veil of immobility over [. . .] mysterious life'.

93. The fan, writes Mallarmé, 'carves the sky into fragments'. 'Fan (*Belonging to Méry Laurent*)' [1890], *Collected Poems and Other Verse*, 207 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 59].

94. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 30. The whole paragraph expresses the wish to extract woman from the night by ceasing to represent her 'among the artificial prestige cast by candelabra or footlights'.

95. Bataille, *Manet*, 121 [91].

96. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 30. Mallarmé, let us recall, writes this in reference to *Hanging Out the Wash*.

97. Ibid., 29.

98. Ibid., 31: 'A life neither personal nor sentient, but itself subjected to the phenomena thus called up by science and shown to our astonished eyes'. Recall that, in his 1890 work entitled *The Future of Science* and subtitled *Ideas of 1848*, Ernest Renan concludes that from the point of view of the arts themselves, 'the real world

revealed to us by science is by far superior to the fantastic world created by the imagination'. (E. Renan, *The Future of Science: Ideas of 1848*, trans. Albert Vandam and C. B. Pitman [London: Chapman and Hall, 1891], 85.)

99. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 101. Apart from Pissarro and Mallarmé, it would be the reactionary press who played on the political loadedness of the epithet 'Intransigent' frequently employed against the Impressionists. 'Thus we see the writers who defend the group [. . .] try to distinguish between the aesthetic components of the debate and their political connotations. [. . .] To political partition', as Denys Riout concludes, 'is opposed *the autonomisation of the artistic field*'. See D. Riout, 'Diversité des impressionismes', Introduction to the collection *Les écrivains devant l'impressionnisme*, 13–14 (italics added). Mallarmé's policy is confirmed in our article in the following paragraph: 'The participation of a hitherto ignored people in the political life of France is a social fact that will honour the whole of the close of the nineteenth century. A parallel is found in artistic matters, the way being prepared by an evolution which the public with rare prescience dubbed, from its first appearance, Intransigent, which, in political language means radical and democratic'. (Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 33.)

100. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 33, 34.

101. Ibid., 34 (emphasis added).

102. É. Zola, 'Une exposition: les peintres impressionistes', *Le Sémaphore de Marseille*, April 19, 1877; republished in *Écrits sur l'art*, 358. 'Claude Monet loves water, and it is his especial gift to portray its mobility and transparency'—thus begin the few lines dedicated to Monet in Mallarmé's article (Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 32). Recall that Monet was never able to resolve himself to illustrate the poem 'Glory', as Mallarmé wished. Reading the letter of October 12, 1899, addressed to Mallarmé by Monet to put an end to the project (cited in a note by Draguet, *Écrits sur l'art*, 398–399), one gets a sense of the distance separating the painter from Mallarmé's 'exquisite poems'.

103. Bataille, *Manet,* 86 [translation modified]. 'Man without words' comes from Y. Ishaghpour's commentary, *Aux origines de l'art moderne. Le Manet de Bataille* (Paris: La Différence, 1989), 31.

104. In the words of Courbet, in *Le Courrier du Dimanche*, December 29, 1861.

105. [*Série noire*: a streak of misfortune or bad luck, literally 'the black series'—Translator's note.]

106. Bataille, *Manet*, 17.

107. Ibid., 42.

108. 'He has a taste corrupted by the love of the bizarre', wrote E. Chesneau, *L'art et les artistes modernes en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: 1864), 189. In the background here is Baudelaire's famous 1855 proposition: 'The beautiful is always bizarre'.

109. Jeff Wall, 'Unity and Fragmentation in Manet', in *Parachute* 35 (1984); reprinted in *Jeff Wall: The Complete Edition* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 78–89.

110. Bataille, *Manet*, 103. This affirmation will not escape the great reader of Bataille, Michel Foucault, in his lecture on 'Manet and the Object of Painting'. Indeed, it could be said to be the major axis of the essay, which opens with the idea that 'Manet in effect did something else [. . .] than simply making impressionism

possible. [. . .] Beyond even impressionism, what Manet made possible, is [. . .] all the painting of the twentieth century, is all the painting from which, in fact, contemporary art developed'. M. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, 28.

111. Bataille, *Manet*, 74.

112. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 140–142, 510–512.

113. See Bataille, *Manet*, 55: in *Olympia*, as in *The Execution of Emperor Maximilian*, 'The text is effaced by the picture. *And what the picture signifies is not the text, but the effacement*' (author's emphasis). Speaking of *The Execution of Emperor Maximilian*, Bataille had earlier cited Malraux's famous phrase: 'It is Goya's *Shootings of May Third* minus what the latter picture signifies' (50).

114. Ibid., 52.

115. Ibid., 37.

116. Cited by É. Zola, 'Edouard Manet', *Salon de 1868*, in *Écrits sur l'art*, 196 (emphasis ours).

117. Bataille, *Manet*, [74] [sentence omitted in English translation].

118. G. H. Hamilton, *Manet and his Critics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1954), 279.

119. Whence the irony laid on by the critic at the expense of Fantin Latour who, in his *Homage to Truth*, placed Manet among the Realists. See Paul Mantz, 'Le Salon de 1865', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, July 1, 1865. Twenty years later, Péladan will reprise the idea that 'Manet is a chimerical colourist' (J. Péladan, 'Le procédé de Manet d'après l'exposition de l'École des Beaux-Arts', *L'Artiste*, February 1884).

120. See É. Zola, 'Salon de 1879':

> His long struggle against the incomprehension of the public is explained by the difficulty he meets in execution, I mean to say that his hand is not equal to his eye. He has not managed to forge a technique for himself; he has remained the enthusiastic scholar who always sees distinctly what happens in nature, but cannot assuredly render his impressions in a complete and definitive fashion. This is why, when he sets off, one never knows how he will arrive at a finish nor even if he will arrive at all. [. . .] In short, for fifteen years now we have not seen such a subjective painter. (É. Zola, *Écrits sur l'art*, 400)

One will of course think of the painter Claude Lantier in *L'Oeuvre*. . . . In 'Salon of 1868', on the other hand, Zola defended a 'naturalist' Manet against Arsène Houssaye's attack cited above.

121. See, respectively, W. Bürger, 'Salon de 1864', *Salons de W. Bürger* (Paris: J. Renouard, 1870), vol. 2, 98; Duret, *Les Peintres français en 1867*, 110–111. Thoré-Bürger takes up the word Paul de Saint Victor employed against Delacroix, on the occasion of the exhibition of the second *Raising of Rebecca* at the Salon of 1859 (Théophile Thoré wrote his chronicles of art criticism under the pseudonym W. Bürger, or Thoré-Burger).

122. The 'desperate flatness' of Manet's paintings, according to a critic's expression, will often be compared to playing-card images—'and there is', according to Zola, 'much truth in this mockery, which is in fact a eulogy'. Adding, 'It would be far more interesting to compare this simplified painting to the Japanese engravings that resemble it in their strange elegance and their patches [*tâches*] of magnificent colour' (É. Zola, 'Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique' [1867], 152). This

flatness is still conceived as the result of a photographic effect—with 'the photographic industry' considered as the 'refuge of all failed painters' (Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1859', in *Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, trans. P. E. Charvet [Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1972], 296). Michael Fried suggests a link between these two *technologies of the surface* (photography and Japanese engraving), for in a certain sense Manet projects one onto the other (they '*interpret* one other'): see Fried, *Manet's Modernism*, 327. See also the two chapters dedicated to Japanese art and photography in A. C. Hanson's *Manet and the Modern Tradition* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1977), 185–196.

123. 'Set down a plane [*Mettre un plan*]', a 'favourite locution' of Manet's, according to Antonin Proust (A. Proust, 'The Art of Édouard Manet', in Fried, *Manet's Modernism,* 428 [translation modified]).

124. In *Le Moniteur*, June 25, 1864.

125. C. Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in *The New Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. G. Battcock (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1972), 68.

126. In other words: to Greenbergian formalism, whose 'purism' will be less and less attentive to the materiality of works and more and more to the 'byzantine parallels' of their 'impressionist' transcendence, we shall oppose not so much the school of Realism as what we call here the materialist economy of the Visual. Thierry de Duve observes quite rightly that Greenberg 'got it wrong when he thought he could contrast the opticality of the painting which he deemed to be the best with the tactility of the painting which he deemed to be bad because it flirted too closely with the thing that is the medium' (T. de Duve, *Look: One Hundred Years of Contemporary Art* [Ghent and Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001], catalogue of the exhibition at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels [November 22, 2000–January 28, 2001], 152).

127. That is, what have been referred to as *Manet's 'Compositional Difficulties*'. Taking note of this debate, Anne Coffin Hanson thus begins her last chapter:

> Of all the qualities of Manet's art, his picture construction has been least understood. He has been charged with faulty composition not only by his own contemporaries, but by writers of the present day. *It is hard to believe, however, that his paintings would have their extraordinary presence if their structure were actually so contrary to human vision and to human understanding.* (Hanson, *Manet and the Modern Tradition*, 197; emphasis added)

But *if*, precisely. . . .

128. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, 31.

129. Cited by A. Wolff, 'Édouard Manet', *Le Figaro*, May 1, 1883.

130. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 17.

131. Nadar, *My Life as a Photographer,* trans. Thomas Repensek in *October*, vol. 5 (Summer 1978), 6–28: 9 [translation modified] (published in 1900). P. Ortel, *La literature à l'âge de la photographie. Enquête sur une révolution invisible* (Nîmes: Jacqueline Chambon, 2002), 290.

132. C. Stella, 'Salon de 1869', *L'Opinion Nationale*, June 12, 1869.

133. The expression is Michael Fried's (*Manet's Modernism*, 229).

134. 'These objects do not at all belong together', Castagnary exclaims in his 'Salon de 1869', *Le Siècle*, June 11, 1869.

135. E. Darragon, *Manet* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 164.

136. Castagnary already wrote of *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo* (1863): 'Do I have an diseased eye, do I have a weak mind? The system of black and white colouration affronts my eyes; this suspect design, this insufficient model, trouble my spirit' (Castagnary, 'Salon de 1863', *Le Courrier du dimanche*, June 14, 1863).

137. The catalogue *Manet* of the centenary exhibition shows this juxtaposition on the same page (cat. 109 and fig. a), 291.

138. Fried, *Manet's Modernism*, 319.

139. See T. Thoré, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1860, on the Chardin exhibition at the Galerie Martinet, where Manet would soon be shown.

140. H. Loyrette, 'Still Life', in the exhibition catalogue *Origins of Impressionism* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), catalogue of the exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais (April 19, 1994–August 1994) and Metropolitan Museum of Art (September 27, 1994–January 8, 1995), 149–182: 179.

141. E. Bazire, *Édouard Manet* (Paris: A. Quantin, 1884), 139.

142. See *Salons de W. Bürger*, 'Salon de 1868' (vol. 2, 532):

> His current vice is a sort of pantheism which does not esteem a head more than a slipper; which sometimes even accords more importance to a bouquet of flowers than to the physiognomy of a woman, for example in his famous painting *Chat noir [Olympia]*; which paints almost uniformly furniture, carpets, books, clothes, flesh, facial tones, for example in his portrait of M. Émile Zola.

143. See É. Zola, 'Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique' (1867), 161: 'You needed a nude woman, so you chose Olympia, the first to come along; you needed bright and luminous patches, so you made a bouquet; you needed black patches, so you have placed in a corner a negress and a cat. What does all this mean? You have not the slightest idea, and neither do I'.

In his *Salon of 1869*, Paul Mantz will draw from this the conclusion that one must look at Manet's paintings as one would look at the wild arabesques of a Persian potter, at the harmony of a bouquet, or at the motifs of wallpaper . . . —and that consequently his painting is 'almost as interesting as a still life' (in reference to *The Balcony*, that 'painting without thought').

144. See Jules and Edmond de Goncourt, *French XVIII Century Painters* (1864) (London: Phaidon, 1948); on Chardin's still lifes, 114. We learn from A. Proust that '"History" painter was in his [Manet's] mouth the most deadly insult one could address to an artist' (Proust, 'Édouard Manet. Souvenirs', 21).

145. E. and J. de Goncourt, 'La peinture à l'Exposition universelle de 1855', in *Arts et artistes*, ed. J.-P. Bouillon (Paris: Hermann, 1997), 205.

146. The troubling of the spectator's perception is determined by the *cold* sensualism of Manet's paintings.

147. This point has been set out particularly effectively by J. H. Rubin in *Manet's Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 164–165, 168. See Maurice Denis, 'Épilogue de l'enquête sur le *sujet*', *Bulletin de la vie artistique* 20 (October 1924), for (a) the recalling of the celebrated

formula of 1890 ('remember that a painting—before being a warhorse, a nude woman, or some anecdote—is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order'), (b) the remark on 'the importance of still life in the preoccupations of painters today' to the detriment of what they call the *literary subject*, and (c) the return *in fine* of the humanist defence of a 'right-thinking subject'.

148. See É. Zola, 'Édouard Manet, étude biographique et critique', 153. And further on: 'Painters, above all Édouard Manet who is an analyst painter, do not have this preoccupation for the subject which torments the masses above all; the subject for them is a pretext for painting, whereas for the masses only the subject exists' (159).

149. One will have recognised here the now classic terms of Michael Fried's analysis in *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

150. 'He had no gift for psychic life', writes Mauclair, evoking 'pieces of painting without ideality'.

151. See Diderot, *Pensées détachées sur la peinture:* 'A composition must be ordered in such a manner as to persuade me that it could not have been ordered otherwise: a figure must act or repose in such a way as to persuade me that it could not have acted otherwise' (*Oeuvres complètes*, ed. P. Vernière [Paris: Garnier, 1959], 780). On Manet's break in regard to this problematic of absorption, see Fried, *Manet's Modernism*, 280sq.

152. As Thierry de Duve writes, in relation to *Nymph Surprised* (1859–1861), 'the first painting in Manet's career where he sensed the path he'd have to follow given his intuition that he'd have to give up history painting and become a painter of the contemporary'. De Duve, *Look*, 127.

153. Ishaghpour, *Aux origines de l'art moderne*, 41.

154. On the 'spectral theory' of the origins of photography, see R. Krauss, 'Tracing Nadar', in *October* vol. 5 (Summer, 1978), 29–47.

155. M. Chaumelin, 'Salon de 1869', *L'Art Contemporain* (Paris: J. Renouard, 1873), 236.

156. See J. Wilson-Bareau, *Manet, Monet. La gare Saint-Lazare* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), catalogue of the exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay (9 February, 1998–17 May, 1998) and National Gallery of Art, Washington (14 June, 1998–20 September, 1998).

157. Mallarmé, 'Edouard Manet', in *Divagations*, 98 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 533].

158. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31.

159. This is the word proposed by G. Zachman, in an article entitled 'Developing Movements: Mallarmé, Manet, the "Photo", and the "Graphic"', *French Forum* XXII, 2 (1997), 190. The author shrewdly recalls the complete title of the journal in which Mallarmé published his article: *The Art Monthly Review and Photographic Portfolio. A Magazine devoted to the Fine and Industrial Arts and Illustrated by Photography*.

160. Mallarmé, '*Fine-Art Gossip*', *The Athenaeum*, April 1, 1876 (*Écrits sur l'Art*, 304).

161. See Fried, *Manet's Modernism*, 322.

162. See *The Railway* (1873–1874), photograph handcoloured with watercolour and gouache (18 × 22 cm). Reproduced in the catalogue *Manet* of the centenary exhibition (342–343 [cat. 134]).

163. As Victor Hugo calls it in a letter to Hertzel of June 2, 1853.

164. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31. On this point, see Durand's commentary, *Crises*, 51.

165. The expression 'peculiar screen [*écran particulier*]' belongs to the vocabulary of Arago. This notion of the screen will be reprised by Zola in his letter to Anthony Valabrègue of August 18, 1864, to *develop* his theory of 'temperament'. See Ortel, *La littérature à l'âge de la photographie*, 130–133.

166. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31.

167. Philippe Ortel cites this phrase of Focillon's from *L'éloge de la main* (1943), written in large part against photography: 'What it [the hand] gives birth to, *is not an flat apparition in the emptiness of the air*, it is a substance, a body, an organized structure' (emphasis added). The author concludes: 'The hand assures the painted image of its matter and organization, presence and sense' (P. Ortel, *La literature à l'âge de la photographie*, 134).

168. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31. These 'means' combining cutting out and de-framing ('represent this arm, this hat, or this shore as if they belong to someone or something exterior to the picture') with 'the light touch and fresh tones uniform and equal, or variously trembling with shifting lights'.

169. See Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1859, II. The modern public and photography', *Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, 285–324: 233, *in fine*, where the poet asks,

> Are we to suppose that a people whose eyes are growing used to considering the results of a material science as though they were the products of the beautiful, will not in the course of time have singularly diminished its faculties of judging and of feeling what are among the most ethereal and immaterial aspects of creation?

Recall that in this celebrated photophobic argument Baudelaire denounces the natural alliance of photography with 'the stupidity of the multitude' (232). Or again: 'A revengeful God has given ear to the prayers of this multitude. Daguerre was his Messiah' (230). This 'multitude', on the contrary, it will be recalled, plays an eminently positive role in Mallarmé's article. As to the question of pictorialism, observe that the latter responds to Baudelaire's request when he wishes to have a portrait made of his mother: it combines 'the *blurriness* of a drawing' with photography (letter of December 23, 1865, cited above).

170. According to the expression of Jean-Baptiste Biot, in a scientific note adjoined to the review of the meeting of January 7, 1839, where Arago presented Daguerre's discovery to the Academy des sciences. G. Zachman cites the following important remark by A. Scharf in *Art and Photography* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc, 1986), 11–12:

> Almost every definable characteristic of photographic form had been anticipated by some artist before the invention of the photographic camera. [. . .] What is important, however, is that none of these things [. . .] had any currency in nineteenth-century European art until they appeared in photographs. [. . .] There can be little doubt that photography served to heighten the artist's perception of both nature and art. (Zachman, 'Developing Movements', 196–197)

171. Ortel, *La literature à l'âge de la photographie*. Scharf opens his chapter on Impressionism with a passage on 'The clandestine use of photography' (165–166).

172. M. Chaumelin, *Le Bien Public*, May 30, 1875.

173. 'How insignificant and neutral in expression is this person in motley costume!' emphasises Théophile Véron (T. Véron, *De l'art et des artistes de mon temps*, *Salon de 1875* (Paris: H. Oudin, 1875), 69–70.

174. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, [30—omitted in English translation].

175. Although Robert L. Herbert sees it as *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* 'brought up to date'—see R. L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 236.

176. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, 49.

177. According to an expression of Mallarmé's, which is given below in the context of the whole sentence. Think here of that *Dead Christ with Angels*, 1864, who was likened to 'a poor miner dragged out of the coal' (anonymous critic in *La Vie Parisienne*, May 1, 1864).

178. Mallarmé concludes this 1866 letter to François Coppée with a kind of warning: 'I feel that sometimes *your words live a little too much as individuals, like the stones in a mosaic of jewels.* [. . .] (But I assume you must have made them as studies?)' Mallarmé, letter to François Coppée, December 5, 1866, in *Selected Letters of Stéphane Mallarmé*, trans. Rosemary Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 68–69.

179. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 31 (emphasis added).

180. See M. Fried, *Courbet's Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 7:

> He concluded that nothing was more abortive of that act of persuasion than when a painter's dramatis personae seemed by virtue of the character of their actions and expressions to evince even a partial consciousness of being beheld, and that the immediate task of the painter was therefore to extinguish or forestall that consciousness by entirely engrossing or, as I chiefly say, absorbing his dramatis personae in their actions and states of mind. Manet, on the contrary, absorbs his figures into their void in order to detheatricalise them.

181. Ibid., 287. Which is not without a certain collusion with the surface effect of these paintings.

182. See Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', 68–72.

183. Fried, *Courbet's Realism*, 201.

184. In an article published in *L'Artiste* on May 1, 1874, Marc de Montifaud (a pseudonym) opposes Manet's coarseness and the absence of 'harmonious linkages' between things in his paintings to 'a certain naivety' in Monet, which 'allowed him to encounter on his path something with which Manet will never rub shoulders: grace'.

185. Bataille, *Manet*, 103.

186. Raymond Bellour, *L'Entre-images. Photo. Cinéma. Vidéo* (Paris: La Différence, 1990): *L'Entre-images 2. Mots, images* (Paris: POL, 1999).

187. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 34.

188. We take inspiration here, very liberally, from certain pages of Jérôme Thélot, *Les inventions littéraires de la photographie* (Paris: PUF, 2003), 133, 139, in his chapter on Mallarmé ('Rien n'aura lieu que la photographie: Mallarmé'), the ultimate

tone of which, however, diverges from our views: *Manet against photography, Manet for the 'life' done away with by science* (158). . . . The author founds his entire argument upon the unreliable French back-translation of this passage from the English text of 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet'.

189. *Study for a Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881). As Thierry de Duve recalls, the main difference is that 'Manet has straightened the barmaid's face, and thus caused her to lose her eye-contact with the customer at the bar and transfer it to the viewer' (de Duve, *Look*, 232).

190. What is more, it is a painter by the fateful name of Gaston La Touche who poses for the client at the bar. Another painter (of military subjects), Henri Dupray, had already posed for the Study.

191. The caricaturist Stop thought it only right to correct 'the distraction of the painter' by interposing the interlocutor of the waitress between herself and us. Stop, 'Une Marchande de Consolation aux Folies-Bergère', caricature in *Le Journal amusant*, 1882; reproduced in the catalogue *Manet*, 481 (fig. c).

192. C. Armstrong, 'Counter, Mirror, Maid: Some Infra-thin Notes on *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*', in B.R. Collins (ed), *12 Views of Manet's Bar* (Princeton University Press, 1996), 37. At this 'level' of analysis there is no need for such a complicated pictorial apparatus: as the author recognises, it is already achieved by the extra *Bunch of Asparagus* sent by Manet, as a kind of *this is not an asparagus* (but a *piece* of painting).

193. For Jules Comte, the whole canvas is occupied by a mirror which does not exist, since the painter satisfied himself with a mere *impression*: 'Let us simply note this fact, that all of the picture takes place in a mirror, and there is no mirror'. He emphasises the inaccuracy of the drawing, which serves the lack of correspondence between the reflected objects and their images. See J. Comte, 'Les Salons de 1882', *L'Illustration*, May 20, 1882; cited with commentary by T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 240.

194. Dubose de Pesquidoux, 'Salon de 1882', *L'Union*, June 15, 1882.

195. See Armstrong, 'Counter, Mirror, Maid', 40–42 ('a sort of cut-out, pop-up figure, an insert between the two domains of counter and mirror'). Arsène Houssaye wrote in 'Le Salon de 1822', *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, June 1, 1882: 'In all good faith, should one admire the flat and chalky face of the *bar-girl*, her featureless corsage, its offensive colour? Should one admire the painter for having succeeded, by means of a little white dust spread on the back of the young woman, in giving the illusion of a scene reflected in a mirror?'

196. See Thierry de Duve's learned reconstruction, in *Look*.

197. See Imbert, 'Les droits de l'image', 151.

198. *Le Constitutionnel* will evoke 'the cold impertinence of place'. See H. Trianon, 'Le Salon de 1882', *Le Constitutionnel*, May 21, 1882.

199. As opposed to its classical-modern definition, as summarised, for example, by Guillaume: 'A visual image can only be a *perspective* similar to the perception that it reproduces, and which implies a point of view' (P. Guillaume, 'Le problème de la perception de l'espace et la psychologie de l'enfant', *Journ. De Psych. Norm. et. Path.* 1924, 129). For then, as René Duret emphasises, 'one cannot represent an object in a

certain perspective, and suppose that one occupies at the same time a different place to that from whence one sees the object in that perspective' (R. Duret, *Les Aspects de l'image visuelle* [Paris: Boivin, 1936], 73).

200. L. de Fourcaud, 'Le Salon', *Le Gaulois*, May 4, 1882.

201. On the occasion of a working meeting on the *Bar aux Folies-Bergères*, Jean-Claude Bonne even went so far as to evoke the pluritemporality of medieval images.

202. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, 78.

203. Rubin, *Manet's Silence*, 'Introduction: Performing Sight'.

204. As summed up by Carol Armstrong, who says that '*Victorine is the product of the means of art* [. . .] *Victorine is a figment of art*' (C. Armstrong, 'To paint, to point, to pose: Manet's *Le Déjeuner*', in Paul Hayes Tucker (ed), *Manet's Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998]: 90–118: 112).

205. Mallarmé, *Mallarmé on Fashion*, 33.

206. Thus Cachin in her notice in the catalogue *Manet* (1983): 'It is entirely possible that Manet did not achieve the unity between figures and landscape that he would have wished' (167).

207. See T. Ribot, *La Philosophie de Schopenhauer* (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1874); the publication of this work furnishes the pretext for an article by Théodore Duret on 'Arthur Schopenhauer' in *Le Siècle*, March 28, 1878.

208. Schopenhauer did not hesitate to 'put forward the physiological hypothesis that conscious thought takes place on the surface of the brain and unconscious in the innermost recesses of its medullary substance' (Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena*, vol. 2, 56 [II, §40]). The *Parerga and Paralipomena* are collected in Duret's article ('Arthur Schopenhauer. *La Philosophie de Schopenhauer* by Ribot. *Parerga et Paralipomena, kleine philosophische Schriften*'). In his work, Ribot noted that 'Schopenhauer submitted his master's [Kant's] doctrines to a physiological transformation: he willingly identifies the *forms* of intelligence with the constitution of the brain' (Ribot, *La Philosophie de Schopenhauer*, 55). Thought is a 'function of the brain' (69), the sensible world a 'cerebral phenomenon' (154). In his conclusion, Ribot compares Schopenhauer's doctrine with Helmholtz's psychophysiology (164).

209. See E. Littré, 'De quelques points de physiologie psychique', *La Philosophie positive*, March–April 1860: 'I am determined to choose the locution *psychic physiology* or, more succinctly, *psychophysiology*. *Psychic*, that is to say relating to feelings and ideas; *Physiology*, that is to say the formation and combination of feelings and of these ideas in relation with the constitution and function of the brain' (reprinted in E. Littré, *La Science au point de vue philosophique* [Paris, 1873, republished Paris: Fayard, 1997], 324).

210. H. Taine, 'L'École des Beaux-Arts et les Beaux-Arts en France', *Journal des Débats*, April 2, 1867; reprinted in *Derniers essais de critique et d'histoire* (Paris: Hachette, 1894; republished in *Relire Taine*, ed. Matthias Waschek [Paris: Éditions Musée du Louvre, 2001], 170). In his 1874 work, Théodule Ribot will discuss Schopenhauer's explanation according to which the nervous system grows along with the triumph of contemplative intelligence over the will—whereby 'the brains of men of genius must be ranked among *monstra per excessum*' (Ribot, *La Philosophie de Schopenhauer*, 101).

211. Taine, *On Intelligence,* vol. 1, 211–213.

212. Ibid., 250–251 (emphasis added).

213. Mallarmé, 'Music and Letters', *Divagations* 187 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 647].

214. Mallarmé, 'Solemnity', *Divagations* 167 [translation modified] [*Oeuvres complètes*, 333].

215. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 1, 294–295. Here, Taine refers in a note to the 'admirable book' that is Helmholtz's *Physiological Optics*.

216. Note that, in one of his last texts, written after the death of the neoclassical painter Édouard Bertin, Taine ends up contesting this principle of indifference by distancing himself from optical appearance ('optical appearance is only an index') in favour of 'the palpable thing and solid appearance', which alone can deflect the painter from the temptation 'to believe that the patch [*tâche*] is what is essential to the object'. On this question, see J.–P. Bouillon, 'Histoire de l'histoire de l'art. Faut-il brûler Taine?' *Quarante huit / Quatorze. Conférences du Musée d'Orsay*, 1 (1989), 59.

217. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 1, 312 [translation modified].

218. Ibid., viii, 225: 'The image, like the sensation it repeats, is, in its nature, hallucinatory. Thus the hallucination, which seems a monstrosity, is the very fabric of our mental life'.

219. All of psychophysiology is implied in the idea, developed at length by Taine, that 'images have for conditions certain encephalic states'.

220. Ibid., 342–343. Taine's debt to Spencerian psychology is recognised by the Frenchman and known to the Englishman (see the Preface to the second edition of *Principles of Psychology*, dated December 1870).

221. Ibid., 350: 'The idea, then, of the Ego, is a product; many variously elaborated materials concur in its formation'.

222. Ibid., 66: 'Every image is possessed of an automatic force, and tends spontaneously to a particular state; to hallucination'; 237: 'The first repression which the image undergoes, and which checks the complete hallucination in which the image would naturally have resulted, opens to us a new world, that of time and space'.

223. Ibid., 359.

224. See de Duve, *Look*, 227.

225. Proust, 'Édouard Manet, Souvenirs', 62–63 (italics added).

226. J. Clay, 'Onguents, fards, pollens', in *Bonjour, Monsieur Manet* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou and Musée national d'art moderne, 1983), 7.

227. A photographic effect which is not only the result of the high contrast between zones of light and shade, the abolition of half-tints, etc. We must emphasise here that the (long) exposure time prohibits all 'spontaneity' and gives rise to the 'posed' aspect, engendering an entirely unprecedented theatrical effect—the very same one prohibited by Diderot (the worst theatre: when the actors give one the feeling that they are playing for the spectators).

228. Fried remarks upon this in *Manet's Modernism*, 592 n.203: 'The relation of Manet to Victorine Meurent seems to anticipate that of certain film directors to particular female stars (Von Sternberg and Dietrich, Antonioni and Monica Vitti, for example)'.

229. Clay, 'Onguents, fards, pollens', 7.

230. Jean Clay again: 'This disparity is unexampled even in Picasso'.

231. According to the observation of Antoine Compagnon, in *Les cinq paradoxes de la modernité* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 43.

232. G. Duthuit, *L'image et l'instant* (Paris: José Corti, 1961), 77–78 ('L'Image surgie').

233. H. Matisse, 'Notes of a Painter', in Jack Flam (ed), *Matisse on Art* (University of California Press, 1995), 38. Apollinaire will sum up Matisse's enterprise thus: 'to give a plastic existence to [his] pictures without the concurrence of the object, except to excite sensations', cf. G. Apollinaire, 'Henri Matisse', *La Phalange*, 2 (December 15–18, 1907).

234. Cf. G. Didi-Huberman, *Phasmes. Essais sur l'apparition* (Paris: Minuit, 1998), 103.

235. Duthuit, *L'image et l'instant*, 80–81.

236. See P. Campion's commentary, *Poésie et philosophie* (Paris: PUF, 1994), 48.

237. Mallarmé, letter to Cazalis, January 1864.

238. According to Antonin Proust's account, 'Édouard Manet. Souvenirs': republished edition, 59. The passage is introduced in the following way, 'She had commissioned a fur coat from Werth. Ah, what a fur, my friend, of a wild brown with an old gold lining. I was mesmerized'.

239. Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting*, 79.

240. In Émile Littré's words, in 'De quelques points de physiologie psychique', 337. Impression is in this psychophysiological context the fact of a nervous fabric of which one cannot say whether it is 'extended or unextended'.

241. Experience of Impression-Construction/Decorative Experiment of Expression-Construction: here is the whole distance between Manet and Matisse that is in play in the difference between Brain-Eye and Eye-Brain (and Expression then has *nothing to do* with the 'expressive' function denounced by Bataille in his *Manet*). See E. Alliez, J.-C. Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse*, in particular, 295–298, for the phrase Eye-Brain (*Cerveau-Oeil*), which comes from Michaux.

242. Mallarmé, 'The Impressionists and Edouard Manet', 29.

243. Mallarmé, Letter to Cazalis, May 14, 1867.

244. Mallarmé, 'Music and Letters', *Divagations* 192 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 657].

245. '*Its study*' refers to '*this new evolution of art*' approached by Mallarmé in the notion of the 'impersonal'.

246. Mallarmé, 'Prose (*for des Esseintes*)', *Selected Poems and Other Verse*, 62. Recall that the date of this poem's publication (in the 1870s) coincides with the meeting with Manet.

247. This is the key to the close collaboration between Mallarmé and Manet for the edition of *Corbeau* (1875) and *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (1876)—Mallarmé's first two *books*. A third collaboration, an illustrated or 'decorated' edition of the translation of the *Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, was never published owing to Manet's illness and subsequent death.

248. Mallarmé, 'The Mystery in Letters', *Divagations*, 235 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 384].

249. In a letter of 1864 written by Manet to the dealer Louis Martinet.

250. Schneider, '"Du fond d'un naufrage"', 7.

251. Cf. M. Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', trans. Michael B. Smith, in Galen A. Johnson ed., *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*, 121–164: 145 (emphasis ours).

252. Mallarmé, *Oeuvres complètes*, 437–438.

253. Mallarmé, 'Music and Letters', in *Divagations*, 196 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 655].

254. Mallarmé, *Oeuvres complètes*, 451.

255. Mallarmé, 'Restricted Action', in *Divagations* 216 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 370].

256. A statement of Mallarmé's reported in a letter from Ambroise Vollard to Odilon Redon (1896).

257. One will think here of Derrida's definitive argument in 'The Double Session', in particular: 'The fold is not an accident that happens to the blank. [. . .] The fold does not come up upon it from outside; it is the blank's outside as well as its inside' (J. Derrida, *Dissemination,* trans. B. Johnson [London: Athlone, 1981]). For our part, inscribing this problematic within the horizon of the Mallarméan question of the *effect produced* (a *poetics of the effect*), we cannot follow Derrida when he sees in the primary formulation of the 'highly new poetics' ('*To paint, not the thing, but the effect that it produces*') the example of 'a language that is naively sensualist and subjectivist' (257 n.56). It is, precisely, most rigorously, *neither one nor the other*.

258. Shall we recall the words of Mallarmé's letter to Gide, where he mentions the publication of *Un Coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*?

> The poem is being printed at this moment as I conceived it; as regards pagination, in which lies the whole effect. A certain word, in large characters, dominates on its own an entire white page and I believe I can be certain about the effect created. [. . .] The ship will list from the top of one page to the bottom of the next, etc.: for, and this is the whole point at issue [. . .] the rhythm of a sentence about an act or even an object has meaning only if it imitates them and, enacted on paper, *when the Letters have taken over from their original etching* [emphasis added], must convey in spite of everything some element of that act or that object. (Mallarmé, *Selected Letters*, 223 [May 14, 1897])

And, to be more precise, some months later: 'Literature thus makes *its proof*: no other reason to write on paper' (Letter to Camille Mauclair, October 8, 1897). As was announced, in *Music and Letters* (1894) in terms of '*Something else*. . . . It seems as if the scattered quivering of a page only wants either to defer or to hasten the possibility of that something else' ('Music and Letters', in *Divagations* 187 [*Oeuvres complètes,* 647]).

259. Mallarmé, 'The Mystery in Letters', in *Divagations* 236 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 387].

260. This black—as we know—is that of Manet. Cf. Mallarmé, 'Edouard Manet', in *Divagations* 98 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 533]. Foucault's planned book on Manet was to be entitled *Black and Colour* (according to a 1967 draft contract with Éditions de Minuit). The 'critical poem' is given by Mallarmé as the endpoint of his quest in the *Bibliography* of *Divagations* (293 [*Oeuvres complètes*, 1576]).

Seurat, *Factories by Moonlight*, 1882–1883
Conté crayon, 23.4 × 30.7 cm
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
(gift of Alexandre and Grégoire Tarnopol, 1976)

Chapter 4

Grey Times on *La Grande Jatte*

(The Extraterrestrial/Seurat/ The Machine-Eye)

> We live in strange times. The popular spirit seems broken, enthusiasm dampened, hope extinct. Whether the masses work or are unemployed, whether they are at leisure or bored, whether they go about their business or their pleasure, they maintain, apart from a few isolated and vague rumblings, a silent sphinx-like serenity—as if the manipulations of politicians, budget-busters, and plutocrats had nothing to do with them; as if the gesticulations of the parliamentary and governmental puppets had nothing in common with their security, their interests, their destinies. Today, the worst sufferings are accepted without eliciting the least response.
>
> —Editorial in the *Revue indépendante*, 1885

> While you enjoy the colour of Les Andelys, I see the Seine. An almost indefinable grey sea, even in the strongest sunshine under a blue sky.
>
> —Georges Seurat to Paul Signac, June 25, 1886

> Gas has replaced the sun.
>
> —Jules Janin, 'Le Daguerotype', *L'Artiste*, November 1838–April 1839

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We hardly ever get to see the Extraterrestrial, except in Disney films and their derivatives. In real life, he's certainly not the Invisible, but—far more ordinary—the *unseen*, the one we do not see (or if so, very poorly). Not for

some essential reason (the ideal is dismissed along with the sensible) but for the (multiple) reason of his 'reterritorialization' into a genealogically weak (and heavily stereotyped) image, most often attached to a *general line* . . . like that line traced by Signac so as to circumscribe Seurat, the line leading *From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism.*

It was this observation that determined the course of the present chapter: to see Seurat 'between' Signac's lines (section 1)—in the sense that Seurat must first of all be extracted from what Signac made of him, for the latter was able to integrate Seurat into his project of the *purification* of the play of colours (through a liberation thought in subjective terms) only by sublating, in a kind of 'modernist' *aufhebung*, all of his supposed limits beyond which one might actually discover an irreducible alterity (in regard to the order of the *neo*) determined by the 'mechanical' character of the *grisaille* effect of his paintings (an *anti*-Impressionism that can hardly be celebrated under the rubric of a nascent 'autonomy of the pictorial');[1] and thus to glimpse Seurat as an Extraterrestrial (sections 2 and 3) announcing the end of the aura in its pictorial self-evidence, which he precipitates into a *photo-graphic* Machine-Eye (hardly a suitable banner under which to assemble 'these young painters, who intended to make pictorial means the immediate vectors of expression').[2] The work becomes the image of a micrology of the visible characterised by an extreme *synthetic* (because anonymous and 'machinic') hardness operating between (the figures of) matter and (the landscapes of) light—a synthesis to which perception, worked by new visibilities, must submit so as to interiorise, at least, an (absent) figure in an (empty) landscape. From which it follows that the work of perception kindled by seeing *a Seurat* involves an impossible retinal and mental focus [*mise au point*] that is very distant from what is understood commonly, and in the most literal sense, by a 'phenomenon'. . . .

1

'*What history for Seurat?*' The question posed by Eric Darragon in a cycle of lectures accompanying the retrospective at the Galeries nationales du Grand Palais[3] (on the occasion of the centenary of the painter's death, in March 1891, at the age of thirty-one) is a good indication of the uncanniness with which Seurat's name is associated. There is no doubt that, for an art historian, his 'case' is so difficult to 'deal with' because the scope of the analysis immediately includes notions as weighty—and as far from being 'practical'—as those of Art and Science. But doesn't the austere syntax that haunts his oeuvre, commonly associated with the dispositif of Art-Science and with the formulary of a *scientific aesthetic of colour*, go 'against the grain'[4] of the teleology reinstated within the discipline by the discourse of 'modernism' in

the guise of the 'liberation of colour' and the affirmation of a *pure pictoriality* . . . ?[5] That is, a modernism associated with 'the primacy of the intrinsic values of painting', and of which Maurice Denis (along with Gauguin) and Paul Signac (at a great distance from Seurat) are the first heroes. . . . (But only after a young man of eighteen named Émile Bernard had, in 1886, defined himself as a 'modernist impressionist',[6] with an instinctive recourse to this new terminology, soon to be adopted for the periodical founded in 1889 and edited by Gabriel-Albert Aurier, *The Illustrated Modernist*.) For we must remember that, despite the 'importance' of neo-impressionism for *all* of the painters who, around 1890–1900, worked at 'the advent of a new art: the art of colour',[7] if we take a step back—not forgetting the distance that is supposed, theoretically, on the basis of 'simultaneous contrast' through 'optical mixture by means of points', to bring about the 'fusion' of colours as a result of its *focussing* [*mise au point*]—we find that Seurat's enterprise is, from the outset, triply disqualified as *anachronistic*.

First, and *a minima*, Seurat's 'positivism' is that of a laboratory art labouring under obsolete principles, which knows nothing of the relativity of chromatic effects (beginning with the aforementioned 'optical mixture') nor of the rigour of experimental procedures (the artifice of the painter cannot reinstate the 'procedures of reality'). Thus, his initial supporters (Pissarro, Signac, Fénéon) will swiftly come to denounce his extreme 'reductionism': a painter cannot use psychophysical aesthetics as an excuse to adopt the sleepwalking ideomotricity of a Man-Machine. It is in the name of the symbolism of the 1890s that Aurier will mock 'poor Seurat and his science, so sterile in itself, of decompositions of light and linear rhythms', charging the painter with being a stagnant worshipper of the 'omnipotence of scientific observation and deduction'.[8] And then 'it is Gauguin who, through a flattening of the painting, will fulfill the dream of brilliant colour formulated by Seurat'[9] (but can we be so certain that the dream was his?); now, what is this flattening if not, already, a complete liberation from the neo-impressionist 'dogma' imposed by these 'young men, these little chemists building up their little dots', leading us 'straight to colour photography'?[10] This is, all things considered, logical enough for a *technique* that has, not unreasonably, been related to the pointillist mechanical fabric of photogravure.[11] Finally—and this time the observation involves the dynamic proper to the neo-Impressionist movement as orchestrated by the enterprising Signac—'in a singular paradox, pointillism is taken up in modern art against the grain of its inventor',[12] who claims only to be applying a 'method'. But how could it be otherwise, in so far as the theory that he paints—Seurat 'paints his theory', as a critic said—seems destined to envelop painting in 'one grand memento mori', translating into 'a luminous vision of nothingness'[13] the structural evidence of a Visual excised from nature.

(Whereas with a painter, according to Félix Fénéon's remark in a note sent to Signac in 1890, 'we are in a studio, not a laboratory'.)

If it falls to Matisse, with *Luxe, calme et volupté* (1904)—that contradictorily, impossibly neo-impressionist painting, as the painter himself admits—to have exacerbated the question of method by hastening the advent of the *fauvist chaosmosis*, let us not forget that from 1895 on, the movement's spokesman Paul Signac is, along with Henri-Edmond Cross, the promoter of a *second* neo-impressionism. And that with an *expanded pointillism* using colours 'as the merchants sell them in tubes'[14] and employing 'far larger and more authoritative mosaic touches',[15] with that brilliantly coloured mosaic effect, Félix Fénéon's claim that 'at the right distance, the facture vanishes in the optical mixture' is entirely contradicted.[16] Signac will not fail to expose the apparent 'quandary' in which *Chromo-luminarism* (the term proposed by Seurat), in its original version, found itself: As he works, in what has become an unfavourable environment (Cézanne, Gauguin, and van Gogh are the heroes of the artistic avant-garde), towards the publication of his manifesto-book *From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism*—published in the *Revue Blanche* in three parts in 1898, and then in a single volume in 1899 (eight years, that is, after Seurat's death), and as he himself draws a line under 'the difficult period of analysis', setting out now on a period of 'personal and varied creation', Signac notes in his *Journal*, in relation to Seurat's painting *Poseuses* (1888): 'It is too divided, the touch is too minute [. . .]. This lends what is a very fine painting a rather mechanical and diminutive aspect. [. . .] The working [. . .] gives the whole thing a *grey tone'*.[17] Zola's friend and disciple, Paul Alexis, had already described the first large canvas, *Bathers at Asnières* (200 × 300 cm, 1883–1884), as a 'fake Puvis' (because its motif and its muted colours find no examples in Impressionist painting); and this critical commonplace in regard to the grey mechanics of Seurat's paintings, from the time *La Grande Jatte* was exhibited in 1886,[18] was shared, along with other painters,[19] by Pissarro, who, in September 1888, faced with the same *Poseuses*, had confessed,

> I think a great deal about how to paint without dots. I hope to succeed in this, but I have not yet been able to resolve the question of pure divided tone without hardness. . . . What can be done to achieve the qualities of purity, simplicity of point, and the richness, suppleness, freedom, spontaneity, the freshness of sensation of our impressionist art? Here is the question; this preoccupies me a great deal, for the dot is meagre, lacking in consistency, diaphanous, monotonous rather than simple, even Seurat's—especially Seurat's.[20]

Now, it is to precisely this quandary, in which we can glimpse Pissarro's forthcoming defection ('pointillism is over', 'the endpoint', as he will soon write), that Signac's supposed panegyric 'in memory of Georges Seurat'

claims to respond. Maintaining that the AIM of modern art is '*To give to colour the greatest possible brilliance*',[21] and situating himself in the neo-impressionist wake of a suitably retouched Delacroix, Signac will obstinately stand up for the *divided touch* against 'the trivial technique of *dotting*' and the 'minute application of tiny strokes', which 'does not ensure brightness, intensity of coloring, or harmony', and threatens to lapse into grey. Whereas, to practice the *division* that relates to a (supposedly) Cézannian 'hyphenation' 'between Impressionists and neo-impressionist modes of execution', and whose *hatched* origin lies in Delacroix[22] (neo-impressionism is 'the fusion and development of the doctrines of Delacroix and of the impressionists') is, *a contrario*, to 'ensure all the benefits of brightness, color, and harmony'. Consequently, the divided touch must be 'proportional to the size of the painting', and hence the dot will be absolutely *ruled out* for large format works[23]—and therefore for these 'formidable machines' characterising what Seurat, obsessed by the 'large composition', called his 'large paintings of *struggle*'.[24]

This affirmation, somewhat parricidal in tone, which brings with it a more 'expressive' idea of the liberation of colours (as compared to the theory of optical mixing), and which is not unrelated to Signac's growing interest in watercolour, will be put through its paces more than once in the manifesto *From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism*. It can be found in what is presented as an initial conclusion (V, 7), with the restatement and development of Fénéon's argument on the vanishing of facture and the divided touch: *from far enough away*, they 'will be as invisible as the hatchings of Delacroix in his decorations of the Apollo Gallery and the Senate Library', and will be noticed only by those who *subsequently come closer* 'to study the interplay of the colored elements, supposing that these technical details are of interest'. Signac brings in Rembrandt to remind us that technique is a matter solely for the painter, and not for the spectator: '"A painting is not to be sniffed"'. He even finds room in his pitch for the *grey effect* he had complained of in his *Journal*, and which over time completes the disappearance of the divided touches: 'In a few years, the impastos diminish, the colors run into one other, and the painting will then be only too well unified'.[25] In the last chapter, entitled 'The Education of the Eye', Signac shuffles the deck as far as Seurat (and his contribution) is concerned, writing that 'in the contribution of the neo-impressionists, what was unnerving was—far more than the *division* of touch—the uncommon brilliance of their canvases' (VIII, 5).

Who exactly are these 'Neos', then, if Seurat's paintings (with their 'minute application of tiny strokes') suffered precisely from a lack of chromatic intensity that would soon be opposed to the 'intense colouring, of a richness that is his [Signac's] alone', the 'gay rawness', the 'frenetic intensity of light' of Signac's first divided paintings (*Sidings at Saint-Germain*, *The Junction*

at Bois-Colombes, *Gas Tanks at Clichy*, *Passage du Puits-Bertin*, *Clichy*),[26] and if it is to Signac—of whom Huysmans could say that he 'southed [*emmarseillait*] the suburbs'[27]—that we owe the restriction to 'uniquely pure pigments (all the colours of the prism and all their values)' brought into the 'optical mixture' to define *division as such*;[28] and if this method signifies a securing of all the benefits of maximum brightness and colour (I, 1)? Writing himself into the very origin of the movement, the zealous propagandist makes sure to recall how, at the first exhibition of Independent Artists in 1884 where 'Seurat and Signac, *who did not know each other*, met for the first time', the *first* showed his *Bathers*, still using colours mixed on the palette, 'a palette composed, like that of Delacroix, of both pure and earth colors', and that 'the use of these ochres and earth colors dulled the painting and made it seem less brilliant than those which the Impressionists painted with a palette reduced to the colors of the prism'; while he who is now no longer really a *second* was represented by 'four landscapes painted solely with the colors of the prism, applied to the canvas in tiny comma-shaped touches after the Impressionist manner, but already free of mixtures toned down on the palette' (IV, 7).[29] Quite a privilege indeed, and one to be compared and contrasted with the official recognition of *Sunday on La Grande Jatte* as 'the first divided painting', shown in 1886 'at the last of the exhibitions of the impressionist group' (IV, 1) and 'the very valuable contribution of Seurat: the methodically balanced separation of elements' (light, shadow, local colour, reactions), which already confers upon the *Bathers* a 'perfect harmony'. For if the runner-up is still close enough to Delacroix (to that which Delacroix *lacks*)[30] to remain the prisoner, even in *Poseuses*, of the ultimate aporia of the impressionists, who 'reconstitute those dull and sombre tones, which they precisely had seemed to do away with' (III, 6), the status of originator thus disputed *from the chrono-luminarist point of view* rebounds, indirectly but unmistakeably, onto Signac. From 1884 onward, 'in a time when most paintings resemble instantaneous photographs or futile illustrations', and when one finds 'not the least trace of pure color [. . .] in the paintings of Camille Pissarro's late period',[31] Signac opposes to this state of affairs nothing less than the principle of his painting conceived as a *denaturalisation*, a *deterriorialisation* of colour reduced to the abstract 'purity' of its prismatic components and to the play of their 'harmonies', as the sole quality of painting. Independently, we immediately understand, of those 'scientific experiments' that claim to rediscover the ways and laws of nature.[32] To adopt the motivations presiding over this rather too convenient chronology,[33] as did the young artists of the new century, it is Signac, decidedly 'the best tactician of neo-impressionism',[34] and quite rightly nicknamed the 'Saint Paul of neo-impressionism', who, on the strength of the break with Impressionist *nature* (of which only the 'pictorial emotion' is conserved),[35] is seen to hold the key to the future: will he not lead us, beyond the

shift from 'romantic' Impressionism to 'scientific' Impressionism (according to the programme of the 'neo-' Pissarro),[36] to the sort of 'principled romanticism' that would be only the first herald of the 'style of pure colour' (according to Maurice Denis's diagnosis), and towards the formal freedom of the non-figurative, even while placing himself 'in the continuation of the French tradition'?[37] Because already, 'the painter, standing in front of his white canvas, must have as his primary preoccupation the choice of the curves and arabesques which will mark out the surface, and of the hues and tones which will cover it'.[38] What follows from this, as the influential Julius Meier-Graefe will write, in terms that recall Émile Verhaeren's renowned eulogy,[39] is that, 'compared to the luminosity of the aerial paintings of Signac, Seurat seems grey and immobile. The almost mechanical character of his treatment of surface must yield before a freer and finer sensibility in Signac'.[40] Although the conclusion of the passage in Signac to which we refer (IV, 7) seems to rebalance the relation between first and second according to the *double* 'genesis of Georges Seurat and Paul Signac' proposed a few paragraphs above, it does so only by erasing the primacy of Seurat (apart from a scientism whose 'almost mechanical' effect the German critic would seize upon) and by maintaining the absolute autonomy of he who 'came to simultaneous contrast and optical mixing, along a very different path to that followed by Seurat'.[41]

Now, Seurat, the 'reticent and distrustful' Seurat,[42] had more than an inkling of the general drift of this dispositif that was to elect him, posthumously, to the rank of the 'accursed one' of post-Impressionism, at the same time as Signac was rapidly crowned 'father of the Independents' (by the socialist deputy Marcel Sembat).[43] Besides the fact that it directly inspired Arsène Alexandre's 1887–1888 article, which caused a scandal in the group because it stated that '[Seurat] constantly ran the risk of having the paternity of his theory contested by ill-informed critics or somewhat unscrupulous comrades',[44] by 1890 he could hardly have been unaware of it, given the article Fénéon dedicated to the young Signac—considered by the critic *off* the record as the 'victor' of the Salon des Independants[45]—which, in hymning 'the young glory of neo-impressionism', did not even mention Seurat's name in relation to the discovery of the new 'optical painting', 'around 1885', by 'certain young painters'.[46] (Signac did however ask Seurat to draw his portrait in profile to illustrate Fénéon's booklet; he did so; Signac appears on the cover wearing a silk top hat, with a cape and a cane which make him look 'rather stuffy'[47]—the typical garb of the symbolists.) An autobiographical letter would follow, addressed to the critic—whom Gauguin called 'Signac's man'—the tone of which we must immediately relate.

Beginning by affirming (with due emphasis): 'The *purity of the spectral element being the keystone of my technique* [. . .] which You [Fénéon] were the first to commend',[48] Seurat (re)establishes that 'since [he] first held a

brush' he had sought 'this kind of an optical formula, from 1876–1884' (from the age of seventeen, then . . .). And he immediately cites his major references (basing himself on the argument of Charles Blanc—who had invented the phrase 'optical mixture', relating it to Delacroix and to his knowledge of the 'mathematical rules of colour'[49]—'the laws of Chevreul and the precepts of Delacroix'), placing between 'Corot's ideas [. . .] on tone' (1875) (that is to say colour value), 'Couture's precepts on the delicacy of tints' (1878), and the names of Sutter (1880) and Rood (1881), 'the intuition of Monet and Pissarro'.

Now, Monet and Pissarro are *Signac's masters at the moment when the two meet* (and Seurat takes care not to mention his own familiarity with the touch and palette of Renoir).[50] Impressionism thus occupies in anticipatory fashion the period 1875–1880,[51] while the term 'intuition' in relation to Monet and Pissarro suggests—as Michael F. Zimmermann discusses in detail—that 'he was less convinced by their pictorial realizations'.[52] Seurat could then 'establish the following dates indicating [his] prior paternity':

1884 Grande Jatte, exhibition of the Indépendants
1884–1885 Grande Jatte composition
1885 Studies at the Grande Jatte and at Grandcamp; took up again the Grande Jatte composition in October 188[5].

These are dates that he places in relation to those of Signac's first two divided paintings in March–April 1886, after the latter had modified his *Modistes* (1885–1886) under the influence of Grandcamp's pointillist paintings and of 'a small canvas by Pissarro [employing] divided and pure color'.[53] For it is Pissarro, and not Signac (too dependent on Guillaumin and Monet) who would be the first to adhere to what he then called 'the modern synthesis through scientific means'.

The most remarkable thing here is that, since Seurat tactically engages in Impressionism at a time when its direct influence on him was hard to detect,[54] except perhaps in terms of a response to it, the question of priority sheds a kind of *contre-jour* light on the real stakes of the dispute with Signac, who continues to identify modern painting with an ideal of 'harmony' *and* 'liberty' that conserves in its 'pictorial' truth the essence of the colourist legacy of Impressionism, but purified of its 'picturesque' phenomenality (*naturally earthy*). Confirmation of this might be found in the fact that 'Couture's precepts on the subtlety of tints' are drawn largely from a chapter of *Conversations on Art Methods* (1867) entitled 'The Colourists and the Luminarists', where Couture opposes *colourists*, who seek to render all the details of nature through their characteristic tints, to *luminarists*, who sacrifice this naturalist realism to the magic of light, in so far as the latter finds its *ideal* and *impersonal* condition in

the art of chiaroscuro.[55] Thus, Couture *as luminarist* will urge artists to work in twilight, after the example of the 'marvellous genius' of Rembrandt, whom he 'admires', placing himself in the idealist wake of Blanc (who wrote that 'chiaroscuro contains a beauty that alone might almost suffice to painting, for it suffices to the relief of the body, and expresses the poetry of the soul')[56]—and will project himself, along with Blanc, as the opposite of what Impressionism would come to identify as a colourist art of creative nature. This play of references had not escaped Pissarro's intuition; indeed, he reacted against it when the moment came, at the end of his 'neo' period, and in his capacity as 'the future of our 'impressionist' art', by counselling Signac to 'remain absolutely outside the *influence of the School* of Seurat'.[57] As to the best-informed modern criticism, it cannot be blamed for following André Chastel in opposing to Seurat's art 'the games of errant and sumptuous subjectivity' so beloved by Impressionism. For, contrary to what was suggested by Signac and Fénéon (informed by Pissarro, and hoping to draw some benefit from it), Seurat had never claimed to *reform Impressionism*[58] but rather, as he had declared, to *start over again everything that the Impressionists had done*. Given the quarrel sparked off by the question of the artists' 'independence', Monet, Sisley, and Renoir had good reason to refuse to participate in the eighth exhibition of the 'impressionist' group where *Sunday on La Grande Jatte* was hung. A hanging of what would not easily pass for a 'painting of atmosphere',[59] the revolutionary nature of which would be affirmed in the most *fin-de-siècle* style by Jules Christophe, with Seurat's full support, in the issue of *Hommes d'Aujourd'hui* dedicated to the painter:

> Since Germinal 1874, each summer has seen another blossoming of a compendious exhibition of fine paintings near the Boulevard des Italiens. [. . .] The public had almost become accustomed to it when, at the eighth of these exhibitions, on Rue Lafitte, in Floréal 1886, a fearful revolution broke out among these evolutionists: the Commune was proclaimed in art by a twenty-six-year-old man, followed by the audacious and mild Camille Pissarro, a Blanqui of the paintbrush, along with the most intelligent and still very young Parisian Paul Signac.[60]

This only goes to show how the reinstated name of Seurat will not fail to singularly scramble the perception of the 'triumphant colorist' announced, prophesied by Signac at the end of his manifesto-book, a colourist whom Seurat had not been able to engender[61] because of his subjection to the rules of a 'scientific' game, and who will appear in an entirely other register than that of an inspiration *ex machina*: 'His palette has already been made ready for him', concludes *in fine* Signac (who is first and foremost: a colourist and a neo-impressionist),[62] so as to 'gradually rid him', this messiah of an art to come, of the 'fetters which first encumbered him' (VIII, 6).[63]

So as to rid himself, if we follow correctly, of Delacroix's earthy colours and of the extraterrestrial grisaille of Seurat himself—even when the latter argues, alone, against all proselytism of method: 'I paint like this only to find something new, a painting of my own'.[64]

A messiah on the path to the *Luxe, calme et volupté* that Matisse, on his return from St. Tropez and his stay with Signac, would set to constructing during autumn 1904: and one might therefore think that this Baudelairean *Invitation to the Voyage* would make it possible to delay for just a few more moments the death agonies of Impressionism—the 'Directorate of impressionism', as Philippe Dagen says of the new officials—which Charles Morice had appraised in his Preface to the 'Enquiry on Current Tendencies in the Plastic Arts' (published in Spring and Summer 1905 in the *Mercure de France*),[65] where he denounces the 'universal modern dispersion', 'the abominable serenity of indifference' that leads to a 'decay of ingenuity'. This is a time when there is no longer any avant-garde to be found, but only the remains of many moribund avant-gardes. These arts, these first moments of a postmodernity *avant la lettre*. And yet this 'Enquiry' had been preceded by a painting whose accomplishment, with a whiff of scandal about it provoked by the outrageous application of a neo-impressionist-inspired method, no longer left the slightest room for doubt: in *Luxe, calme et volupté* the malaise has gone so far that nothing is any longer in its right place or its right order—which really is the limit, when the project of Divisionism was the 'systematization of the means of Impressionism'.[66] But a whole new story begins here, as far from Seurat as from Signac and his rather too fussy 'country aunts' house:[67] one that goes by the name of fauvism. Far from Signac because in fauvism colour is in no way a quality of the painting,[68] but rigorously the opposite: namely, *a quantity that attacks the pictorial order of the painting*.[69] An attack that would, paradoxically, come close to a Seurat-effect extracted from its 'modernist' interpretation (modernist in the primary sense of a purification of Impressionism) in terms of the quantification of colour that it supposes.

2

So, coming back to Seurat. . . .

And to these 'dots' and a technique that applied science so as to render colours more luminous by elevating 'matter-colours', that is to say pigments, to the level of 'light-colours'. Ogden Rood, cited by Signac in his manifesto, explains it as follows: by arranging 'very close to each other a great number of small points of two colours', the mixture would take place on the retina of the viewer 'stood at a suitable distance', thus allowing the painter 'to really mix, not colouring materials, but bundles of coloured light'; the interesting

thing being that, in virtue of a mixing (of light) that is no longer 'subtractive' but 'additive', 'the tints seem more pure and more varied' so long as the points are not 'regular and very obvious' (for then it would give 'to painting a mechanical air that is not entirely agreeable'—the very criticism that would later be levelled against Seurat).[70] Now, as Gleizes and Metzinger saw very well, in spite of these efforts, 'outside of the prism, whether it is a matter of optical mixture or blending on the palette, the combining of complementary colours yields a troubled grey, not a luminous white',[71] just as the addition of white, practised systematically on Seurat's palette, allows—as Chevreul writes in a passage copied out by the painter—for the production of 'all the modifications due to the weakening of the color by light'[72] by rendering colours (those closest to the prism) less intense and less striking. An effect of decolouration, then, which resonates with the doubly impersonal character of a painting that presents itself as the 'application' of a 'scientific theory' (according to Rood's title): because as well as an application of colours that excludes a priori any individual expression, it also involves the use of a no less impersonal palette (in three ranges: eleven 'prismatic' colours at the top, the mixtures of each colour with white in the middle, and pure white at the bottom). A logic that Signac and Cross will personally have to try to break with in order to warm up the colours of nature and to furnish a solar motif 'for every caprice of colour'.[73] (We sense this programme at work in an 1885 still life where Signac poses oranges alongside Maupassant's *Au Soleil*, published the year before, upon a tablecloth stippled with touches of bright green.)

Associated with a heightened contrast (achieved through the use of more materially saturated synthetic colours)[74] contrary to the spirit and the letter of Chevreul,[75] but in agreement with Helmholtz's recommendations made on the basis of an objectivation of the subjective[76] corresponding to the principle of the action of the retina (*die Netzhaut*) conceived as a mosaic of photoreceptors, Seurat-dots charge space with a luminous vibration that extends to the very limits of shadow. With a regular and very noticeable aspect, combining repetitive structure and a fantastic material tangibility, the dots of colour boost each other, as if machinically, on their fringe, mobilising a 'synthetic' surface whose luminous contrast is dominant to the extent that it almost leads back to the non-coloured threshold of colour while the strong geometrisation this brings about in the global construction of the painting adds to the extreme hardness of the whole. Thus Gustave Geffroy, for example, writes,

> It is indeed impossible not to perceive that the procedure takes centre-stage here, and that the cold, regular, meticulous way in which the coloured dots are placed and spaced out holds the attention with an obsessive persistence. [. . .] It takes a persistent effort, an obstinate good faith on the part of the viewer, to break out

> of his cramped vision and discover, beyond this mottled exterior, the truth of the atmosphere and the power of the modelling.[77]

The critic and friend of the Impressionists is not wrong, for the first condition of this effect of ‘radioactive’ (Robert Rey) ‘generalised discontinuity’ (Jean-Claude Lebensztejn) is that the surface of the tints *do not* fuse (in visible contradiction to the optical phenomenon known since Ptolemy’s time, governed by ‘physical laws’ which are those of light itself ‘in nature’)[78]—but that, on the contrary, and as opposed to the schema of dissolution of the ‘optical mixture’, the visibility of the facture stands out to the extent that it becomes as one with the most visually elementary form of sensation, and thus becomes capable of rendering sensible, visible, the mental mode of production of vision through the addition of sensations; a seeing which, in consequence of this artificial discontinuity, ‘admitting the phenomenon of the duration of the luminous impression on the retina’,[79] appeals to motor activity—to the incessant, impossible attempts of the ‘viewer’ to obtain a definitive focus [*mise au point*].

Pushed to the limit-point where the objectivation of the ‘subjective’ becomes quantification, retaining of the ‘objective’ only the molecular action of an infinitesimal matter whose ‘most inert object is doubtless animated’[80]—an action not unrelated to the *flying gnats* (*mouches volantes*) or ‘little irregular dark specks’ introduced by Helmholtz as the physiological foundation of ‘entoptic phenomena’ in the vitreous humour of the eye[81]—this radical appropriation of the scientific proposition that extends it to the impossible work of synthesis demanded of the eye projects new light on Meyer Schapiro’s fine description according to which, since his works involve ‘a mystery of the coming-into-being for the eye’, ‘Seurat is the visionary of the seen, just as Redon [and, let us add, in another sense, Gauguin] is the visionary of the hermetic imagination and the dream’. This conclusion of Schapiro’s stems from an examination of Seurat’s incomparable drawings, whose ‘grain’ is the result of applying smears of soft, fat Conté crayons onto paper with a large and regular grain—so that the ‘varying density of the grain determines the gradations of tone’[82] in a declination of the powdery mysteries of black and white through an augmentation of grey that is unprecedented (apart from Redon, perhaps; but he operated it exclusively in the register of the splendour of the supernatural). It is as if the pattern of these ‘grains’ determined the ‘dots’ in the painting, like the shadows that *cast them*, heightening all the more the synthetic aspect that conditions the sense of the materiality of colour. ‘For a painter’s instinct’, writes Lucie Cousturier of these Conté drawings, ‘leads him to discover, in these initial works, an aspect of the surface that will materialise most sensibly the character of the forms that he conceives’.[83]

The 'most beautiful *painters' drawings* in existence', Signac will say, 'more luminous and colorful than many paintings'[84] (but these 'colours' have to be set within a grey atmosphere), employing the contrast of tone and the construction of shadows and light at the expense of outline and the 'descriptive line' (Fénéon) abandoned at the turn of 1881–1882: thus outlines are born solely from the alternation between bright and dark tones, and from their modulation by light, often under the influence of a harsh lighting. Now, it is this play of value and mass, this tonal structure that overdetermines more than one aspect of Seurat's theory of colours,[85] that furnishes the graphical basis for his pictorial compositions. To the point where he seems only to have been able to invest the problem of colour in his singular fashion, right up to the years 1882–1883 preceding the *Bather*, by privileging drawing. . . .[86] Perhaps in doing so he was influenced by the initially rather academic pedagogy echoed by Rood in his *Modern Chromatics*: 'The advance from drawing to painting should be gradual, and no serious attempts in colour should be made till the student has attained undoubted proficiency in outline and in light and shade. Amateurs almost universally abandon black and white for colour at a very early stage, and this circumstance alone precludes all chance of progress'. The renowned physicist of Columbia University in New York (where he taught physiological optics) and amateur painter (for which Fénéon mocked him) added that 'the simple contrast of light and shade, that is, where all the elements are comprised by white, black, and intermediate shades of grey' is so decisive and so difficult to master that it can result in a drawing being superior to a painting: for 'the contrast of light with dark shades is not inferior in power to that of warm with cool tints; and, in point of fact, the contrast of white with black is the strongest case of contrast possible'. In this play of citations we can read the first principle obeyed by Seurat's drawing—and taken to its acme by his practice—once he had abandoned the Ingres-esque facture taught in the studio of Henri Lehmann (*Copy after Ingres's Roger Freeing Angelica* [circa 1878], graphite and oil drawing on canvas) and the combined angular linearity of oblique hatching that he had developed in 1880–1881 (*Seated Woman* [*Femme sur un banc*]); a principle whose enunciation is paralleled only by that, so intimately other, of Cézanne: the surest line is but the *result* of the *colouring* interplay of light and shade, so that the drawing *is nothing but* 'the relationship of contrasts or, simply, the rapport of two tones, white and black': 'Line and modeling do not exist'. An anachronistic rapport with Cézanne's statements is set in motion here: for if 'to paint is to create *contrasts*' (Cézanne's emphasis), then *as we draw, we gradually paint*.[87] This might perhaps account for the singular yellowish and bluish impressions, those colours-without-colour that Seurat has in common with hand-coloured black-and-white photography. (The fine-grained Michallet paper used for the drawings itself tended towards the yellow.)

In these mysteriously hazy painters' drawings whose immobilising effect combines geometrical simplification and progressive flattening, and which most often show *isolated* or *arrested* figures *suspended* in an atomic existence with no narrative contours, concerning themselves with 'the mechanics of effects alone' (Georges Duthuit) and conducted by an impersonal hand 'modulating all possible images of incommunicability and absence' (Françoise Cachin); in the graphite's blackening of the white of the paper, which remains visible between the dark marks irregularly retained by its grain and its bumps; in these rubbings that bring forth 'evanescent forms of the universe of contrast' (Alexandrian), the eye at first perceives only a contradictory optical architecture. Contradictory because the drawing, in the irreal and spectral atmosphere of a mental image, is at once unified by the unique graphic tonality conferred upon it by the most artificial light possible (the same artificial light that presides over the execution of the drawings, as suggested by *The Lamp* [1882–1883]), and which is inevitably associated by the spectator with a source of natural light that seems to project and capture the shadows like photography (the eponymous *Lamp* having been extinguished, the face and the lamp are lit from without).[88] But in any case, combining the *brightening function of white* with *the colouring function of black*,[89] in these drawings 'an automaton transcribes its incomparable scenes', scenes seen through the Machine-Eye of an extraterrestrial 'half-lost in acetylene fumes',[90] an eye which, in its speculative projection, had invested the mechanical eye, the camera's 'artificial retina',[91] to bring images forth like revenants, to make images *come back* like the *spectres* that they are, that every image is—spectres which, since the first photograph, had menaced every image in its 'being': a real we can no longer touch (just an image). Seurat thus *reveals* a spectral dimension of the post-photographic process of image production by reproducing it in another medium, in *the* medium that is supposed to present the purest alterity to it. . . . Or, in other words, as noted by more than one critic, Seurat's *extraterrestrial gaze*[92] presents itself, in painting, as the spectre of the invention of photography: that *automatic art* to which it was believed we owed the submission of light 'to proofs independent of our sensations' (Jean-Baptiste Biot), and which, under Chevreul's control, would permit the discovery of 'a new action of light in molecular actions' (Niepce de Saint-Victor) from which that new property of matter, *radioactivity*, would be deduced.[93] A discovery of photography, of those photographic procedures of which Seurat is the only painter of his generation (the 'post-impressionist' generation, which is for him alone, de facto, *post-Manet*) to be absolutely contemporary with. Whereas the others, all the others, in a general situation of an increased 'permeability' of painting to photography, only latch onto one or another of its practices or effects—even Degas, that outsider of Impressionism who

was himself a photographer, despite the importance of his replacement of framing by 'composition', and of the internal impulsion of movement by the rendering of the 'mechanics of gestures'. Thus Seurat's drawings will above all be limit-experiences pitting themselves against what David Sutter, the author of *Phenomena of Vision*, cited by Seurat, called the 'resolution of light'.[94]

This experimental aspect is not unrelated to the fact that the vertiginous spectrality of these drawings that take on the 'whatever' aspects of modern life in order to bring out their 'grisaille' crystallises the idealities linked to the birth and development of photography, that 'marvel' that throws 'the theories of science' into disarray and is destined to 'make a revolution in the arts of drawing'—as is announced in a newspaper article quoting the celebrated meeting of the Académie des Sciences where Arago presented Daguerre's 'discovery'.[95] Although 'the inventor', it explains, 'has discovered the means to *fix images*' (emphasis in the meeting documentation), 'the method creates drawings and not colour paintings': 'in the *paintings*, in M. Daguerre's copies, *as in a black crayon drawing*, a woodcut, or, better still (the similarity is more exact) as in a mezzotint [*gravure à la manière noire*][96] or an *aquatint*, there is only white, black, and grey; only light, darkness, and halftones' (italics added).[97] If we emphasise in our turn, it is so as to bring Seurat's painters' drawings into resonance with this new subjectile, to place them in the context of this time when *photology*, in the sense of a 'science of light', still hesitates between rival procedures: the French daguerrotype's unique positive image on metal, and the '*photogenic* art of drawing' ('engendered by light') of the English Talbot, on negative paper ('photogenic papers'). The German invention of the word *Photography*, defined as *Lichtzeichenkunst*, 'the art of drawing with light', initially associated with the negative/positive procedure on paper, will only gain currency by exposing the entirely *graphical* trace of the procedure, reinforced by the refining, around 1880, of dry negative plates (and soon after, sensitive paper) with silver bromide emulsion. But this trace, which led the painter Paul Delaroche to eulogise 'M. Daguerre's drawings' ('an immense service rendered to the arts'), had already been metaphorically evoked, on the English side, in the title of the work published by Henry Fox Talbot between 1844 and 1846, *The Pencil of Nature*—the first book to be illustrated with photographic prints, and which emerged from Talbot's attempts to make drawings using the *camera lucida* of chemist and theorist of optics John Herschel (discoverer of the fixative usage of hyposulfite, and inventor of the series of English words *photography*, *photograph*, *photographic*), and the resulting idea that the image of the *camera obscura* might be '*fixed*', or might '*fix itself*', on paper.[98] This graphical trace thus manifests the (non-) place, the visual terrain of photographs themselves: either with the daguerreotype plate, whose exceptional luminosity and richness of

hallucinatory detail (those 'infinite details' that made Delacroix uneasy) transform the represented objects/subjects into elements of a graphical composition eliciting a hypnotic mode of seeing that colludes with the general flattening of the space of the image, or with the calotype, which uses a negative of oiled paper prepared with silver salts, yielding images with far more contrast but almost devoid of detail and which, unlike the daguerreotype but like the mezzotint, have a *grain*, giving birth to 'a whole new conception of unity' whose 'seeds' lay 'in that tension between the disunity of the lights and darks of the images, and the repetitions of the granular structure of the paper'.[99] Now, this latter effect, the effect of an encounter between light and matter, the *revelation* of the way in which the fibrous texture of the calotype print diffused light while obscuring detail—this material effect of the *negative* contradicting the supposed transparency of a medium in favour of the *suggestion* of a 'latent', depthless image *animated* by an almost manual 'pictorial' aspect—this latency effect will invade France and, paradoxically, consecrate it 'as the country of the calotype, become synonymous with the photography of art, as opposed to the industry of daguerreotype portraiture'.[100] With the pictorial nature of its high black-and-white contrasts structuring the image, this invasion will not only recall Rembrandt's watercolours (Talbot evokes the *Rembrandtish* effect of his calotypes) and Goya's aquatints, to which Seurat's drawings have always been compared; it will have just as profound an influence upon the painting, contemporary with the calotype, of the school of Barbizon so dear to Nadar, those painters 'transfixed by photography' and its modulation of forms in light and shadow, their details 'gobbled up at the opposite ends of the light spectrum'.[101] (Beginning with Millet, Barbizon's teacher: the deep shadow of his foregrounds invades every single one of his drawings.) Their influence on the young Seurat will give the drawings, in common with the early paintings,[102] an anti-realist yet mysteriously 'objective' (over)naturalism, integrated into the most insignificant everyday framework of modern life[103] (*Suburb*, 1881–1882; *Houses and Gardens*, 1882–1883; *White Houses, Ville-d'Avray*, 1882–1883), culminating with *Bathers at Asnières* (1883–1884) and its employment of the rough grain of the canvas to hold the points of chalky paint (a frottage that produces an impression analogous to the granularity of Conté crayon).[104] (As Rosalind Krauss has expertly demonstrated, it is not just that 'the calotypes we know from the 1850s bear a striking resemblance to the pictures by Daubigny'; it was only *the experience of photography* that 'prevented [Daubigny] from translating nature into paintings that were conventionally unified'—paintings, that is, which would obey the 'unifying vision' that supposedly structures the painting as such.)[105] It is this experiment of a decentring of human perception and of its pictorial rendering that Seurat will develop graphically in his visual *découpages* by investing *the most material aspect* of 'art' photographs—their

fibrous texture, their granular structure—and through *the most spectral conception* of a universal photographic 'influence' according to which 'each body within nature' consists 'of series of spectres, in layers superimposed to infinity, foliated in infinitesimal films in every direction where optics perceives this body' (according to Nadar's summary of Balzac's theory of spectres).[106] *Seurat*, *seer and physicist*, Seurat the optician, for—as Strindberg recalls in his 'Legends'—'in optics one distinguishes between virtual images and real images'.[107] A strange and inevitable alliance of 'materialism' and 'spiritualism' ('subtle matter') that the least of his drawings, in their constant affinity with the printed photographic negative, in their refusal of the solutions that Impressionism advocated against the 'failings' of photography,[108] renders immediately perceptible: here, the most common type—nurse, washerwoman, labourer, street sweeper, whitewasher, ragpicker, beggar, concierge, a boy or a woman near a streetlight, a man or woman on a bench, a woman with a dog, an old lady from behind or silhouetted in profile, a bourgeois dressed in black . . . is no longer a person but, in their white solitude, a nocturnal effect, a looming apparition, scrutinised from a beyond which is not that of transcendence, and which recalls the question with which Niepce's first memoir ('On a new action of light in molecular actions') opens: 'Does a body, after having been hit by light or exposed to the sun, conserve within the darkness some impression of this light?'[109] Here all landscapes are *crepuscular zones of the afterward*, *suburbs*[110]—those 'modern *aurea mediocritas*', those lands of ghosts—where the most natural forms become as impenetrable as the most artificial of edifices, through a 'lack of precision': poplars, river banks, church steeples, lock-gates, doors, gates, the black silhouette of a locomotive, a train station, the corner of a factory, a factory in moonlight without a living soul in sight. . . . In our view, it is necessary to consider this mediumistic sensitivity to the 'inorganic consciousness of the universe' (Duthuit), this will bring forth 'impressions which, because of their insignificance, would usually escape attention' (Zimmermann), as the *negative* of the new visibility of science and of the fantastic appropriation of the scientific register operated by Seurat in order '*to find something new*'. Here lies the novelty of these pictograms of the actual, these 'icons of the everyday'[111] resolutely informed on the *artist-plate*[112] through the paradigmatic usage of the photographic apparatus that imposed itself after 1870, when, rather than referring 'to a type of image' and to the question of its nature, 'the notion of photography would henceforth refer to a productive process', to an economy of production at once optical and chemical, comprising the experimental method as a *grey ontology* working from within the positivist current. This is the case, as we know, from the time of the publication of Taine's essay *On Intelligence* (1870), in which images constitute themselves as composite agencies reconciling the psychic and the physiological[113] in the Brain-Eye.

It is interesting to note that, along with photography, this composite character is contemporary with the discovery of *images* and of their ('multi-media') circulation across genre boundaries (lithography, engraving, photo-chromotype engraving, posters . . .), something that takes hold during the years 1860–1880:[114] this is the case, for example, in the art of Franz Hanfstaengl—who will meet with great success in Paris, so much so that, in 1861, he opens up a studio in competition with Nadar's, where the hand-retouching of negatives and prints upon a visibly textured paper yields an 'artisanal character' so precious that 'we are not even entirely sure whether we are looking at a photograph'[115] (see in particular the portrait of Friedrick Overbeck, 1865).

As for the reconciliation of the psychic and the physiological, in truth this was the very objective of Nadar's 'portraits à la Rembrandt'.[116] With the use of light as a form of writing appropriate to the 'shooting' of the writers and painters of modernity (Gautier, Baudelaire, Manet . . . : so many protagonists in 'the invasion of the nervous system' that, according to him, is characteristic of 'our modern art'), Nadar inscribes his name as the last of the 'Primitives of photography', as he to whom it falls to write: 'Thus the daguerreotype gave way to photography'.[117] 'A draughtsman *without knowing it*',[118] this admirer of Corot ('always and eternally the master', he affirms in his *Salon of 1853*) had managed to bring back the supernatural magic of the first daguerrotypes[119] through the chiaroscuro quality brought about by the effects of lighting in salt-print 'portraits' that often combined an illegibility of most of the face, stylised in the densest of shadow by the lighting, and the industrials' hard 'precisionist' rendering of the image (see in particular the series of *Baudelaires*). This led him to make use of his procedure for the 'printing of positive photographic proofs by the electric or gas-light' (patented in February 1861) in the production of a hundred photographs taken in the catacombs and then in the sewers, structured by the totally artificial play of shadow and light that he discovered in the depths of the subterranean city and that of the darkroom, in a 'black rendezvous with immense nothingness': close, very close, to Balzac's spectres—'nothing is lacking to make it disquieting: dowsing, spellcasting, evocations, apparitions [. . .]. Truly, it wouldn't take anything to make philtres of our filters'[120]—experimental 'philtres' for which Fénéon and Signac would reproach the painter of *Circus Parade* (1888), that 'nocturne' lit by the flames of the gas footlights and the artificial light reflecting from the big top.[121] The aged Nadar made one last visitation to photography to conduct the illustrated interview with the chemist Chevreul (in 1886, the year *La Grande Jatte* was shown), positioning himself as the artistic and scientific successor of the illustrious centenarian who, very much to the point, during this conversation rewritten by the photographer after plans to record it had been abandoned, declared:

> M. Pasteur is one of the greatest geniuses of our times because before him, we scientists set out from *known* phenomena to arrive at the *unknown*; it was he who proceeded in the other direction. I must admit that the scientific school to which I belonged made me consider this novelty as a nonsense.[122]

That this 'nonsense' vector of the 'unknown' is not unconnected to the powers of an Art-Science whose optical and chemical reality had been furnished by photography as it inaugurated a new logic of the production of the image, and as it supported Seurat's 'system', all the way to the extreme modernity of his Egyptian hieratism (the contemporaries recognised in him the trace of the egyptomania of the discoverers and rediscoverers of photography; ever since Talbot the Egyptologist . . .), perhaps owes to no other 'secret' than the following: that there would no longer be any secular reproduction of the order of the painting and of its absent iconic aura, reduced to the most material mysteries of the halo, without its rendering visible the new relation of production that the image mediates; without multiplying framings and reframings that expose the viewer to the montage of the painting become screen of a world that is always already *image* (this is the 'constructive' principle of montage, as elaborated from the preparatory drawings onwards); *without an infinitesimal reduction of the painting to the reproduction of an image without world* (according to the image's principle of extension as it appropriates the sphere of the visible by precipitating the disappearance of the things themselves). So that, if there is an *optical mixture*, it is an optical mixture *as collage* (as Meyer Schapiro points out): a collage, on the canvas, of pellets of colour that overlap one another as they obstinately refuse the penetration of a gaze confronted with images as unatmospheric as can be because they emanate from the pulverisation of things on the white grounds of these (photo-)graphs 'engendered by light', where light becomes black (*in the black manner*), 'negative', the twilight of things. The drawings are far more than studies towards each of the 'large compositions': they present in chiaroscuro the latent tonalities of those compositions' spectral heterogenesis, the immaterial purity of the element of the spectre grasped at its two extremities, the true 'keystone' of Seurat's pictorial technique, from the preparatory drawings for *Bathers* onward. In them, it is a matter of (*de-*)*constructing with light*, 'rather than representing it with its fluctuations that undo form' (according to the Impressionist teaching); in them, the granular surface of the white of the page 'seems to mutate into a silvery veil when all that is profiled in it are the contours of one solitary figure'.[123]

It is to this element, in the last analysis, that the paintings owe their irradiation of grey, that power of grisaille which is, black on white, the basis of their 'optical formula'; and this is why it will be reserved for sketches, studies, quick drafts, *croquetons*, to affirm 'a chromatic sensibility that the final work, more measured and controlled, does not attain'.[124]

Well beyond the cautious audacities of Signac, on the side of an 'art of great decorative consequence' (Fénéon), the *croquetons* of 1881–1882 (on little wooden 'boîtes à pouce' or 'cigar box lid' panels, around 16 × 24 cm), with large thick and arbitrary touches, set out by exceeding the Barbizon painters' sweeping criss-crossed strokes,[125] broadly anticipating the way towards the colourist explosion of the surface and the disappearance of the 'subject' in the dancing chaos of pigments; and then we have the proto-Impressionist effects of the banks of the Seine which magnify the procedure in a kind of 'defiance of impressionism' (R. L. Herbert, on *Fishermen*, 1883, presented at the Impressionist exhibition in 1886, in the absence of Monet, to whom Seurat 'refers' here by way of his *Fishermen on the Seine at Poissy*, 1882: *Fishermen* will be considered by the anonymous critic who does not like the *Grande Jatte* at all as 'the gem of the exhibition').[126] To Seurat's eyes, a little later, no doubt, a kind of proof *ad absurdum* in regard to Impressionism, a manner all traces of which he would have to methodically eliminate in the large paintings in order to set up, point by point, monumental in its disenchanted banality, the idea-image of a subject without subjectivity.[127]

Which is indeed the best definition of a spectre.

And the most rigorous perception of the *spectral condition* that threatens painting in the age of photography—the invention that transforms the general character of the art object.

Does anything remain for painting other than to express the disenchantment of the world and the 'allegorical negation of the promises of modernity' by using and abusing its own codes?[128]

In its effective dynamic, the idea develops as follows: to plunge into this age whose latest modernity is a matter of the most 'imaged' absenting (illustrated journals, advertising posters, popular imagery . . .) of things and of beings[129] (industrial suburbs, Sundays on the Grande Jatte, café-concerts, circus parades . . .); to get to the point, foreign to all phenomenology, where, 'between imagery and the mental thing, the visible can no longer exist'[130] (the visible as visage of Being); to *envision* and *synthetise* this invisible as an artifice of the visual that brings with it the most artificial image of painting, which can no longer be anything but a *cosa mentale*, and therefore will be so absolutely and otherwise (the 'absolutely modern' proclaimed by Rimbaud, which we cannot invoke here without mention of Duchamp's admiration for Seurat). To this purpose, the visible world will have to be emptied of all natural, *terrestrial* colour, transferred wholesale into the black-and-white grain of the image obtained via *photo-graphic reduction*, so as then, on the basis of the complete dependency of the image on light, to develop colour according to a *photo-chemistry* with strictly determined effects (the gradation of tones determining the relation of tints) realised through its primary or 'discrete' elements (dots). These dots are the element of facture *and* the element of sensation: their 'mechanical' presence

reduces the painting to showing what remains (all that remains) of the visible: the *machination* of retinal representation, the absent gaze of a Machine-Eye across 'a world from which life and movement are prohibited and where everything is forever fixed in the rigid framing of its geometry'.[131]

But the fact that, in this greyness of colour, in the end, *it all* (or something of it all, modified) *reappears* (otherwise), as André Chastel points out, 'at the magician's behest, like a carousel of luminous rays' rendering space, *all of irrealised space*, more animated than the bodies in frozen or suspended movement (from *La Grande Jatte* to *Circus*, along with all the marine scenes)—this fact is sufficient indication that Seurat's *pictorial alterity* is worked by a 'pantheist' ontological plane (that of an 'active energy') *appropriate to the materialism* expressed, at the end of the nineteenth century, by the 'theory of the discontinuous' that Gustave Kahn related to the theory of light to suggest the kinship of the latter, as well as the free verse he advocated, with 'that of the optical mixture'.[132] In his celebrated analysis of 'ten square centimetres' of *La Grande Jatte*, doesn't Fénéon evoke 'a swirling throng of tiny smudges'?[133] And as for Seurat, doesn't he conceive of this last great painting, so piercing in comparison to the muted tones of *Parade* and *Chahut*, 'as a luminous apparition, his *Circus*, his dream of how colours would appear to him in his death agony'?[134]

It is here that we confirm that Seurat is not Duchamp.
And that there is more than one ghost in the machine.

3

So, coming back to Seurat . . .

And to his contemporaneity with the photographic, whose effect we have been able to gauge by the way in which the 'luminous' nature of his 'static' paintings presents itself as a ('mechanical') fixing of images transmitted by light in the form of captured indexical imprints or traces. This cannot be unconnected to the fact that he preferred the name *Chromoluminarism* (singular, with no retinue, and with the requisite capital) to the term *neo-impressionist* (in the plural in Fénéon's article on the Independents, which appeared in September 1886, baptising, along with Seurat, the works of Charles Angrand, Henri-Edmond Cross, Albert Dubois-Pillet, Pissarro *fils et père*—although the latter did not show anything—and Signac); or, as Seurat says of himself in July 1887, a 'luminist' *tout court* (perhaps stepping back from the 'chromo', and from these colour prints [*chromos*] that he collected and which the critics had fairly thrown back in his face by likening the characters of *La Grand Jatte* to coloured engravings).

Now, through the celebrated Nadar and the 'magical value' of his negatives, which revive something of the mystery of the first photographs ('a magical value', writes Benjamin, 'such as a painted picture can never again have for us'[135]—either for us or for Seurat, perhaps the first painter to have perceived this so acutely); through Nadar—a generic name if there ever was one—and those portraits with 'the blurriness of a drawing' (Baudelaire), we see what ideally we know—that the collodion plate sensitised by silver nitrates, this glass coated with a solution containing innumerable metallic particles, produces its images as a function of the fineness of the grains of matter that light troubles through the radiation of the *aspect* that it transports. The photographic aspect that Seurat 'retains' is the imprint left by bodies in light. It is a memory of bodies confided to the luminous radiation that will transport its image of them as far as possible, at a vertiginous speed. The whole chemical solution, arranged on the negative that receives the pure aspect transmitted by the plane of light traversing the eyepiece, reorganises itself under the polarisation of this imprinting, reducing colour to its screened *value* alone, to the empty impression of dark/light relations that it deposits and focuses on. Now, at the outset, Seurat's *colourised* painting is indeed composed in the same way, from an infinitesimal number of points metered out by the passage of light as it captures the pure aspect of the landscape or the characters taken as a motif. What the painting retains are waves and vibrations, the way they amass, polarise, and screen the material corpuscles. The thing, with its solid set of elements, is deposed out there, untouchable, out of reach, absent. What the painting allows us to see is thus not the thing in its primary authority, but the inorganic memory of its luminous radiation, the material distancing of its aura, and the vibratory effect of this distancing. The idea-image of the ever-more distant emanation of its flows. *Seurat the modern neoplatonist*. Purified, the image will thus be conceived as the fluent imprint of a corpuscular Real that is already abstract, a slice of light, which, given this fact alone, must be able to be fixed durably in a coloured *solution* (itself granular). The daguerreotype 'reveals' this phenomenon in black and white, retaining only the captive aura in the grisaille of its metallic particles, which the painter's chemistry[136] will systematically 'develop' according to the affinities and divisions of colours produced on the chromatic circle by contrasts of tone value (luminous intensity) and tint (degree of refrangibility); with regard, then, to 'the effect of light on the eye', which thus determines *symbolically* everything up to and including the direction of the line (Seurat sliced under the knife of Charles Henry, the Dr. Faustroll of the Néos,[137] who in his lectures used showroom dummies draped with all kinds of fabrics to illustrate his theory of colours), but not so as to imitate the 'colours of bodies' (Seurat *avec* Helmholtz). Owing to its 'conscious and scientific manner' (Fénéon), this System is as distant from the Impressionist and Expressionist

signifiers of 'artistic subjectivity' as it is from the harmonisation of surfaces characteristic of the neoclassical mode of representation, with its heavily policed primitivism (Seurat against those *Times of Harmony* whose praises Signac will soon sing).[138]

Compared to a 'materialist' (Henri Fèvre, in *La Revue de Demain*) or 'modernising' (Fénéon) Puvis de Chavannes, which is to say—let us agree—a *parodic and inverted* Puvis[139] scarcely befitting the supposed project of establishing a 'new classicism', *A Sunday Morning on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1884–1886)[140] uses the landscape as scenery (very much distanced from the naturalist conception by its multiple perspectives, marked by oblique horizontal shadows)[141] before which to set up, rigid, with the resolution of photographic grain, 'some forty characters [. . .] invested with a hieratic and summary outline'.[142] Even apart from this pure *marking* (with no organic relation whatsoever to the forms of the figures) proper to Seurat's reinvention of drawing,[143] it suffices to conceive the manifesto-painting as a post- and anti-Impressionist radicalisation of Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*: less the 'negative counterbalance' of the celebrated painting, as argued by Ernst Bloch (who places it in a present still 'full of innocence', despite these postures which no longer fulfil their traditional 'dialogical mission'), than its *negative tout court*, its ghostly projection set up against the '*picturesque*' illusion that had made its return in Impressionism.[144] And it is here, it is in this way, that we should cite the German philosopher, as he evokes 'the pale river', 'its light matt and watery space, in the expressionless water of the Sunday Seine, as the object of an equally expressionless brooding' such that 'with the working world every world, indeed every object seems to fade into watery *grisaille*'; Bloch concludes that 'such a bourgeois Sunday afternoon is *suicide in a painting*';[145] which is also the orchestrated suicide (a disguised murder . . .) of Impressionist (and soon after, Expressionist) painting, with its maintenance of the romantic ideal within a 'humanitarian' hermeneutic that masks its *retardation* beneath the pictorial religion of incompletion.

(Already the faceless series of *Stone Breakers, Labourers, Harvesters* and *Peasants at Work* [1882–1883] had expurgated Millet and Courbet of classical sentiment, of the 'human quality' that still inhabited them,[146] by means of the homogeneity of a broken and striated touch that produced an indifferentiation between character-types, action, and nature; with their empty figures, rebarbative to any signification compliant with naturalism, between consciousness and passion, and those 'de-faced' landscapes shorn of all 'visible transcendence', Seurat reinvented realism by voiding it of all humanism.)

1. This is indicated, on the plane of the form of content, by those *so-called Egyptian prototypes* that openly break with the Grecocising sculptural aspect of the *Bathers*[147] (an aspect made all the more shocking by the

isolation of the languid figures with their faces all turned in the same direction: the classical tradition was thus twice contradicted by these weary heroes who are the *denizens of the suburbs*: the democratisation of Arcadia had petered out). Described by Charles Blanc as 'monumental in the laconic nature of the modelling, in the austerity of the lines and in their resemblance to the verticals and horizontals of architecture', as it invests a 'constant uniformity [. . .] singularly fostered by the identity of races by means of the uncrossable barriers that separated the castes and thus opposed themselves to all crossing',[148] Seurat's painting ironically uses the geometrical schematisation of the 'Egyptian style' to caricature, in a rigorously anti-expressive language, the *signs* of bourgeois modernity, with its stiff (for men) and corseted (for women) fashions, imitated by all, in a place like La Grande Jatte, which 'provided opportunities for the shortlived social mobility of the *demi-monde*'[149] who set out in pursuit of the new middle classes. A vain pursuit . . .

(Thinking of the paintings to come, the same might well be said of the café-concert and the circus, sites of promiscuity *par excellence*, where mixing, far from breaking down the divisions between classes, maintains the social order under the aegis of the 'new strata'.)

As far as the anti-naturalism of *La Grande Jatte* is concerned, each character is in a static state (an anti-naturalist manifesto),[150] and Blanc's influence on Seurat can be gauged by the descriptive value of what the former says of Egyptian bas-reliefs: 'In this solemn and cabbalistic pantomime, the figure is made of signs rather than gestures; it is in situation rather than in action'.[151]

2. This demonstrates once again, on the plane of the matter of expression, how the *uniform function of pointillism* turns *scientifically* against 'pure' painting (soon to become a synonym of 'modernism') the means that, since Manet and Mallarmé, have been those of the Brain-Eye: thus Fénéon writes of *La Grande Jatte*, 'Whichever part one examines, there is laid out, with monotonous speckles, a tapestry: for here, touch is pointless, effects impossible, there is no place for setpieces;—the hand must be stupid, but the eye agile, perspicacious and knowing; on an ostrich, a clump of straw, a wave, or a rock, the movement of the brush remains the same'.[152] The exactitude of this last assertion (in regard to a facture, as we shall see, far more varied than contemporaries perceived) matters less than the mechanical effect globally produced by a 'pointillism' that imposes on the brush the Machine-Eye of photography and the *machine fact* of the new techniques of impression as the negative and critical truth of the Brain-Eye, at the exact moment when painting was threatened with a one-way departure for the 'neo-traditionalist' Kythira of a *Sacred Grove*.[153]

That the *technical suicide of painting* is a *pictorial* response to a crisis that itself is no less pictorial, should be obvious to anyone who considers the outcome: to 'suicide' Puvis and the Impressionists—that is, the two contrary traditions with which the modern history of painting presents him—by developing in painting, by way of *its most repressed interior* according to the Impressionist dogma (namely, drawing—and this is where Puvis will be parodied) a 'technique' that comes from its *most threatening outside* (photography, which will be retrojected against Impressionism), but which shares in the mysteries of shadow and light, which can then be made to serve the transfiguration of painting. . . .[154]

This is how the chronicle of a death of painting foretold, pronounced by so many critics—the 'not enough life' denounced by Huysmans, against Seurat, 'the automatic gestures of lead soldiers, moving on articulated diamonds' glimpsed by Alfred Paulet, or the 'badly-made mannequins' of Émile Hennequin . . . [155]—most of them reprising the refrain of the day: 'What? That's meant to be painting?' only to oscillate wildly between the adjectives 'demoniac' and 'fumist'—was able, in accordance with the reduction of sensation to 'a system of molecular displacements',[156] to elect the *molecular* as the ultimate domain of the pictorial, and to deliver an *animism of pictorial matter* as the excitation and production of the cerebralised eye. Conveyed by a landscape of rays, of corpuscular vibrations into which the hand might plunge, the canvas offers only a surface resistance to the inspection of the spectator who, insensibly, takes up on his own account the distance at which Seurat stood in order to paint, once he perceives that he is already in the process of traversing, of penetrating the plane through and through. Now, this suppression of the 'distance' of the gaze characteristic of self-hypnosis, this process comparable to the visions of hysterics whose hallucination, under normal conditions of perception, gravitates around these invisible 'highlights'; this facture implying the embrace of a light filtered by a coloured screen mutating into a retina, tends *really* to 'provoke in us a living contemplation'—the objective Helmholtz sets out for the painter[157]—by transfiguring the dot (which Signac calls 'uniform, dead "matter"'), by modulating it according to 'the *divided touch*, that changing, living "light"'.[158]

(Something that Signac, suspicious of 'odious photographic manoeuvres',[159] blinded by his own strategy of affirmation, did not want to see: as with photography and its requirement for the molecular presence of metallic particles, the painter needs the 'grey' point in order to fix, in the infinitely concise eternity of its exposure time [*temps de pose*], in the 'purity' of its element which exceeds natural perception, the divisions of light.)[160]

Robert L. Herbert has described the phenomenon as follows:

> When the viewer gets as close to *La Grande Jatte* as Seurat was when he painted it, the color and brushwork appear quite varied and animated. Although

> it is so often stated that the surface is a screen of uniform dots, the strokes in fact vary from small dots (mostly added in the repainting of 1885–86) to long streaks. For tree trunks, the elongated dabs flow along the axis of the trunk and then change direction to move outward on the branches, as though they were the vital carriers of sap. The strokes similarly follow the imagined reality of the figures and their costumes, flowing in outward curves for bust and hips, vertically for upright torsos, and along the axes of each portion of an arm or leg as it changes direction.

But only to add straight away to this description, which might evoke both the cause and the effect of the sensation of photographic 'motion blur' that we feel when looking at the painting: 'Despite this actual variety of touch, from normal viewing distance the brushwork seems nearly uniform'.[161]

For what holds the 'large painting' back from ceding to the Impressionist frenzy of *plein air* is a rarefied atmosphere that imposes a lack, an *airless void* that is characteristic of 'pointillism'. The air is emptied of its viscous charge, its opalescent thickness in the space of light that is the world, instead establishing a surface very different from anything that could be qualified, following Rilke, in terms of the dimension of the Open. If the Open is the opening of the horizon of the visible into an ecstatic explosion that is the appearance of the World for a living *hyper-impressionable* subject, Seurat instead adopts an *empty air*, detached from any plenitude of being, outrageously diaphanous, the pure light of a matter that is no longer anything more than a gaseous energy imprisoning characters in suspension in a great reservoir of which they are only a local condensation. ('Gas has replaced the sun', as journalist Jules Janin had foreseen in his article in favour of the daguerreotype.)[162] In which respect, the modern age is far closer to the Outside than to the Open: it is an affair of the Outside, with a declination into the *presence of the absent* and the *absence of presence*. For this Outside is 'phenomenologically' indissociable from the way in which, in its vertiginous vacuity, it excludes all communication between the different figures implicated in it. One can explore the Open, but one will not thereby free oneself of the vertigo of the Outside; a vertigo that absorbs every character in an isolation with which Manet was the first to experiment, by mixing the autonomy of its perception with the vacuity of the painting. In Seurat, the multiplication of absent figurines again only emphasises the distance that holds them apart, hollowing out a space that only light can irradiate, saturate with its molecularised matter. . . . (For it goes without saying that the isolation with which Manet experiments is not the same as Seurat's, since in the latter the vacuity is all the stronger for its being linked to an immersion of all the figures within the same anonymous molecular fabric of which they are, anyway, nothing more than variations. In Manet, isolation concerned above all the dislocation of representation and as a consequence,

less directly, the modality of the pictorial.) We are thus confronted with a kind of monadological theatre wherein *relations are external both to their terms and to themselves*. In this 'Egyptian fantasy', the closed stylisation of signs-forms is thwarted only—and *from very close*—by the variations of multicoloured touches that establish the immanence of a mixture that is more haptic than optical—the promise of a new, final *Song of the Earth* for the eye in perdition.

(If it were necessary to specify this field further, we would be tempted to go back to the culmination of Herbert's descriptive analysis, where he writes: 'For tree trunks, the elongated dabs flow along the axis of the trunk and then change direction to move outward on the branches, as though they were the vital carriers of sap'. For we might note in Seurat a permanent tension between a static yet vibratory punctuality, and a dynamic fluency in which what counts are not 'organic' individualised forms but varied circulations, mobilised in particular by those 'long streaks' that do not describe Impressionist sensations—impressions—but instead innervate the figures; and not so much like a 'sap'—a continuous flux—as like the summation of a perpetually renewed influx; in short, a pulsionality and not just a punctuarity: to impel the point.)

For now, between the landscape and the characters embedded in it like blades, the Outside seizes hold of each of the figures in which the all of colour is sought and lost, the harmony of the chromatic circle having been disseminated in a void whose cutting out, whose dislocated cartography, whose *disincarnation* is interiorised by light alone. As absent from the Open as from the plenitude of the Flesh and its distant carnations (the absent that approaches, the distending of space that opens to our presence-to-the-world, etc.), Seurat's art attests to the disincarnation of the world and to the spectral condition of the figures that haunt its theatre, suspended in the void. This is particularly true of the preparatory drawing for *Child in White* (1884), drawn in Conté crayon in anticipation of a colourised integration that would never in fact take place—as if lost in the roseate whiteness of an absent visage. Soon to be placed at the centre of the final composition, the little girl in white is but a phantom borne by the distance of a pure surface, opaque and transparent at once, as might be the paper of a photographic negative—whence this floating feeling which gives us to see the figure crossing the plane without resistance, taken, along with us, by the void of a mental chamber whose revelation still awaits the coloured circle that will develop it. In the same way, all of the crayon studies for *La Grande Jatte* seem to have come out of a sort of photographic bath into which the characters melt like spectres, barely revealed indexical traces (like the almost invisible little girl and carriage to the side of *Three Young Women* [1884]) upon which colour will confer a rhythm at once 'material' and 'cerebral'. ('Without the aid of the painting we might not have

deduced that these shadowy forms represent a small child [. . .] and a baby carriage', writes Herbert.)[163]

Approaching *La Grande Jatte* to pierce the strange film, the eye of the spectator is progressively displaced, from the foreground where it is situated in a screen of thick shadow to the right of the guardian statues formed by the scandalous couple with the monkey, a symbol of lust,[164] to the luminous ground centred on the little girl dressed in an almost pure white.[165] Conserving the spectral element of the preparatory drawing,[166] on the vertical axis formed by the mother, the striking white of the child accentuates the rose-cream colouration of her skirt heightened by cyan stripes, from which spring the red/orange divided touches of the corsage with bluish shadows, and the various umbrellas in half-moon shapes among the foliage—foliage where the eye now perceives 'a swirling throng of tiny smudges, all the constitutive elements of tone' charged by the contrast between green and red-orange. The effect of equilibrium between the higher and lower horizontal planes thus refers the hyperaesthiate viewer to the grassy area beneath the umbrella that he will grasp, despite the alteration of pigments promptly deplored by Seurat's friends (the oranges had turned brown, viridians olive), in a fashion that is, all in all, rather close to Fénéon's description: 'The touches chiefly give the local tone value of the plant: other oranges, sparsely spread out, express the barely perceptible sunlight; other purple touches bring in a complementary green; a stippling of cyan blue, provoked by the proximity of a grassy bank in the sun, accumulates toward the line of demarcation and is progressively rarefied beyond it'.[167]

If it is ascertained that we find the first systematic attempts at *pointillage* in certain of the seascapes painted by Grandcamp in 1885 (above all in *Le Bec du Hoc*, with its exceptional molecular density),[168] have we, for all that, attained the ultimate 'truth' of the painting with this molecular landscapism from which the entire universe is born as a retinoid impressionable at every point by a painter-brain?[169] Won't Seurat's enterprise *all the same* be able to inscribe itself in a 'post-impressionism' that is more than merely chronological (Fénéon's whole 'description' tends towards this conclusion): with the seascapes, qua 'scientifically' rendered 'impressionist' landscapes (which does not preclude 'a very personal and very just grasp of nature'—Huysmans), and with *La Grande Jatte*, which owes its 'pictorial' character solely to the employment of a mixed technique that *in fact* alternates between pointillism and purely Impressionist touches (as in 1885's *Race at Grandcamp*)? A resolutely negative response is suggested to us as much by Seurat himself when he declares to Maurice Beaubourg that he *prefers* his 'large paintings of struggle' to all of his 'landscape studies',[170] as by his critics, who dreamt aloud of scrubbing the *Grande Jatte* of all of its impossible figures so as to feel more at ease in praising the landscapist. An extract from the *Journal des Artistes*:

> Here we see a band of petrified, immobile beings, mannequins whose failing is that they fix the public's attention and make them laugh. Take them away, and what remains is landscape pure and simple—and you are then in the presence of a serious, powerful, and moving work.

We find the same idea, but inverted, in Huysmans, following his evocation of the 'truly beautiful seascapes':

> A strange thing! This landscapist, whose seascapes might induce monotonous dreams, becomes all façade, and remains unsuggestive when he places on the scene painted persons. [. . .] Peel off these persons the shards of colour with which they are coated, and underneath there is nothing; no soul, no thought, nothing. A nothingness in a body only the contours of which exist. [. . .] I was decidedly afraid that he had too many procedures, too many systems, and not enough flame crackling inside, not enough life![171]

Something that our eye, too readily abandoned to the 'vertical swirling' of ten square centimetres of grass, confirms, in the absolute effect of contrast in which it finds itself gripped [*pris*], *over-taken* and *sur-prised* [*sur-pris*] between molecular differentiation, the luminous animation of that which is given as dead (the dot), and the remotest possible schematisation of that which is taken to be living (the flesh) on a production line of 'these profiles that one might call factory-made'—according to a process of double reduction, geometrical and photographic, which leaves subsistent only the pictorial life of 'the shards of colour with which they are coated'. To the exclusion of any other subject, what is affirmed here is an impersonal, disquieting 'microbiology of painting' (the expression is Apollinaire's) to which the word 'serenity', used and abused by critics when speaking of the seascapes, is quite ill-suited.

That we are dealing here with the essence of the Seurat-System is confirmed by the fact that the manifesto-painting, in its rightmost part—the most scandalous part containing the monkey on a leash—when placed in 'the grey perspective of the studio' (Adam) in the background of *Poseuses* (1887–1888), will decidedly steal the scene from the *Three Graces* revisited in the large painting (200 × 250 cm) in a modernised version of the 'grand style'. And we cannot rule out that the three nudes might also figure in a far more contradictory situation in which the reprise of the antique 'pose' in modern painting does not take place without this very real 'manipulation' of the classical tradition passing by way of the assimilation of Ingres into the Academy.[172] With *The Valpinçon Bather* (1808)—'this touchstone of nineteenth-century classicism' (Thomson)—whose *pose* is *détourned* and 'recycled', in a procedure typical of Manet, by the *Poseuse* on the left, it is in fact Ingres who finds himself dragged into the post-*Déjeuner sur l'herbe* world: the depthless

world of the deconstruction of the female nude through the exposure of painting to photographic decoding (no longer excluding colour, even if it has not yet been fixed satisfactorily). To the master of the *neo-Greek* who was also, in 1841, one of the first painters to make use of daguerrotypes for his commissioned portraits,[173] Seurat adds, with his two other nudes, the poses of antique sculpture: the central figure, facing us, who has also been compared (by Jules Christophe) to Ingres's *The Source*,[174] obeys the type of the *chaste Venus*; and that on the right, in profile, the *Boy with Thorn*. These are some of the most common 'quotations [that] were common in the persistent classical canon of much nineteenth-century French painting',[175] and which Impressionism, via Renoir and his *Bathers*, assimilated in singular fashion. . . . But imposed upon this tradition is a rude modernity of an entirely other *type* to that of 'beings in the simplicity of nature' (Adam again),[176] a devilish proletarian type: that of 'thin girls grown up too quickly' (Geffroy) whose 'amorous' connotation is underlined by the title *Poseuses*.[177] To the extent that we could be dealing here with one and the same model, from behind, facing us, and in profile, integrated into a pyramidal construction that isolates the three nudes—as the famous Hellenistic marble would *naturally* associate the *Three Graces*—in the manner of a photographic montage collapsing 'the truth of cities'[178] onto the neoclassical dispositif of Puvis de Chavannes[179] and the neobaroque emphasis of Renoir,[180] which are thus made to serve as a cliché of 'genre painting at the official Salon'. Now, if this cliché-effect is reinforced by the neologism that serves as the title of the painting and by the situation of posing, which is no longer dissimulated, the photographic effect is maintained by way of the 'mechanical' facture and the 'grey' tonality (accentuated by the artificial darkening of the wall behind the model in profile, and the arrangement of the surface into flat zones), bathing these spectral nudities *executed* in a tight grain of fine dots, used here for the first time in such systematic fashion and on such a large scale (provoking, as we know, the commentary of Pissarro and Signac). Thus a particularly *charged* contrast is set up with the 'still life' in the foreground composed of a red umbrella (irresistibly evoking the contrasting vector of the umbrella of the same colour in *La Grande Jatte*), a hat from which a white arabesque unfurls,[181] and a blue dress with large red dots whose pictorial texture offers an almost caricatural demonstration of the contrast of complementary colours by taking up those, in double dots, of *La Grande Jatte*'s female walker. So that 'every one of the accoutrements in the studio finds an echo in those of the painting, as if to give the impression that it is a matter of the same girls, come down from the canvas and undressed'.[182]

Under a generically plural title, *Poseuses* (with no article), Seurat thus puts his signature to a work that is absolutely alien in terms of the placing-into-tension of the pictorial and the photographic that he operates within it; with certain repercussions in regard to the question of the status of the 'painting

within the painting' deployed in the background. Already complicated by its association with popular imagery, here the motif of *La Grande Jatte* loses what remains of its *aura* (understanding, with Benjamin, 'the here and now of the work of art, *the unicity of its presence in the site where it is found*'), entering into the cycle of the reproduction of the 'subject' and of the multiplication of those 'objects' characteristic of the age of their spectacular 'technical' manipulation (the age of department stores).[183] Such as the two pairs of shoes, three umbrellas, three hats, and other trinkets, fashionable articles if ever there were, and which have no value other than that of their exposure as *artifices of art*—now overdetermined by Charles Henry's psychomathematical aesthetic[184]—in a universe where 'the provocation of objects has replaced the proposition of things'.[185] For, it is indeed the 'poseuse' dressed *in the artistic fashion* of La Grande Jatte, 'as potent as [. . .] any advertising logo'[186] whom I see undress herself, in three stages, in *Poseuses*. *Poseuses* in staged moments on the canvas, like the successive Polaroid images of a modern stripping-bare. Time is no longer the *place* of 'the unique appearance or semblance of distance, no matter how close it may be' (Benjamin again); *it makes space bifurcate* according to four virtual figures distributed *between* the space represented at the base of the painting and the supposedly real space of the studio, which itself is ordered by a 'chronophotographic' montage that confers upon the site a character yet more problematic than the re-presentation, unified in time (and thus 'more "contemporary", more socially circumstantial')[187] of *La Grande Jatte*. For in the triangulation of figures, which starts from the *poseuse* in *La Grande Jatte*, referring her back to the seated one shown from behind coming, from outside, to *superpose* her plane on the multiple staggered planes of the 'painting', the central *poseuse*, strategically placed at the angle formed by the wall of the studio and the painting (of) *La Grande Jatte* whose white frame is *identified* with a wall of the room, figures as an agent of bifurcation as well as of the osmosis of one space into the other. In this complex play of a surface-to-surface, superposing the temporal sheaves through a device by which the same model seen in bifurcating universes is stellated across space, undoing, inverting the convention proper to the 'depth' of the painting, to that 'window' which here gives onto a *wall* where the relation of presence to its representation is no longer what we thought it was (and no longer has anything to do with the painting in the painting, nor with the mirror-play that multiplies or breaks up the space of classical representation). The outside is no longer situated on the side of the viewer facing the work, nor in the painter's studio situated on the canvas ('a cliché in the 1880s', as Thomson recalls), but in the vaporous garden of *La Grande Jatte* itself, which crosses over its white frame to impose its tight grain of fine points upon the whole composition. The spectres of *La Grande Jatte* thus come to traverse the walls of the studio by *exposing* the porosity of the surfaces that seem to

support the canvas. An abyssal surface, abyssally falling towards an outside that is more distant than any exterior because it seems no longer to adhere to any support, save for a powder of light in the 'grey perspective of the studio': a pellicular image of a cerebral, atomic, microbiological, and molecular outside, referring every work to something essentially floating, in the same sense in which photography detaches the image from its referent by submitting it to the regime of its reproducibility. Not without producing here this *deposit* of a new genre, doubling the atomic plane of *Poseuses* with an underbrush in the form of a 'false window and a true large mirror in which the real is lost', and in which we can no longer distinguish 'either the true actress of its image and its doubles, nor the true *subject* of the painting'.[188] But the expansiveness of the molecular dispositif that assures the porosity between inside and outside does not stop at the interior of the painting; it extends to the border—a border that, in *Poseuses*, is itself for the first time painted in pointillist fashion. This is an invention whose fundamental interest Seurat quickly recognised, since he added similar borders and/or frames to earlier paintings, and extended this practice, in various ways, to his later and most accomplished works. Without limiting ourselves to the case of *Poseuses*, which is difficult to judge (since the border is no longer original—which is why, one would like to think, it hardly ever appears in reproductions),[189] we ought to understand what is principally at stake in this dispositif. The extension of the chromoluminarist pointillism of the surface of the painting to its frame plays on a double contrast: the contrast between the complementary tints of neighbouring colours from one support to the other, and the often very strong contrast between light and darkness (the frame being of a far darker tone). To this we can add the no less strong contrast in what is seen, given that the modulations of the frame, whose touches are larger and thus more active, are totally abstracted. These surfaces are not just an extension of the molecularity of the painting—they are an *expansion* of it. For what results from the combined play of all of these contrasts, especially when the frames are of a certain size, is a couplet of compression-expansion that produces an abrupt dilation of the space of the painting, of *all* of the painting—here the contrasting play of complementaries is decisive in ensuring the articulation and concatenation of the painted surfaces of the two supports. It is as if the internal modulation is captured, smoothed out, reenergised by the attraction and acceleration of the frame. This zone of transition with and across the environing milieu functions according to a properly decorative regime in so far as it no longer fixes the eye on any form whatsoever; a fact that tends to bring the painting out of itself. Both the way in which, as we have seen, the departitioning [*décloisonnement*] of painting plays out in the interior of the painting *Poseuses*, and the new expansive dispositif of the frame, contain a potential whose future, in Seurat, is still entirely open—the potential to break out from the inside to

the outside of the frame-window (maintained by Impressionism: 'the classical frame of impressionism, the white frame' defended by Fénéon)[190] to the extent of threatening to explode the painting with a radical defection of any image, whether figurative or abstract.

Yet it is once again in the grey perspective of the studio that we can best perceive the loss of the subject (of the painting? Or of painting?) For, if the model at the centre is indeed *the true actress of her image* (of the same size) watching us looking at her—doubled, posing, as a true *poseuse*, the pose of art (nudity in Ingres's *Three Graces* revisited, overmodernised by Seurat in the form of a *proletarian Ingresism*), and walking, *deposed* in *La Grande Jatte*—owing to a certain *shallowness* in the treatment of the figure, the 'living' model is as if veiled or *underexposed* (an effect of the colourised grisaille) in the sifted light of the studio, as opposed to the strangely *overexposed* typological portrait of the elegant walker. Because, like the whole portion of the painting re-presented in the *Poseuses*, the dolled-up 'cocotte' is *re-* or *overpictorialised* by the material effect of her *reproduction*, which presents the aspect of a stippled surface characteristic of the new printing techniques, in particular those of chromotype (used by illustrated magazines in the 1880s).

This is a procedure whose *replica*, in the 'small version' of the *Poseuses* (39.4 × 48.7 cm) with its more iridescent coloured pastel tones, extends to the whole of the painting, in the same blow homogenising the inside (the studio) with the outside (of *La Grande Jatte*).

Circus Parade, begun during winter 1887 and developed in parallel with *Poseuses*,[191] will use this same procedure to fill out the vision of a granitic night in which a phantasmatic spectacle is projected, vaporised by the effects of the gaslights that scramble 'the colourful ground' of the podium to the point of dissimulating the fairground paintings of the Circus Corvi's big top.[192] No longer a *reproduction* of the painting within the painting as a *mise en abyme* of the canvas, here it is the matter-light of the painting 'which mounts within its own canvas another canvas that is effaced, dissolved, just like Frenhofer's 'unknown masterpiece'.[193] Dazzled by these artificial lights and their powdery colours in the penumbra of a parade 'so wilfully pallid and sad',[194] our eye is surprised to be present at a *public execution* rather than a festive spectacle: the imperious centrality of the trombone player, standing on a pedestal, could be that of a hangman; the musicians on the podium would be prisoners in the dock; and, submitted to the geometrical stylisation of the respective classes to which they belong (caps and bowler hats on the left, top hats and chapeaus on the right—this horizontal division will be projected vertically in *Circus*), the spectators are the audience of a silent scene *menaced* by an optical 'mixture' almost total in its rigorous and floating two-dimensionality; and of all this—yet more tenebrous, more ambiguous in

the 1887 crayon *Study of the Whole*—Seurat could say, like Rimbaud in his *Illuminations*: 'I alone have the key to this savage parade'.[195]

By making his pictorial signs emerge from the dazzlement of all representation, Seurat displaces the work of the painter towards an experimentation with an outside immanent to that which vision captures in the hallucinatory reception reserved by the retina for the most artificial light. As exemplar of 'the mysterious [or the most 'extra-terrestrial'][196] quality of Seurat's painting', it is probably in *Circus Parade*, that 'tenebrous masterpiece',[197] that all poses are deposed in the strangest way, carried off by an whirlwind effect that is testified to by the photographic character of the crayons that accompany this masterful work, crayons that are the most immediately close to the chiaroscuro of the drawings. Like the big top paintings of the Circus Corvi, what *Parade* seems to have abandoned is the idea of any reference to an action placed in situation. Its site is delocalised in favour of an erratic image that traverses the paper or the canvas, depositing itself there like an imprint captured by its weave: a plane peeled off any seating, any 'foundation' (beginning with the trombone player, none of the figures—literally—has any 'firm footing'), and which projects itself into the artificial flickering of the outside. Whence the feeling that everything has been deposited onto the same indifferent plane in which peeled-off images, transferred from very different universes, assembled in a *tabular* form, abut onto one another.[198] The viewer, like the curious front-row gawkers in the *shadows* from which it is projected, feels himself sucked in by this phantomatic world whose properly hallucinatory projection the canvas has fixed according to a *counter-light* [*contre-lumière*] effect that imperiously brings to the fore a surface whose density prohibits all visual penetration. He thus finds himself dissolved into its too-physical presence, as if he were affected, *extinguished*, deterritorialised in this deterritorialising plane. The painter theatrically *de*-stages the scenographic field (a theatre of shadows, a theatre of mysteries, a *silent optical theatre*).[199] Conveyed by the refusal of all aesthetic illusion and by the antiscenic character of its frontality, cancelling any effect of perspective or transparency, *Parade* reduces the public to a set of heads, a set of anonymous hats and coats in a queue ordered from left to right towards the glass box office, which, from the top of an invisible stairway, discreetly 'orders' entry to the spectacle, while in large figures on a bright ground, in strong contrast with the dark trombonist, we see posted the entry prices, of which we can perceive only two zeros, arranged vertically, inscribing symbolically on the canvas the infinite abstraction of its commercial price (admission to the interior of the circus being visually prohibited to the 'spectators' who await entry, the painting, like any 'parade', is the spectacle of a subtraction from/of the spectacle—one goes to entertainment as to war!).

In this regime of empty and floating signs (of signs = 0), there are no longer any *poseuses* to whom the transaction might give access. *Parade* designates the floating signifier of an indexical image that lives through its vacancy, through the erratic plane that nocturnally traverses the atmosphere without any longer implying any presence, like an anonymous photograph of which we know neither who we see in it nor who it is for, since it shows only the distance of an appearance with neither reality nor horizonal structure envisaging our 'presence'. Here we are placed face-to-face with the *spectacular neutralisation* of the world,[200] a world of which all that remains is the emptiest of images, fixed in the granular distantiation of a 'photographic' matter that belongs to no one and which, by this very token, will be addressed to all of the anonymous, communicating in the phantasmatic reproduction of bodies that become pure surface effects. The screen of this ideal surface that transcends interior and exterior produces a feeling of being always *on the outside*, in a characteristically airless void wherein the vestiges of bodies reverberate as in a (bad) dream, as is the case in those late crayon drawings where the gaze that we divine 'is not that of a tranquil observer [. . .] but that of a man who cannot approach and dreams of effusions from afar, [who] always feels at a distance, and to whom space, which fascinates him, itself seems as vast as it is inaccessible'.[201] A distance of time, the distance of a stopped time placed *out of reach* of the site of the nocturnal parade, manifesting the new order of a phantasmagorical light separated from the astronomical course of days, it inaugurates an unknown transfer of perception towards what Paul Virilio calls an 'anatomical distension of vision' (relating it to public artificial lighting, 'made to trick everyone's eyes', which will rapidly outstrip the accommodative range of the eye's lens).[202] Thus, this uniformised set of silhouettes, like those crammed together at the *Café-concert* (1886–1888) in a Conté sometimes heightened with chalk, gouache, or pastel (to reinforce the intensity of the gas lamps that have replaced the sun), is underpinned by a light foreign to all *perceptual faith*, the infra- and supra-natural imprint of an outside reducing the visible to the 'intangible apparition, under an irreal light, of real and close beings, but which seem to belong to another order of life'.[203]

An irreal light that belongs to a Visual for which the seascapes had in some way furnished the essential atmospheric testbed, from the *Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur, Evening* (1886) with its texture closing in on the twilight,[204] to which another order of life is added by bringing in those 'stippled' and 'stiff' entities that haunt *The Harbour and the Quays at the Port of Bessin* (1888)—not without conferring a dreary mood on this scene composed like a 'toy theatre'[205] that makes no effort to dissimulate its construction. This did not escape Fénéon, who, regretting the presence of these characters who 'lack probability', deals the following deadly blow: 'The customs officer we have known for two years now: he was the director of the *Parade* painted

by the same M. Seurat'.[206] Far from finding, 'as a compensation, an essentially naturalist vocabulary',[207] the seascapes know nothing of *the flesh of the world*; they no longer harbour anything more than the lustre of weightless silhouettes, misplaced on great empty beaches whose vacuity is suggestive of a desert. 'Persons' and space exchange their meagre luminosity by way of a strange attraction between the *disaffection of landscapes* (as far from being Romantic or Impressionist as can be)[208] and the extinction of the rumour of the time of mankind (which symbolises no geographical exile, despite certain 'Japanese' characteristics à la Hiroshige). This solitude with neither action nor passion, emerging from a 'strangely conceptual sentiment'[209] of the represented elements, seems to have developed in diverse ways, starting with *Sunday at Port-en-Bessin*, 1888 (with the 'sinuous lines' of the pennants flapping in the breeze for no one—a sinuosity characteristic of the last large paintings with figures), *Cranes at Port-en-Bessin*, 1888 (whose clouds are endowed with 'a strange and oddly threatening life-force'),[210] and the two seascapes of Crotoy (*View of Le Crotoy from Upstream*, and *View of Le Crotoy from Downstream*, 1889) duly criticised by Fénéon because of their want of 'probability';[211] up to the last, most 'abstract' works painted at Gravelines (the four paintings of summer 1890 have a darkened border painted pointillistically on the canvas). Microscopic walkers evaporate on a deserted quayside whose geometric whiteness draws our gaze to the hypnotising grains of paint/sand in the foreground (an aesthetic of dissipation—*The Channel of Gravelines, Grand Fort Philippe* [1890]). Painted, like its three microscopic occupants, in the same seeds of red, blue, lavender, yellow, and orange taken from the narrow language of the earth and from the quay in the foreground, a crepuscular pallor suspends the fishing boat below the plane of the water cut by the oblique lines of the anchors (an architecture of disappearance—*The Channel of Gravelines, Evening* [1890]). The absence presiding over these 'quintessences of landscape' allows us to touch on the inhuman law of the entire series of seascapes, in which is deployed an indifferent space submitted to an Outside so absolute that within it the line of the horizon can unfold a region of continuous intensity between the sea, the sky with its flux of 'animist' clouds, and the frames painted in 'petit-point'. Even if we grant that 'seasides, ports, quays, boats' already 'have the air of having survived a purifying cataclysm, a magical and slightly terrifying operation',[212] these empty landscapes with silent forms extract the image of a time so impersonal that nobody could endure it. With no rule except a 'rhythmic' one, their unity is that of the becalmed vacuity of a non-place that submits the motif to the photographic pulverisation of a grey of colour through which the event cannot clear a passage without the resources of an always indecisive optical mixture that is in the process of being undone. This will be the case with *Harbour in Honfleur* (1886): effaced by the mist, beneath the vertiginous diffraction

of the outside, there looms the event of a phantom vessel posed on the water, indistinguishable from its shadow, a pure cerebral imprint tracing out its dream, set in motion by an immense prow driven high into the emptiness, the thrust of its bowsprit merging with a tangle of cables, ropes, and riggings like so many lines of tracery. A solution of points, a network of minute, tight touches with which the brain holds together its images like the variants of one and the same phantasm surveying its own field. 'It is the perfect crime, the eternal truth, the royal splendor of the event', writes Deleuze of the phantasm qua pure event (in relation to the self that dissolves at the surface)—it is the *phantasm-event* or *event-phantasm*.[213] Whence the hypnagogic character of the phantom-image that haunts each of these seascapes, 'always midway between an inexistence and an insistence' (Didi-Hubermann), and which evokes that manner of 'cinematographic representation in colour' proper to the visions of half-sleep[214] slowed down[215] to the point of *stopping* (a freeze-frame) on the static plane extracted by the brain-eye from the grisaille of its light matter. One might think of the Goncourt's observation in their famous *Journal*: the 'eye was transformed into a colour photographic negative [. . .] no spectacle in this world has left in [us] such an image'.[216]

This leaves us with those spectacles, outside of the world (because they show the most contemporary underside of it), that Seurat explores in his three last 'paintings of research, and if possible, of conquest'[217] (*Circus Parade, Chahut*, and *Circus*), plunged into the darkroom of a city brilliant with gas-light, the black-blind city that exposes *the man of crowds*[218] to the hypnotic montage of attractions and to the logistics of perception of which it is both screen and vector. Now, according to one of the rare confidences of the painter, this logistics is somehow related to the 'lucky find' of the last frames where 'he would add contrasts to complementaries', a lucky find applied to many of the seascapes (beginning with *Mouth of the Seine*, *Evening, Honfleur*): for Seurat had 'considered how, at Bayreuth, the hall was darkened so as to present the lit scene as the unique centre of attention. This contrast of great brightness amidst shadow would make him adopt a dark framing while keeping them complementary, as in the past'.[219] Bringing together frontality and the 'contrast of great brightness amidst shadow' produced by veritable optical machines, the Wagnerian scenic dispositif may even have been consciously parodied and, as such, in *Parade*, represented, *deconstructed* from the point of its theatrical 'nebulosity', in an *inversion* of High and Low Art, with the central figure of the trombone player: numerous caricatures had depicted the trombone as the attribute of the 'Wagnerian', the emblem of that very French 'wagneromania' denounced by Nietzsche (this is 1888) as a *synthetic product* that is *hallucinatory from the outset*: 'The whole does not live at all any more: it is cobbled together, calculated, synthetic, an artifact. Wagner begins with a hallucination: not of tones but of gestures'—knowing

'that one can also *hypnotise* with music', and that 'the great imposture of transcendence and of the beyond' can no longer survive without the artifices of mass culture. [220] In this *mass century*, in Nietzsche's words once again, it is the underside of the scenery, of the Bayreuth-effect, that it falls to Seurat to de-pict, to de-paint [*dé-peindre*], reducing its artifices to a vision which is that of the 'engineer of human entertainment'. Seurat, whom one could hardly call a 'Wagnerian chromatist' (Jules Christophe) except in a doubly convoluted, radically indirect sense. (Wagner, 'that figure that no one is', as Mallarmé says.)

With the last two large paintings, their linear accents and mysteriously abstract movements[221] frozen by schematism, *Chahut* (1889–1890) and *Circus* (1891), it is Eadweard Muybridge's 'electrophotography', Etienne Jules-Marey's 'chronophotography' (studied at length in Charles Henry's *Chromatic Circle*) with its pointillist graphs, and the 'bands' and the *freeze-frames* practised by Émile Reynaud with his Projecting Praxinoscope, that are combined with Seurat's interest for Jules Chéret's colour posters, which he collected: are they not 'turning the boulevards into an unacknowledged art-gallery'?[222] Mechanisation of the human, synthetic vision, and decorative flatness are the wellsprings of this art of the poster, this industrial, commercial, and photogenic art developing in a 'superficial and [. . .] charming vision, adorably false [. . .] the sly, frenetic, almost icy joy of the pantomime, a joy that transcends itself by its own excess, being almost raised to the level of pain' (Huysmans on Chéret).[223] A *caricatural art*, which, it must be recognised, has 'above all an experimental interest'[224] when Seurat takes it up, using it to exhibit a 'demoniac rhythm' (Lecomte, on *Circus*) of 'contemporary ignominy' (Kahn, on *Chahut*). An experiment, in fact, in a *synthetic art* whose machinic essence reduces the visibility of the image, definitively inchoative, to its calculated projection as a function of the sole stimulus of spectacle-painting, to the detriment of all 'idealism' of reception and all 'realism' of perception (in *Chahut*, the spectator's snout, as we face the painting, right underneath the dancer, and the effect of the superposition of the tense limbs of the dancers, all feminine despite the two men who complete the quadrille; or, emerging from the inhuman deformation of the acrobat's body and the too-mechanical horseman, the 'erroneous' horse of *Circus*, galloping belly to the floor like the wooden horse of a children's carousel). An experiment, then, under the direct influence of Chéret, in a renewed approach to 'points' of colour chosen according to their expressivity, and the 'rigidly geometrical arabesques' (Geffroy) with which they are married, as the outlines become apparent: in accordance with his preoccupation with formal systematisation, which leads to an image of such steely expression, so far from being individual, so vulgarly factory-made in its expressions[225] that symbolism (apart from Gustave Kahn) would entirely 'desert' Seurat.[226] (Fénéon was the first to grasp the fact that a

symbolist Seurat was simply a misunderstanding.) Writing on *Chahut*, Jules Antoine could even compare the two artists, exclusively in favour of Chéret: 'M. Seurat has got it wrong, for Chéret's marvellous posters remain, in their colour and in their line, a thousand times more *expressive* than his oeuvre, so *grey in colour*, despite the division of tones—and so incorrect in its line, despite the protractor of forms' (Charles Henry's *aesthetic protractor*, that is, which aimed to establish the 'rhythmic' character of all forms).[227] Reviewing *Circus*, Alphonse Germain adopts a more descriptive tone, afflicted by the same malaise, faced with a 'theorem that is rigorously demonstrated—too much so, even', where 'the photogeny [is] as cold as a delicate *grey vision* like that of its author can make it'.[228] From this grey vision, so very incompatible with the inculcation sought by the 'dynamogeny' of the commercial aesthetics of the society of the spectacle, from this grey of colour where Seurat's extraterrestrial distance plays out, the all-too-knowledgeable painter accused of having dispelled the Dream will nevertheless extract an entirely startling effect of 'contrast' between the *caricatural depictorialisation* of the composition of the image (reduced to the schemas of the engineers of entertainment) and the *pictorial pulsation* of the 'mechanical' support as it invades the 'empty' spaces of the image: the 'delirious surjet of life'[229] animating the 'ground' of *Chahut*, the 'track' of *Circus* (with an effect that is emphasised by the serpentine arabesque of Monsieur Loyal's whip, which evokes a wave entering into resonance with the broken line of electric stripes zigzagging on the curtain of the ground). Zones whose animation, springing from the 'colour analyses too close to the work of laboratories' denounced by Geffroy,[230] makes the line flee, independently of any topographical role, between the dots, into the milieu of colours-dots, recreating within the most striated possible space—in *Circus*, everything is ruled with a rod of iron[231]—a nomad space of pure connections inhabited by a vital (that is, non-evaluable) machinic force that can only be called 'abstract'. Thus, through this 'type of gothic with angular forms' (Schapiro) exceeding any a priori value evaluable according to Henry's axiomatic, the eye takes on a *digital function* and 'the ground constantly changes direction, as in aerial acrobatics', as Deleuze and Guattari write.[232] *The Illumination, the fulguration of Seurat*: a bright sand colour springs forth like an electric arc streaking across the space between the soaring skirt and the legs of a disarticulated acrobat-clown somersaulting in the air. This broken, abstract, mutant streak, which supercharges the acrobats of the same colour, and whose flame seems to leap from the hand of the hallucinated clown in the foreground, takes flight freely in a last flash that cuts vividly across the ground—escaping the spectators, escaping the spectacle, through the artists' entrance whence the Extraterrestrial will abruptly depart, after a few days of delirium, at the age of thirty-one years, the Hermes Trismegistus of modern art.

The Circus—'where art has the dignity of danger'[233]—rather than the *Theatre of the World*: could Seurat express any more clearly that art would not be able to remain 'modern', nor painting 'avant-garde', without confronting—as Linda Nochlin has shown—the 'contradictions implied, in modern society, by the relation between art and life'? Which, we can agree, evokes not so much a 'Wagnerian painting' (as commended by the exceedingly symbolist Téodor de Wyzewa: 'Art [. . .] must create life' so as to 'build the holy world of a better life')[234] as *the question of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*. . . . Questions that the large *Poseuses* singularly confronts . . . a work, which, because of the restrictions imposed by the Barnes Foundation into which it has entered, will be 'reduced', by a cruel irony of fate, to poor reproductions. It is to this 'technical' question that Seurat's 'method' tries to respond, exploring from a 'monist' perspective the virtualities of the Machine-Eye, inventing the *machinic alternative* to the tropisms of Gauguin's Eye of the Earth.

NOTES

1. This was the 'proposition' of the exhibition *Signac et la libération de la couleur. De Matisse à Mondrian* [*Signac and the Liberation of Colour. From Matisse to Mondrian*], directed by Erich Franz, Musée de Grenoble (March 9, 1997—May 25, 1997). See Franz's Introduction in the catalogue published under the same title (Paris: RMN, 1997, 17).

2. Ibid., 16: 'As for these young painters, who intended to make of *pictorial means* the immediate vectors of expression, it is not Seurat, but far rather Signac and Cross, to whom they turned'.

3. E. Darragon, 'Quelle histoire pour Seurat?', May 1991. The lecture was published in *Quarante-huit/Quatorze*, no. 4 (1992), 74–81.

4. On the importance of this Benjaminian category of going 'against the grain' for a reopening of the field of art history, see G. Didi-Hubermann, *Devant le temps* (Paris: Minuit, 2000), chapter 2: 'L'image-malice. Histoire de l'art et casse-tête du temps'.

5. This situation is described perfectly by Jonathan Crary: 'There has been a tacit sense that Seurat's neoimpressionism, as technique and idea, is somehow finally not successful in itself and that part of its historical significance is its merely transitional and preparatory role in a larger flowering of *modernism from which Seurat is excluded*'. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 158–159 (emphasis added). Let us point out in passing that Greenberg cites very eulogistically, twice over, the following passage by Kenneth Clark (in *Landscape Painting*) about *La Grande Jatte*: 'Seurat has tried to create large monumental shapes in color by means of the silhouette, and this, in spite of his skill in shallow, internal modeling, produces rather the effect of pasteboard pictures in a toy theater'. Cf. C. Greenberg, 'The Seeing Eye: Review of *Landscape Painting* by Kenneth Clark and *Landscape, Portrait, Still-Life* by Max J.

Freidlander', *The Nation*, April 22, 1950, and 'Cézanne and the Unity of Modern Art', *Partisan Review*, April–May 1951 (reprinted in C. Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 3, *Affirmations and Refusals, 1950–1956* [Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993], 27, 85n). The essential phrase '*Pasteboard pictures*' provides the association between 'painting', 'photography', and 'image', and the popular imagery that Seurat collected.

6. Émile Bernard to his parents, June 3, 1886.

7. A. Gleizes, J. Metzinger, *Du «Cubisme»* (Paris: 1912; republished Sisteron: Présences, 1980), 54.

8. G.-A. Aurier, 'Les Peintres symbolistes', *Revue encyclopédique*, April 1892: republished in *Le Symbolisme en peinture*, texts collected and introduced by P.-L. Mathieu (Caen: L'Échoppe, 1991), 63.

9. Clay, *Impressionnisme*, 275.

10. P. Gauguin, Letter to his wife, March 1892; *Racontars de rapin* (1902), republished in P. Gauguin, *Oviri. Écrits d'un sauvage* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 263. The reference to colour photography is as precious as it is precise: Seurat most certainly having come across the work of Charles and Henri Cros through the intermediary of Charles Henry, author of *Introduction à une esthétique scientifique* (published by *La Revue contemporaine*, August 25, 1885), which was to make so strong an impression upon the painter. Charles Cros was the inventor of the very first procedure for 'colour photography' (in 1867).

11. Cf. N. Broude, 'New Light on Seurat's "Dot": Its Relation to Photomechanical Color Printing in France in the 1880s', *Art Bulletin*, LVI, no. 4 (1974); republished in *Seurat in Perspective* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1978), 163–175.

12. Clay, *Impressionnisme*, 275.

13. These two expressions are Françoise Cachin's, 'Seurat in France', in F. Cachin and R. L. Herbert (eds.), *Georges Seurat 1859–1891,* (New York: Abrams, 1992), catalogue of the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (September 24, 1991–January 12, 1992) and Galeries nationales du Grand Palais (April 9, 1991–August 12, 1991), 423–424: 424.

14. M. Denis, 'Préface à l'exposition Henri-Edmond Cross' (April 22, 1907–May 8, 1907), in *Théories* (Paris, 1912; reprinted in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, ed. J.-P. Bouillon [Paris: Hermann, 1993]), 125.

15. A. Ozenfant, *Mémoires 1886–1962* (Paris: Seghers, 1968), 78.

16. F. Fénéon, 'Le néo-impressionnisme', *L'Art moderne*, May 1, 1887; republished in *Au-delà de l'impressionnisme*, introduced by F. Cachin (Paris: Hermann, 1966), 93: 'Two steps back—, and all these variously coloured droplets melt into undulating luminous masses; the facture, we might say, vanishes'.

17. Paul Signac's *Journal*, December 28, 1897 (emphasis added).

18. On this point, see the exemplary article of Émile Hennequin: 'Something bizarre [. . .] the paintings of M. Seurat, like those of the artists who follow his lead in painting, lack light to the highest degree. Contrary to the theoretical arguments, M. Seurat's marine scenes excel precisely because they are grey; but as to his painting *La Grande Jatte*, which features walkers posed in half shade in full sunlight, it is difficult to imagine anything more dusty and dull'. (E. Hennequin, 'Notes d'art: exposition des artistes indépendants', *La Vie Moderne*, September 11, 1886.)

19. Soon after having visited the eighth and final Impressionist exhibition where *La Grande Jatte* was shown, van Gogh declared that he was trying 'to render *intense* colour and not a *grey* harmony'. (V. van Gogh, letter to Horace M. Livens, August/October 1886, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let569/letter.html.)

20. Letter from Pissarro to his son Lucien, September 6, 1888. The letter ends with the name of Turner, whose discovery, as we know, 'hastened the evolution of impressionism' (G. Lecomte). . . . Signac will declare in 1905 that the English artist gave him 'the finest lessons in this *freedom* toward which [he strives] with all his might' (*Mercure de France*, September 1, 1905).

21. Cf. P. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', trans. W. Silverman, in Floyd Ratliff, *Paul Signac and Color in Neo-Impressionism* (New York: Rockefeller University Press, 1992), 193–286: 266 ('Summary of the Three Contributions'). Françoise Cachin recalls in her Introduction to the French edition [*D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme*. Introduction and notes by F. Cachin (Paris: Hermann, 1978)] that Félix Fénéon had proposed to entitle Signac's book *La Couleur du néo-impressionnisme* [*Neo-Impressionist Colour*] (21).

22. Signac's *Journal* opens on June 14, 1894 with this declaration: 'It would be easy to write an article on Delacroix and the neo-impressionists. Our whole technique can be found in his Journal' (the first volume of which was published in 1893).

23. Signac, *Journal*, 207, 261, 207, 252, 257. Of Pissarro's privileging of *passages* (by means of intermediary elements between two tints) to the detriment of contrast, Signac will say, precisely: 'From *division* all he has taken is the method, the *petit point*' (251; and in a letter from Pissarro to Lucien, dated February 20, 1889, where 'the theory of "passages" appears as 'the means to replace dots', since they do 'not respond simultaneously enough to sensation'). Signac had already responded as follows to a very critical letter from Pissarro: 'But frankly, is it so bad as all that, this method? I don't mean the method of the dot. [. . .] I never used them, I never will, for this word and this thing exasperate me, but that of division, harmony and contrast' (January 25, 1894). In his *Journal*, on the same date, he wrote: 'I attach more and more importance to the purity of touch, and I try to give the latter its maximum purity and intensity: it is this love for the fine tint that makes us paint like this—not some taste for the "dot"'.

24. 'I have made four large paintings of *struggle*, if I might say so', Seurat wrote to Maurice Beaubourg in August 1890 in the shortest of four drafts of a letter that was never sent but which constitutes his 'theoretical' testament. (In it he reprises the 'aesthetic and technical note' written for J. Christophe for his presentation in *Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui*.) But he names only two, by their initials B[athers] and D[imanche à la Grande Jatte]. The cited passage appears in the catalogue *Seurat*, 381 (Appendix E).

25. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to the Neo-Impressionists', 264 (the title of the chapter is 'The Divided Touch'). In the long argument dedicated to Delacroix, Signac cites the *Journal des artistes et des amateurs*, 1829, on *Sardanapalus*: 'At a distance the effect is that of decoration. Close up, a shapeless daub' (222). Recall that the chapter ends with the decorative effect of neo-impressionist compositions.

26. P. Adam, 'Peintres impressionnistes', *La Revue indépendant*, April 1886; J. Vidal, 'Les impressionnistes', *Lutèce*, May 29, 1886; F. Fénéon, 'Les impressionists. VIIIe exposition impressionniste', *La Vogue*, June 13–20, 1886. It is within this

'colourist' context that we should inscribe the phrase of Seurat's with which this chapter opens: 'While you enjoy the colours of Andelys, etc.', Fénéon will write of the Andelys landscapes shown at the second Salon of the Society of Independent Artists: 'In them, colours bring about passionate chromatic ascents, exultant, clamouring. And the Seine flows on and within its waters flow skies and riparian greenery' (F. Fénéon, 'L'Impressionnisme aux Tuileries', *L'Art moderne*, September 19, 1886).

27. J. K. Huysmans, 'Chronique d'art', *La Revue indépendante*, April 1887. [*Emmarseillait*, from 'Marseille'—meaning that Signac injected the landscapes of the outskirts of Paris with the light and vibrancy of the south.—Translator's note]

28. Unlike the theory developed by Fénéon in his 1890 text dedicated to Signac, where 'optical mixture was still composed of each local colour, to which are added different influences of light', it is now local colour that is formed in the optical mixture on the basis of its 'prismatic components—or rather, as Erich Franz argues, it is local colour that will be "purified" by way of prismatic tints' (cf. E. Franz, 'Paul Signac et la liberation de la couleur de Matisse à Mondrian', in *Signac et la libération de la couleur*, 36).

29. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 207, 154, 205, 254 (emphasis added).

30. On the subject of Delacroix, sticking to his rigorous teleology, Signac had written: 'All that he needed to serve his ideal better was a more perfect instrument. To create such an instrument, he would merely have had to exclude from his palette the earthy colors that cluttered it to no purpose. He did them violence in order to extract some brilliance from them, but it did not occur to him to paint only with the pure and potent colors of the prism' (236 [II, 15]). As for Seurat, he had written in a notebook, on November 11, 1881, this commentary on *An Oriental* [unidentified]: 'It's the strictest application of scientific princ. seen through a personality' (cited in the catalogue *Seurat*, 396 [Appendix N]). Here, we can gauge, from the outset, his distance from the temperamental naturalism of Zola (with its celebrated definition of 'a piece of creation seen through a temperament').

31. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 249, 243.

32. In his *Journal*, dated August 23, 1894, Signac noted:

> For some years, I have tried thus to prove to others, through scientific experiments, that these blues, these yellows, these greens, are found in nature. Now I content myself with saying: I paint like this because it is the technique that seems to me most effective in giving the most harmonious, the most luminous, the most coloured, result. (Cited by Cachin in her Introduction to *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme*, 19–20)

From 1892 onward, Signac renounces *plein air* painting and his 'natural forms' are drawn from his watercolours. 'The works of Turner', writes Signac in 1898, 'prove to me that we must be free from all idea of imitation and copying, and that one must create tints. The strongest colourist will be he who will create the most' (*Journal*, April 1898).

33. In one of the versions of his 1890 letter to Félix Fénéon, to which we will return at length, 'version B', Seurat follows his discovery of Rood's chromatics, in 1881, with the following phrase: 'I abandoned the *earth-colours* in 1882 to 1884'—without any influence whatsoever, then, from Signac. Michael Zimmermann has observed that 'already Rood recommended avoiding the earth colours, and in

numerous early sketches we find no trace of ochre or burnt earth colours. That light ochre and burnt sienna are used in *Une Baignade* with ten other colours is of minor significance for the effect of the picture', cf. Michael Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1991), 458 n.80.

34. F. Cachin, *Seurat. Le rêve de l'art-science* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 65.

35. According to the notion used by Signac as the title of the chapter in his 1935 text, 'The Subject in Painting'. In a note in the *Journal* dated July 22, 1897, we read: 'We must make nature bend to our technique, and not decompose our technique to imitate nature'.

36. In the letter to Lucien of January 10, 1887, which develops this opposition between scientific and romantic Impressionism, Pissarro criticises the 'disorder' of Monet's touch as no longer being 'suitable for our times'.

37. According to the expression of Julius Meier-Graefe, see reference below.

38. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 249.

39. Emile Verhaeren, speaking of the painting *Saint-Tropez. La bouée rouge* shown by Signac: 'The latter is the clearest and most marvelous marine scene in the Salon. The touch is larger, the spontaneity breaks with strict formulae, the brilliance and the gaiety and the almost animated colours impress on us the illusion of a clear and precise reality from which the painter has managed to extract the vibrant song of light and the softness of life in the midday sun' (E. Verhaeren, 'Le Salon de la Libre Ésthétique [second article]', *L'Art moderne*, March 8, 1896). Need we emphasise that every one of the terms used here indicates Signac's distance from Seurat? We might, on the other hand, recall the quite significant typographical error thanks to which we read, in his review of the Exhibition of Les XX in Brussels in 1892: 'Seurat is the authentic and decisive *imitator* [instead of *initiator*!] of the neo-impressionist movement' (E. Verhaeren, 'Exposition des XX', *Art et critique* 4 [February 13, 1892]).

40. He concludes: 'As for Signac, he is a natural modern' who 'is placed more closely [than Seurat] in the continuation of the French tradition'. Cf. J. Meier-Graefe, *Der modern Impressionismus* (Berlin, 1903); cited by E. Franz, 'Paul Signac et la libération de la couleur de Matisse à Mondrian', in *Signac et la libération de la couleur*, 37. Signac himself had cited an extract from Ogden Rood's *Modern Chromatics* (translated into French in 1881) where we read: 'If the stippling is formal and quite evident, it is apt to give a mechanical look to drawing, which is not particularly pleasant'. The conclusion of this passage in Signac's manifesto-book in fact opposes this procedure —'the use of touches of pure elements'—that part of the technique of the neo-impressionists 'which is most attacked today' (275 [VII, 4]).

41. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 253–254.

42. 'Reticent and distrustful': these are the first words of the chapter entitled 'Artist's Quarrels' in John Rewald's monograph (where he acknowledges 'the friendly collaboration of Félix Fénéon'), cf. J. Rewald, *Seurat* (New York: Abrams, 1998), 13.

43. In 1899, the participation of the neo-impressionist group in the exhibition of young painters at the Durand-Ruel Gallery seems above all to be a consecration of Signac, who is represented by eleven paintings—and his portrait by Theo Van Rysselberghe, where he is portrayed *At the Helm of Olympia*. . . . Remember that, as late as

1894, in a letter to Lucien (January 27), Pissarro had described Signac as 'a debutant [. . .] and none too modest a one, considering the poor results of his works'.

44. A. Alexandre, 'Le movement artistique', *Paris*, August 13, 1888.

45. Signac had received this note from Fénéon: 'Your exhibition of the Independents is superb [. . .]. You are obviously the victor of this Salon. The views of those whose opinion may interest you—Adam, [Vièle-] Griffin, Retté, Ajalbert, de Régnier, etc.—were absolutely unanimous on the day of the opening, and have been ever since' (cited by H. Perruchot, *La vie de Seurat* [Paris: Hachette, 1966], 154). Not a word from Fénéon, on the other hand, on Seurat's *Chahut*, also exhibited at the Salon.

46. F. Fénéon, 'La peinture optique: Paul Signac', *Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui*, 373 (May 1890); republished in Fénéon, *Au-delà de l'impressionnisme*, 114–120.

47. According to the observation of M. Ferretti-Bocquillon in the catalogue of the exhibition *Signac*, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais (February 27, 2001–May 28, 2001), Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (June 15, 2001–September 9, 2001), and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (October 9, 2001–December 30, 2001) (New York: Abrams, 2001), 162.

48. In Fénéon's booklet, which stood as the first manifesto of neo-impressionist theory, *Les Impressionnistes en 1886*, *La Vogue,* December 1886, a compilation of articles published in June and September, we read: 'M. Georges Seurat, the first to have presented a complete and systematic paradigm of this new painting' (republished in Fénéon, *Au-delà de l'impressionnisme*, 166).

49. C. Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin. Architecture, Sculpture, Peinture* (Paris, 1867) (the third edition had been published in 1876); republished, Paris: Ensba, 2000, 536–538 (with the pointillist schemas). The cover of the republished edition makes use of a reproduction of *Une Baignade à Asnières* (detail).

50. A familiarity that in fact comes later, since Renoir is absent from the Impressionist exhibitions of 1879, 1880, and 1881.

51. Although he had visited the fourth Impressionist exhibition in 1879 (with Ernest Laurent and Aman-Jean), Seurat will adopt the luminous Impressionist manner for a short while only, after having seen the sixth and seventh Impressionist exhibitions in 1881 and 1882. One might again point out that what Seurat admired at the outset in Pissarro, as expressed in certain landscapes of 1881–1882, is precisely the Impressionism that remained the closest to the school of Barbizon (whose palette was not to the taste of Signac, being to his eyes too 'soft')—Pissarro becoming upon his death, in a letter to Angrand of November 17, 1903, 'the true type of the old painter, such as we imagine in the figure of '*père* Corot''. On the other hand, it was the paintings of Monet shown in 1880 at the offices of *La Vie Moderne* that would make Signac decide to embrace painting: 'For two years, I have done painting, never having had as models anything but your works and following the great path that you opened up for us', he wrote in 1883 to the Impressionist painter, in a request for an interview with him.

52. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of His Time*, 103.

53. Letter from Seurat to Fénéon, June 20, 1890; cited in Appendix F of the catalogue *Seurat* (383). In quoting 'version C' above, we have corrected 1886 to 188[5] following the suggestion of Robert L. Herbert, who justifies this rectification

in reference to 'version A': '1884, Ascension Day: Grand Jatte, the studies and the *painting*. This canvas was ready to be shown in March 1885 at the *aborted* Independents, reprised and finished after a trip to Grandcamp (1885) and shown on May 15 1885'. Fénéon will take up Seurat's 'references' almost to the letter in his article 'Au Pavillon de la ville de Paris', *Le Chat noir*, April 2, 1892. The original title of Signac's painting is *Apprêteuse et garnisseuse (Modes), rue du Caire*.

54. In his 1924 book on Seurat, the critic Gustave Coquiot reports this remark made by Signac in the previous year: 'He cared nothing for the Impressionists of whom everyone was talking'. As exaggerated as it may be, the assertion has at least the merit of indicating the way in which Seurat distanced himself from the movement.

55. Thomas Couture, *Conversations on Art Methods*, trans. S. E. Steuart (New York Putnam's, 1879), 154sq.

56. Blanc, *Grammar*, 144. On Couture and Seurat, cf. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 48–51; and Annex O of the catalogue *Seurat* (447). In the 1890 letter to Fénéon, the concatenation Corot–Couture (brought together in the same paragraph) is now clear enough, since Seurat refers to a letter from Corot which reads: 'I always begin with shadows, and this is logical: for, as they are what strike us the most, they are also what we should render first of all'; 'What is to be seen in painting, or rather what I seek, is form, wholeness, tonal value [. . .]. For me, colour comes afterward' (these passages will be dictated by Seurat to Fénéon). For Couture (as for Blanc), chiaroscuro precedes colour.

57. For in his response to Signac, who had complained bitterly at the 'jealous pettiness of our excellent comrade' on the subject of the Alexander affair, Pissarro wrote, 'For the future of our 'impressionist' art it is essential that we keep aloof from the School of Seurat. You indeed have foreseen it. *Seurat is of the École des Beaux-Arts*, he is impregnated with it [. . .]. Let us be careful then, for there is the danger. This is not a question of technique or science, it is a question of our tradition. We must safeguard it' (cited by Rewald, *Seurat*, 157). Pissarro's letter closes with 'a word to the wise' signifying to Signac his decision to abandon the 'neo'. Recall that Charles Blanc, inscribed by Seurat in the very foreground of his *cursus*, was twice director of the École des Beaux-Arts.

58. A. Chastel, 'Le "système" de Seurat', *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Seurat* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973; republished in *Fables, forms, figures* [Paris: Flammarion, 1978], vol. 2, 407). For Seurat it was a question 'of dominating, of absorbing, of conquering and of ultimately reducing the contribution [of Impressionism] with the help of principles that these masters were unable to formulate'. See also P. Smith, *Seurat and the Avant-garde* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 23–27, on Fénéon's dependence on Pissarro in relation to the identification of Seurat's neo-impressionism with a 'scientific impressionism' (a scientific reform of Impressionism). Certain remarks along these lines can also be found in G. Roque's *Art et science de la couleur*, 318–319.

59. In his book on *L'impressionnisme moderne*, following a passage cited above, Meier-Graefe eulogises Signac's 'paintings of atmospheres'.

60. J. Christophe, 'Georges Seurat', *Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui*, 368 (April 1890). The article is valuable as a clarification of the situation, in so far as the journal directed by Fénéon had published a biography of Pissarro with no mention of Seurat's

role in the elaboration of the neo-impressionist 'system'. It will of course have been noted that Signac, in his manifesto, returned a posteriori to an 'evolutionist' point of view that could hardly by regarded as 'communard'. In Christophe's text, the references to the revolutionary calendar and to the Commune leave no doubt as to Seurat's political sensibilities.

61. The cover of *Hommes d'Aujourd'hui* features a photomechanical reproduction of a drawing by Maximilien Luce representing Seurat at work. As Ségolène Le Men remarks, this black-and-white page is 'an anomaly in this series of illustrated biographies of contemporaries'. In it neither 'the theorist of colour nor the partisan of the divided touch prevails'. Cf. S. Le Men, *Seurat & Chéret. Le peintre, le cirque et l'affiche* (Paris: CNRS, 1994), 12. Let us further note that Luce's 'anarchism', self-declared and well enough known for Signac to have placed *Luce Reading 'La Révolte'* on the cover of the *Hommes d'Aujourd'hui* dedicated to him (376, July 1890), had not at all worried Seurat, who, in all evidence, throughout his oeuvre, intended to bear 'witness to the great social process underway between the workers and Capital' (in Signac's words, in an article signed 'An impressionist comrade' and entitled 'Impressionists and Revolutionaries', *La Révolte*, June 13–19, 1891, wherein Seurat's oeuvre is associated with 'the synthetic representation of the pleasures of decadence'). See here the Editorial of the *Revue indépendante* published in 1885, which serves as an epigraph to this chapter: in it we recognise Fénéon's style and many of Seurat's favoured themes.

62. 'First and foremost, Signac was a colorist', Susan Alyson Stein summarises, 'whose view of art was shaped by a painterly tradition of color and light. As a neo-impressionist, he saw himself as heir to the glorious contributions of Delacroix, Turner, and Monet' (S. A. Stein, 'An Artist Among Artists: Signac Beyond the Neo-impressionist Circle', catalogue *Signac*, 68).

63. P. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 285 [translation modified]. Signac is thus the first to conceive of neo-impressionism as a *moment*, one that is essentially 'preparatory' to modernism conceived as the libation of 'pure colour'. Note that the expression 'messiah of a new art' that we use above appeared in 1886 to qualify none other than Seurat (Anonymous, 'Les Vingtistes parisiens', *L'Art moderne*, June 27, 1886). Signac's conclusion blends themes inherited from Wagner (one can only prepare for the advent of 'the true work of art') with a colourist motif explored by van Gogh on the basis of these two 'references' over the course of the year 1888.

64. In a letter to Signac, August 26, 1888.

65. On all of this, see Philippe Dagen's indispensable Preface to *Pour ou contre le fauvism*, ed. P. Dagen (Paris: Éditions d'art Somogy, 1994); 17–19 for the citations of Morice given here and Dagen's commentary on them. Charles Morice's 'Enquiry' was published by Dagen (Paris: Lettres modernes, 1986).

66. H. Matisse, 'Statement to Tériade: On Fauvism and Color', trans. J. Flam, in *Matisse on Art*, 83–86: 84. We know that Divisionism is Signac's *trademark*, according to the principle that 'the neo-impressionist painter *divides* rather than *using points*'.

67. 'Fauvism overthrew the tyranny of Divisionism. One can't live in a household that is too well kept, a house kept by country aunts. One has to go off into the jungle to find simpler ways which won't stifle the spirit' (Ibid).

68. As E. Franz believed was the case with Matisse and the fauves (Franz, 'Paul Signac et la liberation de la couleur', 38)—which would lend support to an 'evolutionist' hypothesis on the passage from the second neo-impressionism to fauvism.

69. See E. Alliez, J.-C. Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse*, 75–84 ('L'ordonnance quantitative sévère des couleurs du fauvisme'; trans. R. Mackay as 'Matisse-Thought and the Strict Quantitative Ordering of Fauvism', in *Collapse*, vol. 3 [Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2007], 207–229).

70. O. N. Rood, *Modern Chromatics: A Student's Text Book of Color* [1878] (facsimile edition, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1973). These last passages are those cited by Signac in his manifesto (141–142 [VII, 3]). It is from Rood's book that Seurat learns of the work of Maxwell and Helmholtz (see Appendix K of the catalogue *Seurat*, 390–391). Fénéon, in his analysis of *La Grande Jatte*, states: 'Thus we have, not a mixture of matter-colours (pigments), but a mixture of light-colours' (F. Fénéon, *Les Impressionnistes en 1866*, 65).

71. Gleizes and Metzinger, *Du «Cubisme»*, 55. Rood had placed white at the centre of his circular diagram of complementary colours.

72. Chevreul, *De la loi du contraste* . . . (Paris, 1839), §388; reproduced in 'Appendix J' of the catalogue *Seurat*, 390.

73. M. Denis, 'Préface à l'exposition Henri-Edmond Cross', 1907, cited by I. Compin in his monograph *H.E. Cross* (Paris: 1964), with the following commentary:

> Thus is explained the evolution of the tint towards a greater resonance, which can be seen in the work of Cross from 1895 onward. Less preoccupied with luminous realism, he abandons decoloration. The mixtures with white, designed to temper pure colours [. . .] become less frequent. [. . .] From now on, the painter replaces the study of the phenomena of the absorption of colour by light, with the creation of striking chromatic harmonies. (Reprinted in an abridged version in *Signac et la libération de la couleur*, 122.)

74. As Zimmerman has quite rightly noted, 'In effect, a process that started with the chemical possibility of synthetic colours', more saturated than natural pigments, 'was here only reaching its culminating point' (Zimmerman, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 204).

75. Jules Antoine reports Chevreul's own view:

> Consulted by the partisans of this manner of painting [neo-impressionism] he responded that since nature furnishes complementaries as required, at the same time as it creates colours, the pains they took to legitimate each tone through its complementary was pointless, since it was in effect redundant. (J. Antoine, 'Les peintres néo-impressionnistes', *Art et critique*, August 9–16, 1890.)

See again Gleizes and Metzinger, *Du «Cubisme»*, 57:

> The law of contrast, as old as the human eye, and upon which Seurat judiciously insisted, was promulgated with great commotion, and of those who flattered themselves most on being sensitive to it, none were sensitive enough to perceive that to apply the law of colour contrasts recklessly is to deny it, since it is valid only in so far as it applies automatically, and demands only a delicate approach to bring it out.

76. See H. von Helmholtz, 'On the Relation of Optics to Painting', in *Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects*, *series 2*, trans. E. Atkinson (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1881), 73–138:

> The perfection of the art of painting was only reached after having succeeded at imitating not the colours of bodies, but instead the effect of light upon the eye [. . .]. These subjective phenomena, which are manifest in the aspect of paintings, would be missing unless the painter reproduced them objectively upon the canvas. (196, 207)

Cited, with commentary, by J.-C. Lebensztejn, 'L'optique du peintre (Seurat avec Helmholtz)', *Critique* 540 (May 1992), 415–416; see also, by the same author, the chapter 'Contrasts', in *Chahut* (Paris: Hazan, 1989), 108–114. Seurat mentions Helmholtz as a source of his thinking in the first version of his 'Aesthetics' addressed to J. Christophe. This idea of 'objectivating the subjective' would be taken up again by a close friend of Seurat, Gustave Kahn, in a 'symbolist' reaction against the 'naturalist' definition of art proposed by Zola ('nature seen through a temperament'), which he translates as 'subjectivating the objective' ('Response of the Symbolists', *L'Événement*, September 28, 1886).

77. G. Geffroy, 'Chronique, Pointillé-cloisonnisme', *La Justice*, April 2, 1888.

78. One thinks here of the 'standard' commentary on *La Grande Jatte* proposed by W. I. Homer in *Seurat and the Science of Painting* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1964), 163:

> First, [Seurat] discovered and applied physical laws governing the behavior of light and color in nature, rather than merely relying on his sensations; by doing so, he was literally able to make his picture duplicate nature's mode of operation, thus obtaining a degree of luminosity far greater than that achieved by the Impressionists.

Fénéon had been the first to posit that, through optical mixture, 'the artifice of the painter will have rigorously reestablished the procedures of reality'.

79. This is the first line of Seurat's 'Technique', which follows his 'Aesthetics' in the 1890 letter to M. Beaubourg, and where the painter takes up again the title of one of Rood's chapters ('Duration of the Impression upon the Retina'). The second line is more problematic, as Seurat hesitates between two formulations: according to the first, 'The means of expression will be synthetic', while in the second, 'Synthesis is logically the result' (catalogue *Seurat*, Appendix E, 382). Having recalled the 'constructive', 'processual', and 'inventive' character of the synthesis in question here, Jonathan Crary quite rightly concludes that 'in Seurat's work synthesis is hardly an "unavoidable" result' (Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 155). On this point, we should also remember the strong impact of the translation of W. Wundt's *Physiological Psychology* (translated into French for the publisher Alcan in 1886, first edition 1873), in which the 'institutional' founder of experimental psychology defines an *active apperception* operating via *creative syntheses*.

80. R. Rey, *La Renaissance du sentiment classique dans la peinture française à la fin du xix*e *siècle* (Paris: 1931); cited by J.–C. Lebensztejn, *Chahut*, 114.

81. These 'pearl specks' and 'dark specks' were represented in figures 84–86 of Hermann von Helmholtz's *Treatise on Physiological optics* (ed. James P. C. Southall [New York: Dover, 3rd ed. 1962], vol. 1, 208). Seurat could have read some essential passages here:

> Sometimes, too, the author has noticed a *flicker* on a wall roughly plastered with lime and very obliquely lighted by a small window, as of tiny objects in motion. The wall appears to be studded with a quantity of small black irregular points. But these might perhaps have

been after-images of the small points flaring up from unavoidable little perturbations of the eye (309–310).

Helmholtz remarks that it is common 'for a person who has some ocular trouble that impairs his vision to become suddenly aware of the so-called *mouches volantes* in his visual field, although the causes of this phenomenon *have been there in the vitreous humor all his life*' (H. von Helmholtz, *Treatise on Physiological Optics,* Vol. 3: *Perceptions of Vision* [Birmingham, AL: Optical Society of America, 1925], 6 [emphasis added]).

82. M. Schapiro, 'New Light on Seurat', *Art News*, 1958, 362, 367; reprinted as 'Seurat', in *Modern Art: 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: George Brazilier, 1978), 101, 104.

83. L. Cousturier, 'Georges Seurat', *L'Art decorative* 31 (1914). Lucie Cousturier belongs to the 'second generation' of neo-impressionism.

84. P. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 252. Note, however, that Signac makes use of the first formula in his *Journal* when discussing Angrand's drawings: 'His drawings are masterpieces. It is impossible to imagine a more beautiful arrangement of black and white [. . .]. They are *the most beautiful painters' drawings that could be*, poems of light' (*Journal*, March 15, 1899).

85. Cf. J. Gage, *Color and Meaning. Art, Science and Symbolism* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999), 216; Roque, *Art et science de la couleur*, 308–309.

86. John Russell writes, a little exaggeratedly, that 'while the question of colour was working itself out in his mind, he foreswore colour altogether', cf. J. Russell, *Seurat* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1965), 62. Although putting forward the hypothesis that the artist's intention changes depending on whether he is drawing or painting (privileging the Impressionist facture during these years), Zimmermann still has to agree that Seurat 'often applies to paintings stylistic techniques specific to drawings. The irregular strokes of a board brush are equivalent to gently modeled grey tones. The fibrous hatching strokes of differentiated chiaroscuro transitions are equivalent to interweaving colour surfaces painted in fine brushstrokes which intersect in a criss-cross pattern' (Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 70). See here the two Conté and oil sketches on canvas entitled *Man Leaning on a Parapet*, or *The 'Invalid'* (circa 1881), the *Boy Sitting in a Meadow* (Conté crayon, 1882), and *Young Peasant in Blue* (oil on canvas, around 1882).

87. L. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks . . .' in Doran, ed., *Conversations with Cézanne*, 17–18 (XXV, XXXIII, XXIX) ('As we paint, we gradually draw', says Cézanne)—and XXVI: 'Light and shadow result from the rapport between colors', Ibid.

88. See Herbert's notice in the catalogue *Seurat*, 54 [cat. 34].

89. Alexandrian uses these two notions to define two 'series' in Seurat's drawings, to which is added a third: that of a *tonal calm*, 'in other words, the equality of light and darkness'. While not seeking to contest the validity of this principle of classification, we have preferred to lay the accent on the interdependency of these two functions as the primary characteristic of Seurat's drawings. See, for example, *The Artist's Mother* (1882–1883) where the 'brightening function of white'—confronting 'the light proper to the character' and 'external light'—*slices*, as the author himself

writes, 'into the black corsage': it is complemented by the 'colouring function of black'; cf. S. Alexandrian, *Seurat* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), 12–20.

90. G. Duthuit, 'Georges Seurat, voyant et physicien' (1946); reprinted in *Représentation et présence. Premiers écrits et travaux (1923–1952)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1974), 324.

91. As the theorist of optics Jean-Baptiste Biot writes in a scientific note adjoined to the record of the meeting on January 7, 1839, at which Arago presented Daguerre's discovery to the Académie des sciences.

92. See, for example, after Fry and Lebensztejn, *Chahut*, 122.

93. On this point, see the important communication of J. and P. Fournier, 'Chevreul et la photographie. Un thème révélateur du savant après 1847 et de sa place dans le mouvement scientifique', in *Michel-Eugène Chevreul, Un savant, des couleurs!*, ed. G. Roque, B. Bodot, F. Vienot (Paris: Éditions du Museum national d'Histoire naturelle, 1997), 113–128 (in particular, 'Une nouvelle action de la lumière ou la découverte de la radioactivité', 121sq).

94. Alexandrian in particular is sensitive to this experimental aspect:

> These experiments dictate to Seurat his subjects and orient his observations: it is because he needs a white scene that he draws the Place de la Concorde in winter, with a black carriage driving over an immaculate blanket of snow—not because he seeks to denote an effect of snow, like the impressionists. (*Place de la Concorde, Winter* [1882–1883]; Alexandrian, 15)

95. Here we follow F. Brunet's work *La naissance de l'idée de photographie* (Paris: PUF, 2000), where all of our references can easily be found. We previously consulted A. Rouillé, *La photographie en France. Textes et controverses: une anthologie 1816–1871* (Paris: Macula, 1989).

96. [*Gravure à la manière noire*—the French term means literally 'engraving in the black manner'.—Translator's note]

97. Observe that mezzotint, like aquatint (along with 'crayon manner' and 'pointillist' engraving) is defined by the distribution of white upon a black *grained* surface. In his *Grammar of Painting and Engraving*, Charles Blanc recalls that 'the Italians have called the black manner *mezzo-tinto*', and that the English, unlike the French, too classical, have excelled at it, and have conserved this name. Because, as he explains, 'The mezzotint is more suited than any other style of engraving to the representation of phantoms, incantations, artificial lights like those of the lamp, torches, fire, all the drama of conflagrations, all nocturnal effects'. However, it 'does not imitate well solid and hard bodies' (Annex to Book III on engraving). Cf. C. Blanc, *Grammar*, 281, 283.

98. Cf. L. J. Schaaf, *Out of the Shadows. Herschel, Talbot, and the Invention of Photography* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1992), chapters 2 and 3, and in particular p. 48 for the description of Talbot and his discovery (in a letter to Herschel) in terms that are startlingly similar to those of Arago-Daguerre:

> Having a paper to be read next week before the Royal Society ['Some Accounts of the Art of Photographic Drawing', meeting of January 31, 1839], respecting a new Art of Design which I discovered about five years ago, viz. the possibility of fixing upon paper

> the image fixed on a Camera Obscura, or rather, I should say, causing it to *fix itself*, I should be most happy to show you specimens of this curious process.

It is interesting to learn that Talbot had in the mid-1820s published some notable contributions to the field of *spectral analysis*.

99. Cf. R. Krauss, 'Impressionism: The Narcissism of Light', *Partisan Review* (1976), 43(1): 102–112:107. On Talbot's invention of the 'calotype' (announced in 'The Process of Calotype Photogenic Drawing', 1841, and patented in the same year), or Talbotype (on the model of the Daguerrotype), see Schaaf, *Out of the Shadows*, 112sq. The diffusion of photography on paper in France took place through the agency of Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Evrard, who in 1847 had published his *Procédés employés pour obtenir les épreuves de photographie sur papier* [*Procedures used to obtain photographic prints on paper*], on an improved 'negative paper' process.

100. Brunet, *La naissance de l'idée de photographie*, 126: 'From 1851, the establishment in Lille of Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Evrard's photographic printworks and the launching of the *Missions héliographique*, whose photographs all, or almost all, used the paper process, paradoxically consecrated France as the land of the calotype'. In 1848, painter and photographer David Octavius Hill had perfectly identified the 'artistic' virtues of the calotype: 'The rough and unequal texture throughout the paper is the main cause of the Calotype's failure in details before the Daguerrotype [. . .] and this is the very life of it. They look like the imperfect work of man and not the very much diminished life of God' (Letter to Elhanan Bicknell, January 17, 1848; cited by J. Snyder, 'Inventing Photography', in *On the Art of Fixing Shadows, One Hundred and Fifty Years of Photography* [Boston, Toronto, and London: National Gallery of Art, Art Institute of Chicago, 1989], 20). Brunet himself insisted on 'the contradiction between the formula "Pencil of Nature" and the insistence on the voice of the author' (147)—with the return of the 'Artist's pencil' that had been solemnly expelled by Talbot in a marginal note in *The Pencil of Nature*.

101. The terms in quotes are from Krauss, 'Impressionism', 106, 105.

102. Even up to the 'little dots' of *The Forest at Pontaubert* (1881–1882), painted in Corot and Daubigny's favourite region, concerning which we cannot exclude the possibility that they were at least partially the result of later interventions. This is in fact 'the greatest and most ambitious of Seurat's paintings before *Une Baignade*', as Herbert states in his notice in the catalogue *Seurat* [cat. 78]. As to the influence of Barbizon's master, it is important to know that it was through Millet's *engravings* that Seurat, as a child, learnt of 'modern' painting. Since he could not be counted as a 'colourist' (van Gogh will say that his paintings evoke an 'colourless gray' that presents 'hardly any colour'), Millet does not figure in Signac's manifesto-book.

103. For 'we no longer find in Seurat the continuing thread of a pantheistic religion inherited from the Romantics' that was still the *theme* of the school of Barbizon. Cf. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time,* 101.

104. Cf. R. Thomson, *Seurat* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1990), 87: 'Seurat allowed the thick weave of the canvas to act as a medium for the modeling (as he utilised the texture of paper in his drawings), having it reinforce contours and shadows'. W. I. Homer had already evoked 'a sort of 'proto-pointillist' effect'.

105. Krauss, 'Impressionism', 105.

106. Nadar, *When I was a Photographer*. See Balzac, *Le Cousin Pons*, chapter 32. The American geologist and theologian Edward Hitchcock seems to propose a conception rather close to this in *The Religion of Geology and its Connected Sciences* (Boston: 1857) (cited by Brunet, *La naissance de l'idée de photographie*, 199): that nature is full 'of daguerrotypical impressions'. In the chapter entitled 'In the traces of Nadar', the opening chapter of her book, Krauss writes at length on the 'invisible rays' that Talbot conceived as being captured by 'the eye of the camera [which, thus,] sees clearly where the human eye can see only shadows' (Krauss, 27–31). As Michel Frizot sums up: 'In the first decades of photography, [. . .] the world could be seen as a vast complex of latent images, a natural potential of spontaneous demonstration, waiting to be revealed by the perseverance of the darkroom'. Cf. M. Frizot, *Histoire de voir. De l'invention à l'art photographique (1839–1880)* (Paris: Centre national de photographie, 1989) (no pagination).

107. A. Strindberg, 'Légendes', *Oeuvre autobiographique* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1990), 463; cited by C. Chéroux, *L'éxpérience photographique d'August Strindberg* (Arles: Actes Sud, 1994), 57.

108. Cf. Y. Ishaghpour, *Seurat. Le pureté de l'élément spectral* (Caen: L'Echoppe, 1992) (no pagination): 'In the impressionists, open air, light, and colour deny the powers of photography, affirming themselves against its failings. To black, to the mechanical, to absence, are opposed the touch, the vibrancy, and the presence of light'.

109. A. Niepce de Saint-Victor, *Compte-Rendu de l'Académie des Sciences*, 45, 1857 (cf. J. and P. Fournier, 'Chevreul et la photographie', 121).

110. On the theme of the suburbs [*banlieues*], see Thomson's comprehensive chapter in *Seurat* (chapter 4: 'Rehearsing the Subject'). Zimmermann has quite rightly identified that 'his drawings of forgotten suburban corners are entirely original' and that in them Seurat 'breaks out of the straitjacket, imposed by the rhetoric of earlier forms of landscape painting' (Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 110, 115).

111. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 118.

112. This expression 'artist-plate' comes from Max Weller, in his review of the hanging of neo-impressionist paintings at the Salon des XX in Brussels (M. Weller, 'Le Salon des XX', *L'artiste*, May 1888). He goes on to evoke an 'extra-photographic plate'.

113. Cf. Brunet, *La naissance de l'idée de photographie*, 292–295. Hippolyte Taine taught intermittently at the École des Beaux-Arts from 1863 onward; his *Philosophie des Beaux-Arts* was published in 1865. This of course is not unconnected to the diffusion of his work in artistic milieus.

114. Michel Foucault discusses this 'new frenzy of images' in 'Photogenic Painting' (1975) (in *Revisions: Gérard Fromanger*, ed. S. Wilson [London: Black Dog Publishing], 83–88). From the very beginning, he posits that 'perhaps they were less in love with paintings or photographic plates than with the images themselves, with their migration and perversion, their transvesticism, their disguised difference' (84).

115. Françoise Heilbrun, 'L'art du portrait photographique chez Félix Nadar', in *Nadar, Les années créatrices: 1854–1860* (Paris: RMN, 1994), 91.

116. This phrase is found in Ernest Lacan's essay, 'Les Ateliers photographiques parisiens: Pierre Petit-Nadar', *Le Moniteur de la photographie*, December 1, 1876.

117. Nadar, 229–230 ('The primitives of photography').

118. Ibid., 288 (Nadar's emphasis).

119. 'In the shadow of the great Daguerre', he writes in his *Revendication de la propriété exclusive du pseudonyme Nadar* (1857).

120. Nadar, *When I was a photographer* ('Subterranean Paris. In the Catacombs and Sewers. First attempts at photography in artificial lighting').

121. Under the pseudonym 'Néo', Signac will critique 'the application to a nocturne of a method that is only applicable to the effects of daylight' ('Néo' [Paul Signac], 'IVe Exposition des Artistes Indépendants', *Le Cri du Peuple*, March 29, 1888).

122. Cf. Catalogue *Nadar*, 162–164 [ill. 120]. This first photo-interview appeared in the *Journal illustré* in September 1886.

123. U. Appollonio, *Disegni di Seurat*, Catalogue of the exhibition at the Galleria dell'Obelisco, Rome, 1950.

124. Clay, *Impressionnisme*, 287. To convince oneself of this, one need only compare the *Final Study* [or *Sketch of the Whole*] for *Sunday on la Grande Jatte* with the definitive painting (taken up again and finished some months after having been completed). We find an indication of this in Thomson, *Seurat*, 102–103: 'The *Esquisse* incorporated within it a much more sophisticated respect for colour relationships in both the light and shade [. . .]. The *Esquisse d'Ensemble* is a bright painting'. The same could be said of *Bathers at Asnières*, although the latter, with its pale tonality, is among the brightest *and most classical* of Seurat's paintings.

125. Presiding over the series of 'rural scenes' (1881–1882), the principle of which is explicitly formulated in *Forest of Barbizon* (1882).

126. Cf. Catalogue *Seurat*, 138 (cat. 97).

127. Which also explains why Seurat tends progressively to replace the 'croquetons' with preparatory designs, from *Parade* and his experiments with artificial light onward. Cf. R. J. Goldwater, 'Some aspects of the development of Seurat's style', *The Art Bulletin* 23, 1941.

128. Cf. L. Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 185 (and all of chapter 9: 'Seurat's *La Grande Jatte*: An Anti-Utopian Allegory').

129. 'What starts to wobble thus is the authority of the thing [*die Autorität der Sache*]', as Walter Benjamin writes in *The Work of Art in the Era of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936), trans. J. A. Underwood (London: Penguin, 2008).

130. Ishaghpour, *Seurat* (np).

131. Cf. R. Fry, 'Seurat', in *Transformations* (New York, 1926), 188–196; cited by J. Russell and L. Nochlin. One might here again note that those of Signac's paintings most directly influenced by Seurat's 'reductive style'—beginning with *The Milliners* (1885–1886), that 'systematic and convincing paradigm of the new process' according to Fénéon—remain tied to the 'visible and tangible world' (according to John Leighton's remark in his Introduction to the catalogue *Signac*, 8).

132. Cf. Lebensztejn, 'L'optique du peintre', 419, and *Chahut*, 110–113. It is through Kahn, to whom he was very close, that Seurat familiarised himself with the 'psychophysical' work of Charles Henry. To these scientific references we must add, for its radical neoleibnizianism, the foundational article of Gabriel Tarde, 'Monadologie et sociologie' (1893) (republished Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond/

Synthélabo, 1999). An obligatory reference for us despite its late date, because in this book, Tarde is led to develop this 'productive' photographic dispositif, as described by François Brunet: in the Preface to the 1895 edition of *The Laws of Imitation*, he will define imitation as 'an action which consists in a quasi-photographic reproduction of a cerebral negative by the sensible plate of another brain' (*Les Lois de l'imitation* [Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond/Seuil, 2001]), 46.

133. F. Fénéon, 'VIIIe Exposition des Impressionnistes', *La Vogue*, September 20–27, 1886; republished in *Les Impressionnistes en 1886*, 65.

134. Paul Signac's *Journal*, March 12, 1898.

135. W. Benjamin, 'Little History of Photography' (1931), in *Selected Writings,* vol. 2: *1927–1934*, ed. Rodney Livingstone et al. (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 510.

136. The synthetic colours he uses are chemical pigments.

137. *Physiognomical Note:* Without waiting for the publication of the *Cercle chromatique*, Seurat had studied very closely the 'Introduction to a scientific aesthetics' (*La Revue contemporaine*, August 25, 1885) where Charles Henry affirmed that 'for a given colour there is only one suitable direction'. After Charles Blanc (in the preliminaries of his *Grammar*), Henry here rediscovers the 'physiognomic' schematism of Humbert de Superville, which (in his *Essai sur les signes inconditionnels dans l'art* [Leiden, 1827–1839]) associates directions with colours according to three combinations: gay, calm, or sad (cf. A. Chastel, 'Une source oubliée de Seurat' [1959], reprinted in *Fables, formes, figures*, 385–392). Seurat will take up this idea in his letter of August 28, 1890, to Maurice Beaubourg, his one and only theoretical text: 'The analogy of similar elements of *tone*, *color and line*, considered according to their dominants and under the influence of light, in gay, calm, or sad combinations' (in Joshua C. Taylor [ed.], *Nineteenth-Century Theories of Art*, [Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1987], 541–542: 541). This reprise of Superville, however, contains an essential difference, since it is no longer the direction of lines that brings with it the deduction of colours, but the 'lighting' that 'influences' the harmony of the whole. This confirms a statement of Seurat's reported by Cross in one of his notebooks: 'Seurat said to us yesterday morning [. . .] that in his vision, tonal values came before lines, and that the idea never occurred to him of beginning a painting with a line. What's more, he added, the colour of things changes their outline' (published in *Bulletin de la vie artistique*, September 15, 1922). Note that Henry himself, in the 1885 essay cited by Seurat in the 'Études' of 1887–1888, held that ignorance of the 'decomposition of the spectrum'—and of the 'composition of forces'—was responsible for the belatedness of the scientific study of subjective impressions of movement, colour, and sound (see 'Appendix L', on Charles Henry, ed. R. L. Herbert, in the catalogue *Seurat*, 391–393). In his summary of Henry's aesthetics published in 1889 in *La Cravache*, Fénéon would take part in an experiment carried out on a Japanese engraving with eyeglasses of different colours: 'Take two prints of the same Japanese engraving, each printed using a different colour: freehand and by eye alone, we reproduce the outline of one, then the outline of the other. Our two drawings, made following two similar outlines, are not identical; *and the deformations to which we have subjected the outlines are a function of the colours*' (emphasis

added). After the *Poseuses*, it will fall to *Parade* and to *Chahut* to develop, for itself, the coloured play of directions as 'dynamogenic' and 'inhibitory'. On Charles Henry, see Zimmermann's comprehensive chapter, 'Henry's Theory and its Sources' (Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 249–275).

138. Despite its subtitle (*L'âge d'or n'est pas dans le passé, il est dans l'avenir* [*The golden age is not in the past, but in the future*]), the quite bucolic *Au temps d'Harmonie* [*In the Time of Harmony*] (1893–1895) refers directly to two paintings by Puvis de Chavannes: *The Happy Land* and *Repose*. On Puvis and Signac, see Nochlin's valuable commentary, *The Politics of Vision*, 176–178.

139. In a critique of the Salon of 1885, where Puvis presented *Autumn, or Children in a Verger*, R. Cazé wrote that '*Autumn* [. . .] has the false airs of an ancient petit-point tapestry. . . . [Puvis de Chavannes] has painted a lie, I was going to say a vision as painting by monks in a time when there was faith, religion, a God, and true monks'. In a letter to Lucien on January 7, 1887, the 'Néo' Pissarro defined Puvis de Chavannes as 'our opposite in art, however talented he may be'. On the other hand, 'Signac objected to Puvis's low-key palette, but he continued to regard Puvis as a touchstone' (M. Ferretti-Bocquillon, catalogue *Signac*, 195).

140. Number 175 in the catalogue of the eighth Exhibition of the Impressionists, the canvas bears the date 1884—a date manifesting the anteriority of Seurat's conception in regard to the paintings of Pissarro and Signac that were shown alongside his, and this despite his rejection of pointillism in 1885–1886.

141. See *Landscape, Island of La Grande Jatte* (1884). Indeed, Catherine Grenier says that 'this empty landscape seems like a scene awaiting its actors' (C. Grenier, *Seurat, Catalogue complet* [Paris: Bordas, 1991], 78). And yet we must note that the *Landscape*, qua 'empty painting', prefigures the marine and port scenes 'empty' of ulterior characters.

142. Fénéon, *Les Impressionnistes en 1886*.

143. Cf. L. Cousturier, 'Georges Seurat', *L'Art decorative*, 27 (1912); 31 (1914). Lucie Cousturier describes Seurat's drawings in terms of their 'hieratic immobility'.

144. We borrow this term 'picturesque' from Clement Greenberg, in an article entitled 'Renoir and the picturesque', *Art News*, April 1950 (reprinted in C. Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. III. *Affirmations and Refusals, 1950–1956*, 222sq), based upon this twofold observation: 'It [the picturesque] entails emphasis on what is felt to be immediately pleasing'—in terms of the extension of the domain of *beauty* affirmed by tradition; and 'the picturesque creeps into the art of almost all the Impressionists'.

145. E. Bloch, *The Principle of Hope,* vol. 2, trans. Neville Place, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 814 [translation modified].

146. On the face as 'ultimate retrenchment' of the 'value of religion', see Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'.

147. The noticeably equal dimensions of each canvas (201 × 301 cm for *Une Baignade*, 207 × 308 cm for the *Grande Jatte*) predispose them to comparison.

148. Blanc, *Grammaire*, 423–425 ('The Egyptian Style') [omitted from English translation]. This, to Blanc's eyes, confirms the superiority of Greek statuary over Egyptian art, which remains 'a form of writing' because it is a 'pure emanation of the spirit' 'in a foreign people who respected death more than life, as if for them death

were the initiation into eternal life'. On the influence of Blanc (the 'modernist in spite of himself') on Seurat, cf. Smith, *Seurat and the Avant-garde*, 14sq (I, 1); and the first chapter of Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time* (17–58).

149. Thomson, *Seurat*, 124. As with *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, critics picked up on the codes and emblems of prostitution staged within the scene.

150. André Salmon notes in his *Propos d'atelier*: 'All of naturalist literature crumbles to dust in the breeze that blows across his *Grande Jatte*' (Paris: G. Crès, 1922), 55. From an apocryphal oriental manuscript he got from Gauguin, Seurat had copied out, in 1886: 'Avoid *the pose in movement*. Each of your characters must be in the *static* state'.

151. Blanc, *Grammaire*, 423 [omitted in English translation].

152. F. Fénéon, 'VIIIe Exposition des Impressionnistes', *La Vogue*, September 20–27, 1886. In an article published some days earlier in *L'Art modern*e, 'L'Impressionnisme aux Tuileries' (September 10, 1886), Fénéon wrote of 'the *cuisine* of the master Impressionists': 'customary craft is used to one's advantage; the play of the hand will vary with the effect to be reproduced: for water there will be smooth strokes and the wake of bristles in the paint; the brushstroke will be circular to make clouds bulge, firm and nimble to make a sun glint; the happy chance of the brush, the lucky finds of improvisation are cherished'. Cf. Fénéon, *Au-délà de l'impressionnisme*, 66, 74.

153. Puvis de Chavannes's *The Sacred Grove, Beloved of the Arts and Muses* was shown in the 1884 Salon, the same year that Seurat began *La Grande Jatte* (on 'Ascension Day'!) Meyer Schapiro defines perfectly his 'noble, monumental style adequate to the conservative ideas of his time-comprehensive images of a stable community, austere and harmonious' (Schapiro, 'Seurat', *Modern Art*, 105)—to which Seurat responds with the stiffness and isolation of figures as far from mythological as can be—placed, as in a collage, into a landscape whose structure is very close to that of *The Sacred Grove*.

154. In a certain sense this diagnosis adds the finishing touch to Guila Ballas's accurate observation: 'Whoever visited the great exhibition of Seurat in Paris in 1991 could not have failed to remark on the great resemblance (almost to the extent of being identical) between the immense and impressive photograph of *La Grande Jatte* [its negative . . .] and the drawings shown in the neighbouring room. The photograph showed very well how chromatic variations had been translated by passages of tones and by dark and light masses'. G. Ballas, *La couleur dans la peinture moderne*, 84.

155. J.-K. Huysmans, 'Chronique d'art, les Independants', *La Revue indépendante*, April 1887; A. Paulet, 'Les Impressionnistes', *Paris*, June 5, 1886; E. Hennequin, 'Notes d'art, les Impressionnistes', *La Vie moderne*, June 19, 1886. As we have seen, the 'mannequins' may well have been 'made' under the influence of Charles Henry and his lectures, followed by Seurat.

156. Cf. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 1, 147.

157. A living contemplation for Helmholtz meaning, as we know, that painting must succeed in interpreting perception as that excitation and production of the eye which alone is capable of constituting that which is perceived, 'if it succeeds in imitating no longer the colours of bodies, but the effects of light upon the eye'.

158. Signac, 'From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism', 262.

159. The expression appears in a letter to Octave Maus on the subject of the 'cheesy' lithograph entitled *First Thoughts for* A Sunday: *Woman Standing Before a Window, from Behind* (end of 1887/beginning of 1888).

160. In his critique of Pissarro, Signac does however concede the 'purity' of the '*petit point*' (Signac, 251).

161. Herbert, catalogue *Seurat*, 173.

162. J. Janin, 'Le Daguerotype' [sic], *L'Artiste*, November 1838–April 1839; cited by A. Rouillé, *La Photographie. Entre document et art contemporain* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 56.

163. Notice in the catalogue *Seurat* for the drawing of *Three Young Women* [218, cat. 147].

164. Prostitutes were known as '*singesses* [female monkeys]'. Let us note that Huysmans will speak of the *Bathers* as a 'monkey business [*singerie*] of biblical proportions'.

165. Underlining the anomalies of perspective and proportion in the painting, John Russell identifies quite correctly that 'the whole of this foreground zone is, in fact, seen from a point on the extreme right of the canvas; when we emerge into the sunlight, in the middle-ground, this is no longer the case' (Russell, *Seurat*, 147).

166. In his notice for *L'Enfant blanc*, Herbert cites Corot's precept, copied out by Seurat, regarding the necessity of there being a single 'luminous point' in a painting that contributes to 'the whole and harmony in the tones', to 'the value of the tones; colour, for [him] coming afterwards' ('Appendix M' and 215, [cat. 145]).

167. Fénéon, *Les Impressionnistes en 1886*. Let us not forget that the 'monumental' *Grand Jatte* (205.7 × 305.8 cm) was shown in a room in which it was impossible to step back from it.

168. Along with *Race in Grandcamp* and *Fort-Samson* (a painting which has disappeared), *Le Bec du Hoc* featured in the 1886 exhibition alongside *La Grande Jatte*.

169. Maurice Denis's article 'Définition du néo-traditionnisme' (1890) includes this important passage: 'I seek a *painter's* definition of this simple word 'nature' which labels and summarises this *fin de siècle*'s generally accepted theory of art. Probably: the total of optical sensations? But, without even mentioning the natural perturbations of the modern eye, who is incognizant of the power of the cerebral habits of vision?' (M. Denis, *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 6).

170. In 1886, Fénéon had paid homage to Monet's seascapes.

171. J. Le Fustec, 'Exposition de la Société des Artistes Indépendants', *Journal des Artistes*, August 24, 1886; J. K. Huysmans, 'Chronique d'art: Les Indépendants'. These two articles are discussed by Lebensztejn in *Chahut*, 134–135. To the latter, we should add Hennequin's article, cited above (E. Hennequin, 'Notes d'art: exposition des artistes indépendants', *La Vie moderne*, September 11, 1886).

172. E. E. Amaury-Duval, in *L'Atelier d'Ingres* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1878) has noted that Ingres 'made himself his very own [style of] drawing, whose correctness is dubious and which is bizarre', signifying that he had 'put aside the academic science learnt at school'. Gauguin will remember this lesson in his *Racontars de Rapin* (1902).

173. Could Seurat really not have known that Ingres's last portraits had regularly been compared to 'enlarged daguerrotypes'? 'Ingres, whose portraits were meager,

painted like a door—according to an expression of Degas's—', one which delighted Pissarro (in a letter to J.-K. Huysmans of May 20, 1883).

174. *The Source* had been inspired by a drawing from nature executed by Seurat around 1876.

175. Cf. Thomson, *Seurat*, 141.

176. As Paul Adam writes of *Poseuses*: 'Here are beings in the simplicity of nature, with the smiling feminine enigma on their lips, with elegant curves and the small breasts of maidens and pearlescent soft skin' (P. Adam, 'Les Impressionnistes à l'exposition des Indépendants', *La Vie Moderne*, April 15, 1888).

177. The term 'poseuse' is given as a synonym for prostitute by C. Virmaître, *Paris galant* (Paris: L. Genonceaux, 1890).

178. G. Geffroy, 'Pointillé-cloisonnisme', *La Justice*, April 2, 1888. The montage effect is amplified by the existence of three small studies (25 × 16 cm) from the end of 1866: *Poseuse debout* (shown at the Indépendants in spring 1887), *Poseuse* [in profile], *Poseuse from behind*.

179. One thinks here of the three *Young Women at the Sea* (1879), shown at the Puvis exhibition organised by Durand-Ruel in 1887, and which represents the same model three times.

180. Seurat could have seen, at the international exhibition at Galerie Georges Petit in 1897, Renoir's painting shown under the title *Bathers: An Essay in Decorative Painting* (1884–1887), in which an opulent Suzanne Valdon is also represented three times (in an idyllic natural setting).

181. The arabesque will be developed over the course of summer 1888 in the works at Port-en-Bessin (see in particular *Cranes at the Port of Bessin*). Linked with the mutation of forms into 'carpets' (*Entrance to the Harbour at the Port of Bessin*) and the growing abstraction of the landscapes, it contributes to a new turn in the 'decorative' aspect of Seurat's paintings—which, albeit according to an opposite dialectic, brings it into singular proximity with Gauguin's enterprise.

182. Cachin, *Seurat*, 316. Keeping in mind the article cited above by Paul Adam which strongly suggests this 'transfer', the author, what is more, emphasises how

> the realism of bodies and of faces contrast in a strange and, who knows, possibly voluntary way, with the very elaborate style of the rest of the painting: compare, for example, [. . .] the treatment of the facing *poseuse*'s body and face, of an almost smooth appearance, so miniscule and close in tone are the points, with that of the objects in the foreground, the blue clothing and the yellow parasol: the latter, covered with large coloured, contrasting diamond shapes, the first in red and the second in blue, offer in the foreground an enlarged, almost caricatural, demonstration of the contrast of complementary colours. (Cachin, *Seurat*, 333)

183. *Au Bonheur des dames*, a novel in which Émile Zola presented the universe of the *grands magasins*, had been published in 1883.

184. Something that did not escape the notice of Félix Fénéon: 'Through a pseudoscientific fantasy, the red umbrella, the straw-coloured umbrella and the dark green one are oriented according to the direction that red, yellow, and green are given in Henry's chromatic circle'. (Fénéon, *Les Impressionnistes en 1886,* 100). Aside from noting that 'Féneon's observations should not be taken too literally; if they are, then the yellow parasol would have to lie in a horizontal position or else have a marked

leaning towards green'—as Zimmermann observes (470 n.118)—it seems to us particularly interesting that Fénéon intuitively relates these artifices of the new age to Henry's aesthetic determinism, recently rediscovered by Seurat.

185. The phrase is Henry Maldiney's, in *Regard, Parole, Espace* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1973), 121. Thomson argues from these accessories to deny that it could be a matter of one and the same model. Since it is so characteristic of the perplexity of the critic before this painting, his conclusion is worth citing: '*Les Poseuses* is *not merely* an artificial arrangement; it is derived from a specific everyday event' (146). *Not merely*? So it is, then? And isn't it the 'everyday' that is touched here, contaminated by the 'artificial'? In rather peremptory fashion, Zimmermann for his part affirms from the outset: 'Seurat's large studio painting [. . .] makes the least reference of all his figure paintings to anything beyond art and his own work' (Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 332).

186. Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision*, 183. *La Mode Artistique* was the publication containing the most 'up-to-date' fashion engravings.

187. As Nochlin rightly emphasises, *The Politics of Vision*, 187.

188. This is the conclusion towards which the whole analysis of Alain Madeleine-Perdrillat tends, in his *Seurat* (Paris: Skira, 1990), 96–99. The 'true large mirror' is 'borrowed' from Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, which the critic frequently associates with *Poseuses*.

189. One can get an idea of the original frame of *Poseuses* from its replica *Poseuses* (small version, 39.4 × 48.7 cm).

190. Cf. F. Fénéon, 'Les Néo-impressionisms aux Indépendants', *L'art moderne*, April 15, 1888.

191. The two paintings were shown in March 1888 at the Indépendants, both of them in pointillist frames, neither of which have survived.

192. G. Kahn evokes 'the colourful ground of the Circus Corvi paintings' in his review 'Peinture: Exposition des Indépendants', *La Revue indépendante*, 18 (1888). In her commentary, Ségolène Le Men makes sure to oppose the 'visual memory' of the critic to the dissimulation of the 'acrobat's canvas' under the powdery colour of the painted surface (Le Men, *Seurat & Chéret*, 22).

193. Le Men, *Seurat & Chéret*, 22.

194. Kahn, 'Peinture: Exposition des Indépendants'. Gustave Geffroy will also speak of the 'pallid and poorly contrasted aspect' of *Circus Parade* (G. Geffroy, 'Chronique, Pointillé-cloisonnisme', *La Justice*, April 2, 1888).

195. Rimbaud's poem *Parade* (without article . . .) was published on May 13, 1886 in the symbolist journal *La Vogue*. Here we follow Russell's fine page on *Parade* (Russell, *Seurat*, 218).

196. It is in regard to *Parade* in particular that Roger Fry brings in the idea of the vision of an 'extra-terrestrial visitor'.

197. These are the expressions of G. Tinterow in the notice of the catalogue *Seurat*, 347.

198. Cf. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 190: 'The surface became a *tabular* field with rows and columns'.

199. Again, Jonathan Crary says it very well: 'The ostensible subject of the work [. . .] mimics a classically represented theatrical space while in fact withholding the

essential elements of that signifying model', Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 188. This is a recurrent theme of the critique of the circus, of which Théophile Gautier was a pioneer: its superiority over 'theatrical prattle'. Cf. S. Bash, 'Barbey d'Aurevilly et la critique de cirque', in E. Wallon (ed.), *Le Cirque au risque de l'art* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2002), 158–160.

200. Jonathan Crary writes, 'In this work *neither* a dynamogenic (gay) *nor* an inhibitory (sad) effect is sought, but rather a *neutralization* of those poles', *Suspensions of Perception*, 210.

201. Madeleine-Perdrillat, *Seurat*, 121.

202. Cf. P. Virilio, *The Vision Machine*, trans. Julie Rose (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press and British Film Institute, 1994), 9. Virilio cites a contemporary account.

203. Madeleine-Perdrillat, *Seurat*, 122.

204. Seurat added the large, pointillistically painted frame in 1889 or 1890.

205. According to Herbert's observation in the notice in the catalogue *Seurat,* 381 [cat. 209].

206. F. Fénéon, 'Exposition des artistes indépendants à Paris', *L'Art moderne* 9 (October 1888).

207. In compensation, that is, for the paintings with figures, which are 'increasingly arbitrary and synthetic', Thomson, *Seurat*, 176.

208. Unlike the paintings made by Signac some years before at Port-en-Bessin. Zimmermann notes that 'Signac had turned to Monet in his choice of details; indeed, he sought even more romantic effects than Monet' (Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, 418).

209. Ibid., 410.

210. Herbert, in the notice in the catalogue *Seurat*, 362 [cat. 203].

211. Cf. F. Fénéon, 'Cinquième exposition de la Société des artistes indépendants', *La Vogue* 3 (September 1889); republished in *L'Art moderne*, October 27, 1889. The citation is given below.

212. Cachin, *Le rêve de l'art-science*, 73.

213. G. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London and New York: Continuum, 2001), 242 ('Thirtieth Series of the Phantasm').

214. Cf. E. B. Leroy, *Les Visions du demi-sommeil* (Paris: Alcan, 1926), 111.

215. John Russell recalls that Robert Rey was impressed by the way in which *La Grande Jatte* announced the invention of 'the slow-motion film' (Russell, *Seurat*, 157).

216. Cited by Leroy, *Les Visions du demi-sommeil*, 29.

217. This is the phrase used by Seurat in reference to the 'large paintings' undertaken in winter (as reported by Verhaeren, in June 1887).

218. See the startling descriptions by Edgar Allan Poe in *The Man of Crowds* (in the *New Extraordinary Stories*, translated by Baudelaire). We owe thanks to Paul Virilio for our rereading of this story.

219. Cf. E. Verhaeren, 'Georges Seurat', *La Société nouvelle*, 7 (1891).

220. F. Nietzsche, 'The Wagner Case (Letters from Turin, May 1888)', in Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman (eds.) *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 245 (§7)—and

further on, the 'Wagnerian genius for nebulosity'. In fragment iv, written in May 1878, Nietzsche defines in the following terms the *optical principle* of Wagnerian art: 'The art of Wagner conceived by the myopic—too great a proximity necessary (miniature) but at the same time for the far-sighted. In any case, not for a normal eye'—which, it is true, brings Wagner singularly close to pointillism. On 'wagneromania' as an essentially French cultural phenomenon, see *Nietzsche contra Wagner* (1888), 'Where Wagner Belongs' (ibid., 283sq).

221. The same tendency towards 'abstraction' as in the last seascapes painted by Seurat at Gravelines in 1890.

222. Russell, *Seurat*, 234. In an article in *Père Peinard* (April 30, 1893), Fénéon extols the 'colour posters' in the following terms: 'This makes for an open-air exhibition, all through the year, the full length of the street'. Remember that Chéret had served his apprenticeship in England, where he had studied the techniques of colour lithography. On the other hand, it is also interesting to note that Chéret had drawn the posters for the luminous pantomimes of Reynaud at the Musée Grevin, the directorship of which Chéret will be associated with in 1891 (on the importance of Reynaud, see Crary's definitive pages, *Suspensions of Perception*, 259–280).

Fénéon, in his 1889 article reviewing the fifth exhibition of the Independents, suspected Chéret's influence in a Crotoy seascape (*View of Le Crotoy, from Downstream*), combining this discovery with the following commentary: 'M. Seurat's art does not dream of dissimulating his research, and the plausibility of the spectacles suffers from it' (F. Fénéon, 'Cinquième exposition de la Societé des artistes indépendants', *La Vogue*, 3 September, 1889).

223. J.-K. Huysmans, *Certains* (Paris: Tresse et Stock, 1889; republished Paris: UGE 10/18, 1976), 313–319 ('Chéret'). Cited after Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art of his Time*, 374.

224. A. Alexandre, 'Le Salon des Indépendants', Paris, March 20, 1891. Which, from this pen, is not exactly a eulogy.

225. An image produced by the predominance of 'dynamogenic' and 'inhibitory' lines, heirs, through Charles Henry, of the physiognomic schemas of Humbert de Superville, retooled for use in a world of automata.

226. According to the statement of Anne Distel, in the notice for *Cirque* in the catalogue *Seurat*, 360.

227. J. Antoine, 'Les peintres néo-impressionnistes', *Art et critique*, 9–16 August, 1890 (emphasis ours).

228. A. Germain, 'A l'exposition des Indépendants', *Le Moniteur des Arts*, March 27, 1891 (italics added). Henry's enslaving of painting to theoretico-mathematical exigencies contrasts with Signac's attitude as analysed by Fénéon in his 1890 article for *Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui*: Signac, we read here, 'does not slave himself to this gracious mathematics: he knows very well that a work of art is inextricable'. In his review of the 'Cinquième exposition des artistes Indépendantes' (*La Vogue*, 3 September, 1889), the critic concludes his (very reserved) analysis of the two Crotoy seascapes by playing on the difference between Chéret and Seurat: 'So natively loyal [to Charles Henry's theories], M. Seurat's art hardly dreams of dissimulating his

research, and the plausibility of the spectacles suffers from it. The snail-shell clouds of *Crotoy, from Downstream* are not very persuasive'.

229. According to Huysman's remarkable phrase, in his article on Chéret (J.-K. Huysmans, *Certains*, 317).

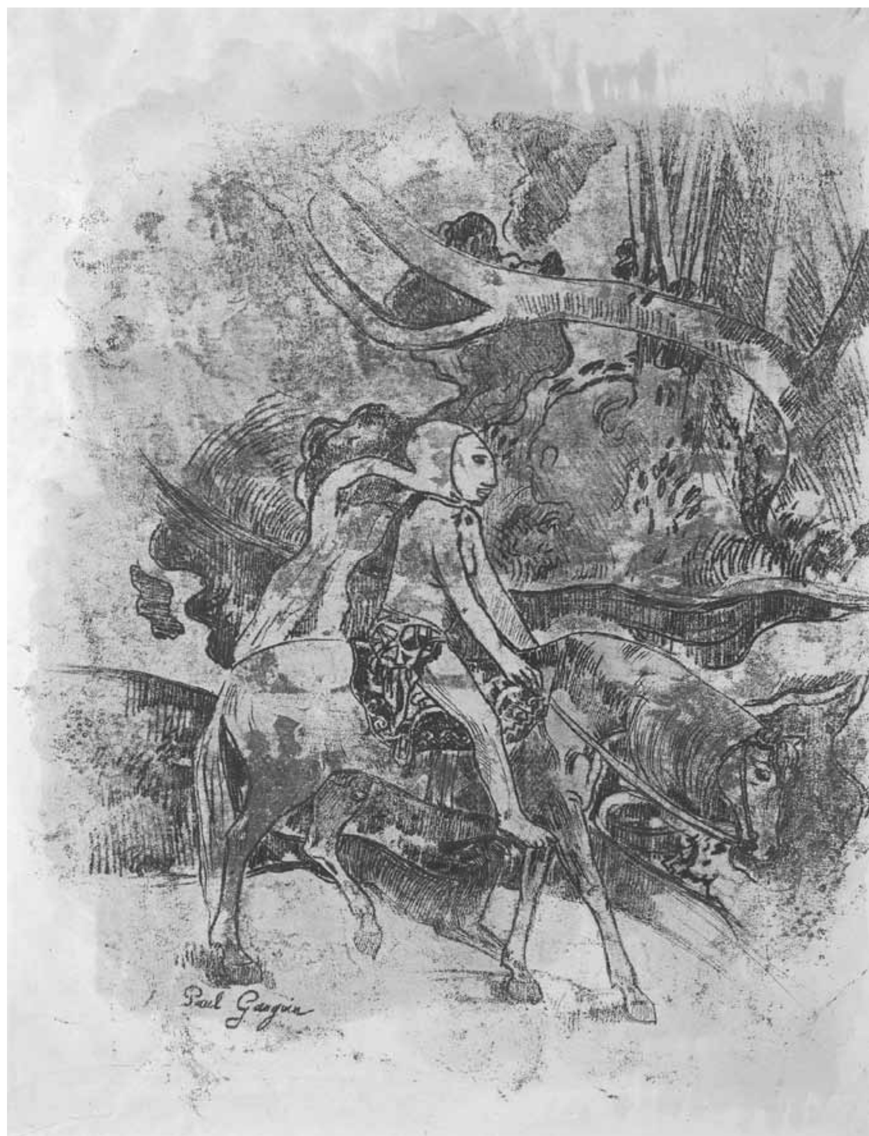
230. G. Geffroy, 'Les Indépendants' (March 29, 1892), in *La Vie artistique* II, 1893.

231. As Ségolène Le Men indicates, pointing out the conductor's baton, the bows of the two violinists, the clown's baton in the foreground, and the whip of the ring-master . . . (Le Men, *Seurat & Chéret*, 124).

232. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 494 (and the whole section 'the aesthetic model: nomad art').

233. Barbey d'Aurevilly, 'Le Cirque' (June 20, 1881), in *Le theater contemporain. Dernière série*, *1881–1883* (Paris: Stock, 1896), 23–25. Cited by S. Bash, 162–163.

234. T. de Wyzewa, 'Notes sur la peinture wagnérienne et le Salon de 1886', *La Revue wagnérienne*, May 1886. This article attempts a response to the essential reservation of Mallarmé, who had written in the August 1885 issue: 'If the French spirit, strictly imaginative and abstract, sheds some light, it will not be in this way: in agreement with Art as a whole, which is inventive, it finds Legend repellent'.



Gauguin, *Horseman*, 1901–1902
Drawing on black and grey monotype on vellum
50 × 40 cm
Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens, Paris

Chapter 5

Gauguin, or the Eye of the Earth

> But why leave the pretty Breton plates behind and exile oneself in Tahiti, only to take up a type of painting that, judging by what M. Gauguin himself says, could just as well be done without leaving one's room? And how about this plastic art that makes you think 'without the aid of ideas and images'? What an amazing thing it must be, this painter-thinker's cerebrality with neither ideas nor images!
>
> —Camille Mauclair, 'Choses d'Art', *Mercure de France*, June 1985

> The great error is the Greek, as beautiful as it may be. . . .
>
> —Paul Gauguin to Daniel de Monfreid, Tahiti, October 1897

> Those mischievous Greeks, who understood all things, imagined Antaeus, whose strength came back to him when he touched the earth.
>
> —Paul Gauguin to Daniel de Monfreid, Marquesas, August 25, 1902

1

Gauguin's oeuvre, freed of the cumbersome weight of the artist's extravagant biography, comes to us in the form of that well-travelled, illegitimate daughter of the Cézannian revolution painted on a cigar box lid in flat, pure, synthetic, saturated colours; something that is no longer a landscape ('a formless [*informe*] landscape') but a 'talisman': the *Talisman,* the *Laven River at Bois d'Amour* presented by Sérusier in Autumn 1888 on his return from

Pont-Aven.[1] The talisman owes its power, it is said, to the 'logical construction of the composition'[2]—a composition whose quest to surpass Impressionist realism has driven the simplification of colour beyond all description, and will lead to the formation of the Nabi group, who recognise in Gauguin their 'undisputed Master'.[3]

(As Maurice Denis explains, the Nabis will understand symbolism 'not [as] an idealist theory', but as 'the most strictly scientific approach to art' in which 'the immediate results of the positive philosophies' of Taine and Spencer are blended with the 'influence of Cézanne on Gauguin, Bernard, etc'.)[4]

Originally 'stolen' from Cézanne, then—if we are to believe the famous words of the complainant on the subject of his 'little sensation'—and soon to be launched on the assault of the Tropics,[5] Gauguin's *good news* stands for a break with what will appear, with what he will portray (not without a certain violence and a certain calculation) as the Old Testament of modern art. To the extent where it is now Cézanne who will be said to spring 'from the proud lineage of Gauguin'. . . .[6] Need we point out that the right-minded Prophets (*nabi* in Hebrew) will soon demur at this good news? (The order of the day is reaction against contemporary painting—in the name of Cézanne's 'classicism'.)

Without even having to wait for the great revelation, and prefigured by Huysman's prejudicial 1880 citation for the 'dilution of the still uncertain works of Pissarro',[7] Gauguin's enterprise will immediately be condemned as the 'art of a sailor' whose instigator, under the guise of 'synthetism' (a term invented or reprised by him, we don't know which) and syncretism, hardly conceals his having taken 'a little [. . .] from everywhere'—the portrait of Gauguin as a 'man of genius, an assimilator *par excellence*' painted by his defender Julien Leclerq.[8] Together with the marketing of the artist as work of art, the 'anti-artistic' attitude of such transcultural 'trinket collecting' condemns itself in the eyes of his first mentor Camille Pissarro, who was in principle unsympathetic to the *transpositional*[9] quality of such an 'exaggerated' art.[10] Soon enough, his ceramics would be spoken of in terms of 'Hindu, Tibetan, Javanese, and medieval resurrections' stitched together by a 'cutter of images'.[11] Cézanne himself, in the homage Gauguin pays him in 1886, entitled *Still Life with Profile of Laval* (46 × 38 cm), will be singularly confronted with a ceramic the savage 'monstrosity' of which captures the attention of the young Laval—entering abruptly into the visual field from the upper right edge of the picture according to a 'photographic' dispositif à la Degas—and which overshadows a wholly Cézannian still life, thus doubly threatened from upstream and *downstream* [*l'aval*]. . . . Adopting the close-up, hallucinated mode of vision suggested by Laval's profile, concentrated on the forehead and the eye—a closed brain-eye with a monocle—we see that the hollow interior of

the ceramic has the exact shape of a Cézannian skull-apple.[12] The painting lacks nothing to indicate the presence of this dispositif, and to emphasise the meaning of this capture: placed in an overly close confrontation with Laval's visage, the coarsely anthropomorphic negative form of the ceramic—in the form of a primitive idol—associates the 'apple' with the emptying out of the 'skull'; the Cézannian treatment of modelled light and shade parodies the Master's famous apples; on the left, a negative space within this negative space, echoing the *point culminant* of the light of the Cézannian volumes, left in reserve so that we see the ground, is no less telling. The four flaps manifest the bursting of the skull-apple, with the lower flap lolling out like a tongue onto the large 'unidentifiable' fruit shaped like a large squash, the colours of which fuse those of the pot and those of the apples: a ceramic metamorphosis into 'severe matter', a Cézannian apple baked in the Gauguinian oven. This fruit appropriates a patch of Cézanne-apple-red that contrasts with the green apple placed in front of it; and in the ground, the flaps of the burst ceramic-apple, exploded like a 'volcano' with its lava in frozen fusion, are transformed into decorative motifs which, unlike the Cézannian apples, are non-individuated. In this ground, we perceive a form that extends Laval's hair and perhaps his face, and, confronting it, above the ceramic, a vaguely human profile (a self-portrait?), defining this central zone as a kind of mirror where the dappled Cézannian green of the apples becomes a patch-zone of pure, flat tints: Cézanne as seen in Gauguin's 'ocular mirror'. This whole central zone, therefore, becomes the place where we pass, according to a continuous variation, from Gauguin's ceramics to his painting (as the right flap of the ceramic, in relief, falls back into the plane), and—this time on the contrary indicating a discontinuity—from Cézanne's to Gauguin's painting: in the upper left part of the ground, an apple melts into a 'decorative' monochrome, as if to mark the confrontation of Cézannian 'composition' with an abstract 'construction', 'created from scratch', as Gauguin will soon claim. . . . Two years later, Félix Fénéon, the first to discover the importance of Gauguin's ceramics, writes: 'Barbarous and atrabilious in character, not particularly atmospheric, coloured with diagonal touches falling in showers from right to left [remarkably Cézannian traits . . .], these proud paintings would be a summation of M. Paul Gauguin's oeuvre, if only this shrike [*grièche*] artist had not been above all a potter. Reviled, nasty, hard stoneware, he loved it'.[13] His love of ceramics may be the belated fruit of an 'Indian, Inca background',[14] yet this is an authenticity tinged with implacable strategy: the shrike is a carnivorous bird that impales its prey on sharp points before eating it. Cézanne, Degas, for whom the 'shrike artist' harboured a voracious admiration. . . . But let's bring this consuming parenthesis to a close, and come back to what Gauguin wished to portray, what he had to portray, as the Old Testament of modern painting—in the name of a colourism so extreme that the first word that comes to mind is 'abstraction'—an abstraction unleashed against the motif of description, and

which displaces Cézanne's whole project, a project marked by a mysterious ambivalence between these two terms.

Nb. This Cézannian in-between of motif and abstraction—as Gauguin perceives it—will, not without irony, be distanced in the very name of a beyond of Cézanne, with the final argument, addressed to Vincent by he who is henceforth 'artist, seeker, and thinker', according to which 'All this is mannered, perhaps—but where's the natural in a painting?'[15]

Although 'Delacroix and Manet made beautiful colour', as Gauguin writes in his notes from 1896 to 1898, 'their masterpieces only give us direct sensations of drawing'.[16] And this despite the importance of the two painters in regard to his will, in the mid-1880s, to furnish a foundation for painting other than an 'impressionist' one: 'Manet, the painter who Gauguin most admired';[17] Delacroix, seen through the Baudelairean filter, studied by way of Charles Blanc even before Gauguin had devoured the *Journal* (published from 1893 to 1895). The best way to put it is that, while distancing themselves from an academic tradition they felt they were struggling against, neither Manet nor Delacroix went any further than *not drawing like the others*, and drawing *with colours* instead. Scorning the outline, taking things 'from the middle, through masses, from the core', Delacroix took drawing into a new dimension according to the principle of an entirely dynamic, entirely animal composition, which Gauguin compared to the 'breath of a powerful monster'.[18] In doing so, he endowed drawing with more effective means to kinaesthetic and empathic effects, and with an unequalled force—think of the famous *Study for the Death of Sardanapalus* in the Drawing Room in the Louvre.[19] But what Delacroix and Manet alike falls short of is a practice in which colour would *attack drawing*[20] to the extent of reducing it *entirely* to a rhythm that 'denounces lines, limits their number, hieratises them'; to that more *primitive* state, that more *primitive* brilliance in which lines and colours are immediately as one, 'in each of the spacious zones formed by their interlacing'; colours used without mixing and without intermediate tonal values are set vibrating for themselves, *uniformly*, 'without infringing on the neighbouring colours',[21] without any appeal to the shimmering effects of light, without representing anything 'absolutely real in the vulgar sense of the word'.[22] So that—as Julien Leclercq intuits in his defence of Gauguin—it is 'the quality of tone that limits the duration and the rhythm of line'[23] by bringing forth a vibration as enigmatic as that 'of symphonies, of harmonies', and from which one takes away 'coloured images that vibrate at the very base of [one's] being'.[24]

Now, this musicality of colours, thus located as far as possible from the subject and its modelling (however 'vigorous' . . .) in a *tone* that will attain

its highest intensity of expression—'the musical part that colour will henceforth play in modern painting'[25]—with the principle of the 'listening eye' in Gauguin, on the most prosaic level of his art is above all the sign of a break with the drifting of the plastic arts 'into literary affectations', in 'this time that is [. . .] literary to its marrow'.[26] Anti-descriptive, *suggestive* because it 'does not express directly any idea',[27] when Gauguin speaks of musicality it is first and foremost a way of positing the *decorative*: *decorative abstraction* as a *without-literature*, a *without-reading*—'without servitude to the text', as Maurice Denis will indicate, in opposing '*symbolist* tendencies, that is to say the search for expression through the work of art' to 'mystical and *allegorical* tendencies, that is to say the search for expression through the subject'.[28] For despite his will to reduce painting to a musical conception of its harmonies,[29] Gauguin will never succumb to that magic that is peculiar to music, the magic that traverses bodies to deliver them from the density of the things of the world, so as better to express the inexpressible.[30] (A music whose supernatural effect conjugates, under Wagner's influence, the floating and the infused, and which might be described in the words of Verlaine: *No Colour, nothing but Nuance*.) Quite to the contrary, what is characteristic of colour is that it is posited on the outside, composing what is called harmony, which Gauguin reminds us is the truth of its multiplicity,[31] in *coloured spaces* according to a relation of exteriority—a '*physical* principle' which must be thought out,[32] which knows nothing of musical intimacy, and which projects 'what we might call the music *of* the painting' into 'such and such an arrangement of colours, of light and shade'. Thus, 'before even knowing what the painting represents, you enter into a cathedral, finding yourself placed at too great a distance to know what it represents, and you are often gripped by this magical accord. Here lies the superiority of painting over other art'.[33] A magical accord. . . . Gauguin thus makes an observation common to Delacroix and Baudelaire (that the modern painting abolishes the correct distance of classical representation: that it demands to be seen *both from too close and from far enough away* to 'make it impossible to understand its subject or to distinguish its lines')[34]—but only to project it *against* the (too literary) romantic master[35] so as to manifest not the ideal supremacy of music[36] but the decisive superiority of painting: a painting where representation is suspended according to a distance-effect that the simile of entering into a cathedral compares to an effect of *grandeur* judged to be as incompatible with 'literary' romanticism as with the 'phenomenism' of those Impressionists who 'draw like nature'—as Baudelaire says in his 'Salon of 1846', in the passage where his defence of Delacroix leads him to call into question the antique primacy of drawing. . . . (Having defined Impressionism as 'a painting that tends toward phenomenism', Gustave Geffroy immediately cites this passage from Renan's *Drames philosophiques*:

'We must look neither too closely, nor from too far away. The eye's vision is equally falsified when you place the object right beneath your eyes and when you place it out of reach'.)[37] The same goes, then, for the grandeur of *this* painting (Gauguin's)[38] in so far as, in opposition to any 'optical mixture' that is supposed to reassemble representation at the correct distance—neither too close nor too far . . . —on the basis of juxtaposed touches that obey the physical code of optics, it revives for its own purposes (in the cathedral) the fragmentary vibrations of stained glass,[39] and addresses to the soul, in its most mysterious depths, the interlocking of flat tints and their 'supplementary constructive elements' that are stitched together in the brain like a *patchwork*. Now, what could be further from a music that drowns tone in the most 'emotive', the most 'ethereal' *nuances* of the self, fusing them together in a wavelike radiation that quavers in the air (a radiation and a quavering in which we recognise a Wagnerian generation who blended affective values and atmospheric tonalities in order to intone, with Liszt, the prelude to *Lohengrin*'s 'transparent vapour of the clouds') than a *primitivism* of colours-forms whose techniques of *cloisonnement* and *découpage* belong to the *arts of fire*? Quite logically, this arbitrary polychromatism makes it just as 'difficult to define the art of stained glass in "impressionist" terms'[40] as to view Gauguin's work as a musical translation of Impressionism.[41] As is confirmed by the Scottish painter A. S. Hartrick, who, in an aside in his memoir of Pont-Aven, confirms that, in 1888–1889, it was 'from thirteenth- and fourteenth-century glass [. . .] that [Gauguin] got an idea of design and colour which exactly suited him; and he then proceeded to translate it into an art of his own, using oil paint as a vehicle. [. . .] Perhaps the most compelling example is his celebrated painting *The Yellow Christ*'.[42]

Based on the synthetism put in place in this 1889 canvas with its hieratic, 'barbarous' simplicity, with its strange tints the melancholic acidity of which did not even spare the reds—'In the entirely yellow countryside, an agonising yellow, [. . .] the piteous and barbarous Christ is daubed with yellow', according to Mirbeau's remarkable description[43]—*The Artist with the Yellow Christ* [1889–1890] is an imbroglio of fragments, of sequestrated shards that play on the traditional mastery of pathos associated with the self-portrait, 'shattering' the face of the painter into dull laminar colours rendered in a manner 'strongly inspired by Cézanne's technique' (Maurice Denis). This helps to project the painter's head—already represented in *Christ in the Garden of Olives* (1889) with the red hair and the beard of a modern torture victim—towards the oversized stoneware self-portrait fashioned some months previously, the *Jar in the Form of a Grotesque Head*, the deformed head of Gauguin the savage exposed to the torture of 'grand feu', like the inscription of 'some wild [*fauve*] dream', in Félix Fénéon's premonitory words, that we see in the background of the painting.[44] For this *mise en abyme* of the work

within the work (and of the perception of the spectator: *sensationally* torn between the identification with Christ and his savage alteration, while his *sensibility* is torn between Cézanne-the-painter and Gauguin-the-potter) is only made possible by a fusion of colour that is 'far from nature' but as close as can be to the texture of matter. '*Colours as grave as matter*'. By way of the most caloric, the most intense sculpture in which is intermingled the memory of the Peruvian potteries of his 'Inca' childhood, 'the echo of a pre-industrial, even prelinguistic world', in frank opposition to the 'modern primitivism of Pissarro and Seurat',[45] Gauguin's pictorial working exploits this vitrification of matter, this '*ignitiation*' *of and to matter* which he himself had undergone directly with the ceramics of winter 1886–1887 alongside Ernest Chaplet[46]—while leading to a 'simplification' of its design in an ever more 'synthetic' direction that brings it technically close to 'cloisonnism'. To adopt Carlyle's key expression in *Sartor Resartus* (a reference that came from van Gogh and Meyer de Haan, and whose importance for Gauguin we shall see below): a '*Baphometic Baptism of Fire*'. Gauguin repeatedly speaks of colour as that which must be raised to a high temperature, treated by baking[47] in order to lend it a plasticity independent of all external influence, following the example of Japanese and Chinese ceramics with their perfect understanding of the animated, flaming characteristics of matter which the hand can extract by dint of accidents, 'bizarre offspring'.[48] So many 'terrible' traits emerging from a matter-energy that distances them from the Impressionist atmosphere and from the cult of the visual instant, since here the singularity of colour varies with each level of incandescence to which it is raised. To discover the thermic thresholds of matter 'as it passes through hell' is no longer a matter of indulging oneself in the 'insipid coquetries of line and subject', or of *drawing* with colours that have little in common 'with a severe matter'.[49] And the painting, in its turn, will be complete 'at that moment when the most intense emotions are in fusion in the depths of one's being, when they burst forth and when thought comes up like lava from a volcano',[50] thus coming close to that 'Devil Ferment', that incendiary Decomposition that is the terrestrial globe as cerebral globe—'that nocturnal's Devil Ferment and Decomposition (of my cerebral globe as well as of the Earth-globe)', as Carlyle writes—as it 'decomposes the Atmosphere'.[51] The *Still Life with Profile of Laval* testifies to all of this, by delivering us once and for all from the seductions of the 'pleasant', the shackles of similarity, and the authority of those Impressionists who see 'with a brainless eye', seeking 'around the eye and not in the mysterious centre of thought'. Quite to the contrary, one must let oneself slide into 'the dreamed landscape, created from scratch', one must allow oneself to be led by the elaboration of 'sensations perceived through the medium of colours'[52]—so as to risk oneself to 'an art otherwise abstract than the servile imitation of nature'.[53]

At each stage of colour intensity, in each of its increments, one will seek to produce a singular vitrification of matter, a distribution of its tones, from the coldest to the hottest, so that it falls to a *nonfigurative* colour to reveal sensations, and no longer to a solely *subjective* sensation to assemble, to figure, the colours of a 'sacred nature'. At every degree, according to their proper intensities, colours genetically encompass sensations that the heat will develop, de-form, and trans-form, rather than illustrating them (even musically). Set ablaze by these 'ceramics-sculptures', by 'these strange, barbarous, and savage ceramics' (in regard to which we decidedly cannot altogether agree with Albert Aurier that 'the sublime potter has put more soul than clay' into them),[54] it is in the light of this kind of overflowing, suggestive of molten metal (and not of the hazy impression of vibrations in the air)—as in *Washerwomen at the Roubin Du Roi Arles* (1888), with its colours that spill out of a volcano of mud brought to melting point by a fiery red bush—that we must hear Gauguin's cry: 'Pure colour! And everything must be sacrificed to it'.[55] From the most 'pure' colour, purified, intensified in the trial by fire, reduced to a mineral fire that transforms it into lava and redeems it, is born a network of augmented sensations of the 'fire of life'—according to van Gogh's Faustian expression—by way of an *energy that materialises an aesthetic* and its plastic correspondents, which are not transcribed from the ordinary surface of the real. The tree trunk, with its local colour, matters little. And the half-tint of a Delacroix will not realise its image. What distinguishes the blueing of the tree in the evening is the primitive property of colour, not some shadow or nuance representing an ulterior, figurative property that calls for its imitative employment.[56] So a bluish grey can be rendered by a pure blue straight from the tube, just as the strongest green will best express, will best *construct*, the intensity of a brighter light through its pictorial equivalence, irreducible to a formal order. A principle of intensity that is synthetic as much as material, attributed to Cézanne by Gauguin, a principle according to which, since 'a kilo of green is more green than half a kilo',[57] one need have no hesitation in 'us[ing] a green that is greener than nature', or in extending the touch over the whole extent of an area of flat tint to defigure sensations by relating them to the dream that is their point of origin and the source of their *decorative suggestion*.[58] So that the musical metaphor, developed in the direction of 'these oriental threnodies chanted by shrill voices, accompanied by vibrant notes which are contiguous to them and enrich them by opposition',[59] will above all be the sign of the most radical break-up of the colour-nature couplet, and by virtue of this alone will prevent the 'musical part' from falling back on those 'beautiful harmonies, infinitely varied as in nature' that Maurice Denis and the Nabis will soon substitute for 'his over-simplified idea of pure color'.[60] From colour in the exclusive sense Gauguin confers upon it, 'from colour alone,

as the language of the listening eye, the language of its suggestive virtue', as A. Delaroche says, 'capable of aiding the flight of the imagination, furnishing our dream, opening a new door onto infinity and onto mystery', are born sensations that, in naturalist terms, would have to be called insensible—and insensible to Beauty. For colour is 'in itself enigmatic in the sensations that it yields', generating images that are no more drawings indexed to natural perception and content to heighten its brilliance than they are 'equivalents in beauty' (Denis) of the infinite variations of nature.

We might think here of that celebrated passage of Baudelaire, in 'Salon of 1859':

> Just as a dream inhabits its own proper atmosphere, so a conception which has become a composition needs to move within a coloured setting that is peculiar to itself.[61]

But then why still these 'natural' motifs and landscapes, why this *postponing of abstraction* (in the sense that has only been able to become our own on the basis of Gauguin's employment of it: construction pitted against description), if what is characteristic of the painter is to sacrifice *everything* to pure colour in his quest for an *auto da fé*? If it is of no matter that, 'when we take colour in terms of its own allure, without its designating any object perceived in nature, then the troubling question arises: "What could that possibly mean?"; a question that disrupts our ability to analyse?'[62]

Why? Because Gauguin's paintings are mysterious, like apparitions called forth by the nocturnal light, and conserving its volcanic memory in the dreamed visions of the brain; anonymous visions to which it falls to encounter the coloured emanations of a landscape in order to incorporate them. There is no other way to understand the painter's celebrated argument which we have continually appropriated:

> With arrangements of lines and colours, on the pretext of any subject whatsoever, whether borrowed from life or from nature, I obtain symphonies, harmonies that represent nothing absolutely *real* in the vulgar sense of the word, which do not express directly any idea, but which should make one think as music makes one think, without the help of ideas or images, simply through the mysterious affinities that exist between our brains and such arrangements of colours and lines.[63]

Thus a motif apparently borrowed from a piece of nature finds itself caught up in new lines that find their incarnation in an imaginary earth, coloured red with blue trees, where the brain can air its maddest visions.

'Without the help of ideas or images' perhaps—but most certainly with the concurrence of that idea of 'interior events that are apparently external' proposed by Hippolyte Taine, when he explains that 'the red color with which the arm-chair is clothed, the green color which seems to me incorporated with the tree, is nothing more than my sensation of red or of green, detached from myself and carried, in appearance, to a distance of six paces from my eyes'.[64] (Gauguin's argument could also be compared with a celebrated passage in Taine's *Philosophy of Art* where the latter set forth his definition of the painting as a 'coloured surface', a definition adopted and adapted by Maurice Denis under Gauguin's influence: 'In themselves and quite apart from their imitative employment, colours, like lines, have a meaning. [. . .] Our impression varies with their assemblage; their assemblage thus has an expression. A painting is a coloured surface, in which various tones and various degrees of light are distributed according to a certain choice. This is its innermost being; the fact that these tones and these degrees of light portray figures, fabrics, architectures, is for them an ulterior property which does not prevent their primitive property from retaining its full importance and all of its rights. Thus colour is enormously important, and the stance that painters take in respect to it determines the rest of their oeuvre'.)[65] Charles Morice will not be mistaken in conceiving of Gauguin's primitive art, in the footsteps of Octave Mirbeau and Jean Dolent, as a 'pure cerebral art'.[66] Hadn't the painter firmly declared: 'My artistic centre is in my brain and not elsewhere'?[67] *Gauguin's crucible is the brain*.

As such, it is not unusual for Gauguin to juxtapose in the same painting and on one single plane two spaces taken from different worlds, fused together by colour. Such is the case in that manifesto-painting of *synthetism*, 'a breviary of his new style' (Rewald), *Vision After the Sermon* (1888, 73 × 92 cm). Flattening out all distinction between matter (the reality of Bretons praying) and thought (the content of their vision), the canvas is composed (i.e., constructed) of a cerebral 'space' in the form of a vision treated in a rigorously two-dimensional primitive style, like stained glass, in several 'panels': in the upper right, *The Struggle of Jacob with the Angel* (transposed from a Hokusai print representing two fighters) abuts onto a gleaming vermilion meadow ('pure vermilion')[68] that is barely modulated, its colour applied almost uniformly. Separated from 'the wrestling in its landscape, not real and out of proportion' by the strong dark diagonal of a tree trunk of Japanese inspiration (in the manner of Hiroshige), on the left and across the whole foreground plane a dominical 'place' presents the religious reality of a Breton mass whose worshippers ('real people [*gens nature*]') we might think were trying to follow the sermon from outside the church did we not see the priest, strangely similar to the artist in profile, arbitrarily cut off on the extreme right of the frame. All of this ('natural' and 'non-natural'

alike) is brought together by such a powerful compression of depth that the silhouettes of the faithful seem to have been nailed to the canvas 'like a series of paper cut-outs',[69] while the white caps in the foreground, in their luminous decorative play, 'unfolding like gulls' wings',[70] *figure and disfigure* the wings of the vision. Accentuated by a very light primer and by the use of wax to enhance their dusky mystery,[71] the flat tints of this violently anti-naturalist art of the surface bring about a *fusion* of spirit and matter that the whole construction conveys, grounded, *ungrounded* as it is upon the hallucination of a red meadow/ground that decentres vision around a dissonance that adjoins the imaginary—in the guise of religion—to the texture of a world rendered in all its 'rustic and superstitious simplicity'.[72] This mirage that interlaces the vision with the memory of Delacroix's wax fresco (*The Struggle of Jacob with the Angel*, 1861) and with Baudelaire's *Beacons* planted in a 'lake of blood haunted by bad angels', is matched by the material effect created by the application of smooth and fine chromatic layers onto the raw, rough canvas, so that 'the literally three-dimensional bumps accentuate the two-dimensionality of the painting'.[73] Setting up 'the rather severe whole' of this 'very badly done [. . .] religious painting'[74] against the whole tradition of easel painting, the *canvas* gives the feeling of having become the *medium*, serving less to 'write clearly the ideic signification of the object' that would emerge inevitably from a 'transcendental emotivity' to express the 'general symbol' (Albert Aurier), than to transcribe the most abstract *and most material* sense of a pictorial space whose colours ('far from nature') are the dreams awoken by our 'visions' according to an entirely visual poetics that comes to dis-figure, to *decontextualise* the 'forms-signs'[75] proper to the narrative logic of the painting. (Art, as Gauguin affirms in a letter to Daniel de Monfreid in August 1901, is 'neither the illustration nor the translation of writings by form'.)[76] Like the vivid red that began by *enamelling* the dark dresses of the two little Breton girls dancing (*Breton Girls Dancing*, June 1888), but whose action is so far from being 'readable' that 'one has the impression of being audience at the scene of a trance'.[77]

At this stage, there is nothing to prevent us from invoking, as Aurier does, a *pictorial symbolism*. Except that in that case, Gauguin's declarations would immediately oblige us to consider the inherent incongruity of 'non-literary symbolism' as a genre. This difficulty, which leads the painter to remark that the 'symbolic way is a rocky road', at a time when he still wishes to consider symbolism as 'in fact, in my nature',[78] is not at all contested by the young art critic of the *Mercure de France* in his 'ideist' manifesto of a Platonist bent; in fact, he decides resolutely in favour of the *Poem*, illuminated by 'that

marvellous painting of Paul Gauguin's [. . .] which resolves, for the good reader, the eternal psychological problem of the possibility of religions, of politics, and of sociologies'. A vision guided by the simple intuition of the True, colour will be 'the word of an Idea'. Now, for many years this was the programme of another painter, a far from Platonic one with a taste for naturalist literature above all else: Vincent van Gogh. To make his colours 'suggestive', he subordinates them to *poetic ideas* that the subject of the painting must describe, within the framework of what it makes sense to call a *realist symbolism*. Against these 'poetical subjects', in a letter to Vincent from the beginning of September 1888—in the middle of his work on the *Vision*—Gauguin objects that 'forms and colours brought into harmonies create a form of poetry in themselves', and that in this sense he 'finds *everything* poetic', an objection he would repeat throughout their adventure at Arles. So much so that van Gogh ends up ceding the point, writing to his sister Wil in mid-November 1888, in reference to *Memory of the Garden at Etten*: 'I don't know if you'll understand that one can speak poetry just by arranging colours well, just as one can say consoling things in music'. (This 'consoling' comparison, on the other hand, definitely comes from Vincent, who is thinking here of Wagner, and will soon suggest that 'we're perhaps [. . .] there to console or to prepare for more consolatory painting'.)[79] Just as the bizarre nuanced and multiplied lines snaking through the whole painting are not meant to give us a vulgar similitude of the garden, but to draw it for us as seen in a dream, in character yet stranger than in reality. The principle of a Dream becomes the Vision of a painting. But Aurier can only manage to describe it in terms of a 'Voice [. . .] become visible, imperiously visible'—and not just any voice: 'the old curate preaching'. . . . We can make out from here the chuckling of the Savage from Peru[80] who had lent the curate his own features, basing his painting on a biblical subject only so as to 'attain in the figures a great rustic and superstitious simplicity'. As for the painting 'of the head' of Vincent, Gauguin stated at the beginning of December that he had ruined it: a 'failure' of a painting. . . . We know what came next, in the Lantier-Zola version: 'only the truth, only nature, is the possible basis, the necessary policing, outside of which madness begins'. (A madness that brings us back to Taine's claim that 'our pure visual sensations are none other than signs' whose 'experience alone acquaints us with their meanings'; a logical madness of the deformation of common sense through the pictorial experience of signs in their most immanent—most horizontal and most sensational—terms, as 'indexes of unknown things'.)[81]

From this point on, radicalised by a tropicalism synonymous with the departitioning [*décloisonnement*] of the domains of 'dream' and 'reality', Gauguin's painting will continue to multiply such juxtapositions and intrications, assimilating the painting, and the painting within the painting, to

multiple visions and polymorphous dreams that render enigmatic every landscape's effect of the 'real': as in that *Dream (Te rerioa*, 1896) inspired by Delacroix's *Women of Algiers*, where we no longer know whether the landscape, with its rich colour contrasts that coincide across the two scenes, was painted 'in the real' or 'in a painting' (one whose conception is very close to that of *Rue de Tahiti* [1891]), since everything is a dream imbricated on the canvas (the horseman in the dreamed landscape of women and children, who themselves dream of the man on the horse, a dream conveyed by the erotico-symbolic 'fantasies' of the two panels—a dream breathed by, inspired by the visions of the painter, marrying Borabudur with Maori sculpture . . .).[82] As is the case with the apparitions that emerge from the encrustations of paint and disappear back into them in the *Self-Portrait near Golgotha* (1896), in which we see superposed and soldered together 'upon a background of conjectured calvaries'[83] the phantomal image of two beings leading Christ to his martyrdom, a Christ who is none other than the painter himself, with a dolorous mien, fixing us straight in the eye in a provocative attitude, and dressed in a shirt whose rough cloth is gnawed away by the smeared 'Spirit of the dead' plants announced by the dark 'barbarous' sculptures at the base; or, in the final *Bouquet of Flowers* (around 1900–1901) arranged in a ceramic pot encrusted with a primitive medallion with interlaced forms, the terrifying face that *transpires* in the uppermost left part of the frame, and which—as Françoise Cachin has noted—'could be a sculpture [. . .], the painter's face distorted by a mirror, or the disquieting apparition of a *Tupapau*'.[84]

Let's not forget the startling composite impression, in an otherwise luxuriant register, delivered in one of Gauguin's strangest paintings by the plastic equivalents he invents for 'that greatness, depth, that mystery of Tahiti, when it must be expressed in a canvas of one metre square'[85]—the canvas being, in this case, a Virgin with Child, 'the wild [*fauve*] Virgin and Jesus also' (A. Jarry): *Ia orana Maria* (*Hail Mary*, around 1891–1892, 113.7 × 87.7 cm). The whole painting presents us with a densely decorated space, an overdecorative plane that explodes with numerous patches of luxuriant colour. Copied from a photograph of a Javanese frieze in Borobudur, the praying faithful follow one other, as if deposited on the canvas with no support other than a dark mauve band 'showing' the way, arranged with no coherent perspective, conferring upon the whole a naivety quite in accordance with the vows of primitivism. On this painting, which in places allows a white ground to show through, accentuating the surface effects and the overpainting, everything begins to melt together, and soon the eye can no longer manage to discern foreground from background. Thus, the angel with the long black hair, her face simplified as in a stained glass window, whose mauve robe appears behind a shrub with rather Florentine branches which dissimulate her, forms one single motif, one sole mass, with the foliage of the gardenia, its white

flowers enamelling her blue, violet, and yellow feathers. Bordered by the violets of the mountain and the road landscaped by rich Tahitian nature, she could almost pass unnoticed in so far as her exotic presence seems to be a product of the imagination, the work of the brain acting upon the billowing masses in order to extract from them the appearance of a figure. Does the extreme shallowness of the painting have any aim other than to expose the virtual fringe of imperceptible images that inhabit it, and between which the brain must pass in order to actualise a form?

Otherwise 'fin de siècle' than the red pool of Maurice Denis's *Sunlight on the Terrace* (1890), this subtle *tachisme* invites comparison to the deliberately provoked hallucinations and 'experiments in perception' analysed by Hermann Rorschach, where some mass of colour, first folded in on itself, is unfolded into the shape of a butterfly or a bat, depending on the affects of the brain that configures it.[86] A hallucinatory experiment formulated by Alfred Binet in 1886 when he discusses the process of conversion whereby a surface gives rise to a face, and notes how a photograph of a landscape will be perceived by a patient as if it were a portrait, polarised around visual landmarks disposed to induce delirium.[87] The support gives rise to hallucination when the patient fixes anchor-points within it around which to inflect the surface and to give it the appearance of a figure. The microscopic veins of the support serve as landmarks for the suggestion of an image that the hysteric will not find on any other surface, in so far as he remains attentive to the structure of the least detail, imperfection, or singularity upon which to fix his projection.[88] The white page, the Bristol board, is saturated with remarkable points, microscopic indices that need only to be polarised, just as the retina unfolds its coloured geometry around minute phosphenes. The most virginal plane, the most tenuous patch, behaves like the most *superficial* retina. . . . Whereas in ordinary perception the details are ignored, here they invade the whole visual field and insist in a manner that is startlingly magnified by pathology (or hypnosis), yielding forms that are figurating rather than figured. Thus, on a blank page invested according to the most intense molecularity, the patient identifies minute 'spots' capable of amalgamating into a surreal impression, somewhat like the way in which certain phosphenes can induce hallucination on the level of natural vision.

It is this kind of paradoxical image that is suggested to us by Gauguin's canvases, unprimed or prepared with such a light primer that it hardly even modifies the raw texture of the material, thus allowing him to exploit its granular irregularities, conferring upon his paintings 'something of the roughness of his pottery' (the uneven texture 'breaks up the touch' by dissimulating it).[89] For here, this primitive roughness sets out to conquer a veritable *field*

of figurability[90] through the distribution of blue patches on a yellow ground which *place* the extravagant Angel, blended with the green leaves and the white flowers of the shrub. But in truth, everything in the animation of the colours and the pale lines is conducive to these visual *conversions* favoured by the ecstasy of prayer, which, combined with the plants and the tropical heat, makes the intoxication of angels and the sweet perfume of flowers well up. This is conducive, also, to the movement whereby, turning again to Georges Didi-Hubermann, 'many self-evident truths concerning the act of seeing and the offering of the visible world in general are *opened up*, overturned, by the result of this extraordinary situation'.[91]

For example, as far as the object-relation is concerned, there is no difference between the white flowers that decorate the red sarong of Maria/Mary ('a haloed apparition of woman'—Paul Delaroche), the white and red flowers of the garden, the stylised tree visible behind the two Tahitians, and the still life in the foreground composed of a bunch of wild red bananas, two breadfruits that hardly stand out from the emerald green ground, and the yellow bananas on a wooden plate, all posed in an oneiric setting that evokes the flora of the brain as much as the fruits of the earth.

Gauguin's oeuvre resonates with the mystery of the incorporation of the spirit into an exotic, *primitive* matter which is that of the subject of the canvas and of its most 'terrestrial' texture—so contrary to the illusionist tradition of oil painting—as it reduces the world to an immense tactile retina haunted by pure visual and virtual fields that emphasise the 'thin zones of pictorial void' that tend to extend themselves from the outlines to the very heart of the wide bands of colour.[92] These are no longer landscapes traversed by the eye, but material dreams that it deploys upon the screen of colour surfaces, and in the wake of the thick lines that marble a composition scattered with strange 'details'. Like the half-green half-vermillion mask with unequal greenish-white/yellow eyes visible in the upper right corner of *Parau na te varua ino* (*Words of the Devil*, 1892), and the hardly discernible hand beneath it, cut off from a strange animal motif of the same dark tint by the sinuous line of a liana vine which, along with the branch of the tree that it extends, forms an immense menacing tentacle whose summit crackles with yellowish-white highlights below the woman's head (like the 'flowers of Tupapau, phosphorescences, a sign that the ghost is interested in you', as Gauguin writes of *Manao Tupapau*, painted in the same year, in 'Genesis of a painting' in the *Cahier pour Aline*); but also the unlikely mass of the tree, the animality of which is emphasised yet further by the red-rose hatching that makes the form of an eye appear; and the figure, surrounded on all sides by sinuous forms both dark and brilliant and which are like the monstrous deformation of the disquieting, perfectly ovoid mask of the 'devil' that operates as their emanative centre. . . . Amplified to the scale of the entire painting, in *Fatata te*

miti (*By the Sea*, 1892) we find again the tree of *Parau na te varua ino*, this time as a vegetable, terrestrial sea monster, whose branch-arms are charged with electricity and whose dark animal form, overlapped by a haloed woman decorated with vegetable motifs, mates with the luminous face of the rose and mauve beach. . . .

Every figure thus seems to surge forth as if from the indiscernible ground in which it bathes, dormant, in the reserve of the hallucinated eye that will stir it from its sleep by imposing upon it a differentiating revelation founded on 'the power of exoticism, which is nothing but the power of conceiving otherwise'—that is to say, again with Victor Segalen, the *different*, in the sense of 'the cognizance that something is not itself'.[93] This is akin to what Gauguin shows us in *Pape Moe* (1893), which should be translated not as *Mysterious Water* but, following the glottal inflection of *mo'e*, as *Latent Water*, with its source gushing from humid dark rocks amidst vegetation as ambiguous as the sex of the 'figure' quenching its thirst from the stream.[94] These then are the spirits of the forest, emerging in the tracery of mineral and animal throngs that arouse the eye, forcing it to see these paradoxical figures appended to the sumptuous festivities of colour-matter.

Gods, spirits, animals, 'vegetable and human flora' are all taken up in the same plane of apparition, a plane of muted colours, abstract shadows, and undulating lines—as in the monumental recapitulation-painting of 1897–1898, *Where did we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?* (375 × 139 cm), painted shortly before the (self-declared) attempted suicide by arsenic, and inspired by Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*[95]—already an emblem in the *Portrait of Meyer de Haan* (1889), along with Milton's *Paradise Lost* (but *Paradise* is hidden, so that only *Lost* is legible), at a time when the work of the Scottish philosopher had not yet been translated into French (it would be translated in 1895, the year of Meyer de Haan's death at forty-three). In chapter 8 of book I of this work, entitled 'The World Out of Clothes', the philosopher Diogenes Teufelsdröcke (Devil's dung, the diabolical excrement of divine origin) inhabiting Wahngasse (the street of daydreams) in the land of I-don't-know-where (Weissnichtwo), an errant spectre on a 'savage pilgrimage' in a universe which is the Foreign par excellence, presents his 'spiritual Painting of Nature', introducing the reader to 'an unexplored, almost inconceivable region, a chaos'. Leaving the environs of an 'Aesthetic Tea' to go 'from Mystery to Mystery', borne by the questions 'Where do we come from?' and 'Where are we going?' without faith responding, he asks himself whether 'on the most extreme edge of our current horizon, there is not something like the *mirage of an Earth*; the promise of new Fortunate Islands, of a whole virgin America perhaps, *for those who have the sails to be carried thus far?*'—thus projecting into an 'undiscovered America' his hallucinated interrogations of the coloured-colourist phantasmagoria that is for

us the placeholder of the Self, imprisoned as we are in our *Dream-grotto* . . . (an 'Apparitions' Cave' or 'grotesque' dream?) painted on the Canvas of the World:

> Who am I; what is this ME? A Voice, a Motion, an Appearance;—some embodied, visualized Idea in the Eternal Mind? *Cogito, ergo sum*. Alas, poor Cogitator, this takes us but a little way. Sure enough, I am; and lately was not: but Whence? How? Whereto? The answer lies around, written in all colors and motions, uttered in all tones of jubilee and wail, in thousand-figured, thousand-voiced, harmonious Nature. [. . .] We sit as in a boundless Phantasmagoria and Dream-grotto; boundless, for the faintest star, the remotest century, lies not even nearer the verge thereof: sounds and many-colored visions flit round our sense; but Him, the Unslumbering, whose work both Dream and Dreamer are, we see not; except in rare half-waking moments, suspect not. [. . .] But that same WHERE, with its brother WHEN, are from the first the master-colors of our Dream-grotto; say rather, the Canvas (the warp and woof thereof) whereon all our Dreams and Life-visions are painted.[96]

Painted on rough canvas with the master-colours of a 'Dream-grotto', blending the 'fantasies of our dream' with *Faust*'s Spirit-of-the-Earth (now that the Earth can no longer constitute itself as an earth-of-beauty), each figure contemplates us from its inchoate solitude as if we ourselves were the phantoms of this dream, apparitions arising from 'the most intense emotions [. . .] in fusion in the depths of one's being'. More captives than witnesses as 'the work is created suddenly, brutally if you like, but great, almost superhuman',[97] since we are prisoners of the closed composition of the grotto-canvas (or of the 'cave wall', in Mallarmé's terms) and of its multiple 'compartments' watched over by Hina, the blue goddess of the Moon. In the supernatural luminosity (that of a 'natural supernaturalism', according to the title of the essential chapter of *Sartor Resartus*)[98] that she impresses on the whole of the great painting ('constantly blue and viridian from one end to the other',[99] and thus the *other side* of landscape-green), the idol that faces us seems to address to us all of these gazes, from the squatting old woman to the two 'savagesses' keeping watch over the sleeping baby, as if she were addressing a man whom she had made cross the frontier of the common into the secret hyperaesthesic experience of Death and the reality of Madness, which 'Ever [. . .] remain[s] a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation, which swims thereon, which we name the Real'. The errant protagonist no longer travels; he advances into the night of hallucination, becoming the object and the subject of this *quest between the lines* that seeks to reveal the 'black foundations' upon which the 'habitable flowery Earth' reposes.[100]

We also rediscover, in this dawning lunar speleology of the *Ancient mahorie* (sic) *Religion* rewritten and illustrated following the first stay in Tahiti,[101] apart from Carlyle and his idea of the Hero-Artist depicted as a modern primitive with the 'seeing eye' in syntony with the 'magical' world of the 'Complexity of Forces',[102] the influence exerted (via Balzac's Séraphîta) on Gauguin by Swedenborg—the 'inspiring hallucinator', as Aurier says, associating him with the 'sublime seer', 'initiator of a new art'. This is incontestable, but perhaps not sufficient if, contemporaneously with this painting, the painter questions himself on a theme whose distance is symbolically entirely relative, namely: 'Where does the making of a painting begin, and where does it end?' For, if it begins at the moment when 'all thought comes out like lava from a volcano', then maybe it ends with the finished work, which, like cooled lava, would close the cycle of its 'composition', with the completed painting exhibiting the fallout of the 'élan vital' that it would have posited upstream as its brutal and superhuman condition.[103] Gauguin faces this thought, confronts himself with it, in this painting which he judges to '[surpass] all my preceding ones'[104]—yet he does not remain prisoner of it, as we shall see.

Without reinstating in full the lunar palette of the large painting, but projecting us into the place of the painter, the *Portrait of Vaïté Goupil* (1896, 75 × 65 cm), albeit a 'commissioned portrait', delivers something of this hyperaesthesic feeling through a crossing of the ultra-flat (or *infra-thin*) frontier between dream and reality, expressed by the spectral apparition of a young girl. For the little girl with the fixed gaze is no more than a spectre with a chalky, strangely impenetrable face, posed on a dark violet ground that corresponds to a mysterious shadow constellated with floral motifs neither 'irregular enough to be "natural" or regular enough to be "architectural"'.[105] The orange-brown of the robe absorbs what remains of the presence of a body, reduced to a vertical surface that might be said to be juxtaposed with the rose part of the wall, had Gauguin not surprisingly succeeded in fusing the hallucinated spectrality of the child (a little seer with her gaze fixedly lost in an attentive reverie) with the phantasmagoria of the decorative dream that she inhabits (and which the painter invests). This decorative identification can be 'read' on lips whose pale red finds an echo in the sculpted chair and in the embossed flowers of the ground, and, on the other hand, in the concatenation of the line separating the rose zone from the violet that fades away below her shoulder (it *rises* towards the shoulder and the head) with the yoke of the dress, the back of the 'colonial'-style chair serving as its driving element—so that this line of fracture, which is also a line of flight between the light and dark principles that it imbricates, comes to emphasise the extreme

deterritorialisation of the face with its regular traits, its well-combed hair, a lovely soft face as pale as death.

But it is to the Olympia of Tahiti praised by Jarry, the Olympia 'brown on a coverlet of golden arabesques', 'reposing', and to 'The Spirit of the dead [who] is posed'[106] in the place, the inverted place, of the black servant[107]—it is to *Manao Tupapau* (*The Spirit of the Dead Watches*, 1892) and to its 'general sombre, sad, frightful harmony that sounds in the eye like a death knell'[108] that we must decidedly turn. For the tupapau, the spirit of the dead, with its violet purple ground stellated by phosphorescent flowers 'which have a certain resemblance to the apparitions of Redon's imaginary universe',[109] will ceaselessly haunt the world of the painter, who will successively propose many geneses, written and engraved, for the painting ('counter-signed', like all the Tahitian paintings: in the top left we read *Manao Tupapau*). The most curious thing is the strange uncertainty into which its viewers find themselves plunged owing to the fact that we do not see what we expect to see, even when we think that we know—as Gauguin's tale in the manuscript of *Noa Noa* tells us—that 'this half-light [was] surely peopled [. . .] with dangerous apparitions and terrifying suggestions'. Are we to think that this 'literary part'—according to the taxonomy proposed by the painter in the chapter of the *Cahier pour Aline* entitled 'Genesis of a Painting'—could be eclipsed by the 'Musical part' ('Undulating horizontal lines—accords of orange and blue linked by yellows and violets, their derivatives'), something that would have to be a matter for celebration given that this *literature* 'all too often [. . .] did great harm to the painter's most beautiful works',[110] and given that, in short, to follow the Gauguin of the *Cahier* as he suddenly cuts short the analysis of 'whys' and 'wherefores', 'it's quite simply an Oceanian nude study'? But how then to understand the obsession with the morbid tupapau with its black hood (not to mention the register of primitive Maori art: a simple decorative motif borrowed from the macabre profile of an allegorical engraving published by Humbert de Superville in 1801[111] and/or a true 'maori hypostasis' *dreamt up* by the painter[112] in the guise of the most abstract drawing) associated with nocturnal themes (following the *Words of the Devil* addressed to the Tahitian Eve),[113] and the importance with which Gauguin invested the fetish painting[114] that he makes feature, enframed in chromium yellow, reversed ('exactly in accordance with Superville's schema', notes Philippe Dagen), in the *Self-Portrait with Hat* of winter 1893–1894, where the young girl's face, simplified in the extreme, is turned towards the painter as if to testify to the mysterious bonds that unite her to the work?

Following Gauguin's 'mahori' (sic) hypostasis in the *Cahier*, we find an important indication that corroborates the complete title given by Gauguin, *Manao Tupapao, Think of the Revenant—or the Spirit of the Dead Watches*:[115]

> The title Manao Tupapau has two senses—thinking—Revenant—belief
> either she thinks of the revenant
> or the revenant thinks of her.

Thus, we no longer know who is the ghost and who is the subject of this revenance; it is undecidable whether the subject is that which returns to the spirit of the young girl or that which returns to the frontalised eye of he who watches over her (because she *believes* in him). *Thinking—Revenant—Belief.* As if what Gauguin's 'Tahitian' painting makes return, under cover of superstition, is Thought as Belief (*Manao*). Belief as the Revenant of thought discovering the mirrored imbrication of its 'light' face (*noa*) with the 'dark' world of 'spirits' (*mo'a*): *Noa Mo'a*: belief in the necessity, for painting, of these 'new and *terrible* elements' that first present themselves in the form of the lunar completion of an *androgynous image* that belongs to the 'savage'.[116] Thus is hollowed out the space of a *celibate image* whose condition of appearance is that 'she' (Teha'amana la *vahiné*; the image of Teha'amana, more 'true' than the original if the latter was, in fact, the painter's favourite model; the Tehura of his stories who, naturally, very often only existed through his paintings) can think of the revenant *only in so far as* the revenant, in resolutely anonymous fashion, thinks (*in* she whom he thinks) *of* 'her'. For thought does not become belief, belief does not become thought,[117] image-thought rather than thinking in images, except on that impersonal condition detached from any pathos, *prefiguring* a community that only exists in a state of *revenance*—a state, as such, projected into the troubled worlds of woodcuts, with their effect of experimental imprecision. Whence—since this, since these ceaselessly return in the paintings—the fact that *nothing manifests itself in its literality* (fright, sacred terror, etc.: this whole 'literary part' refuses to 'transport' us), but that *it is manifest* in the constitutive relation to an Other (the blind profile of the tupupau in the background becomes 'the motif [of] the painting', making the nude pass 'into the secondary plane'), an Other projected *through* the painting's absence of relief (emphasised by the laminar violet ground with its phosphorescent white effects), and in the painter's 'tendency to the abstract'[118] with its *false* dramatisation (the 'bias toward strangeness' pointed out by Charles Morice). This dispositif is accentuated in the lithograph of the same name (summer 1894) published in *L'Estampe originale*: here the tupupau is overlooked by a schematically stylised hooded 'revenant', one line of whose strange abyssally projected plane extends its own, emphasising the chiasmic effect produced by the inversion of the two faces: on an autonomous plane on the extreme right, separated by a void through which we glimpse a section with cut-out motifs, an idol (we recognise the goddess Hina) faces us with her empty-eyed mask-head, the entire height of her body bathed in lunar shadow and contained in a frame too

narrow for the arms; on the extreme left, the acronym 'PGo', the 'synthetist' monogram of the painter (used for the first time in 1886–1887 on the ceramics) crowns what is not so much a drawing as a graphic, a curious unfolding butterfly, a mere visual mark that emphasises the enigmatic coding and the figural displacements that preside over the composition. Now, this lithograph belongs in its turn to a series of engravings after *Manao Tupapao*, since it is still under this same title that Gauguin makes the secret chaos implied by the Double rise to the plane of representation, and places it in the service of the *revelation* of two types of images that nothing seems capable of reconciling—apart from *The Spirit that Watches Over*. In the engraving most similar to the painting, a kind of magnified close-up whose innumerable scratches tend to accentuate the essential blackness of the engraving printed on Japan paper, the tupupau, now placed in the position of the watcher at the bedside of Teha'amana, of whom we see only her face bordered by her hands and the upper part of her body, presents 'a summary reduction, almost an intensification' of the image,[119] making the phosphorescences of abraded matter explode before it. On the second type of image, the prints of which (one was cut out and glued into the manuscript of *Noa Noa*) are heightened with watercolours, an adult woman impossibly drawn in profile *and* from behind so as better to appear folded in on herself, absorbed, 'sleeping like a baby', is presented in a foetal position, in the suspense of her own birth, according to an impossible *interred* dimension, in a plane that is *rounded* like the curve of an ocular globe that is also that of an egg or womb (that of the earth-mother), and which in its turn is enveloped by the curvature of the landscape's relief lines. . . .[120] To be more precise, it is on the verso of this board that Gauguin engraved the 'off the record' scene of the tupapau watching that we have just described, printed on Japan paper. . . . Let us add finally that, in another woodcut designed to illustrate *Noa Noa*,[121] he had already associated the black image of the tupapau—steeped in the oily darkness of a ground that is now lit by only a few electrified patches-flowers on the vellum, and an indeterminate mask-form that looms out of the savagery of the night that watches us—with the foetal woman coiled in her alveolus, primitively drawn from behind, her legs bizarrely contorted.

What are we to take from this mesmerising dispositif if not the will to join, through the greatest 'mental distancing' (André Chastel), with the plane of that dark region, 'empty as it were', suspended in a virtuality that undoes all formal completion, a pure inobservable, or observable only from the indistinct point 'not of *Being* but of Life', the Life of Dream wherein the power of vision of Gauguin's painting plays out? Testifying to the intrusion of another world into the visual world of figuration, his painting had to reach the point where 'everything was absorbed', 'in germ', 'without a perceptible or perceiving act' in order to determine an organic representation 'without active

or passive reality'; a painting in which the foreground *laterally* (but not literarily) plunges into an abyss, into a behind, only in so far as, *frontally*—and here lies the whole mystery of his 'abstraction'—*the behind is laid out before us*, under the auspices of a decorativity that acknowledges its necessarily dreamt and mythologised apprehension, reducing it to the *immanence* of its plane by preventing the formation of any *interior* (yielding that impression of 'spiritual onanism' that Huysmans perceived upon viewing the 'symbolist' watercolours of Gustave Moreau), following 'the decisive example of Expression through Decor'.[122]

Knowing that the title of the last (written) Work planned by the writer-painter reinstates the over-essential dimension of the Hermetic, we can understand why, in so far as this Decor is the pictorial result of a vitalist hermetics in *Avant et Après*,[123] it will be governed by the search for the flattest of correspondences between matter and spirit. Now, the most likely entrance—the *shallowest* of caverns—of this Hermetics is once again the frontal eye of the tupapau, in its metamorphic apparitions and reapparitions. All the way to the most artificial 'flower-eye', surging forth from the Eye of the Earth, which seeks to enigmatise (through an interposed Redon) and to desublimate van Gogh's striking sunflowers (*Sunflowers in an Armchair*, where the withered sunflowers seem to detach themselves decoratively, like flowers on a sarong, from the white shroud-like fabric of the armchair transfixed under the sunflower-eye that dominates the dark half of the room with its black sun, while the woman invites us to see 'à la Tahitian' the Spirit of life and death, as is suggested by the proximity of her head in profile to the great eye-flower, also in profile; *Sunflowers and Mangoes* [1901], whose flowers spring from a Maori vase of sculpted wood). All the way to the last passage of the hooded 'rider' (*Riders* [1901]), *Riders on the Beach* [1902] . . .) in a tropicalist counterpoint to Dürer's celebrated engraving *Knight, Death and the Devil*, a reproduction of which was glued to the back of the manuscript of *Avant et Après*. Not to mention that drawing-print of the *Knight* (1901–1902)—reproduced at the beginning of this chapter—where his hood is extended into a floating region in which a monstrous yet mysteriously feminine form emerges from the forest, and where the contours and hatchings of the horse and the dog are fused into and rhythmically concatenated with a bio-thanatropic landscape which evokes the original germination that comes from death and must return to it. Definitively dissociated from any 'hermeneutic' (the latter has been swept away along with the symbolist recycling of Romanticism),[124] associated instead with the conquest of the domain of 'abstraction', and announced from the point of view of a definitive and *cruel enigma*,[125] no text expresses Gauguin's Hermetics more dramatically than this last arrow let loose in February 1903, when death is so close:

> Seeing this leads me to think, or rather to dream, of the time when everything was absorbed, numb, prostrate in the slumber of the primordial, in germ.
>
> Principles invisible, indeterminate, indistinguishable at that time, all in the first inertia of their virtuality, without a perceptible or perceiving act, without active or passive reality or cohesion, possessing only one evident characteristic, that of nature itself, entire, without life, without expression, in solution, reduced to vacuity, swallowed up in the immensity of space which, without any form and as it were empty and penetrated to its very depths by night and silence, must have been a nameless void: this was chaos, the primeval nothingness, not of *Being* but of life, afterwards to be called the empire of death, when life, produced from it, returns to it.
>
> And my dream, with the boldness of the unconscious, solves many questions that my understanding dares not approach.[126]

Along with the (Schopenhaurian) theme of Death as *reservoir of life* (which the painter could have encountered at the end of the *Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life*, translated into French in 1880), what was always at stake for Gauguin in the representation of death and of its Spirits *was the death of representation*, leading, at the extreme limits of individuation, towards a radical alterity.

But, even so, a *pictorial* symbolism? Let us observe that, when he decides to make use of this vocabulary, Gauguin prefers to say: '*an abstract and symbolic art*'.[127] From which can be deduced all the better the 'prohibited' characteristics enumerated by Pierre-Henry Frangne in the conclusion to his inquiry into *The Symbolist Philosophy of Art*, after he had emphasised that the aesthetic category of symbolism need not involve 'the consideration of style or of specific formal motifs' (duly noted). 'A work', he writes, 'can thus be called symbolist according to the type of relation that it prohibits: the prohibition on surpassing the work in favour of some meaning that could be transcribed; the prohibition on surpassing it toward a pure transcendence; the prohibition of the constitution of the work as representation; the prohibition of the reception of the work as the expression of a subject (impersonalization)'.[128] But in that case, doesn't all of modern art, from Manet onward, up to and including the most contemporary art, pass, *in fine* and *en masse*, into 'symbolism'?

2

It is in terms of his use of 'heavy and opulent colour' deposited in rhythmically delineated, violent flat tints in the paintings, or in terms of the effects of pictorial matter and the extraordinary pictorial force of the blacks and

whites of woodcuts, that we should consider Gauguin's oeuvre in its principal effect: that of affirming, in the most 'decorative', the most mysteriously 'objective'[129] *deformation* of nature, the greatest distance in relation to any figuration of natural objects dependent on the intentionality of the gaze. Reality is no longer anything but 'a pretext for distanced creations'[130] situated in the exclusive space of the canvas—a space which, however, in the greatest paradox of the Studio of the Tropics, becomes the place where the animality of the Earth will be exhibited. The most unexpected thing being, again, that it should be in the tracery of an anonymous life fringed with 'mysterious zones incapable of any mutual explanation of one other' (according to one of the most beautiful descriptions of *Dream* (*Te rerioa*), a description which in our opinion remains applicable for the primitive in art since Gauguin) that the spectator of this *trans-formation* will experience the most attenuated frontier, a frontier that is *infra-thin* in so far as 'his paintings are authentically planar surfaces',[131] and which thus opens up between vision, dream and reality, between hallucination and perception. In other words, when dream becomes indistinct from life and unconsciousness is thereby mobilised as a sort of universal substance, the horizon is no longer defined by the convergence of optical paths.[132]

Now, if there is a crossing of the border, it is above all that of the arabesque, that of tracery and of the snaking line, as they are inscribed first within the perspective of *cloisonnism*, with that technique of compartmentalisation ('a painting through *compartments*, analogous to the *cloisonné*'), of simplified lines become abstract through their insistent bulk. 'A path outside, a violent and abrupt colouration, inevitably recalling picture books and japonism'[133] which Gauguin, who himself writes of 'boxes stacked up here and there',[134] will invest, will dramatise in his 'Breton' art, to the extent of forming a unique tracery, a unique mental image of landscapes imbricated in the most vertiginous way, a puzzle or a patchwork from which all light, all opticality, have been banished:[135] *At the Cliff's Edge*, according to the retrospective title proposed by the painter for his *Seascape with Cow* (1888), a title that sets out its abrupt protocol quite pedagogically, since here the rocks, their purple and orange reflections evoking pottery, seem to be cut vertically into the colour, and the scene seems to be a detail of an incomprehensible whole setting out the powerful animality of the earth confronted by the fragility of the cow and the ship. . . . In this *cloisonnisme* of space, or *japonisme*[136]—which is not exempt from the influence of the 'playing card figures' to which certain of Manet's paintings had been compared[137]—Gauguin discovers the abstractive stylisation of decoration, the new formulae of Decor, in a sort of stained glass grid ablaze with 'fiery lava' or upholstered in Oriental style, raising details to the rank of subjects and emblems. This would lead him to say of the purple-red face of his *Self-Portrait* (*Les Misérables*), with its 'flames like

a furnace irradiating the eyes' and its greenish shadows, painted in the same year, 1888, that it was a matter of a drawing that was 'entirely peculiar, [a] complete abstraction. The eyes, the mouth, the nose are like the flowers on a Persian carpet'. The portrait is 'absolutely incomprehensible [. . .] so abstract is it'.[138] '*It is not in the least the world of the flesh*', he will insist in his letter to Vincent (as if the better to demarcate himself from the 'effort of blood and tears which [Claude Lantier] agonizes over, in order to create flesh': thus Zola, in *L'Oeuvre*, described the artist as being 'always at war with the real, and always defeated by it'); it is, on the contrary, an *apparition*, according to the word soon adopted by van Gogh to define the effect that he wishes to produce with his portraits, his *modern* portraits.[139] With its tints set out in flat areas (or at least treated as upright surfaces), juxtaposed with no intermediate shades between them, cloisonnism thus allows Gauguin to stick to the dreamt image by sticking it onto the plane of the painting,[140] now devolved into an indifferent space, with no horizon but strongly stylised by spaces that are empty (*The Painter of Sunflowers* [1888]) or full and disconnected from one another (*Woman in the Hay*, or *In the Heat of the Day* [1880]), unafraid of caricaturing forms through simplification (*The Wave* [1888], *The Beach at Pouldu* [1889], *Kelp Gatherers* [1889], *The Potato Field* [1890]) to the point of the most emblematic deformation (*In the Waves* and *Woman in the Waves* [1889], *Ondine* on all its different supports); by violently contrasting colours (*Blue Trees* [1888]); by delocalising all references, now become enigmatic (*Old Women of Arles* [1888]) or disquieting and agonising (*Washerwomen of Arles* [1888], *Harvest at Arles* or *Human Misery* [1888], *A Breton Boy* [1889], *Hello, Mr Gauguin* [1889], no reproduction of which can do justice to the absolutely spectral face of the 'traveller'), sometimes terrifying in their mystery (*Double Portrait of a Young Girl* [1890]), and in every case *bizarre* in their aberrant framings which, since the 1886 painting *Still Life with Profile of Laval*, owe so much to Degas's example. Adopting the brilliance and the incongruous variety associated with Japanese 'découpages' (so similar to medieval enamels), these *cloisonnés* have no subject other than the *apparition, as such, of the construction in its apparition—and the construction of apparition in an image-patchwork that flattens description.* This is why they allow Gauguin to *deposit onto the canvas*[141] the most disparate elements, like that portrait of a young Breton girl in local costume (accompanied by her 'designation' written at the bottom left) with an expressionless face, married with a 'barbarous' ceramic of Peruvian inspiration (which, isolated, watches over her), a portrait in which the encircled figure is dissociated from the essentially 'decorative' ground only so as to propose a 'magical' association giving one to perceive the medallion in which the Breton girl is *taken* [*prise*], in all senses of the word, as if expressing the continued ascendancy [*emprise*] of the mysterious barbarous idol (*The Beautiful*

Angel [1889]). The thick working of the black and ochre outlines, like lead bullion containing the materiality of a void, and which render the flattening of colours yet more tangible, arranges the abstract spaces wherein will come to take their place crests whose caricatural strangeness is antipodal to 'incorruptible icons' à la Maurice Denis (that 'nabi of fine icons' stricken with a precocious angelology—it is not for nothing that one calls oneself 'prophet', *nabi* in Hebrew). Hesitating between 'an atmosphere of Nirvana' and an 'almost phantomatic vision',[142] they tend much rather towards *iconoclastic icons* (such as the *Portrait of Gauguin by himself* and *Meyer de Haan* [end of 1889] from the Pouldu *auberge*, or the '*Nirvana*' personified in the form of a second *Portrait of Jacob Meyer de Haan* [around 1890] with the hypnotic reptilian gaze, 'the hallucinated mask of a Buddhist idol standing out from a tracery of figures').[143] Despite the force of their plastic innovations—above all that of the *Portrait of Gauguin*, where the head reposes on a flat yellow tint cut out by black tracery in a strangely 'art nouveau' style—it would not be uninteresting to compare these provocative images with the parodic 'indifference', 'a parody of realism in painting', cultivated in the very early works in the register of the photographic ugliness of the *Nude Study*, or *Suzanne Sewing* (1880), which already caricatured 'the fantasy world of Near-Eastern odalisques':[144] a downcast *Suzanne* whose wan, tapestry-like touch and static motif do not at all seem to be drawn 'from the repertoire of impressionism'.[145] No more than the fantastic motifs of those 'hieroglyphs in oil'[146] that will soon come to decorate the sleep of children (*The Little One is Dreaming, Study* [1881]), only to rapidly outgrow the canvas (*Sleeping Child* [1884]).

Beginning with the *Four Breton Women Dancing* of summer 1886, which allows the viewer no access other than a decorative one to the scene represented[147] (the last straw in the view of the subjects: *Bretons Arguing*), the synthetist period[148] is at its height in the *Still Life with Three Puppies* (1888, 92 × 63 cm). For this painting, inspired by a Kuniyoshi print, and in which we can read the fascination with Manet seen as the master of prints rather than as the promoter of *peinture claire* (*The Ham* [1889] will raise him to the rank of master-decorator), this canvas which tends to reduce everything to the verticality of a new plane-space that sees the painting composed of one single flat white area,[149] not only manifests the 'avant-gardism' of one of the first admirers of Cézanne, and Gauguin's resolutely singular daring in subtracting himself definitively from the influence of Impressionism, whose wake he managed to escape more deftly than its 'dissidents'—like van Gogh, who felt at the same moment that everything he had 'learnt in Paris *is leaving me*'[150]—a little as one might leave the misnamed Île-de-France to go *elsewhere*, without having anywhere to lay one's head. Decoratively investing Cézannian frontality so as to detach it from 'the conscientious image of

things' still dear to the recluse of Aix, the painting marks above all the will *to have done once and for all*—and not without a certain humour—*with the* '*brainless eye*'[151] *of Impressionism*,[152] according to the principle of a beyond of Cézanne which here implies a new confrontation with the question of the plane. To the strictly *Cézannian* plane in the bottom right (that of apples *arranged* on a cloth, at once folded and hanging, *enclosing* a composition), a plane that is merely tilted (and which thus still refers to the optical point of view of an eye in a plunging view), Gauguin opposes—in the most overt way—*his* otherwise verticalised plane, distributive, totally opened up, and liberated from the question of point of view (constructive and not compositional) by a decorativity that stands as a definitive rupture with the naturalism with which Cézanne was still debating/struggling [*débatt(r)ait*]. Gauguin thus makes his plane transpire *beneath* the Cézannian plane that transforms the border of the bright zone of the ground mural into the edge of a table. He even sets up an opposition between the Cézannian apples contained in the bowl (on the lower left) and the *off-cut* apples deposited on the vertical plane itself, which makes them hold *entirely alone and unsupported*. As for the three little rose-grey young pups 'still somewhat unformed', drinking from a common trough as if to desacralise that which is indicated by the three chalice cups (a 'trinity'!), three pups for three (Cézannian) apples—a desublimation of the Cézannian universe and a parody of communion—let us note that the space must become shallow in the extreme in order to fix these dreams in a reality with neither sky nor atmosphere, and to submit the real to the purely decorative vision of a 'children's painting' (the very same one 'whose enterprise was announced to Vincent by Émile Bernard and Gauguin').[153] Whence, influenced by Baudelaire's call for a 'synthetic and abbreviating' art,[154] that vision in close planes that would soon develop 'technically' in contact with van Gogh, but in an abstract and decorative direction because, unlike in van Gogh, it would be turned against all reference to naturalism as the originary language of forms and, consequently, would turn away from expressionism as the 'natural' alternative to Impressionism—an alternative that, as Georges Duthuit says, is 'existentialist *avant la lettre*'.[155]

At this point, Vincent, on the verge of the discovery of the expressive force of colour *in itself*, 'starting from one's palette—from one's knowledge of the beautiful effect of colours', claims—romantically—to remain faithful to the stenography of the words of nature,[156] 'fiddl[ing] around from nature, hardly thinking of impressionism or of this or that', leaving the enchanted ground of abstraction[157] to Gauguin, and content instead 'to express states of the soul'.[158] In doing so, van Gogh cannot help but overinvest those who fall short of Cézanne, those by the names of Millet, Monticelli. . . .

A stoneware vessel, three blue cups, a few fruits 'stolen' from Cézanne, with a sovereign disdain for proportion and a total subversion of his Plane, an animal variation punctuated with black motifs-patches and two red notes animating a large white surface that makes up the whole of the painting, and which could just as well be either a tablecloth or a curtain, were it not an imaginary plane. Polarised between (subverted) horizontality and (abstractly, decoratively established) verticality, the eye registers a powerful disequilibrium, as the support of the table refuses its office as a bedrock for the natural allocation of beings and things and as the viewer finds himself invited to the strangest animal banquet. The whiteness of the ultra-thin fabric, 'where there appear, here and there, inscribed in the cloth, curious silhouettes of leaves or plants which evoke the rubbings of Max Ernst, the textures of Klee or of Jaspar Johns',[159] presents a phantasmal granularity similar to that of the photographs Binet offered up to the hallucinatory perceptions of the hysteric. As if the elements had to be distributed in space by way of a *faculty of imagination/imaging* positing 'as its milieu of action, rather than a hackneyed scene of crossroads and streets, *all or part of the brain*',[160] in virtue of an imagination that now recognises no seat other than a rhythmic one, no solidity other than a decorative one, expanding into the great spaces of a far-eastern ornamental line that is inseparable from 'the delicious feeling of gliding [*planer*]'.[161]

A sentiment that, in light of his rigorous phantasmagorias, the faun Mallarmé[162] would share with the painter, even if, rather than the mysteries of the splendour of colour, the poet preferred Redon's brush 'soaked in shadow' (was the latter not 'most exactly the Mallarmé of painting'?)[163] and surely also the opalescent art of Seurat, whose ideal light rarefies its distant evocations to the point of suggesting 'that static point', 'that quest for absolute liberation'[164] where all sensations take on the colours of another spectrum, the 'grey murmur' of a faceless absolute. . . .[165]

And then these antipodes, with their sometimes common spectres that had already provided material for an abundant literature, are left to themselves (not without having been duly instrumentalised). One abandons them so as to take as far as possible this synthetic construction that Seurat and Gauguin had once disputed through the device of an uncertain 'Mani, giver of precepts' on painting.[166] And then *one leaves*. Conveyed by that 'art of the sailor, taken a little from everywhere' (according to the already-cited words of Pissarro) which not even the prayer to Mary will escape—that composite, syncretic, hybrid painting whose 'disquieting mixture of barbarous splendour, Catholic liturgy, Hindu daydreams, gothic imagery, obscure and subtle symbolism' could not be denied.[167] A very *fin-de-siècle* primitivism, then, perfectly described by Octave Mirbeau in 1891, upon which could be based a vision of Tahiti at once westernised (and thus corrupted, perverted by 'the tree of science': 1896's *Te arii vahine* [*The King's Wife*], that *Black Olympia* described

as a 'gritty Eve after the fall, delighting in her nakedness')[168] and, not without a certain provocation, classicised (along with *Ia orana Maria*, see *Te tamari no atua* [*The Birth of Christ*] in 1895–1896), the better to conjugate it with the influence of the colonial imaginary—an influence forestalled yet persistent even up to the final scene of *Noa Noa*[169]—as crystallised in *The Marriage of Loti* (the exotic bestseller of the 1880s, written by naval officer Julien Viaud, alias Pierre Loti).[170] It remains the case that, if the ever 'calculating' and 'shrewd' Gauguin had managed to leave to establish an outpost of exoticism with the Last Savages,[171] a kind of Kanakian extension of the 1889 *Exposition Universelle* under the heading of the 'Societé P. Go & Co',[172] we cannot deny—in he who was happy to qualify himself, not without preciosity, as 'A Savage from Peru'[173]—a more pagan presentiment of 'the earth' as 'our animality'.[174] A sentiment, a sensation that will lead to the discovery of *the animality of the earth* ('nothing but the earth')[175] as the Tropic of a new painting. The tropics of a figuration sufficiently free to bring into accord the plastic developments of the decorative line and the knowledge and expression of the soil and 'its odour'.[176] This is what *Noa Noa means*: 'in Tahitian, *fragrant*; that which Tahiti exhales'.[177]

The Oceanian Mystery of Gauguin, to which we should certainly relate his ambition to 'become the Saint John the Baptist of the painting of the future'[178]—but the eventual status of which, moreover, must be determined over and above the 'gauguinism' he invented[179] (not to mention the posthumous gauguinism promoted by Charles Morice).

And he did become this 'Saint John the Baptist of the painting of the future', almost by sheer force, through the force of a Matisse submitting himself to the *trial by fire*, leaving 'for the brush' in order to overthrow 'the tyranny of Divisionism'[180] and to 'brilliantly resolve the problem' of colour—as Gauguin himself had predicted.[181] But since we must decidedly be wary of 'a simplified genealogy which, from Gauguin, would lead to Matisse and Derain almost without transition',[182] let us specify that he will have done so for reasons at once of the construction and the physiology of colour that are so far from being formal and so far from being 'Greenbergian' that the American critic did not hesitate to write: 'Just like "socialism" in Russia, Gauguin is a case of premature and unequal development. He would perhaps have realised himself more fully had he stayed closer to the spirit of impressionism'.[183]

To grasp the dazzling effect that Tahiti had on Gauguin upon his arrival in June 1891, and this despite his stay in Martinique a few years beforehand,[184] to perceive the extent and the nature of the troubledness that took hold of the painter at that moment, we must first of all remember that it is precisely not

the supposed 'geographic romanticism'[185] of the landscape, but the face, the character of the Maori face, into which he immediately initiated himself. And this in a series of portraits where the painter does not show these faces as the incarnation of the mythical elements proper to a virgin culture (this is therefore 'not symbolism');[186] instead, they are marked by the rapid disappearance of the 'old state of things',[187] associating a melancholic reverie (*Faaturuma* [*Melancholic*, or *Reverie*]) with the torpor aroused by the silence of nature that poetically resists (shorn of the 'innumerable adjectives [. . .] which are so familiar to Pierre Loti'),[188] a silence 'yet stranger than the rest', strange 'like a rustling of the spirit' (*Te faaturuma* [*Silence* or *The Brooding Woman*]).[189] An oxymoronic strangeness that appears also in *Head of a Tahitian*, where '*the eye that listens*' is replaced by *the flower that listens*,[190] the title of what is perhaps the first version of the Cézannian *Vahine no te tiare* [*Woman with a Flower*][191] dressed in the garb imposed by the missionaries, holding in her hand a flower that seems to be detached from the painted paper . . . a painting that sought to show what *Noa Noa* describes: 'She has a flower behind her ear which listens to her scent'. In view of the 'uneven fire of a contained force'[192] that she manifests, and the unique regime of her troubled rendering, resembling nothing else that had been done up to this point, this *Head of a Tahitian with the Flower that Listens* gives us to perceive the sensations that impregnate those 'notes and sketches of all sorts' that Gauguin made on his arrival, when 'everything in the landscape blinded [him], dazzled [him]', and when, as such, he could not yet resolve himself to render it on the canvas. As he explains:

> Coming from Europe, I was always uncertain of a colour, making heavy weather of it [. . .]. And yet it was as simple as naturally putting on my canvas a red and a blue. In the streams, golden forms enchanted me. Why did I hesitate to make all of this gold and this rejoicing of the sun flow onto my canvas? Probably because of my old European habits, that whole timidity of expression of our bastardized races.[193]

The inevitable return, it will be said, of the Noble Savage and of Rousseauist mythologies. . . .[194] A remarkable passage, however, in so far as we glimpse in it a radical reversal of racist exoticism and of 'scented concoctions' à la Loti—inverting what will soon be held to be the *Psychological Laws of the Evolution of Peoples* (Gustave le Bon, 1894), invalidating also a certain future mention by Gauguin of the 'civilizing mission of France',[195] and contesting many a passage in *Noa Noa* itself, that tends to highlight the ancestral weight of a 'mournful animality' (as Françoise Cachin says, relating this observation, not without due argument, to more than one composition) that is not decisively contradicted by 'maori caprice' and 'coquetry', the

'passivity residing in domination'[196] ('it is to be had for almost nothing',[197] 'and must we still take them in the maori manner [*mau* = to grasp]', 'brutally taken', 'desire for violence',[198] etc.).

Now, as to these 'golden forms', we can very easily see why the painter, at first, 'hesitates' to make them flow onto the canvas, and, we may guess, even resolutely abstains from doing so, so as not to credit the governing idea of a 'colonial art' (Camille Mauclair), in a painting entitled *The Valley* with a sumptuous facture, that of a post-Cézannian and post-cloissonist Impressionism, in which the laminar density of the brushstrokes scrupulously respects the line of the masses, according to the lesson of *Tropical Vegetation* (1887), here further consolidated. This painting's entire foreground is taken up by the controlled richness of the golden and orange reflections of ochre, in dots neither smooth nor soft, along with a complementary green which extends into the highlights of the red-ochre bands and patches.

On the other hand, we do see these golden forms flowing into the canvas and animating, animalising the whole landscape of *Matamoe*, also called *Landscape with Peacocks* (1891–1892), through the life that they give to these great fluid flat tints with their fused touch, full of mysterious arabesques that confer a common rhythm upon the painting—the rhythm of a nature whose luxuriant perspective is that of a tormented union of colour gamuts (the yellows and red-oranges are associated with the blizzard of dark greens by the ochres and a few rare mauve-blues) in a unique animality where the ocellated feathers of the peacocks in the foreground figure almost as mere pleasant anecdotes. Moreover, it is not these birds that Gauguin focuses on in his description of the painting, but instead the animal appearance, the life of forms presiding over a *becoming-bird* of the great coconut palm: '[the] diseased coconut-tree resembles a huge parrot with golden tails hanging down, and holding in its claws a huge cluster of coconuts' (we observe also in this painting the crossing of the naked curve of the 'diseased' coconut palm, which inflects the indefinable zone of foliage with its sharp claws). And continuing, in this passage from *Noa Noa*, now focusing on the woodcutter whose portrait he had painted in *Man with an Axe* (1891), a painting that he blends with his story by superimposing the two paintings from (two) *bottoms and* (one) *top* to recompose the totality of the *motif*: the coming back to life of a *still life*, a *nature morte* of the dead tree, which *lives again for an instant in the flames of each day*: 'The almost naked man raises a heavy ax in his two hands. It leaves above a blue impression against the silvery sky [of *Man with an Axe*], and below a rosy incision in the dead tree [of *Matamoe (Death)*] where for an inflammatory moment the ardour stored up day by day throughout centuries will come to life again'. He concludes with the 'purple soil' of *Man with an Axe*, with its 'long serpentine leaves' which, in a counterpoint that transforms

the 'golden tail' of the palm-parrot, bring back the decorative 'oriental' line, now crazed with all the animality of the world, and whose abstract tracery spells out the letters of a language once more become a 'mysterious sacred writing' to the dazzled eyes of the painter, an 'originary' language 'of Oceania', 'throughout the Indies' even when the Orient is supposedly the source of these original beliefs . . . : 'On the purple soil long serpentine leaves of a metallic yellow make me think of a mysterious sacred writing of the ancient Orient. They distinctly form the originary word of Oceania, ATUA (God), the Taäta or Takata or Tathagata, who is found everywhere or in everything. (The religion of Buddha.)'

Together with *Fatata te mouà* [*At the Foot of a Mountain*] (1892) and *I raro te oviri* [*Under the Pandanus*] (1891)—the first a counterpart to *Matamoe* in the register of a purely colourist research into the 'golden forms', which here take hold of the dark green foliage of a great mango and make the 'golden tails' of coconut palms planted on a vermilion foreground glow red, the second presenting one great tracery of 'serpentine' roots as the principal motif of the painting—the couplet formed by *Man with an Axe* and *Matamoe*[199] initiates Gauguin's magical series. They are magical, for the tumultuous movements of the flat line and the puzzles participate in the greatest decorative abstraction, which animates their coloured planes and the earth and the surface of the water that come together in the modelling of the bodies. Treated in one single broken tone, far from all flesh, they draw from it, in the inorganic vitality of these surreal images, a powerful animality, sinuous and massive all at once, almost vegetable in its fusion with this arabesque nature crisscrossed by ardent dissonances.

From those paintings that have been continually reproduced, and that have been reproduced as posters[200] more than their fair share—from the most 'decorative' (*Fatata te miti* [*By the Sea*], *Aha oe Feii?* [*What, Are You Jealous?*], *Tahitian Women on the Beach*, *Matamua* [*In Olden Times*], *Arearea* [*Joyousness*], *Tahitian Pastorals*, *Parahi te marae* [*There Lies the Temple*] with the disquieting Marquesan motif of an imaginary barrier detaching itself from the vivid yellow of the hill, and the rose and red of the hibiscus bush in the foreground—all paintings from 1892, to which we can add *Nave nave moe* [*Sacred Spring/Sweet Dreams*] from 1894, and other later pieces . . .), and the painter's most 'mythological' works (*Parau hanohano* [*Terrifying Words*] and *Parau na te varua ino* [*Words of the Devil*] 1892, with its lively vermilion stranded on the rose-mauve sand, the rhythm of which is furnished by the serpentine leaves of the pandanus that trace out the 'words' mentioned in the title; *Pape Moe* [*Mysterious Water*] and *Hina Tefatou* [*The Moon and the Earth*], 1893; *Arearea no varua ino* [*In the Thrall of the Revenant*], 1894 . . .)—from all of these paintings we shall take only three from among those, numerous and not cited above, that project these two supposed

dimensions—the 'decorative' and the 'mythological'—into the montage of a hallucinatory ensemble that surpasses both of them. Absolutely.

Mahana no Atua [Day of the God] (68.3 × 91.5 cm), painted in Paris in 1894, between the two stays in Tahiti, presents the most 'straightforward' pedagogy of this process—in three horizontal planes. Beneath a blue sky topped with white clouds with abstractly floating contours, the upper part gives us the *figurative-naturalist convention* of landscape according to a perfectly controlled exoticism from which nothing is lacking: Tahitian dancers in red sarongs and bearers of offerings in white, flute-players of a far-eastern design that agrees with the Japanese surf of the waves, canoes and riders on the chromium yellow beach, the plumage of coconut trees accentuating from afar the blue mountains which are differentiated from the sea by their hatching, etc. This 'real' landscape, *the furthest from us*, is dominated by a monumental idol that occupies the centre of the foreground, incorporating into its 'lunar' allure (it is a variation on Hina) the influence of the Easter Island statues and the Borobudur reliefs to which they are related.[201] The mask-head is haloed with a thick dark motif that forms a sort of cosmic fleece, the left half of which extends the line of a large branch with a clearly animal curvature (one can make out the 'paws' and 'plumage', the extremity of which is superimposed onto the head of the dog sitting near the blue-green rocks adjacent to the base of the statue: a *slumbering* animality). Before the great god, on the middle plane of rose sand, Gauguin sets out the hieratic composition of the second zone of the painting, inhabited by three figures (a Trinity? A *deposed* cross?). On the left, a first child faces us in an attitude of repose and reverie, stretched out on the beach, his arms folded, his toes touching the water; on the right, a second child (or the same one, according to an offset 'recto/verso' movement) turns his back on us in a foetal attitude borrowed, inverted, from one of the woodcuts after *Manao Tupapau*; and in the centre, below the idol, a woman with features more oriental than oceanian, seated on the edge of the water in the attitude of a 'bather', complicating the nobility of the pose, gazes at us, her bust and face detaching themselves from a curious green mandorla with a vegetable suppleness, a natural respondent to the dark and mysterious mandorla of the idol. At waist height, as if escaping from between her legs, a red sarong patched with blue, associating her nakedness with the animated world of colour, snakes all the way to a zone where the rose sand joins the water into which the bather's feet are plunged (but the water is only really 'signified' by ripples around the feet of the bather). And out in front, in full frontality, on a third plane that we cannot simply call 'lower' since it is without any point of view, almost without any closure other than the edge of the painting itself, there unfolds a surface whose (almost) perfect abstraction retains only the pure animist-*animic*[202] play of forms treated in parallel or imbricated with

one another; flat surfaces reduced, in the absence of any possibility of their reflecting the two 'upper' worlds (otherwise but identically illusionistic *and* mythological), to the puzzle of their multicoloured existence alone.[203] Thus is formed an image of the irruption and of the streaming down of the *day of colour*. *Making of the Day of God the revelation of the day of colour*: such is Gauguin's 'Good News' (which, as one might suspect, is not declared without frightening him with what it lets loose: the green bank upon which, at the bottom left, he signs and inscribes the title of the painting, as if he were clinging onto firm ground, reinstating a 'naturalist' border around what would thus become once more, very laterally, a landscape-image). That this third plane is a 'sacred pool that reflects not the world of appearances', as Brettell claims,[204] and that those who bathe within it find themselves invested in it (the child dangling his toes in the water dreams; his twin alongside him covers his eyes so as to make of himself a blind-seer contracted into his body in the foetal position; the bather does not look at the magical plane in which she is 'planted', her savage and oriental beauty emanates *from* it, and as such we are addressed by her dreaming gaze and the gesture with which she lets down her hair)—this only makes sense in so far as here, Gauguin does not in any way figure a beyond of the visible world, but its visual transformation, its abstract-concrete transcolouration, its pictorial development, equivalent to an animation, a divagation, an agitation perpetuated by the animal ground of coloured matter in all its metamorphic power, implying the fusion of the solar and the nocturnal. The obscure idol manifests this *in negative* through that branching vestige that is not so much a symbol (or a symbol of the absence of the beyond, a 'surface that contains all')[205] as an index and symptom that tends to show that *The Day of God is the Earth of Colour that raises to decorative abstraction the colour of the earth*. Atua, God . . . —'this originary word of Oceania', this word that Gauguin believes he *sees*. For meaning is reduced to the visibility of a sign so as no longer to allow itself be 'read' except flush with the figured-figural construction of the painting, in the play of an internal gap that prohibits it from projecting itself 'literarily' into the painting: all that he 'says' of the mystery is what he shows (of it) as 'pure' painting, that is, a painting purified of all allegorical temptation, that *hermetic* painting into which the viewer is invited to plunge in order to dream that he has been reborn—reborn, as if in spite of himself, *of* and *to* the Earth.

Which brings us to the monumental *Where do We Come From? Who are We? Where are we Going?* (1897). For this painting, a nocturne if ever there was one, entirely bathed in the lunar penumbra of the goddess Hina who also appears here, on a pedestal and in a very similar pose ('her arms mysteriously raised in a sort of rhythm'), her blue legs smeared with a green *mixed with earth*, is the paroxystic continuation of *The Day of God*. In short,

The Night of the Goddess is the Colour of the Earth. Which is why this 'testamentary' painting—presented as such by Gauguin himself—will be *the colour of earth and sky* ('constant, either blue or Veronese green'), the colour of 'repetitions of tones, of monotonous accords, in the musical sense of colour', from which 'the naked figures stand out [. . .] in bold orange', the colour of a primitive earth patched by a broad, thick vegetation of animated shadows, their rhythm furnished by the trees that snake, inhabited by animal figures of a 'rare immobility' (two cats, a black dog, a white goat, a tropical duck . . .), all the way to the 'strange white bird, holding a lizard in its claw, [which] represents the futility of words'. It is worth emphasising that this strange *whiteness*—so *white* that the bird *does not* hold the lizard, unlike in *Vairumati* (1897), which proves to be a study for 'the crouching figure' who 'seems to be listening to the idol'—placed as if in an overture to the painting, may figurally and declaratively (as Gauguin writes) signify the invalidation of any exegesis proposing to give the hermeneutic of this painting which the painter believes has surpassed 'all my preceding ones',[206] and which, to tell the truth, unfailingly disappointed critics in search of the 'meaning of the allegory'.[207] Critics strangely forgetful of Gauguin's warning: 'My dream cannot be grasped, it conveys no allegory: a musical poem, it has no libretto'; and again: 'My eyes close in order to *see without comprehending* the dream in the infinite space stretching out before me'.[208] With the result that what is *in principle Gauguin's most 'metaphysical' painting* is subtracted by the painter himself not only from any 'literary medium' in favour of a *total dream* 'translated' 'into a suggestive décor [. . .] with all the possible simplicity of the craft, a difficult labour . . .', but also from any form of abstract reflection on destiny set in motion by what is not so much a 'title' as the 'signature' of a final and broadly retrospective meditation: *Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?* For this interrogation only makes 'sense' *on the basis of* the necessity proper to painting, the necessity of plunging into the 'primeval chaos' (Carlyle), into the Night, in order to extract from it the 'sensational' Body of a Thought. A thought to which painting here lends its exhausted and febrile body—'I have worked night and day in an unprecedented fury'—'Before death I put in it all my energy, a passion so dolorous, amid circumstances so terrible, and so clear was my vision that the haste of the execution is lost and life surges up'.[209] Something that 'inscription' can signify only metaphorically and on condition of marking the ontological dimension of the enterprise, elevated to sensible intuition through the lunar fact of these *earth tones* 'on a sackcloth canvas full of knots and irregularities'. Therefore, it will be the only masculine character in the work who, for the painter, will pick the apple; and given this displacement (a new Adam in place of an Eve), the apple cannot signify any Knowledge *written in advance*. . . . Gauguin thus

seems to explain that, despite the chronological trace leading, from right to left, from birth to death (inverted, then, in regard to the sequence written at the top left in three superposed lines, with no question mark, and thus forming a *cycle* with it: the old man from which we come, our ancestor . . .), and from the Orient of our maps towards the Occident (the funereal figure gazes to the left, the newborn to the right—as do the two 'Occidentalized' women: a return to the Orient of our origins . . .), this question can hardly belong to painting in so far as it remains formulated in words, those waking words that always come *afterwards* and which, we must observe, will never be anything but the literary, 'symbolic' clothing (the literary Absolute of symbolism) of an experience that escapes them. This is what criticism wishes to ignore, 'preoccupied with what concerns it, its special domain, i.e., literature'.[210] This explains the critical acclaim afforded to Puvis de Chavannes, who 'explains his idea and depicts it, but does not paint it'; in which respect, *he is a Greek—and I, Gauguin, a Savage. . . .*[211] (We should relate Puvis's reaction to the mention of Gauguin's name to this antagonism between Greek and Savage: 'M. Puvis de Chavannes jolted as if at the appearance of a hydra [. . .]. And with his arms spread wide, taking up the classical gesture of Christ in the Olive Garden, seemed to say: "Deliver me from this Gauguin!"')[212] The Savage becomes *The one who paints* according to the principle of a *hermetics of colour* whose sole meaning is to seek 'the agreement of human life with animal and vegetable life, in compositions where [one must know how to leave] an important part to the great voice of the earth'.[213] It will thus come as no surprise that the male nude in the middle of the great composition, whose posture is 'an amalgam of European and Asian iconographies',[214] originates in *Man with an Axe*, and that here he *crystallises*,[215] in the movement of picking the fruit of colour (the orange of the fruit is the most intensely 'brazen' colour in the whole painting), occupying the whole height of the canvas, the only point on whose basis it is possible to confer a common perspective upon the horizontal arrangement of the figures, each of which, in the cave of an 'in itself' without any 'for itself', exists only in so far as it incorporates into its night the earth's dream of colour.

(Was there, in 1898, a more powerful challenge to Seurat's great work, *A Sunday Morning on the Island of La Grande Jatte*?)

This also explains why Gauguin's monument is bordered, so to speak, by two innocently luxuriant paintings which, in the context of his oeuvre, 'respond' to the questions 'Where do we come from?' and 'Where are we going?': *Bathers*, painted in the preceding months (we come from Cézanne—which is not the same thing as to say, with Camille Mauclair, that 'Gauguin comes entirely from Cézanne':[216] the bathers are shown 'naked, in the glory

of a strangely irradiated vegetation'),[217] and 1899's large *Rupe Rupe* [*Luxury* or *Fruit Gathering*][218] (we go to bathe in a golden sky).

The 'machine' being—in Gauguin's words (in *Avant et Après*)—'set in motion', and the 'ford' crossed, on the horses which, from 1898's *White Horse* and *Rupe Rupe* onwards,[219] came to haunt the last paintings in the Marquesas[220] with a 'here' of a matured orphism from which 'poetry seems to come of itself, and I need only let myself dream a little while painting to suggest it',[221] it remains for us to return to a work that, in its savage determination, carries *expressionism abstracted from the earth* into a beyond of the decorative—or rather: towards a beyond of the *appearance* of decorative painting (in the sense in which Anquetin uses this idea to define cloissonism).

If *Te nave nave fenua* (1892, 91 × 72 cm) is incontestably Gauguin's most provocative painting, its authorised translation as *The Delightful Land* or *Delicious Earth* reinforces the mystery rather than dissipating it, in regard to the *absolutely out of place* [*hors registre*] representation that it gives us of a nude that we might take for one of the most monstrous in the history of painting. An Eve of a far from Tahitian monumentality, represented facing us, and whose body, traversed by mossy green reflections, with large misshapen limbs, fills the whole height of the painting, even exceeding it slightly at the 'top'. Yet she adopts an entirely oriental attitude of elevation, borrowed from a Buddhist figure from Borobudur (the effeminate character Maitrakanyaka . . .), thus contradicting as much the enormity of what is shown (pubic hair included) as the melodic ciphering of what must be seen in it: a temptation announcing the spiritual fall of an '*exotic Eve*'. Gauguin had painted such an Eve, explicitly designated as such, in 1890—*before* his departure, that is—with his mother's face, to which he added a body in a posture imitating the same bas-relief, embedded in a tropical frame whose exoticism may already be nocturnal (and which is attenuated by the stylisations of the middle plane) but is nevertheless real (a memory of the stay in Martinique).[222] That is to say, for reasons that go beyond applied psychoanalysis, that it is certainly not this *Exotic Eve* that Gauguin is thinking of when he declares in 1895, in an interview with the *Echo de Paris*, that '[his] chosen Eve is almost an animal'. It is surely our heavy, sculptural giant that he has in mind, the queen and prophet of a '*virgin earth*' in which she *roots* her polydactylous left foot, with too many toes[223]—making Thiébault-Sisson compare her to a 'female quadrumane'. A woman born of the earth, of an animality that knows nothing of the frontiers between genitality and vegetality, virgin by virtue of the earth as much as by virtue of 'her primitive and simple race'. A dominant Eve whose 'animal beauty' is that of the First Day (just the contrary of a little Rarahu à la Pierre Loti, as Gauguin insisted in one of his notes dating from 1896–1898). An Eve with a grave face that could be taken for a great fruit on the length of a branch that sets to rustling the green tints emphasised by

pale blue on her powerful shoulder; her black hair animated rather than kept back by a reddish ribbon, as if coloured by fire, by the emanations of the red-winged lizard (the red of *The Vision*, like a lightning flash) mysteriously attached to or detached from its black body with taloned feet, which seems to be drawing itself up, dark and terrible, from a branch of the tree of knowledge of the Earth. From this fabulous vegetable-animal the woman's gaze turns (even as one of its wings seems to *enter into her head*, the 'ribbon' now being perceived as a streak of *blood*) to apprehend, outside of the painting, a danger of an entirely other nature—missionary and Catholic?[224]—than that of the fantastic plant with 'flowers like the dazzling eyes of peacock feathers, flowers of pride' (Morice) that she is picking: an 'eye-flower' (Cachin) 'half peacock feather, half eyeball' (Stuckey), the memory of a hallucinated Redon lithograph, which extends its visionary irreality to the surrounding flora by projecting onto it the eye-animality of the Earth. The leaves of the great tree are animated by a fluttering fauna born of the sombre contrast of green and black that forms the eye of the peacock flower, while the trunk is tinted with the rose of its feathered circumference, and dark smears mark the bed of the dried-up river with the flat derivative colours of the 'red wings of the Chimaera' (Delaroche). . . . While farther away, a furious apparition seems to be hauling itself out of the earth, at the extreme right of the painting, at the level of the sex. . . .

Given all of this, August Strindberg's remark, if we limit its pertinence to *Te nave nave fenua*, seems relatively restrained:

> I have seen trees that no botanist could find, animals that Cuvier has never suspected and men that you alone have been able to create. A sea that flows from a volcano, a sky in which no god could abide. Sir (I said in my dream), you have created a new earth, and a new sky, but I am not happy in the milieu of your creation, it is too sunny for me, with my love of chiaroscuro. And in your paradise there lives an Eve who is not my ideal.[225]

At this point, there is also, we might say, an uncommon justice to the 'assassination' staged by the omnipresent and always hateful Camille Mauclair: 'This is the art of Papou, repugnant with vulgarity and rank violence'.[226]

Did Strindberg, whose thoughts 'tend [. . .] toward Puvis de Chavannes', know that this new Earth could not come about without the putting to death of a too-catholic God by an Eve so savage that she could take on the features of 'The Murderess' *Oviri* (1894), the 'sculptural work in grand feu pottery' designed by Gauguin for his own tomb? An Idol with a hallucinated expression, of proportions as monstrous as the reptilian wolf from which

she extracts herself like a scroll with her powerful hair, while on her flank she embraces a bleeding animal, reversing 'not death into life, but life into death' (to Odilon Redon); *Oviri*, which means savage in Tahitian, is 'a creature engendered by the secular slime of a black nourishing earth' (Brettell). Both fecund and murderous, *Oviri* expresses the dark face of a mother-earth religion, so 'antisupernatural'[227]—or of a 'natural supernaturalism' (Carlyle) that makes 'the heavy mass of naturalism' (Brunetière) rise up—that the religion of the Son is gripped by the 'unerring dogmatism' of the will of the Father, a Son who can only be saved by the identification of a woman come from the depths of ages, Hina. . . . So that 'it is not the fabulous Christ that we should strike, but higher up, further back in history: God'.[228] We must kill God, creator of the 'theocratic regime of the priest, of the priestly caste that calls itself the Catholic Church',[229] so as to render his body to the Earth and extract the dreams of the Son from the veils that denature them. To render God 'to the poets, to dream'. . . .[230] It is this challenge, with very Nietzschean echoes, into which Gauguin initiates us with *Te nave nave fenua*, remaking the scene of Genesis from the ground up, substituting the innocent fear of terrible and savage beauty for the culpable shame of sin. But the critics persist in seeing only a Tahitian illustration of a biblical theme, when what must be grasped in this 'beautiful lapidary painting' is the Dionysiac subversion of Adamic iconography by an 'ancient Eve', daughter and messenger of the Earth—Zarathustra, in his first sermon against the despisers of life: 'The overhuman is the meaning of the Earth [. . .] *remain faithful to the Earth*'.

An initiatory Earth at once Same and Other, and which comes to singularly complicate the insular mytheme of the 'Tahitian Paradise, *nave nave fenua*' announced and enunciated in *Noa Noa*, while maintaining the *imaginal* of a *Delicious Earth* (or more literally: an *Earth of Sensual Pleasure*) for whoever can make their own the animality of vision and the belief that associates the primitive Spirit of Christianity (Eve) with a savage nature (Teha'amana). Like the peacock under the banner of the Polynesian deity Taaroa which, in an engraving under the sign of the Oceanian 'God' (*Te atua*), is placed overlooking a prostrate creature with a Brahmanic allure; a peacock we find again in another woodcut with the predestined title *The Rape of Europa* (a pagan and no longer Christian Europe),[231] and again in the central panel of the *House of Pleasure* (*Maison du Jouir*) in the Marquesas where, beside Taaroa, it 'symbolises' the Triumph of the Spirit of the painter in his last abode and in his rebirth far from Catholic Europe.[232] As anticipated by the sovereign face of Eve/Teha'amana and the hybrid nature of the liminal dispositif that places it on a body which is still, which is once more an 'animal thing', even when—as Gauguin says—with 'an ironic smile on her lips' 'she searches her memory for the "why" of past and present times'.

That the One (Face) does not go without the Other (Body), the suite of variations on *Te nave nave fenua* shows indirectly: even if the Eve of the engravings—those entirely extraordinary engravings, with 'almost illegible' forms—is furnished with a smaller and more elegant body, even as her face is lost in an 'exotic' landscape of palms swaying in the wind, whose centre is occupied by a great flying lizard on the point of attacking her, even as 'the once-dominating Eve is dominated [by a troubled paradise]'[233] (unless Gauguin is here illustrating in his own way the 'passivity that resides in domination').

The little pointillist watercolour (*Te nave nave fenua*) at the Musée de Grenoble, which it is now agreed dates from the same period in Paris (1894, and not 1892), presents an interesting case of an intermediate figure, at the highest defensible point of an *Exotic Eve*. See As Françoise Cachin writes, neo-impressionist technique is used here 'to delectably model his vahine's body and make the sand glisten like sequins on golden skin that had just emerged from the water'.[234] Is there any need to point out that this Tahitian Venus has lost, along with her monumentality, all trace of prophetic defiguration: and that, were it not perhaps for a certain ampleness, her seductive innocence would be entirely compatible with the 'aesthetic' of a Loti (associated by Segalen with 'impressionist tourists')?[235] An Eve who does not at all announce the anticlerical comparativism of *The Modern Spirit and Catholicism*, the painter's last effort to insist on the engagement of his 'coloured pictures'[236] in a vitalism of reason that hallucinates history by bringing back all of the primitives (Christian and Byzantine, Buddhist and Hindu, Egyptian, Japanese . . . : a 'synthetic primitive' based on photographs)[237] on the Polynesian earth of '*desire*' (threatened, of course, by the 'economists'):[238] 'To rediscover the ancient hearth, to revive the fire amidst all these ashes'. . . .[239] And in doing so, as Gauguin writes in the dedication to Charles Morice in his last work, not without taking aim at the pure spontaneity of the Impressionist life: 'Reason remains: mad, doubtless, but alive. / And thus the green shoots begin to swell'. In the pointillist *Te nave nave fenua*, all that remains of the mad but living reason of the animal vision with red wings which is as one with the face of the giant is a finely 'tahitianized' snake, whispering a few words which we imagine are not so terrible to a *Eve who listens*, her hair adorned with a white gardenia. . . .[240] Will the 'myth of earthly paradise' have thus merely 'travelled toward the blessed isles',[241] in a voyage (almost) without history? It seems not, given Gauguin's revelation, on the first day of his Oceanian sojourn: 'It was all over: nothing but the Civilised'.[242] For this observation, that of the definitive loss of Paradise in this insular geography which nourishes the edenic mytheme of a primitive with Apollonian aspirations, will not be unconnected to the Dionysiac deconstruction of the 'colonies' of the Golden Age,

where man encounters, in the twilight of the gods—when 'The Gods are dead, [when] Attuana dies of their death'[243]—the hallucinated alterity of the Savage God, in a decreation of the self and of the world conveyed by the visionary power of colour.

A historical moment at the level of the painter's biography, this unique example of the use of pointillist technique—apart from 1889's *Still Life: Ripipoint*, in the context of an 'opposition to the little dot'[244]—and whose dimension of subversion and satire, or even self-mockery, cannot be neglected, given that the organiser of the neo-impressionist group, Paul Signac, had been treated as the 'explorer of the little dot'. The fact that this formula takes shape in the shadow of the delicious young girl may in fact alert us to the *détournement* being operated, whether consciously or not, by Gauguin. For here the rigorous schematism of Seurat's Art-Science is placed in the service of a watercolour—a technique by definition disregarded by Seurat[245]—of a prettiness as far from being 'absolutely modern' as it is from the perspective of the 'large composition'—very much after the example of that misinterpretation and recuperation in the opposite direction that the cubists would carry out in 1914,[246] preoccupied, as Signac and Cross ('Signac and co.') had been, with bringing colour back into their paintings. Division is rerouted, reduced to a purely ornamental game whose pointillist rendering is the exact opposite of any 'optical mixture': it follows the outline of forms, to the detriment of any effect of luminous vibration and in accord with decorative cloissonism, accentuating the line of drawing. 'As if to mimic the device of pricking a drawing for transfer to the canvas, as he had done in 1892 when transferring the body of Eve'[247] from a large preparatory drawing after another model onto the painting *Te nave nave fenua* (the transferred figure was modified in the painting). Given that this drawing (on vellum, perforated in view of its transfer) was reprised in 1894, to be transformed into an independent work,[248] we get some idea of the way in which Gauguin may have hoped to recuperate neo-impressionism into the inverted genesis of his whole oeuvre, without hesitating to reduce the modern 'primitivism' of the latter to drawing—and to the contour-line of an exotic Odalisque which he himself had made use of, making the body integral to the forces of a decorative universe—so as to deny the reality of the revolution carried out by Seurat *on the plane of painting*. To deny it, in the name of his discovery of a vital power that would only be able to 'save' painting by overflowing its 'optical' regime to submit it to a 'haptic' vision where one *touches with the eyes of the earth*—a discovery that we could define as *the vitalist conquest of the plastic identity between decoration and the expression of the powers of the earth*. Or once again, in Oceanian *and* (proto-) Matissean terms: expression can only be decorative in its 'construction by coloured surfaces' if decoration is itself intrinsically an expression of the life of the earth.

Neither can we rule out the possibility that Gauguin had in mind a certain atypical facing *Poseuse*, a 'petit-point' pen drawing that Seurat made especially to illustrate Paul Adam's eulogistic article in *La Vie moderne* on April 15, 1888. For this *Drawing by M. Seurat after his Painting* presents two troubling analogies with the 'procedure' that Gauguin would adopt: the dot as technique of reproduction, following the example of Charles Blanc in his *Grammar* (copied out by Seurat); and, more anomalously, the outline surrounding the rain of little points 'almost as in a tracing'. . . .[249] Now, it is indeed in employing both of these techniques—transfer via the *poncif* and the surrounding outline—that, in *Luxe, calme et volupté*, Matisse would rediscover the means to shake off 'the tyranny of Divisionism', to let colour out of its 'fussy country aunts' house'. . . . As he explained to Signac: 'Remind yourself of the cartoon for the picture and the canvas, and you will notice, if you have not already done so, the discordance of their artistic approaches. To colour the cartoon, *all that was needed was to fill its compartments with flat tints*, à la Puvis, for example'.[250] Or, better still, à la Gauguin, as Matisse himself defined the influence of the painter, in the Fauve era, in the 1929 Interview with Tériade: '*construction by coloured surfaces*'.[251] Something he takes up almost twenty-five years later, in the same way: 'Cross said to me that I wouldn't stick to [divisionist] theory, but without telling me why. Later I understood. My dominant colors, which were supposed to be supported by contrasts, were eaten away by these contrasts, which I made as important as the dominants. *This led me to paint with flat tones: it was fauvism*'.[252]

But perhaps Gauguin also wished to show that he *knew* how to draw—which does not mean 'to draw well'[253]—and that he could even do so, like Puvis de Chavannes exhibiting his studies-drawings, without making 'special forms', in so far as it is not a matter of making a painting. Painting had become inconceivable to Gauguin without that arabesque-colour that is so 'special'—'a creeping arabesque in the living and various mass of colour'[254]—and which links the fate of painting to the eye of the earth, in heat, coming together with our very fibres to produce the dream of a brain.

NOTES

1. According to Maurice Denis's telling of the story, 'L'Influence de Paul Gauguin', *L'Occident* 23 (October 1903); 'The Influence of Paul Gauguin', in Herschell Chipp, ed. *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 100–105:

> It was at the beginning of 1888 that the name of Gauguin was revealed to us by Sérusier, back from Pont-Aven, who showed us, not without a certain mystery, a cigar box cover

upon which could be seen a landscape. It seemed formless because of its synthetic formulation in purple, vermilion, Veronese green and other pure colors—just as they came out of the tube—with almost no white mixed in. 'How do you see this tree', Gauguin had said, standing in one of the corners of the Bois d'Amour. 'Is it really green? Use some green then, the most beautiful green on your palette. And that shadow, rather blue? Don't be afraid to paint it as blue as possible'. Thus was introduced to us, for the first time, in a paradoxical and unforgettable form, the fertile concept of the 'plane surface covered with colors assembled in a certain order'. Thus we learned that every work of art was a transposition, a caricature, the passionate equivalent of a sensation received. (101)

It must be understood, as Denis explained in his second great retrospective text, that 'art is no longer just a visual sensation that we set down, a photography, however refined it may be, of nature. No, art is a creation of our imagination of which nature is only the occasion. Instead of "working outwards from the eye, we explored the mysterious centre of thought", as Gauguin used to say' (M. Denis, 'From Gauguin and Van Gogh to Classicism' [1909], in *Modern Art and Modernism*, ed. Francis Frascina, Charles Harrison, and Deirdre Paul [London: Harper & Row, 1982], 51–55: 53).

2. Dom. W. Verkade, *Le Tourment de Dieu. Etapes d'un moine peintre* (Paris: Librairie de l'Art Catholique, 1926), 75–76. Before being ordained as a priest in 1902, the young painter Jan Verkade had been introduced to Gauguin and Sérusier by his compatriot Jacob Meyer de Haan. He became a member of the Nabi group and spent time in Brittany in 1891–1892. His finest painting dates from this period—its title is *Decorative Landscape*.

3. Denis, 'The Influence of Paul Gauguin', 102.

4. M. Denis, 'Notes sur la peinture religieuse', *L'Art et la vie* 54 (1896); republished in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, éd. J.-P. Bouillon (Paris, Hermann, 1993), 36.

5. Cézanne accused Gauguin of having 'stolen his little sensation in order to roam with it through the South Seas' (as reported by Ambroise Vollard, after Octave Mirbeau). And according to the version given by Maurice Denis in his *Journal*: 'Ah! This Gauguin! I had one little sensation, and he took it from me. He took it to Brittany, to Martinique, to Tahiti, yes, on every steamship going'. In an article in April 1984, Camille Mauclair exclaimed: 'When Gauguin paints the greenery of a riverbank, or a yew tree, it is as if the plants and the yew tree had grown up in a Cézanne painting' (C. Mauclair, 'Notes sur la vente Théodore Duret', *Journal des artistes*, April 1, 1894).

6. In *L'Art Français*, November 23, 1895; cited by A. Vollard in the Appendix to his *Paul Cézanne* (Paris: Crés, 1919) ('Cézanne et la critique').

7. Cf. J.-K. Huysmans, 'L'exposition des Indépendants en 1881', in *L'Art moderne*, 1883; republished in *L'Art moderne, Certains* (Paris: UGE 10/18, 1976), 213. Cited by Victor Segalen in his 'Hommage à Gauguin' with which the publication of the *Lettres à Daniel de Monfreid* opens (ed. Joly-Segalen [Paris: Crès, 1918; second edition Paris: Falaize, 1950], 16).

8. J. Leclercq, 'Les Cochons', *Mercure de France*, August 1894.

9. In reference to Gauguin's ceramics, Pissarro wrote of an 'art of a sailor, a little taken from everywhere', defining Gauguin's attitude as 'anti-artistic' in order to justify his break with him (Letter from Pissarro to Lucien, January 23, 1887, in

Camille Pissarro, *Letters to his Son Lucien*, ed. John Rewald [New York: Pantheon, 1945], 97). With some justification, given a previous disagreement during which Gauguin had already displayed the 'tactlessness of a sailor' (Pissarro again), Seurat would in turn call Gauguin a (rough) 'sailor'; apart from having spent his youth in the navy, didn't he sport a Breton sailor's outfit, 'a beret nonchalantly tipped to the side', during his first stay at Pont-Aven when he had just embarked upon the stylistic elaboration of his *persona*? In 1903, in *Avant et Après*, Gauguin wrote of himself: 'In myself there are many strange mixtures. A rough sailor—so be it! But there is race there also', citing the judgement of a 'young painter' who is none other than Seurat: 'Gauguin, you know, is a rough sailor. He is quite clever at making little boats with their sails set, well put together' (Paul Gauguin, *Gauguin's Intimate Journals*, trans. Van Wyck Brooks [London, Boston, MA and Melbourne: KPI, 1985], 68 [*Avant et Après* (republished Tahiti: Avant et Après, 1989), 79, 34]). Gauguin's death, on the other hand, saw a celebration of the 'seafaring, remote, and extra-European spirit' (Redon) and the 'hardy sailor [whose] great voyage was not in vain'—a voyage much further than Tahiti! A 'return to the principles' (Signac), cf. C. Morice, 'Quelques opinions sur Paul Gauguin', *Mercure de France*, November 1903.

10. Gauguin told Pissarro in a letter at the end of May 1885: 'More than ever I am convinced that there is no *exaggerated art*—And I even believe that the only salvation lies in the extreme'.

11. G. Lagye, 'Chronique des beaux-arts: Le Salon des XX (III)', *Eventail* (Brussels), March 8, 1891.

12. We shall see in the next and final chapter that Cézanne's apples are constantly accompanied by a recurrent obsession with the *Skull*.

13. F. Fénéon, 'Vitrines des marchands de tableaux', *La Revue indépendante*, January 1888. Gauguin will adopt this epithet in a letter to Theo van Gogh on November 14, 1888, whose register is strangely gastronomic: 'The good Vincent and the shrike Gauguin still get on well together and at home eat *petite cuisine* that they make themselves'. From this we may very well conclude that in fact the 'petite cuisine' Gauguin was preparing to devour was 'the good Vincent' himself. . . .

14. P. Gauguin, in a letter to Theo van Gogh, around November 18–24, 1889: 'You know that I am from an Indian, Inca background, and that this can be felt in everything that I do. It is the basis of my personality. To corrupt civilization I seek to oppose something more natural that comes from the savage'. Gauguin is quite right to recall, in an article that appeared in the same year, that 'in the most remote times, among the American Indians, [pottery] was always favoured'. P. Gauguin, 'Notes sur l'art à l'Exposition Universelle', *Le Moderniste illustré*, July 4 and 11, 1889: republished in P. Gauguin, *Oviri, écrits d'un sauvage*, ed. D. Guérin (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 50.

15. P. Gauguin, Letter to Vincent van Gogh, around December 8–10, 1889 (concluding his description of the second *Kelp Gatherers*): http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let828/letter.html. The 'seeker' and 'thinker' function of the artist is affirmed in a letter from Gauguin to Émile Bernard at the end of November/beginning of December 1889.

16. P. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*; reprinted in *Oviri*, 171. And more specifically, in relation to Delacroix: 'Delacroix was a great colourist, they say, but a bad draughtsman. But you can see very well that it's the other way around, since even in [black-and-white] photographs his works retain their charm' (178).

17. C. Morice, 'Paul Gauguin', *Mercure de France*, October 1903. In terms of his continued influence, Manet is also the painter whom Gauguin 'admired' the earliest.

18. See the Letter to E. Schuffenecker, May 24, 1885: 'Delacroix's drawing always reminds me of the lithe and sinewy movements of the tiger. You cannot tell where the muscles are attached in this superb animal, and the turn of a paw suggests an impossibility that is nonetheless real [. . .]. [In Delacroix] the draperies twist and twine like a spotted snake enraged, or is it a tiger! [. . .] His Don Juan's barque is the breath of a powerful monster'.

19. Gauguin continues, in the same paragraph of *Diverses choses*: 'And Delacroix believed he was fighting [. . .] for colour, when on the contrary he was working toward the triumph of drawing' (Gauguin, *Oviri*, 171).

20. Which is not the same thing as to write, with van Gogh, that '[y]ou have to attack the drawing with the colour itself *in order to draw well*' (V. van Gogh, Letter to Theo, September 1888, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let683/letter.html, emphasis ours [translation modified]). Vincent's relation to Delacroix after 1885 will confirm this difference. In fact, it is only from an 'academic' point of view, that of the Zouave Milliet, painted by van Gogh (*The Zouave* [1888]), that it could be said that the latter 'replaces drawing with colour' (cited by John Rewald, *Post Impressionism: From Van Gogh to Gauguin* [London: Secker and Warburg, 1956], 209). Here we must recall the definitive words of Gauguin, writing to Bernard from Arles, on the subject of Vincent: 'He is a romantic, and I'm more drawn towards a primitive condition' (November 1888: http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let721/letter.html).

21. F. Fénéon, 'Autre groupe impressionniste', *La Cravache*, July 6, 1889. From drawing *as such*, as Gauguin will explain in *Avant et Après*, 'It always seems to me that something is lacking—Colour' (Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 104 [162]).

22. P. Gauguin, Interview with E. Tardieu in *L'Echo de Paris*, May 13, 1895, which appeared under the title 'La Peinture et les Peintres' (reprinted in Gauguin, *Oviri*, 138).

23. J. Leclercq, 'La lutte pour les peintres', *Mercure de France*, November 1894.

24. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 172.

25. Gauguin, Letter to André Fontainas, March 1899. *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, trans. Henry J. Stenning (London: Saturn Press, 1948), 216.

26. M. Denis, 'Définition du néo-traditionnisme' (§XVIII), *Art et critique* 65–66, August 23 and 30, 1890; republished in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 15. The founding theorist of the Nabi group considered Gauguin to be the 'dominant personality of neo-traditionalism', combining the return to a 'primitive' tradition with the 'new classical order' that he called for—a misunderstanding that would rapidly be dissipated.

27. Gauguin, Interview with E. Tardieu, 138.

28. M. Denis, 'Notes d'art et d'esthétique, le Salon du Champ de Mars, l'exposition Renoir', *La Revue blanche*, June 25, 1892: reprinted in *Théories (1890–1910). Du Symbolisme et de Gauguin vers un nouvel ordre classique*

(Paris: L. Rouart et J. Watelin, 1912, 1920 edition), 17 (a passage given in a note in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 28). One would not be mistaken in including among these 'mystical and *allegorical* tendencies' Gustave Moreau, who insistently spoke of *reading* a work of art; and who was praised by Esseintes-Huysmans (his paintings 'go beyond painting, borrowing from the art of writing its most subtle evocations') and heatedly criticised by Gauguin: 'Gustave Moreau speaks only a language already written by men of letters; it is, in a certain sense, just the illustration of old stories' (P. Gauguin, 'Huysmans et Redon' [end of 1889], reprinted in *Oviri*, 61). Returning to Maurice Denis's 'Notes', we should indicate that Maeterlinck, in his 'Réponse à l'*Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire* de Jules Huret' (published in *L'Echo de Paris* in 1891) opposed 'the work born of the symbol' in so far as the latter cannot but be an 'allegory'—on the contrary, he argues, 'the symbol is always born of the work, if the work is really viable'.

29. Whence the strong impression made on Gauguin by Achille Delaroche's article, 'D'un point de vue esthétique: A propos du peintre Paul Gauguin' (*L'Hermitage*, January 1894), certain passages of which are reproduced in *Diverses choses* and in *Avant et Après*, those 'scattered notes' written by Gauguin a few months before his death in the Marquesas, on May 8, 1903. At the end of the article, Delaroche discusses the pure musical 'atmosphere' of Gauguin's paintings.

30. Something that is also refused by his friend Félix Bracquemond, who in 1885 had published *Du Dessin et de la couleur*. This book puts forward an abstract idea of art whose ornamental principle renders the musical analogy inadequate. On this question, a romantic question if ever there was one, see Deleuze's argument in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation,* trans. Daniel Smith (London: Continuum, 2004), 55. On this page, we find Gauguin's famous expression: '*Our eye, insatiable and in heat*', which we should quote here in full: 'Musicians take their pleasure [*jouissent*] through the ear, but we, with our eye, insatiable and in heat, taste all pleasures'.

31. Cf. P. Gauguin, 'Notes synthétiques' (1884–1885), reprinted in *Oviri*, 24–25. In particular: 'With an instrument you start from one tone. In a painting you start from many tones'.

32. 'A *physical* principle' that J. Leclercq, in his article in the *Mercure de France*, cited above, celebrates in Gauguin's work.

33. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 161. Apart from the last phrase, Gauguin here copies *to the letter* the celebrated passage from Delacroix's *Journal* on the 'music of the painting': 'There is a type of emotion that is very particular to painting: nothing in [the literary work] gives us an idea of it. There is an impression that results from such and such an arrangement of colours, of light, of shadow, and so forth. This is what could be called the music of the painting'. For Baudelaire's presentation of this theme, see his 'The Exposition Universelle, 1855' (*Mirror of Art*, 216–217).

34. Baudelaire, 'Salon of 1846: On Colour', *Mirror of Art*, 48.

35. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 171–172: 'And before [Delacroix's] paintings I feel the same sensations as when reading; whereas on the contrary, if I go to a concert to hear a Beethoven quartet I come out with coloured images'. And yet, it is indeed from Delacroix—as we saw in chapter 2—that Gauguin 'borrows' the idea that painting should aim at an effect that is impossible to achieve in literature!

36. A supremacy promoted, in Gauguin's symbolist times, by literature, as the latter sought to appropriate its means (the music of words, etc.). According to Brunetière's formulation: 'We are today at the threshold of a new transformation, and one might say that, having appropriated the means of painting to the point of possessing them as well as or better than painters themselves, literature wishes now to seize those of music'. Cf. Brunetière, 'Symbolistes et decadents', *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, November 1, 1888.

37. G. Geffroy, *Claude Monet, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Paris, 1922 and 1924; republished Paris: Macula, 1980), 124–125.

38. In the above passage, the painter evokes 'the grandeur of the masters of the art' (Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 161).

39. In a fragment of an unpublished text (published in *Arts*, July 8, 1949), the cathedral theme returns, with the mention of 'windows decorated with stained glass whose fundamental basis is coloured light' (republished by D. Guérin under the title 'Sur l'art décoratif', in Gauguin, *Oviri*, 26–28).

40. A. Chastel, 'Le vitrail: problèmes formels', *Le vitrail français* (Paris: 1958; reprinted in *Fables, forms, figures* [Paris: Flammarion, 1978], vol. 1, 311). The historian evokes the 'decorative fabric' implied by the 'precise distribution of interstitial elements within the coloured fields [of the stained glass window]'.

41. Whereas the idea of a *musical impressionism* is fundamental to the thesis advanced by Camille Mauclair in 'La peinture musicienne et la fusion des arts', *Revue bleue*, September 6, 1902: according to him, music's superiority over the other arts can be gauged by the fact that it 'awakens the sentiment of secret correspondences that linked them together without their suspecting it'. Here, we read that 'Claude Monet's admirable landscapes are nothing other than symphonies of light waves'.

42. A. S. Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage through Fifty Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939). The theme of stained glass came up more than once when contemporaries spoke of this painting. We might again cite Gauguin's 1892 letter to Daniel de Monfreid: 'Beware of modelling. Simple stained glass attracting the eye through its divisions of colours and forms—here is something that is still better' (*Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 174; cited by Chastel, 'Le vitrail: problèmes formels'). Gauguin made two stained glass pieces, only one of which survives, *Tahitienne torse nu tenant un fruit de l'arbre à pain* (probably from the beginning of 1892), painted in the synthetist manner.

43. O. Mirbeau, 'Sur les progrès de Gauguin', *L'Echo de Paris*, February 16, 1891. 'In the barren yellow moor stands a cross upon which a yellow Christ dies eternally', Morice will write in his article in the *Mercure de France* in December 1893 ('Paul Gauguin').

44. We refer to the glazed pottery piece entitled *Portrait de Gauguin en forme de tête grotesque* [Winter 1889]. On 'grand feu', see Gauguin's explanation in his letter to Émile Bernard, November 1889, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 128.

45. As remarked in the catalogue for the exhibition *Van Gogh et Gauguin. L'atelier du Midi* (The Art Institute of Chicago, September 22, 2001–January 13, 2002/Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, February 9, 2002—June 2, 2002), curated by D. W. Druick and P. K. Zegers, 69.

46. On this point, see M. Bodelsen's essential work *Gauguin's Ceramics: A Study in the Development of His Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964); and C. Gray, *Sculptures and Ceramics of Paul Gauguin* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1963), 5–32. It is through the intermediary of Bracquemond that Gauguin meets the ceramicist Chaplet. 'I was the first to start making ceramic sculpture'. Gauguin claims in a letter to Vollard on August 25, 1902.

47. Cf. Gauguin, Letter to Shuffenecker, October 8, 1888, where the painter describes the self-portrait dedicated to van Gogh, known as *Les Misérables*: 'The colour is a colour remote from nature: do you perhaps remember my pottery, twisted by *grand feu* [the gory *Jug in the Form of a Head, Self-Portrait* of January(?) 1889]—all the reds and violets streaked by flames, like a furnace irradiating the eyes, the seat the painter's mental struggles'. *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 104–6. See again the letter to Vincent accompanying the shipment: 'The blood in heat floods the face, and the tones of a fiery smithy, which surround the eyes, suggest *the red-hot lava that sets our painter's souls ablaze*' (October 1, 1888, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let692/letter.html, emphasis added).

48. Cf. 'Une lettre de Paul Gauguin à propos de Sèvres et du dernier four', *Le Soir*, April 23, 1895 (reprinted in Gauguin, *Oviri*, 135–137). The ceramicist Ernest Chaplet, the meeting with whom had determined Gauguin's interest in this art (see the letter to Mette Gad-Gauguin, his wife, from the end of May 1886 [*Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 65–66]), had been one of the protagonists in the rediscovery of the secrets of 'oriental' glazes, whose *ox-blood* effect he used in 1886. An effect overinvested by Gauguin—see on this subject Gray, *Sculptures and Ceramics of Paul Gauguin*, 19. As for gargoyles, those 'unforgettable monsters' that populate cathedrals, Gauguin writes in *Avant et Après*: 'My eye follows their accidents without fear, these bizarre offspring' (Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 129 [translation modified] [196–197]).

49. See P. Gauguin, 'Notes sur l'art à l'Exposition Universelle', *Le Moderniste illustré*, July 4 and 11, 1889, where the painter delivers a harsh review of the ceramics section: 'Sèvres, to name but one, has killed ceramics' (reprinted in *Oviri*, 47–52). The article concludes with a rather circumspect eulogy to the 'only two real ceramicists', Chaplet and Delaherche. For 'both of them must be taken to task for the same failing. If they seek to make something beautiful and modern, they should do so completely; beyond *the beautiful colour that they obtain*, they should produce forms of vases other than the known mechanical forms. They should come together with an artist' (emphasis added).

50. Gauguin, Letter to Daniel de Monfreid, March 1898, *The Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, trans. Ruth Pielkovo (London: Heinemann, 1923), 99.

51. T. Carlyle, *German Romance*, II, *Centenary Edition. The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes* (London, 1898), 190–191. On the 'pyromaniac inspiration' of *Sartor Resartus*, see the author's whole argument on 'The Baptism of Fire' (321–345).

52. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 172. Gauguin will come back one last time to this question of the 'pretty' in *Before and After*, confiding, 'I am afraid that the younger generation, all coming out of the same mould—too pretty a mould, in my

opinion—will never be able to efface the stamp of it' (Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 132 [201]). For Impressionism is then mixed with the nabi culture, making a very strange *ménage a trois* with the return to the beautiful, representative of that classical sensibility extolled by Maurice Denis. . . .

53. Gauguin, 'Notes sur l'art à l'Exposition Universelle', 50.

54. G.-A. Aurier, 'Néo-Traditionnistes. Paul Gauguin', *La Plume*, September 1, 1891. The formula will embarrass Gauguin: 'I would accept this praise for my drawing, if not for my oeuvre', he wrote in his 1895 letter 'à propos de Sèvres et du dernier four'.

55. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 177.

56. Taking up on his own account Gauguin's advice to the young Sérusier, van Gogh writes that Bernard and Gauguin 'won't ask for the correct tone of the mountains but they'll say: for Christ's sake, were the mountains blue, then chuck on some blue and don't go telling me that it was a blue a bit like this or like that, it was blue wasn't it? Good—make them blue and that's enough!' (to Theo, mid-September 1889; http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let805/letter.html).

57. Attributed to Cézanne, the maxim is found in the book from the pension Gloannec, and will be reprised in *Diverses choses* in the course of an argument that, in truth, is not particularly Cézannian. . . . Moreover, commentators have without exception confirmed that we find no trace of the phrase in Cézanne's writings or recorded remarks. According to Yves-Alain Bois, it first occurs in a story told by Duranty published in 1867 under the title 'Le Peintre Marsabiel', in which one recognises immediately the Cézanne of the *couillarde* period (cf. Y.-A. Bois, 'Matisse and 'Arche-drawing'', in *Painting as Model* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990], 37–38).

58. This Mallarméan inspiration is carried through to its ultimate conclusion: as Gauguin writes, in a letter to Charles Morice, October 1901, 'There is in painting more to be sought in suggestion than in description, as is the case also in music'.

59. Gauguin, letter to A. Fontainas, March 1899, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 216.

60. Denis, 'The Influence of Paul Gauguin', 103: 'In the Louvre [. . .] we completed the rudimentary teaching of Gauguin by substituting for his over-simplistic idea of pure color the idea of beautiful harmonies, infinitely varied as in nature [. . .]. We sought equivalents, but equivalents in beauty!'

61. Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1859', in *Mirror of Art*, 239–240 [translation modified].

62. Gauguin, *Diverses choses*, 177–180. This whole passage is placed under the sign of the 'Orientals' who, in their carpets, 'had above all printed a complete dictionary of this language of the listening eye'.

63. Remark reported by E. Tardieu, 'La Peinture et les Peintres', *L'Echo de Paris*, May 13, 1895 (Gauguin, *Oviri*, 138). Let us cite the first lines of the article: 'He is the fiercest of all the innovators and the most intransigent of the *misunderstood* [*incompris*]. [. . .] He continues to paint orange flowers and red dogs, every day exacerbating further this most personal manner'. In the *Mercure de France*, June 1895, Mauclair writes ironically: 'What M. Gauguin defines here existed some three thousand years

ago: the *carpet*. And indeed M. Gauguin's paintings would make rather nice carpets, garish but amusing' (C. Mauclair, 'Choses d'art', *Mercure de France*, June 1895).

64. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 2, 53.

65. H. Taine, *Philosophie de l'art* (Paris: Fayard, 1985), 452–453 (1865–1869, 1881 for the 1st edition in 2 vols). [The English translation by John Durand, *Philosophy of Art* (New York: Holt and Williams, 1873) omits this passage.—Translator's note]

66. C. Morice, *Gauguin* (Paris: H. Floury, 1919). 'A strangely cerebral oeuvre, compelling yet uneven', Mirbeau had written in the article *L'Echo de Paris*, cited above. And J. Dolent, some days later, and more directly: 'Gauguin's crucible is the brain' ('Paul Gauguin', *Journal des artistes*, February 22, 1891).

67. P. Gauguin, Letter to Mette, March 1892, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 164–168: 165. This letter from Tahiti is a response to his wife, who had reproached him for having left Paris and for 'remaining far from the artistic centre'.

68. According to the description of the painting given by Gauguin in a letter to van Gogh (around September 22, 1888): 'An *apple tree* goes across the canvas: dark purple, and the foliage drawn in masses like emerald green clouds, with yellow-green interstices of sunlight. The earth (pure vermilion). At the church it goes down and becomes red brown'. The two citations given below are from the same letter (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let688/letter.html).

69. As M. A. Stevens observes, 'Émile Bernard et l'esthétique de Pont-Aven', catalogue of the exhibition *L'Aventure de Pont-Aven et Gauguin* (Musée du Luxembourg, April 2, 2003–June 22, 2003) (Paris: Skira, 2003), 51.

70. Cf. G.-A. Aurier, 'Le symbolisme en peinture: Paul Gauguin', *Mercure de France*, March 1891: republished in *Le Symbolisme en peinture,* ed. P.-L. Mathieu (Caen: L'Échoppe, 1991), 15. Need we remind ourselves that the celebrated manifesto of symbolism in painting opens with a description of this very painting? 'Far, very far away on a fabulous foothill, whose base appears in gleaming vermilion, we see the biblical struggle of Jacob with the Angel'.

71. In *L'Encaustique et les autres procédés de peinture chez les anciens* (Paris: Rouam, 1884), Henri Cros and Charles Henry relate wax painting to the mysticism of the early Christians and to the intensity of the visions their masterpieces gave rise to (87).

72. This expression appears in the same letter from Gauguin to van Gogh. Offered by Gauguin to the church at Pont-Aven, *Vision* was promptly refused by the priest.

73. Z. Amishai-Maisels, 'Dualisme iconographique et stylistique', in *Gauguin. Actes du colloque du Musée d'Orsay (11–13 janvier 1989)* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1991), 206–207.

74. Gauguin, letter to van Gogh, around September 22, 1888, cited above.

75. The word proposed by Jacques Rancière in his rigorous deconstruction of Aurier's article, cf. J. Rancière, 'Painting in the Text', in *The Future of the Image* (London: Verso, 2009), 69–89.

76. *The Letters of Paul Gauguin to Georges Daniel de Monfreid*, trans. Ruth Pielkovo (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co, 1922), 143.

77. Druick and Zegers, *Van Gogh et Gauguin*, 113.

78. P. Gauguin, Letter to Schuffenecker, October 16, 1888, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 109–110.

79. V. van Gogh, Letter to Theo, June 17/18, 1889. The ‘we’ includes ‘Gauguin, Bernard, and myself’ (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let782/letter.html).

80. This expression—‘a Savage from Peru’—appears in a letter to Schuffenecker, July 8, 1888, where Gauguin describes *Fighting Children* as ‘not at all in the Degas style’, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 99.

81. Cf. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. I, 311; vol. II, 69 (‘nothing but signs, *signs and indexes of unknown things*’ [vol. 1, 186]). In this same paragraph, Taine recalls (with reference to Mill) that ‘The object is not directly manifested to us, it is denoted indirectly by the group of sensations it arouses, or would arouse in us’ (vol. 1, 185–186).

82. See the letter from Gauguin to Daniel de Monfreid, dated March 12, 1897, where the painter declares: ‘All this is apart from painting, they will say. Who knows? Perhaps not’. *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 79.

83. V. Segalen, ‘Gauguin dans son dernier décor’, *Mercure de France*, June 1904.

84. F. Cachin, *Gauguin* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990, revised edition 2003), 247 [translation modified].

85. P. Gauguin, *Notes à la suite de ‘Noa Noa’,* cited in J. Rewald, *Gauguin* (Paris: Éditions Hypérion, 1938), 23.

86. Rorschach’s masterwork will not be published until the year of his death, in 1921. Cf. H. Rorschach, *Psychodiagnostics: A Diagnostic Test Based on Perception* (Berne: Verlag Hans Huber, 1951).

87. A. Binet, *The Psychology of Reasoning: Based on Experimental Researches in Hypnotism* (Chicago: Open Court, 1912). (We could be forgiven for noting that both Binet and Rorschach were the sons of artist-painters. . . .) On this hallucinatory question, see G. Didi-Hubermann’s book on Charcot, *The Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*, trans. Alisa Hartz (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), and the article ‘Don de la page, don du visage’ (1994), in *Phasmes. Essais sur l’apparition* (Paris: Minuit, 1998).

88. Binet, *The Psychology of Reasoning*, 58.

89. Druick and Zegers, *Van Gogh et Gauguin*, 170, 180. The authors are particularly convincing in regard to the importance of the ‘very thick jute fabric’ used for all the Alyscamps paintings, during Gauguin’s time in Arles alongside van Gogh. V. Jirat-Wasiuntynski and H. Travers Newton Jr. confirm that ‘1888 is a crucial year in this respect’; see V. Jirat-Wasiuntyenski, H. Travers Newton Jr., ‘Tradition et innovation dans la technique picturale de Gauguin’, in *Gauguin. Actes du colloque du Musée d’Orsay* . . . , in particular, 71–79.

90. Cf. Didi-Hubermann, *Phasmes*, 154.

91. Ibid., 164.

92. Cf. C. De Couëssin, ‘Le synthétisme de Paul Gauguin’, in *Gauguin. Actes du colloque du Musée d’Orsay* . . . , 81–97.

93. Cf. Victor Segalen, *Essai sur l’exoticism. Une esthétique du divers* (*Notes*) [1904–1918], *Oeuvres completes*, vol. 1 (Paris. Robert Laffont, 1995), 749. And again,

in a letter from Segalen to Henry Manceron dated August 7, 1908: 'the exotic: the power of conceiving otherwise'.

94. Gauguin composed his painting from a photograph by Charles Spitz showing a Tahitian drinking from a spring.

95. We also find in *Sartor Resartus* ('The Tailored Retailored') the temptation to suicide by arsenic. . . .

96. T. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus,* ed. K. McSweeney and P. Sabor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 42–43. Associated with the memory of Meyer de Haan, friend and sponsor of the little community at Pouldu in 1889–1890, but also with van Gogh, who had introduced Gauguin to Carlyle's 'metaphysics', *Sartor Resartus* was translated into French in 1895 and serialised in the *Mercure de France*, 'complementary copies' of which were made available to Gauguin in his 'Isles'. Meyer de Haan—who, it is thought, read long passages of *Sartor Resartus* to Gauguin during his stay at Pont-Aven—returns in one of Gauguin's last paintings, disguised as a faun with claws. Commentators have vainly tried to penetrate the meaning of the painting's title: *Barbarous Tales* (1902).

97. Gauguin, letter to Daniel de Monfreid, March 1898, *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 99 [translation modified].

98. Chapter 8 of book Two of *Sartor Resartus* ('Natural Supernaturalism') takes up the argument on 'the universal *Canvas*, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves'.

99. In a letter to Daniel de Monfreid in February 1898, Gauguin states that the chromium yellow of the two upper corners that heightens the effect should be thought of 'like a fresco whose corners are spoiled with age, and which is appliquéed upon a golden wall'. 'It is all done straight from the brush, on sackcloth full of knots and wrinkles, so the appearance is terribly rough' (*Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 94). In view of the innumerable borrowings of this painting from 'motifs' of the earlier work, commentators have invariably questioned this claim.

100. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, 281. See Jacques Cabau's fine page on *Sartor Resartus* as a 'parody of the romantic voyage', a '*quête en creux*', a 'hallucination', etc. J. Cabau, *Thomas Carlyle ou le Prométhée enchainé*, 238–245.

101. P. Gauguin, *Ancien Culte mahorie*, ed. R. Huyghe (facsimile edition, Paris: Hermann, 1951; republished 2001). The manuscript is largely inspired by, and often copied verbatim from, French consul and ethnographer Jacques-Antoine Moerenhout's *Voyages aux îles du Grand Océan* (Paris, 1837). This is also the case for *Noa Noa* (see R. Huyghe's introduction, 25sq.).

102. See the entire opening of Carlyle's work *On Heroes, Hero-worship and the Heroic in History* (London: James Fraser, 1841). Gauguin knew of this work through van Gogh.

103. Let us finally give in full this argument of Gauguin's, extracted from the letter to Daniel de Monfreid, March 1898, already cited above: 'Where does the execution of a painting commence and where does it end? At that moment, when the most intense emotions are in fusion in the depths of one's being, when they burst forth and when thought comes up like lava from a volcano, is there not then something like an explosion? The work is created suddenly, brutally if you like, but great, almost

superhuman'. In her commentary, Cachin states that Gauguin finds in this passage 'the themes that were most fashionable in the philosophy of the time, those of the creative power of instinct and of "élan vital"' (Cachin, *Gauguin*, 234). The 1890s were indeed marked by what was called 'the vogue for bergsonism'.

104. Gauguin, Letter to Daniel de Monfreid, February 1898, *Letters of Gauguin to Monfried*, 94.

105. According to the observation of R. Brettell in his notice in the catalogue for the exhibition *Gauguin*, at the National Gallery of Art, Washington (1 May–31 July, 1988), The Art Institute of Chicago (17 September–11 December 1988) and Galeries nationale du Grand Palais (10 January—24 April 1989) (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 401–402 [cat. 216].

106. A. Jarry, 'Manao Tupapau', in *Oeuvres completes*, ed. M. Arrivé (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 254. This poem was written in the *Golden book of the pension Gloannec,* and dated July 11, 1894.

107. Gauguin had made the copy of Manet's *Olympia* in February 1891. He would use the pose again with *Te arii vahine* (*The King's Wife*) in 1896, to which Julien Leclercq would give the title *L'Olympia noire* at its first showing, in 1898.

108. Gauguin, Letter to Mette, December 8, 1892, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 178.

109. Rewald, *Post-Impressionism*, 490. On Gauguin's relation to Redon, see the unpublished article from the end of 1889, exhumed by *Les Nouvelles littéraires*, May 7, 1953; republished in *Oviri*, 59–61. Gauguin possessed a lithograph of Redon's *La Fleur Cyclope* (1883).

110. Cachin, *Gauguin*, 176. A commonplace of the era, since Félix Fénéon had opined that Gauguin 'in a literary fervor' had himself become 'the prey of the literati'; and one that we find again, for example, from the pen of the critic of *Le Temps*, François Thiébault Sisson: 'An artist who would be more gifted if exclusively literary friendships did not obscure his judgment and paralyze the instinctive sense that he had for painting' (F. Thiébault Sisson, 'Les petits salons', *Le Temps*, December 2, 1893).

111. Cf. P. Dagen, *Le Peintre, le Poète, le Sauvage. Les voies du primitivisme dans l'art français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998), 85.

112. Cf. V. Segalen, Letter to Daniel de Monfreid, December 1903, published in the *Mercure de France*, June 1904: 'He thus dreamt of a maori genesis [. . .]. Before Gauguin, in Tahiti, there was no maori hypostasis. Taaroa the Creator had plunged—tired, no doubt, after his work— back into dream [. . .]. This lack of the presence of the great autochthonous gods certainly led the Polynesians to their doom, for they died [. . .] from all sorts of illnesses, but primarily from the contagion of the Christian god, god made man, incarnated in a Jewish flesh'.

113. See the reprise of the same 'motif' in the woodcut entitled *Eve* (1898–1899 [cat. 235]), presenting the head of the tupupau detached from the body and simply juxtaposed with the nude according to a pure picture-book 'collage' effect.

114. A painting that Gauguin did not want to sell ('this one, I will keep for myself'), despite the financial distress of the last weeks of 1892, when he had been petitioning for almost six months to be repatriated into France as a *pauper*.

115. Gauguin, letter to Daniel de Monfreid, December 8, 1892. See *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 38–39 [although this note is omitted in the English].

116. If the revenant can only be 'any fine young woman *whatever*', as Gauguin declares, her traits are decisively as ambiguous as the 'Oceanian nude'. 'The androgynous side of the savage', Gauguin notes in the margin of the first manuscript of *Noa Noa* (1893), opposite the story of his uneasy desire for the young man who had led him into the forest in search of wood. P. Gauguin, *Noa Noa: The Tahitian Journal* (New York: Dover, 1985), 25–26 [*Noa Noa*, ed. P. Petit (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1988), 55–59]. Mention is also made of *Seraphîta*, Balzac's novel of 'Swedenborgian' inspiration, in the *Cahier pour Aline* (1892) in the middle of the commentary on *Manao Tupapau*. For a very close analysis of this *androgynous condition* in Gauguin, see Stephen. F. Eisenman's book *Gauguin's Skirt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), chapter 2: 'Sex in Tahiti'.

117. To speak like Charles Morice, who has the following to say on *Spirit of the Dead Watching*: 'Tahiti called Gauguin as painter and poet, poet and sculptor; he rediscovered the homeland of his dream. But he did not arrive with a naked soul! The only homeland is thought, and of the place that allows our thought the most free rein, we say it is our homeland' (C. Morice, Preface to *Exposition d'oeuvres récentes de Paul Gauguin*, Galerie Durand-Ruel, November 1893).

118. The expression is that of André Fontainas, who uses this 'tendency to the abstract' to explain why he has 'never been transported or moved' by Gauguin's paintings. He argues that 'too often the dry, colourless, rigid characters of his dream figure, imprecisely, the unwelcome forms of an awkwardly metaphysical imagination whose meaning is hazardous, its expression arbitrary' (A. Fontainas, 'Art moderne', *Mercure de France*, January 29, 1899).

119. As Richard Brettell clearly notes in his notice for the catalogue *Gauguin*, 346 [cat. 189]. The lithography bears the number [cat. 189 bis].

120. See in particular [cat. 186]: [cat. 186 bis] for the engraving of *Noa Noa* (p. 75 in the Louvre manuscript, 1893–1897) and [cat. 185] for the largest of the woodcuts.

121. Catalogue *Gauguin* [cat. 176].

122. This last expression is Denis's, in 'The Influence of Paul Gauguin', 103; all the other citations are from Gauguin, in a passage from *Avant et Après* given *infra*.

123. Recall that this is the title given by Gauguin to those 'sparse notes, with no consequent, made, like Dreams, like life, entirely of pieces', written a few months before his death, on the Marquesas. The book was printed only in 1923, in Paris, by éditions G. Crès (with the twenty-seven drawings of the original manuscript).

124. See the final elucidation given in a letter to Daniel de Monfreid, November 1901: 'You know what I think about all these false ideas of symbolism, both in literature and painting, so it's useless to repeat it'. *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 150. As testimony to the excess of Hermetics (call it what you will . . .) over the hermeneutic will, see the many *non-explanations* contained in the excellent notices of the catalogue *Gauguin* from the 1989 exhibition: such-and-such a motif, detail, figure, composition . . . 'remains unexplained'; 'the symbolism' of this, that and the other painting 'resists all attempts at interpretation', 'plunges us back (sic) into perplexity', etc.

125. The dedication to Mallarmé of the woodcut figure in *Oviri* (1894): 'To Stéphane Mallarmé, this strange figure and cruel enigma'.

126. Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 46 [*Avant et Après*, in *Oviri*, 341; *Avant et Après*, 77] ('Being' is underlined by Gauguin).

127. Gauguin, Letter to van Gogh, October 1, 1888, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let692/letter.html.

128. P.-H. Frangne, *La Négation à l'oeuvre*. *La philosophie symboliste de l'art (1860–1905)* (Rennes: PUF, 2005), 346.

129. According to Maurice Denis's analysis, which identifies *decorative deformation* and *objective deformation* in Gauguin, in order to oppose them to van Gogh's *subjective deformation*: 'Whereas decorative deformation is Gauguin's most characteristic preoccupation, it is on the contrary subjective deformation which gives van Gogh's painting its character and its lyricism'. Cf. M. Denis, 'De Gauguin et de van Gogh au classicism', *L'Occident* 90 (1909); *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 163.

130. F. Fénéon, 'Autre groupe impressionniste', *La Cravache*, 6 July 1889.

131. Denis, 'De Gauguin et de Van Gogh au classicism', 165.

132. Cf. R. L. Delevoy, *Le Symbolisme* (Geneva: Skira, 1982), 70–74. Recall that Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious* had been translated into French in 1877.

133. E. Dujardin, 'Le cloissonisme', *Revue indépendante*, May 19, 1888.

134. In a letter to Vincent van Gogh, December 1889, describing *Kelp Gatherers*: http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let828/letter.html.

135. *Note on the synthetism quarrel*. Although Dujardin's article on 'Cloisonnisme' (cited above) dealt exclusively with Anquetin, Émile Bernard's contribution to the elaboration of this 'modern style' left no doubt—despite his 'find[ing] everything that he, Bernard, does, bad in comparison with Gauguin' (V. van Gogh on Bernard, Letter to Theo, September/October 1888, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let683/letter.html). In Vincent's eyes, 'young Bernard has perhaps gone further than Anquetin in the Japanese style' (in a letter to Theo, June 1888, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let620/letter.html). In any case, it is after having mentioned these 'interesting things' reported at Pont-Aven by 'young Bernard' that Gauguin continues, in his letter to Schuffenecker in August 1888, as follows: 'Some advice, do not copy too much from nature. Art is an abstraction; draw it from nature while dreaming before her, and think more of the creation than of the result [. . .]. My latest works are going well'. The quarrel between Bernard and Gauguin over the paternity of 'synthetism' was elucidated by the articles of Mirbeau and Aurier (cited above), who both pass over Bernard's contribution in silence; under the influence of the latter, Félix Fénéon focuses on Gauguin's usurpation and fraudulence; Gauguin 'in Brittany met a young painter, well taught and of an adventurous spirit, M. Émile Bernard, who today is perhaps his student, but who seems to have been his initiator; for M. Bernard was the first to have painted, in saturated colours, shambling Bretons, delimited by a close mesh of panes and enveloped by a décor with neither atmosphere nor tonal values' (F. Fénéon, 'Paul Gauguin', *Le Chat noir*, May 23, 1891). On this *synthetism quarrel*, whose effect would above all be to precipitate Bernard, in reaction against Gauguin, towards the worst kind of academicism and the struggle against

'satanic dechristianization', see the particularly effective retelling by Rewald, in *Post-Impressionism*, chap. IX: '1890–1891. Gauguin and the Symbolists'.

Substantively—that is to say, in regard to painting—compare Bernard's *Breton Women in a Green Pasture* (or *The Pardon*) to *The Vision after the Sermon* (in the same format), preceded very closely by Bernard's painting, if the two are not 'exactly contemporary' (as suggested by the most recent research, led by Jirat-Wasiuntyenski and Travers Newton in *Technique and Meaning in the Paintings of Paul Gauguin* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000], 101): one will be forced to admit that, in the absence of any kind of tension, any kind of spatial dramatisation in Bernard's painting, where the stylistic innovation does not inform, does not deform 'the meaning of the work' (as Druick and Zegers state, *Van Gogh et Gauguin*, 136), Bernard's work remains a *Bretonnerie*. . . . This is still true of *Black Wheat* (1888), incontestably his finest painting (along with *The Market at Pont-Aven*), and which 'responds' to the *Vision* and seeks to invest its radical anti-naturalism. To follow the more belated 'point of view' of Gauguin himself, we would have to compare 'young Bernard's' chaste *Madeleine in the Bois d'Amour* (1889), where his sister, painted recumbent, brings her hand to her ear to hear the Divine Voices, to the parodic *Loss of Virginity* (1890–1891), which resuscitates a lunar Olympia lying upon a saturated ochre soil, contrasting a green horizontal band with a summarily-brushed blood-red moorland. . . . The association of the woman (already a 'Tahitian girl') with a fox (a satanic animal, 'the Indian symbol of perversity') might emphasise the sister's perversity as well as the brother's perfidy (and his affectation of purity), while unveiling through this irony the *demoniac underside* of an edifying *Hope* à la Puvis de Chavannes. We will conclude with this remark of Philippe Dagen's, on *Loss of Virginity*: 'That Gauguin had deliberately ridiculed the affectation of purity which, in Bernard's oeuvre, ended in prudishness—this irony shows, if it were necessary, to what extent the oeuvre is opposed to the "right-thinking" themes which, from the beginning of the 1890s, Bernard and Denis claimed to treat in the Pont-Aven manner' (P. Dagen, *Le Peintre, le Poète, le Sauvage*, 75).

136. The two words were taken as equivalents: along with Dujardin, see, for example, M. Denis, 'L'époque du symbolisme', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, March 1934: 'Rather than windows opening onto nature, like the impressionists' paintings, they were heavily decorative surfaces, powerfully coloured and surrounded with thick lines, partitioned [*cloisonnées*]—for one spoke, in relation to them, of *cloisonnisme* and even of *japonisme*' (reprinted in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 207).

137. 'Manet, for whom my admiration is unbounded', Gauguin had confided to André Fontainas in his letter of August 1899; *Letters to His Wife and Friends,* 222.

138. Gauguin, letter to Schuffenecker, October 8, 1888, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 105. Practically the same words are found again in the letter to van Gogh of October 1, 1888, accompanying the painting dedicated 'to friend Vincent', where it is a question of an 'abstract and symbolic art' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let692/letter.html)—and already, on the subject of the initial plan for a portrait of Bernard, in a letter to Vincent on September 25/27, 1888: 'in any case it will be an abstraction' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let688/letter.html). Following Gauguin's association closely, the theme of going all the way back 'to the art of the

gothic stained glass window, all the way to the carpets of the Orient' will become a commonplace of criticism, under the authority of Maurice Denis (see, for example, the 'Chronique de peinture' [published under the title 'Le Soleil' in *Théories*], *L'Ermitage*, December 15, 1906; *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 122).

139. Van Gogh, Letter to Wil, beginning of June 1890: 'What I'm most passionate about, much more than all the rest in my profession—is the portrait, the modern portrait. I seek it by way of colour, and am certainly not alone in seeking it in this way. I would like, you see I'm far from saying that I can do all this, but anyway I'm aiming at it, I *would like* to do portraits which would look like apparitions to people a century later' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let879/letter.html). We know through the correspondence that this development would not meet with Theo's approval, since the latter remarked, not without perplexity, that his brother's painting was close to Gauguin's. See the letter from Theo to Vincent of October 22, 1889: 'In Gauguin's last consignment there are the same preoccupations as with you' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let813/letter.html).

140. See also, in the upper right part of the *Self Portrait*, the simplified image of Bernard: red lines on a green ground 'fixed', 'stuck' to flowered wallpaper.

141. As Theo van Gogh will say of *La Belle Angèle*, in a letter to Vincent, September 1889: 'It is a painting deposited on the canvas like the big heads in Japanese prints', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let799/letter.html.

142. Cf. Y. Le Pichon, 'Gauguin et ses amis', *Beaux-Arts* 30 (December 1985).

143. J. Leymarie, *Gauguin. Aquarelles, pastels et dessins* (Geneva: Skira, 1988), 35 (1st edition: 1960).

144. According to the remark of C. F. Stuckey in his notice for the catalogue *Gauguin*, 23 (and in his presentation of the 'impressionist years', 11–16). We will also cite his startling description: 'The model's face is bruised with shadow, and her pallid chest is mottled with blues and greens. Worst of all is the graceless curve of her back' (22). The historian fortunately highlights the misinterpretation of Huysman's 1881 'realist' review ('L'exposition des Indépendants en 1881'), which had not escaped Gauguin: 'Despite the complimentary side, I see that he is seduced only by the literature of my woman and not by the painterly side' (Letter from Gauguin to Pissarro, May 11/12, 1883).

145. I. F. Walther, *Paul Gauguin* (Paris: Taschen, 1988), 10. In a letter to Pissarro dated May–June 1882, Gauguin advises him 'to do *more in the studio*, but things matured in advance from the point of view of the arrangement and the *décor*', rather than 'seeking a new *vision* of nature' (Gauguin's emphasis).

146. In the words of Alexandre Hepp reviewing the works presented by Gauguin at the Impressionist exhibition of 1882. Cf. A. Hepp, 'Impressionnisme', *Le Voltaire*, March 3, 1882.

147. As Jirat-Wasiuntyenski and Newton write, in *Technique and Meaning in the Paintings of Paul Gauguin*, 68.

148. This is the second—or even third—period for art historians, by their vocation attentive to the formative years under the tutelage of the mentor Pissarro, and to the influence of his 'taste for frank and bold tones' from 1879's *Market Gardens of Vaugirard* onwards. A taste to which, according to Bernard Dorival,

Gauguin would attribute 'his daring to heighten tones'. Dorival concludes that 'apart from this liberation of colour and a need for novelty, an intimate necessity for non-conformism'—a nonconformism with which Gauguin strictly identified Impressionism when he still advocated it—'everything separates Gauguin from the impressionists' (B. Dorival, 'Le milieu', chapter 2 of *Paul Gauguin* [Paris: Éditions du Chêne, 1986], 54). Let us add that, from 1881 onwards, Gauguin opposes Pissarro and Cézanne to Monet.

149. This tendency, as we shall soon verify, implies an extraordinary tension in relation to the Cézannian plane.

150. Van Gogh, Letter to Theo, August 18, 1888: 'I find that what I learned in Paris *is leaving me* [. . .]. And I wouldn't be surprised if the Impressionists were soon to find fault with my way of doing things, which was fertilized more by the ideas of Delacroix than by theirs', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let663/letter.html [translation modified].

151. In a letter to van Gogh, in April 1890, Gauguin uses this phrase in relation to the 'impressionist' painter Armand Guillaumin (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let859/letter.html). The attack takes on a greater importance when we realise that Vincent had admired Guillaumin since his time in Paris, when he had frequented his studio a great deal, and that Guillaumin had been close enough to Gauguin (who still took him to belong to his 'group' at the time of the 1889 exhibition at Café Volpini) to defend him against Seurat (on the occasion of an obscure affair concerning a loaned studio). What is more, it was through Guillaumin that Seurat had been introduced to Pissarro, with all the consequences we know of. In short, he was the ideal target by way of which the ever-'calculating' Gauguin could make known the radicality of his break with Impressionism. . . .

152. Whence Gauguin would be quick to declare that 'the impressionists all look the same' (Letter from Gauguin to Pissarro, July 24–29, 1882).

153. Cf. Cachin, *Gauguin*, 71. 'One thinks already of Matisse or of the Bonnard of *La Revue blanche*', she emphasises. See the letter from Vincent to Theo, end of August 1888: 'Gauguin and Bernard are now taking about doing "children's painting". I prefer that to the painting of the decadents', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let668/letter.html.

154. An expression of Baudelaire's, in *The Painter of Modern Life* ('V. Mnemonic Art'). On this Baudelairean dimension of the theme of the 'Barbarous' in Gauguin, see Cachin, *Gauguin*, in particular 98–100.

155. Cf. G. Duthuit, *Van Gogh* (Lausanne: Éditions Jean Marguerat, 1948); republished in *Représentation et présence. Premiers écrits et travaux (1923–1952)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1974), 332.

156. This is the famous phrase in the letter to Theo at the beginning of September 1882: 'I see that nature has told me something, has spoken to me and that I've written it down in shorthand', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let260/letter.html; in February, he will borrow Mauve's maxim: 'to penetrate nature deeply'. See again the letter to Theo from the end of October or beginning of November 1885, which concludes with the affirmation that 'realism and naturalism are not free of [romanticism]': http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let537/letter.html.

157. See the letter to Bernard written from the Saint-Rémy asylum, beginning of December 1889, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let822/letter.html: 'When Gauguin was in Arles, once or twice I allowed myself to be led into abstraction [. . .] and at the time abstraction seemed an attractive route to me. But that's enchanted ground—my good fellow—and one soon finds oneself up against a wall'. In the same vein, he had already confided in October 1888: 'I have such a fear of separating myself from what's possible and what's right as far as form is concerned. After another ten years of studies, I have not succeeded, but in very truth I have so much curiosity for what's possible and what really exists that I have so little desire or courage to search for the ideal, in so far as it could result from *my* abstract studies. [. . .] But in the meantime I continue to live off nature. I exaggerate, I sometimes make changes to the subject, but still I don't invent the whole of the painting; on the contrary, I find it ready-made—but to be untangled—in nature', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let698/letter.html [translation modified]. And to Gauguin himself: 'I find my artistic ideas extremely commonplace in comparison with yours. I always have an animal's coarse appetites. I forget everything for the external beauty of things, *which I'm unable to render*', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let695/letter.html.

158. Vincent's words, during the stay in The Hague in Summer 1882.

159. J. Clay, *L'Impressionnisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1971), 245.

160. G. Kahn, 'Réponse des symbolists', *L'Evénement*, September 28, 1886 (emphasis added). This 'response' by Gustave Kahn presents itself as a corrective to the symbolist manifesto published by Jean Moréas some days beforehand (J. Moréas, 'Un Manifeste littéraire', *Le Figaro littéraire*, September 18, 1886).

161. Walther, *Paul Gauguin*, 56. One will be reminded here of that letter from Gauguin to Schuffenecker towards the end of August 1888, contemporary therefore with the *Still Life with Three Puppies*: 'How they remain on dry land, these *pompiers* with their *trompe-l'oeil* of nature. We alone sail on the phantom ship with all of our fantasist imperfection'. By now we know that the advocacy of this 'fantasist imperfection' is far from Wagnerian in intent.

162. At the beginning of 1891, Gauguin made an aquatint etching *Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé* as a faun. It is the only example of the painter working in this medium entirely 'subordinated to the intention of the draughtsman and to his genius' (Charles Blanc). In it we find a singular intuition as to what *separates* Mallarmé from Gauguin, in so far as the Mallarméan formula to which Gauguin clung as to the only recognition of his art that really counted—'It is incredible that so much mystery can be put into so much brilliance' (a phrase used as the epigraph of chapter 1 of *Noa Noa* and cited in the letter from Gauguin to Fontainas in March 1899, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 217)—is not far from saying that the poet, *who never wrote anything on the painter*, 'was disturbed by the brightness of Gauguin's paintings rather than sensitive to their mystery' (Cachin, *Gauguin*, 210). There is also a wooden sculpture entitled *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, given to Mallarmé by Gauguin in return for the work dedicated 'to the savage and the bibliophile' (no. 100 in the Gray catalogue).

163. According to Maurice Denis in 'L'époque du symbolisme', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, March 1934: reprinted in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 213. It is Redon that Mallarmé chose, just before his death, to illustrate the *Coup de dés*.

164. G. Kahn, *Les Dessins de Seurat* (Paris: Bernheim-Jeune, 1926), introduction.

165. We should think of the 'grey murmur' of the cinders of *Igitur* as we read Georges Duthuit's fine page on Poe and Seurat (or Redon and Seurat?) in his inspired article entitled 'Georges Seurat voyant et physicien', in *Labyrinthe* 22 (1946); reprinted in *Représentation et présence*, 323–324.

166. This text, which is usually attributed to Gauguin himself, reappears in *Avant et Après*, 52–56 [*Intimate Journal* 31–33].

167. O. Mirbeau, 'Paul Gauguin', *L'Echo de Paris*, February 16, 1891: published as the preface to *Catalogue d'une vente de trente tableaux de Paul Gauguin*. This is the sale that would enable the painter to undertake his voyage to Tahiti.

168. Dagen, *Le Peintre, le Poète, le Sauvage*, 59.

169. Cf. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 89 [95]:

> As I left the quay, at the moment of going on board, I saw Tehura for the last time. She had wept through many nights. Now she sat worn-out and sad, but calm, on a stone with her legs hanging down and her strong, little feet touching the soiled water. The flower which she had put behind the ear in the morning had fallen wilted upon her knee.

170. Julien Viaud (Pierre Loti), *Le Mariage de Loti* (Paris, 1880), first published in *La Nouvelle Revue* under the title *Rarahu, Idylle polynésienne*. In his *Essai sur l'exotisme*, Victor Segalen associated Loti, the 'Pseudo-Exote', with 'Traffickers of the Sensation of Diversity'. On the sexual aspect of this colonial thematic, one might consult, apart from Eisenman, *Gauguin's Skirt*, A. Salomon-Godeau, 'Going Native', *Art in America* 161 (July 1989), 119–128; N. Mowll Mathews, *Paul Gauguin. An Erotic Life* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001).

171. *Les Derniers sauvages* was the title of an illustrated work by Max Radiguet, published in 1860, very probably read by van Gogh and Gauguin. In a letter to Theo on September 17, 1888, Vincent accused Gauguin of being a 'calculating person, who, seeing himself at the bottom of the social ladder, wishes to attain a position by means that will be honest, to be sure, but which will be very shrewd' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let682/letter.html). We read in a letter from Gauguin to Bernard of November 9/12, 1888, where the latter accords to Vincent the paternity of the idea of the Studio of the Tropics: 'I rather agree with Vincent: the future belongs to painters of the tropics which have not yet been painted, and *we need something new as motifs for the stupid buying public*' (italics added).

172. See the letters from Gauguin to Schuffenecker (April 1890) and to Bernard (August 1890). In the first, 'I have read a book from the Department of the Colonies giving a great deal of information on the existence of Taïti [sic], a marvelous land in which I would like to end my days'. It is thus factually incontestable that Gauguin's departure is inscribed in a geographic imaginary formatted by colonial propaganda—cf. J.-F. Staszak, *Géographies de Gauguin* (Paris: Bréal, 2003).

173. In the letter to Schuffenecker of July 8, 1888, the word 'French' that preceded this expression had been *crossed out*. Van Gogh had confided in his letter to Bernard of November 2, 1888, then, it is true, that he knew that Gauguin would read these two phrases at the moment when he added a postscript: 'Now here, without the slightest doubt, we're in the presence of an unspoiled creature with the instincts of a wild beast.

With Gauguin, blood and sex have the edge over ambition' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let716/letter.html).

174. Gauguin, letter to Daniel de Monfreid, August 25, 1902: 'The earth is our animality, believe me'. Our epigraph to this chapter on 'those mischevious Greeks' is taken from the same letter (*Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 158).

175. As Gauguin emphasises in a letter to Schuffenecker on December 20, 1888, in the middle of his description of *Human Misery*: 'With her chin resting on her two fists, [the woman] thinks of few things, but feels consolation on this earth (*nothing but the earth*) whose vines the sun inundates with its red triangle' (emphasis added). Now, this 'red triangle' presents in the most startling fashion the 'earth' as a sort of volcanically animated magma, rendered 'by large flat surfaces of colour, spread thickly with the knife'—as is indicated by Druick and Zegers, pointing out that in/on this canvas Gauguin 'modelled the surface of the painting as he had never done before, accepting the materiality of the colour that he worked [. . .] like clay' (Druick and Zegers, *Van Gogh et Gauguin*, 194). Note once again that Gauguin would propose a 'Tahitian' version—far more dreamy . . . —of *Human Misery* in 1898–1899 (engraving on wood, printed in black on Japan paper).

176. Gauguin, Letter to Mette, July 1892: 'I am in the midst of work, now that I know the soil, its odour', *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 172.

177. Gauguin, *L'Echo de Paris*, May 13, 1890. Whence also the fact that the tactile plane of this *new earth* can no longer be rendered by those almost *Monticellian* qualities of *Human Misery*, painted under the influence of Vincent.

178. Gauguin, Letter to van Gogh, June 13, 1890, http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let884/letter.html. This letter announces to Vincent his intention to found the Studio of the Tropics, first mooted by van Gogh on the basis of a community of ideas and a 'commercial' concern to mix the influence of Gauguin with the 'exotic' novels of Loti (in a letter to Theo of October 28, 1888, for example: 'What Gauguin has to say about the tropics seems wonderful to me. There, certainly, is the future of a great renaissance of painting', http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let714/letter.html). Gauguin cites Vincent as the originator of the idea in the postscript of the letter (cited above) from Vincent to Bernard of November 2, 1888. The prophetic theme of the announcement of the painting of the future (whose reprise by Signac at the end of his manifesto-book we met above) and of an artistic new testament itself owes a great deal to Van Gogh's identification of the artist of the future with a 'colourist such as there has never before been'—maintaining furthermore that 'this new art will have the tropics for its homeland' (http://vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let716/letter.html). Aurier will echo this tropicalist messianism in his article on van Gogh published in the first issue of the *Mercure de France* (January 1890) under the title 'Les isolés: Vincent van Gogh'.

179. 'Gauguin has invented gauguinism', cf. Anon. 'Huitième Salon des XX à Bruxelles', *Journal des Artistes*, 1891.

180. According to his declaration in the 1929 Interview with Tériade. Matisse continues, 'The influence of Gauguin and van Gogh were felt then [at the moment of Fauvism], too'. Cf. Matisse, *Matisse on Art*, 84. In *Noa Noa*, Gauguin presented his departure from European Papeete as a decision to live 'completely in the brush' so

as to ‘to relight the fire the very ashes of which are scattered’ (Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 7 [translation modified] [37]).

181. This is the explanation given by Gauguin in *Racontars de Rapin*: ‘It was thus necessary, while taking account of the efforts made and all the research, even scientific research [Gauguin has just criticized neo-impressionist “dogma”] that had been carried out, to imagine a complete liberation, to break the windows, at the risk of cutting one’s fingers, *even if it meant leaving it to the following generation, now independent, extracted from all obstacles, to resolve the problem brilliantly*’ (Gauguin, *Oviri*, 263, italics added).

182. Dagen, *Le Peintre, le Poète, le Sauvage*, 95.

183. C. Greenberg, ‘Review of the Exhibitions of Paul Gauguin and Arshile Gorky’, *The Nation*, May 4, 1946: republished in C. Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 2, *Arrogant Purpose (1945–1949)*, ed. J. O’Brian (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), 77.

184. In a letter to Schuffenecker from mid-October 1887, Gauguin already judged the paintings produced during his stay in Martinique to be generally superior to all of his work at Pont-Aven. These are the paintings from Martinique that would arouse the enthusiasm of the van Gogh brothers. Theo purchased for himself *Negresses* (*With* [*Tropical*] *Mangos*).

185. Cf. Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Enlarged edition 1986), 63.

186. As Schuffenecker concludes after seeing *The Woman with a Flower*. See Gauguin’s letter to Daniel de Monfreid of November 5, 1892, where the painter cites this phrase of Schuffenecker’s (cf. *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 36). Druick and Zegers see this as evidence of a ‘revisionist exoticism’. It is, however, more difficult to follow our two curators when they wish to see in it ‘a transposition of the Arles experience’ (Druick and Zegers, *Van Gogh et Gauguin*, 337, 339).

187. Gauguin, Letter to Mette, June 1891: ‘The old order is gradually disappearing. Our missionaries have already introduced a great deal of hypocrisy and removed some of the poetry’, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 163 [translation modified]. Recall that *Noa Noa* opens on a ‘disillusioned’ note, faced with the ‘European triviality’ of Papeete, which had rendered the painter ‘in a manner blind’: ‘It was all over: nothing but the Civilised’. As in *Avant et Après*: see the pages on the absence of the picturesque, the language damaged by French words, the disappearance of Oceanian decorative art, the extinction of the race, etc. (Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 43–47, 105 [73–77, 163]. . . .)

188. Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 105 [163]. He continues: ‘Many things that are strange and picturesque existed here once but there are no traces of them left to-day; everything has disappeared. Day by day the race vanishes, decimated [in the original manuscript, *disseminated* . . .] by the European diseases’. Something which, in truth, we find more than a presentiment of in Loti himself (cf. *Le Mariage de Loti*, part 2, XXXV). . . .

189. The two paintings perhaps give us to read ‘the rest’ as referring to the colonial reality of the ‘Tahitian’ (the mission dress of the woman in the rocking chair in the first painting, the hat and cigar of the ‘woman in the shirt’ in the second). Whence the other translation of *Faaturuma*: *Sulky*. It will be noted that this ‘rustling of the spirit’

can still bring forth life, as is testified to by our *sulky* woman in the figure of a young nude girl seated, and obviously pregnant, in a monotype with watercolour on paper (1894–1895) inspired by Puvis de Chavannes's *Hope*. . . .

190. The painting is numbered 421 in the Wildenstein catalogue.

191. But the literal translation of the Tahitian gives us 'The woman of the flower'.

192. Gauguin, *Noa Noa* [49—omitted in English translation].

193. Ibid., [47—omitted in English translation].

194. In *Le Sourire* 4 (November 1899), a journal edited by Gauguin in Papeete between 1899 and 1900, the painter insists on the currency of Rousseau's, Bougainville's, and Diderot's theories (republished in facsimile edition Paris: J.-L. Bouge, 1952). Rousseau appears again in the 'scattered notes' of *Avant et Après* (*Intimate Journal* 199–200 [131]).

195. With this expression, it is the official ideology of the colonial Bulletins and other colonial Announcements that are echoed by Gauguin's pen. See also the frankly ignoble article in *Guêpes* (no. 21, October 12, 1900) on the question of the Chinese in Oceania: 'This yellow patch soiling our national flag makes me blush with shame', etc.; and the passage with anti-Semitic connotations on the 'Yid baby' in *Avant et Après* (*Intimate Journal*, 30–31 [52]).

196. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, [49—omitted in English translation].

197. Gauguin, *Intimate Journal*, 45 [76].

198. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 18 [41, 51].

199. The critic credits *Matamoe* with an 'unprecedented richness of color and linear arabesque'. See F. Stuckey's notice in the catalogue *Gauguin*, 238–240: 239.

200. And very often reproduced in a format larger than the paintings themselves, whose 'standard' format is 91 × 72 cm.

201. Gauguin reprises the idea of an Indo-Javanese origin of Polynesian culture, as argued in the first guidebook on Tahiti published in 1889 by Louis Henrique; cf. P. Peltier, 'Gauguin, artiste ethnographe', in *Gauguin Tahiti, l'atelier des Tropiques* (Paris: RMN, 2003), catalogue for the exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais (September 30, 2003–January 19, 2004), 32–33.

202. We encounter this word *animique* in René Huyghe's article, 'Gauguin, initiateur des temps nouveaux', chapter 8 of *Paul Gauguin* (Paris: Hachette, 1960), 196.

203. The greater part of the *Talisman*, taken up by the reflection in the water, may still be perceived in a 'narrowly' symbolist way, whereby 'art is not the objective transcription of external nature but its mirror, a message that one sends by inverting and reversing the real landscape by means of its reflection in water' (M.-A. Stevens, 'Émile Bernard et l'esthétique de Pont-Aven', catalogue *L'Aventure de Pont-Aven et Gauguin*, 54.

204. In his notice for the catalogue *Gauguin*, 364 [cat. 205].

205. As is posited by Pierre-Henry Frangne in his Hegelian commentary, cf. *La Négation à l'oeuvre*, 118.

206. To the extent that he will 'never do anything better, or even like it'. All citations from the Letter to Daniel Monfreid, February 1898, *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 94.

207. Fontainas, in the article already cited above in the *Mercure de France* (January 1899): 'In the huge panel that M. Gauguin showed, nothing, not even the two

supple and pensive figures that pass through it, tranquil and so beautiful, nor the evocation of a mysterious idol, would reveal to us the meaning of the allegory, if he had not taken the care to write in a corner at the top of the painting: "Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?"' The most convincing interpretation to our eyes, for it puts the description in the service of an analysis minimal enough that one might call it not so much 'symbolic' as 'diagrammatic', is that proposed by Michel Butor in his three lectures given at the Bibliothèque nationale de France on March 8, 10, and 11, 1999 (published in M. Butor, *Quant au livre. Triptyque en l'honneur de Gauguin* [Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2000]).

208. Gauguin, letter to A. Fontainas, March 1899, in 'response' to the article in the *Mercure de France* (emphasis by the painter), *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 216. Under the sign of the famous phrase of Mallarmé ('A critic! A man who mixes with something that does not concern him'), the letter was accompanied by a print of a portrait of Mallarmé (the 1891 aquatint). It is A. Fontainas to whom the manuscripts of *Racontars de Rapin* would be addressed (it would be rejected for publication by the reading committee of the *Mercure*), along with *Avant et Après* with a dedication that read, 'To Monsieur Fontainas, all of this I send you, all of it moved by an unconscious sentiment, born in isolation and savagery'.

209. Gauguin, Letter to Daniel de Monfreid, February 1898, *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 94.

210. Gauguin, letter to A. Fontainas, March 1899, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 218.

211. See the letter to Morice of July 1901, *Letters to His Wife and Friends*, 225–228. In the letter to Monfreid, Gauguin had marked his distance from Puvis with 'To be sure, it is not done like a Puvis de Chavannes' (*Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 94). He may have been thinking of *Inter Artes et Naturam*, shown at the Salon of 1890, which is not without certain 'formal similarities' to Gauguin's great canvas.

212. The interview with Puvis de Chavannes in *L'Echo de Paris* appeared on the same day as the interview with Gauguin (E. Tardieu, 'La Peinture et les Peintres', *L'Echo de Paris*, May 13, 1895). In it Gauguin exclaimed:

> Follow the masters! But why follow them? They are only masters because they did not follow anyone! [. . .] By doing what has already been done, I would be a plagiarist and I would consider myself contemptible: when I do something else, they call me a wretch. I'd rather be a wretch than a plagiarist!

213. The painter writes: 'where I leave'. Cf. P. Gauguin, 'Armand Séguin', *Mercure de France*, February 1895.

214. Georges T.M. Schackelford, '*D'où venons-nous? Que sommes-nous? Où allons-nous?*', *Gauguin Tahiti, l'atelier des Tropiques* (Paris: RMN, 2003), exhibition catalogue, 235.

215. Richard Field proposes this term *crystallisation* to take account of the innumerable 'fragmentary borrowings' and *incorporations* of motifs from other works—whether his own or others'—in almost all of Gauguin's paintings. Cf. R. Field, 'Plagiaire ou créateur', chapter 5 of *Paul Gauguin*, 129 (along with the analysis of *D'où venons-nous? . . .*). These *crystallisations* have been meticulously studied by Schackelford in his article '*D'où venons-nous? Que sommes-nous? Où allons-nous?*'

It should be noted that the systematic nature of the procedure evokes *dream logic*, and that we know of only one precedent, albeit with other ‘coordinates’: Manet.

216. Only to add immediately that ‘Gauguin put some philosophy, for a painted wooden Noah’s Ark, into his Cézanne’. Cf. C. Mauclair, ‘Choses d’art’, *Mercure de France*, January 1896. *Racontars de Rapin* (1902) will be a long response to Mauclair’s numerous interventions in the *Mercure de France* (see V. Merlhès’s comprehensive presentation, ‘Art de Papou & Chant de rossignol. La lutte pour les peintres’, in the facsimile edition of *Racontars de Rapin* [Tahiti: Éditions Avant et Après, 1994]).

217. In Fontainas’s description in his article in the *Mercure de France*, January 1899. For this painting was shown with eight others, accompanying *Where are we from?* . . . like so many ‘replica-fragments’, in the exhibition at the Galerie Vollard that opened on November 17, 1898. It is this ‘installation’ that was recreated at the exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais (September 30, 2003–January 19, 2004), *Gauguin Tahiti, l’atelier des Tropiques*.

218. *Rupe Rupe*, 128 × 200 cm, is almost as high as *Where are we from?* (139 × 375 cm).

219. The horseman bowed over his mount in the bottom right of *White Horse* reappears in the right half of *Rupe Rupe*.

220. The painting entitled *Horsemen* (1901) in the Gauguin exhibition at the Galerie Vollard in 1903, was shown under the title *Le Gué* at the major retrospective at the Salon d’Automne in 1906.

221. Gauguin, Letter to Daniel de Monfreid, November 1901. *Letters of Gauguin to Monfreid*, 150. ‘To *suggest*, that is the dream’, declared Mallarmé in his response to Jules Huret’s ‘Enquête sur l’évolution littéraire’ (1891).

222. Along with *Exotic Eve*, Gauguin had also made in the same year, 1890, an *Eve* in brown-black ceramic, whose harmonious modelling is inspired by Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus*. So that, with this ‘“colour” version of Venus-Eve’ (C. Frèches-Thory [cat. 104]), we have the perfect antithesis of the giant emerging from a *delicious Earth*.

223. See Eisenman, *Gauguin’s Skirt*, 66–68, with the references to C. Lévi-Strauss and above all to E.S. Craighill Handy’s *Marquesan Legends* (Honolulu, 1930; reprint 1971).

224. In *The Marriage of Loti*, the Tahitian heroine Rarahu explains that the missionaries presented the serpent of the temptation as ‘a long lizard without feet’ because there were no snakes on the island.

225. Letter from Strindberg to Gauguin, printed in the catalogue of the *Vente Gauguin* at the Hôtel Drouot, February 18, 1895 (reprinted, along with painter’s response—without the phrase that takes up the ‘botanical’ question—in *Oviri*, 134–135).

226. C. Mauclair, ‘Choses d’art’, *Mercure de France*, May 1886.

227. As Gauguin wrote in *L’Esprit moderne et le catholicisme* (1902–1903), reprinted in part in Gauguin, *Oviri*, 208.

228. P. Gauguin, *L’Église catholique et les temps modernes* (1897–1898), reprinted in part in Gauguin, *Oviri*, 198. *L’Esprit moderne et le catholicisme* is a reprise and extension of this earlier text.

229. Gauguin, *L'Esprit moderne et le catholicisme*, 203.

230. Ibid., 199.

231. *Te atua* and *The Rape of Europa* [cat. 232 and 233] belong to the late suite of engravings on wood (1898–1899).

232. Cf. Gray, *Sculptures and Ceramics of Paul Gauguin*, 82 (Appendix A: 'Gauguin's Use of Animal Symbols').

233. Brettell, catalogue *Gauguin*, 331, in his notice for the Parisian engravings that begin with *Te nave nave fenua* (Winter 1893–1894) [cat. 172a–n].

234. Cachin, *Gauguin*, 171.

235. Segalen, *Essai sur l'exotisme*, 756.

236. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 21 [53].

237. 'Synthetic primitive' is Dagen's expression, in *Le Peintre, le Poète, le Sauvage*, 90. The author cites a passage from Gauguin's letter to Redon (Le Pouldu, September 1890) where he confides: 'I carry in photographs, drawings, a whole little world of comrades, who talk with me every day'.

238. For the 'desired earth' with which the narration of *Noa Noa* opens ('For sixty-three days now I have been en route and I burn to achieve the desired earth') *becomes* the earth of 'desire'. Eisenman, among others, cites an article by an economist called Lanessan that appeared in *L'Océanie française* on April 4, 1887, and which tries to oppose to the generalised 'desire' for the autochthonous the motif of their animal resistance to the superior reason of colonialism, the 'taste for work'. . . . Written in the House of Pleasure that Gauguin built for himself in the Marquesas, *L'Esprit moderne et le catholicisme* contains in its last pages a vibrant plea for free love—figured on the verso of the first cover plate by the engraving *Be Amorous and you will be Happy*.

239. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 37.

240. In the painting, the tiare, of the same rose colour as the 'eye-plants', seemed as if it were still attached to the branch, thus *implanting* the face in the vegetation, and was placed, along with the ear turned towards the 'out-of-frame', *opposite* the fabulous animal.

241. Cachin, *Gauguin*.

242. Gauguin, *Noa Noa*, 7 [translation modified] [37].

243. This is the epigraph inscribed upon Gauguin's gravestone.

244. Gauguin's phrase; he uses it at the end of November 1888 in presenting to Schuffenecker the 'serious exhibition' he was preparing for the Salon des Vingt at Brussels.

245. In the Seurat centenary exhibition at the Grand Palais there was only one *watercolour drawing*, a preparatory sketch for *Circus*. . . . It is significant that it should only be after Seurat's death and on the counsel of Pissarro that Signac discovers the 'watercolour annotations' (1892).

246. See André Chastel's closing observation in 'Seurat et Gauguin', 402–403.

247. Brettell, catalogue *Gauguin*, 333. This *pricking* is a classic academic procedure, also known as a *poncif*.

248. The Des Moines drawing [cat. 149].

249. See Cachin's notice in the catalogue *Georges Seurat* 1859–1891 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991) of the exhibition at the Galeries nationales du

Grand Palais (April 9, 1991–August 12, 1991) and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (September 24, 1991–January 12, 1991), 344–335 [cat. 190]: 'it *curiously* surrounds'.

250. Letter from Matisse to Signac, July 14, 1905 (italics added): cited in P. Schneider, *Matisse* (Paris: Flammarion, 1992), 98.

251. 'Statement to Tériade', *Matisse on Art*, 84.

252. 'Matisse speaks', interview with Tériade, in *Matisse on Art*, 46.

253. It is of some interest here to relay Clement Greenberg's judgement: 'And frankly Gauguin does not draw that well. By adjusting the contour to the "negative" space between the latter and the closest contour to the edge of the painting, he seems to depend on a sort of automatic stylization rather than proceeding by intuition'. C. Greenberg, 'Review of Exhibitions of Paul Gauguin and Arshile Gorky', *The Nation*, May 4, 1946; reprinted in C. Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 2, *Arrogant Purpose (1945–1949)*, 78.

254. G. Duthuit, 'D'où venons nous? Que sommes-nous? Où allons-nous?', in *L'image et l'instant* (Paris: José Corti, 1961), 47.

Sherrie Levine, *Pyramid of Skulls* 1–12, 2002
12 black and white photographs, each 20.3 × 25.4 cm, overall 136.2 × 225.1 cm
After Cézanne, *Pyramid of Skulls*, 1901, oil on canvas, private collection

Chapter 6

Ten Variations on Cézanne's Concentric Eye

The optical arts concern the eye and only the eye.

—J. Laforgue, 'L'Impressionnisme', 1833

You have to have theories, sensation and theories.

—Cézanne to Maurice Denis, 1906

(leaving the image to the ideologists).

—K. S. Malevich, 'An Analysis of New Figurative Art (Paul Cézanne)', 1928

1

There is . . . the slowness with which Cezanne paints, guiding '[his] entire painting as a whole, all the time' so as to 'bring together all the scattered elements with the same energy and the same faith';[1] there is his insistence on a few motifs, always the same ones, which, from *Bathers, Monte-Sainte-Victoire* onwards, vegetable and mineral, flesh and blood, come back in an endless variation that implies the *non-finito* as its 'form of possibility';[2] and then, from another angle, there is the recurrent obsession of the *Skulls* putting an end to the Vanities of the subject, caught in the close-up still life of a 'logical laugh' (Verlaine) the hard rotundity of which, in its 'modulation', evokes the famous *Apples* transplanted so many times from one painting to another; but also, in the unbridled search for the 'realisation' that 'is lacking', there are those *Portraits of the Artist*, with his bald, round head ('the shiny egg of his

skull')[3] where everything is concentrated on the seat of thought of 'the one who paints'[4]—but who paints only 'preliminary devices'.[5]

There is all of this that remains to be seen, in order to conceive the reality-conditions of what Charles Morice called an '*art of separation*' . . . .[6]

2

And all of this from a 'foulmouth' who takes painting down a route so violently precarious and problematic that the catalogued works are but the remnants of a dateless, signatureless process;—all of *this*, so processually unstable, all too quickly reduced to *that*, startlingly definitive: Cézanne, one single and common name as shorthand for the priesthood of a modernity in search of the Ideal of absolute Art. When he himself, who we can scarcely imagine sympathetic towards the role of any theology in painting—'a potful of sh . . .'?[7]—and who thanks Gustave Geffroy, in a letter on March 26, 1894, for 'the long article you devoted to shedding light on my efforts at painting',[8] announces drily: 'I seek by painting'.[9]

Cézanne, who abhorred nothing quite so much as the idea of someone 'getting their hooks into him', saw what was coming from Gasquet's quarter: it was not long before he 'wanted to make of Cézanne what Plato made of Socrates'[10]—the provincial poet wedded to the Félibrige almost admitting as much when he dares to say so unguardedly: 'No matter how objective I try to be, a little bit of myself is bound unconsciously to find its way into my writing'.[11] Thus, the dialogue inevitably takes on an exemplary tone:

> *Cézanne:* The prism is our prime pathway to God, our seven beatitudes, the celestial geography of the great eternal white, the diamond-encrusted zones of God. I bet you think I'm a little crazy, Henri [Joachim Gasquet's father, a childhood friend of Cézanne's].
>
> *My Father:* No, no. My son understands you.[12]

We get an inkling here of the ambition of these 'imaginary conversations' with Cézanne: a 'life of a saint' for a Sainte-Victoire that he will finally paint—'divine, in its essence and its eternity'.[13] A prophetic Cézanne who writes to Gasquet, on April 30, 1896: 'And you, who would be a philosopher, want to end up finishing me off?' And then, on June 22, 1898, acknowledging receipt of Gasquet's second article, 'Le sang provençal [The Blood of Provence]', in his literary review *Les Mois dorés* (March–April 1898): 'You see with such a prism that all words pale in thanking you'. It must be said that in this hymn to Cézanne 'the luminous sanctity with which he impregnates his landscapes' is mingled with the anticipation of a saviour ('everything awaits a saviour, the world wants a master').

Before beginning to pass increasingly negative judgements on his Master ('Cézanne—illusion of my youth'), Émile Bernard says exactly this, when he upbraids Gasquet for celebrating Cézanne as if he were 'a mystic, because he teaches us lessons on art, because he sees things, not in themselves, but in their direct rapport with painting', considering that he will immediately be led back to 'style' and to 'pure beauty' by 'the absence of material vision'.[14] The resistance of 'the pig-headed old macrobite' when he always comes back to this surely seems doubly obscene to the author of 'What is Mystical Art': 'To paint what you have in front of you and persevere logically' will be translated retrospectively into 'Cézanne's Error'—Cézanne as modern artist degenerated by logic. . . .[15] 'After all', as Philip Conisbee aptly reminds us, opening the exhibition catalogue for *Cézanne in Provence*, 'Cézanne's favourite poet was not Mistral, but Charles Baudelaire, the modern Parisian voice *par excellence*';[16] and to link Cézanne's oeuvre to the idea of a 'pure painting' that 'borders on music' on account of the dematerialisation of the real that Bernard claims for it in a first moment (in his 1904 article) goes entirely against Cézanne's negation of neo-platonic idealism, and that 'sentiment of matter [in which] he remained stuck his whole life'.[17]

Looking further ahead, in the direction of Matisse, who must be struggled against and undone at all costs, Maurice Denis managed to invent the notion of a Cézannian classicism founded upon 'a certain Style' in which the very traditional question of the relation between art and nature is translated into an 'agreement between the object and the subject' through 'representation' (which comes to replace the former notion of 'equivalence'). The essential thing here being to define more precisely (instrumentalising Cézanne for the purpose) the 'reaction against modern painting', once it is understood what Matisse is in the process of doing with it. It remains only to credit Cézanne with the greatest possible equilibrium 'between nature and style' because 'he never compromises [it] with abstraction'. . . .[18] Such an untenable position that, by 1920, the aforementioned Classic will become 'baroque' again, in 'The Influence of Cézanne', when the Return to Order in the definitive passage from symbolism to classicism allows Denis to say that the Cézannian model was only ever of transitional value—in order to return, 'through Cézanne, to the classical masters'. To come back to the trip to Aix in January 1906: 'The aim of this pilgrimage was, for me at least, to hear from the great master's mouth ideas that I believed I could attribute to him'.[19]

In the face of such old dross, let's try to keep breathing.

For, being not so much 'formalist' as 'modernist' after its own fashion, the Ontotheology of Painting—to call things by their names—sets out its stall on the basis of those debates of yore that opposed the Impressionist child and the symbolist old man who takes himself to be classical *by nature*. Now, the latter 'seeks' and 'finds' via the 'sure paths' of a *Moderniste illustré*, whose

first issue bears the date 'April 1889'. He reckons with Albert Aurier's 'initial advertisement' for this illustrious new journal, amply plagiarised by Émile Bernard when he declares himself solemnly *Against Cézanne*: 'Let us learn from *those who find*, and not from these *eternal seekers*, for whom the search only leads them deeper into the morass; let us seek, but by paths that are sure'.[20] Against Cézanne . . . and Bernard had always known why—when he explained, for example, that in Cézanne, colour becomes '*a sort of convention*' applied to the observation of nature in order to reconstitute, 'through a logical and almost molecular work, the optical symphony'.[21] 'But then', he confides, 'I felt that to apply a similar procedure to nature *would be contradictory*, since all rules of reason bend more freely and more easily to a creation than to nature itself'.[22] The paintings—Cézanne says over and over again in his letters that he always says the same thing, his way of fiercely marking his greatest difference from 'symbolism' even as his vocabulary is being used to exit from Impressionism and when 'the sentences with which he attempted it become long and convoluted, [. . .] balk and bristle, get knotted up'[23]—the paintings are 'constructions after nature'. Hence the unique question and problem of Cézanne, from the end of the 1880s onwards: the fact that this must stand or fall by colour alone, and not by description, and that painting by 'constructive stroke'[24] must be its experimental means ('my studies of paintings') as a 'harmony parallel to nature'.[25] And hence the obsession with *work* ('I always have to work'), identified with the *motif of study* ('not to achieve the finish that earns the admiration of imbeciles')[26] that will differentiate him from the 'imbeciles who tell you that the artist is always inferior to nature'; but also his permanent insistence, in the form of a war machine no less anti-Impressionist than anti-symbolist, and projecting against one and the other 'constructions after nature' (the word 'nature' lacks in its Impressionist place in a letter to his son on October 13, 1906: logically, this 'nature' comes after construction).[27] The 'credo' is formulated as such in 'the truest letter that I have written up to this point' (to Charles Camoin, February 22, 1903): '*Everything is, in art above all*, theory developed and applied in contact with nature' (emphasis added). Everything? In art above all? Will the *truth in painting* promised by Cézanne *also* be the doing 'of an artist specialising in other researches', as Maurice Denis believes at the time of his first visits to Tanguy's shop? 'But isn't all his work an analysis directed toward a synthesis, observation directed toward a scientific goal rather than a decorative one?' ask Rivière and Schnerb in a testimony whose independence has been praised,[28] and which is not at all consonant with the innocence of a first glance when the latter is destined, via Gasquet, to paint 'the virginity of the world', and so on. It is in this way that a whole 'Cézannian' phenomenology ends up incorporating the Impressionist optic into a natural history of vision and of the world.

(Today, the painter Maurice Matieu takes up the thread of this *question of method* in 'his' *Letter of Paul Cézanne to the Mathematician Félix Klein*—a text more just, more true in every regard than these 'imaginary conversations' with Cézanne that supposedly took place 'in reality'.)[29]

A few more words, to justify this 'Second Navigation'. The 'Memories' published by Émile Bernard in 1907 finish with the idea that Cézanne is a 'bridge [. . .] by which Impressionism returns to the Louvre and to profound life'. Since we no longer know how to start with Cézanne, since we can only start again after him, once again, and with great difficulty, we can anticipate that it will be of little use to erase the word 'Louvre', precipitating the phrase of the young Bernard into the flesh of Gasquet's 'natural nirvana'. We can no longer reanimate the dead face of a bygone world. The impossible possibility of Merleau-Ponty. . . .

—But then, why, in turn, start again with this 'slowness' that the philosopher was able to put into words so sensitive that you cannot hope to seriously rival the prose of his world?

—Because this 'slowness' is the obvious sign of the search for *something else* that cannot be apprehended 'in a relation of preestablished harmony' with visible things, since, as Cézanne affirms, 'study modifies our vision so such an extent that the humble and colossal Pissarro finds his anarchistic theories wholly justified';[30] because Cézanne's painting does not lead a 'primordial perception' back to 'the vision of the things themselves' in their inobjective reality ('the universal flesh of the world')—and because, if there was ever really any 'doubt', a part of this doubt had been *logically* allayed by the break with the Impressionist Eye and the entirely intuitive image, no less 'opening' than it is 'phenomenal', of the pseudo-primitives of *plein air* in their 'sympathy' with the world, in the surprise of appearing, with the first glance at the world. . . . 'Because, it has been said in vain', as the painter blurted out to Gasquet (but none of his usual followers follow up on this phrase), 'that the worst decadence is to play at ignorance and naiveté or senility'. How can we read, after this, that 'Cézanne's difficulties are those of the first word' through a 'schizoid' placing-in-suspense of expressive values . . . ? Merleau-Ponty, who writes this in 'Cézanne's Doubt',[31] cannot be accused of 'playing at ignorance and naiveté'. Quite the contrary, since his thesis is that one accedes 'to' the world only through 'reduction', and that one must therefore get 'behind' all instantaneous perception in order—as he will soon say, in the process altering the meaning of 'the things themselves'—to *render the invisible visible*. One will thus be Cézannian in the name of the philosophical invention of a *superior Impressionism* capable of encompassing the immediate

'lived' in the *époché* of the object, supplanted by the hidden-revealed light of a pure appearing . . . where it is enough for 'historical' Impressionism to '*bracket out*' the intellectualised image of the world[32] upheld by the optical education of the School in order to 'remake for oneself a natural eye', in order 'to see naturally and to paint as naively as one sees'—'in the shortest possible time'.[33] Let us provisionally conclude that this figure of thought is too emblematic of the 'historial' pretention of philosophical discourse to really constitute a break with it. The necessary consequence: in the name of the *pictorial époché*, 'painting is primordially inscribed in a history of philosophy, and from this inscription the history of thought results'.)[34] By way of retaliation, the break *of* Cézanne, the very break that made one so quick to say that he was the precursor of *an entirely other art*, or that leads us today to observe that his 'mark' is to be sought more on the side of an aphorism of Nietzsche than a paragraph of Proust,[35] permits us to identify, very 'historically' but not without strongly contemporary stakes, the values shared—albeit conflictually—by Impressionists and symbolists (the two 'manners' of Elstir, *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower*). After all, the famous phrase according to which Cézanne 'wanted to make of Impressionism something solid and enduring like the art in the museums' comes to us only through one single text by Maurice Denis (and rather surprisingly, this remark does not feature in his *Journal*). . . .[36] As for Denis, by way of a logic not shared by all of his readers, he moves naturally from 'Cézanne's' remark—from which he has deduced a 'Poussin of impressionism' the better to 'account for the awkwardness with which Cézanne has often been charged' and to observe that 'he suffered from the backlash against the disorder of our times'—not to Baudelaire, who defines the man of modernity in terms of his will to 'draw the eternal from the transitory' ('One who is strong is Baudelaire', the painter confides in one of his last letters), but to *Action Française*, that standard of 'the French order' and of the new orientation of youth 'toward a rational art and toward classical truth'. He concludes: 'Have I taken my own dream and desire for reality? But rather I express here the will of my life'.[37]

Proof, if proof were needed, that this belated lesson goes for all, and for each of us: Gasquet, albeit in the most iridescent way, entangles in the very roots of the being of Universal Nature this same 'French' heritage of a vichyssoise vocation.[38] But it takes a foreigner to be surprised both at the way in which Merleau-Ponty manhandles the poet of Aix, and at not having found 'any indication according to which the philosopher was interested in the motivations of his favourite source of information'.[39]

3

Work—that watchword of Cézanne's vocabulary (which Matisse would spend so much time undoing)—superseding the *vanities of painting*: all the time Cézanne put in on the construction site, with paintings stacked in a corner of the studio waiting to be taken up again, the repetition through which he included them in other realisations of which they are the tributaries and to which they give, in return, the elements of their own memory, in a 'perpetual recommencement'. Ambroise Vollard: 'When Cézanne abandoned a painting, it was almost always with the intention of "taking it up again" later, in the hope of bringing it to perfection. This explains the already "classified" landscapes, reworked the following year, and sometimes two or three times after that'.[40] That is, unless the paintings-studies had been 'wrecked' and 'annihilated', like the portrait of Zola whose tragic end the writer recounts (in a letter [probably] of August 1861 where we learn that Cézanne held 'discourses on the economy')[41]—but even then (taking into account the *Portrait of Émile Zola*, dated 1861–1862, whereabouts unknown). . . . A proverbial difficulty, a legendary slowness, as confirmed by Bernard's testimony: 'Since he worked very slowly, many paintings were never completed. [. . .] I saw many landscapes which were neither sketches nor studies but only bare beginnings of color arrays which had been left unfinished'. Installed with Cézanne in the studio at Les Lauves (in February 1904), Bernard once more saw him 'agonize this way [. . .] during the entire month [. . .] over the painting of the skulls [. . .]' on an Oriental carpet which Bernard considered his 'testament'. 'The colors and shapes in this painting changed almost every day, and each day when I arrived at his studio, it could have been taken from the easel and considered a finished work of art'. 'In truth', he concludes, 'his method of study was a meditation with a brush in his hand'.[42] Through this logical meditation as incompatible with the (classical) subject as with the new (modern) means,[43] this experimentation passing by way of 'quantities of scenes where the canvas was not completely covered',[44] with Cézanne 'enslaved to research',[45] we can grasp at what an extravagant price repetition can lead to significant differences, until, within a discontinuous series, the relative independence of each attempt in regard to the others is realised—even when, we must immediately add, this dearly bought autonomy must at the same time mark a processual advance in relation to the preceding 'attempts'. Something which, in truth, only Cézanne himself could evaluate (in real time: the time of working) in the present of an *in-the-making* that assembles the immediate past of the work so as to project it into a future methodologically opened up by the force of the accumulated experience that rushes into it. This is no affair of 'beauty', but one of 'truth', as Bernard understands, in Cézannian words that lead to the observation—we dare not say a *phenomenological*

observation—that the visual data was hardly adequate to his logically oriented *optics* (given that 'he insisted on the necessity of an "optic" and a "logic"',[46] and that 'the optic that develops in us through study teaches us to see'):[47] 'I was often confused by what he showed me as proof of his progress, because I sometimes found it inferior to what I had seen of his earlier work. He had his own ideal, however, and without doubt he knew exactly what he meant about his progress'.[48] This enables us to apprehend as a 'pure conception', provided that we posit it, with Cézanne, on the basis of a paradoxical *purification* of the visible leading to a 'destructive and conclusive synthesis' (in Bernard's expression), that (1) 'the universality of the immediate impact of art does not indicate its importance'; and (2) 'for the artist, seeing is conceiving; conceiving is composing'.[49] Provided, also, that we extend to the passage from one attempt to another what Bernard perceives as the *exasperating* condition of the 'progress' of each day/each work, when he writes,

> It can be said that every day a more exasperating vision comes to superimpose itself on that of the day before, until the weary artist feels his wings melt from their closeness to the sun. In other words, he abandons his work at the highest point to which he was able to raise his art. If he had made as many canvases as he had painting sessions, the result of his analysis would be a quantity of ascending visions, increasingly lively, lilting, abstract, harmonious, of which the most *supernatural* would be the definitive one. However, in only taking one canvas for this slow and ardent deliberation, Paul Cézanne shows us that analysis is not his goal, that it is only a means that he employs just as he uses an easel, and which he maintains only until the destructive and conclusive synthesis.[50]

That is, his supernatural slowness is as much one of execution as of elaboration.[51] It is the elaboration of a destructive 'synthesis' that is *synchronically* (and thus virtually) that of the sessions that led, 'according to a new and original logic', to what would be the last 'harmony [grasped] from among many relationships':[52] every painting, whether 'incomplete' or not (in the eyes and the words of Cézanne, who swiftly adds: 'I have to work all the time, but not to achieve the finish that earns the admiration of imbeciles'),[53] is then abandoned 'at the highest point to which he was able to raise his work'. But it is also, above and beyond Bernard's analysis, an elaboration that is *diachronically* destructive of the preceding paintings, which find themselves surpassed, that is to say displaced. The 'synthesis' is conclusive of all the work that he sketches out anew at a given point (the highest to which one can climb: alpinism); a work which, each time, must in this way stand up by itself on the canvas *twice*, in order to be conclusive qua provisionally definitive device that de facto involves the erratic continuum of a research *forwards and backwards*, forever 'incomplete' and *free of any manner* (apart from its eternal recommencement, apart from its characteristic *overlabour* [*surtravail*]), refractory

to any categorisation in terms of well-defined chronological sequences (whence the extreme difficulty in dating the works, and the often considerable disparity in the 'estimates' proposed). 'The improvements to be made are endless', writes Cézanne in 1904; and, two months before his death, in a last letter to Bernard: 'It seems that I am making slow progress' because 'I think I see better and think more clearly about the general direction of my studies'—'So, I continue my studies'.[54] *Studies*—a word we must grasp here in its most 'learned' sense (*studium*), more theoretically 'comprehensive' than its regular usage in the studio given that it entails 'such an indifference for his work once it is made'.[55] If we are to believe Rivière and Schnerb, 'canvas was nothing more for this provençal master than a blackboard on which a mathematician works out the solution to a problem. Perhaps it's as much due to this idea as to the lack of concern for making his work known that such a great number of Cézanne's paintings were left unfinished'.[56]

Hence, the unparalleled facility—and it is indeed the only thing that comes easily to he for whom, in painting, 'everything is a problem'!—with which Cézanne gives away and abandons his paintings, all of which are, to varying degrees, studies—to the extent, it is said, of letting old Tanguy cut out with scissors the 'motifs' of his 'studies' (the title? *Two and a Half Apples*. . . .)[57] This is why Zola's *L'Oeuvre* is 'a very bad book and completely false':[58] when one is not happy—and one never is—one starts again. . . . If, at each session and 'with each painting the attempt must be made all over again, entirely', as Félix Valotton says with no pathos whatsoever,[59] it is indeed because one works to 'become strong'. The rest is 'sheer idiocy' (care of Gasquet) or (a variation made especially for Bernard) 'isn't even worth the Word of Cambronne'.[60]

The death's heads, soon abandoned along with all the paraphernalia of vanity (see the 1866 *Skull with Candlestick*) in favour of the long series of still lifes that oblige one to 'grapple directly with the objects'[61] in their utmost banality, will make a comeback in the late works (the *Still Life with Skull* at the Barnes Foundation, which—we would suggest—marks the transition, is dated 1895–1900). Rendered banal in their turn by the study of their 'volumes' 'modulated' by colour (from white to ochre, with a blue mixed in)—to the extent that Cézanne would exclaim one day (addressing Vollard, in 1905): 'How beautiful a skull is to paint!'—these skulls, grasped frontally with neither jawbones nor teeth, the better to mark their sphericity, always the same skulls, which the painter had lined up three in a row on a narrow table like an anatomical study in oil of the three ages of life after death (*Three Skulls*, 1898–1900), the same skulls come back in one painting after another, but each time in a different experimental arrangement without common measure, between *Pyramid of Skulls* (1898–1900) and *Three Skulls on an Oriental Carpet* (begun after *Pyramid*, but obviously of the same period, if we adopt

the timespan 1898–1905), which Bernard will rediscover 'tacked to the wall, abandoned', the following year.[62] If the arrangement of these paintings often manifest the force of the powerful frontal architecture of the skulls projected towards the viewer (which is not the case for *Three Skulls on an Oriental Carpet*—we shall come back to this), the yawning arches expose us in a very different way to the 'geological seats' of the eye-that-thinks—and thinks the matter of an art that is decidedly more bone than 'flesh'.[63] *Pyramid of Skulls* gives us, from a certain point of view borrowed from the sombre tradition of the Vanities, the most 'pure' conception of this: along with the effect of a triangular construction produced by the architecture of the picture (two oblique lines converging towards a vertical that passes through the upper skull) and the logic of the colours (the three skulls below—one partly hidden—are brownish, the one on top is whitish), the stacking of the skull cases on a white sheet (on a 'canvas') *constructively* sustains the structure of the painter's vision of these eye-sockets, pointed in various directions but also with differing contours (as if the eyes were still 'working') that *concentrically* 'modulate' their empty gaze. So that it is the visual pyramid of the painter Cézanne, a pyramid haunted by the orb upon which it is constructed, that is represented representing in a surface—where it hurts the most: the skull is the housing of the Brain-Eye—without perspective, the inhuman depth of nature, *in the absolute stripping of the flesh* [*décharnement*] *of representation*. The 'logical laugh' comes soon enough, along with the absence of 'perspective' of a *phenomenal nothing-to-see/nothing-to-see of the phenomenal* in this hard truth of painting reduced to the modulation of a skull. . . . For, thus integrated into the protogeometrical system of the pyramid and exposed like a trophy,[64] the skull will be taken for and by what it is, which it extends to the surrounding 'world': it will be the exemplary point of the implication and application of what Rivière and Schnerb refer to, following their visit of January 1905, as the commonplace of Cézanne's 'theory'—namely, 'the theory of the sphericity of objects in relation to the eye'.[65] So that the stacking of skulls short-circuits the far too emblematic assemblage of still lifes (despite Cézanne's predilection for spherical 'objects' arranged on a table 'disangulated' by the movements of the cloth), as the skull becomes a painter's trophy that incorporates '*in this lethargic world / Always prey to old remorse* [the world of *Vanities*] / *The only laugh still logical* / [. . .] *that of skulls*' (Verlaine, recited by Cézanne while walking alongside the river Arc—if we are to believe Joachim Gasquet).[66] A laugh because 'All' ɪs 'Nothing', a laugh whose identity, monstrously opened up by the enucleated Eye of the brain-skull,[67] involves 'the comprehension of the point of view of the picture' when the latter is accompanied by the petrification 'of age and the weakening of the body',[68] when no piety can any longer redeem with an insistent *cogito mori* 'the nothingness of all' (in Saint-Simon's key formula). All religiosity aside, the *motif* of the

death's-head haunts Cézanne because in this motif Nothingness is totalised in an Eye voided of all transcendent response, the same eye that is at work in the work (like the empty eye-socket, turned towards heaven, of the skull situated in the rearward, nocturnal part of the pyramid).

This laughter with many triggers, which posits the skull as the final terminus of an eye become 'concentric by dint of looking and working'[69] (proof if there ever was of general rotundity!), Cézanne painted it in the *Still Life with Skull* (of 1895–1900), bringing ephemeral fruits together with a matching death's-head with the strangest grimace, and which seems to *bite into the apple*: the skull-object as realised archaeology of the sphere-apple. More 'classically' posed in profile upon a pile of books—the classic repertory of skull and books of the literary-scientific Vanity: the *Still Life of Books with Skull* style that Cézanne had built into his *Skull and Candlestick* [1886], a more immediately 'philosophical' work (*sub specie aeternitatis/vanitatis*)—the same 'object' again confronts the *Boy with Skull* (1896–1898). Wreathed in a blue veil like a 'bone flower' sprouting from the skull case to invest the moving matter of 'the opulent flowered drapery' (the one used in his still lifes, as Gasquet specifies), in doing so dehumanising the whole painting, the young man with skull (himself 'flowering' from a 'dead' branch) nevertheless adopts an attitude too indifferent to make him a personification of Melancholia. As if petrified, devoid of all personal and expressive character[70]—and in this respect, close to the self-portraits—his visage confronts the realisation of the unbearable: that the gaping stare of the death's-head bearing *upon him* insists *under him* as henchman [*suppôt*] of all reality by exposing, in the space of the picture wherein the face of each of us figures, the monumental tomb of this '*nature [that] exists for us humans more in depth than on the surface*'.[71] But doesn't Cézanne then come dangerously close to the concept[72] of that 'onto-phenomenology of appearances and nothingness' which, under the rhetorical name of *Vanity*, gives us the negative profile of a modernity of truth (in the vanity of the arts of mimesis: Pascal) only the better to fix, in the glare of the mirror, the necessity of a transcendent region from which the flight and flux of being can be gauged?[73] It is to the negative phenomenology of this 'universal self-portrait' (Louis Marin) entrusted to a *Memento Mori*[74] that the startling realism of *Three Skulls* (mentioned above) opposes itself, with its skulls that seem to close up on their own mass, acceding to their objectal frontality. With a density of matter rendered undisplaceable in the absence of any human being, these *Three Skulls* play the anatomy of painting AGAINST the painting of vanities—knowing that the latter had borrowed its anatomical 'matter' from the former only so as draw the conclusion, in an abyssal meditation, of the perennial survival of the virtual image of the subject after its material death.[75] A passage that is abruptly, exemplarily Cézannian: for, if there is something of the undisplaceable in Cézanne's paintings, where

the motif is ossified in the depth of the surface—as is shown, in the order of landscape, by the parietal forms of the Bibémus quarry or the caves and rocks of the Château Noir painted during the same years—this sentiment depends at every point upon a radical displacement of the mirror image in the painting, which imposes the fragmented evidence of its materiality upon thought so as to *render* the latter *real*. A material displacement without which it would not be possible to *think in painting*.

The inhuman slowness, the unfinishedness, the fundamental strangeness of Cézanne are the signs of this struggle, which must always be joined once again; of this work, pushed to the point of frenzy, against the image and its 'intangible speculations' fuelled by the 'spirit of the gentleman of letters'.[76] To resist the image from which one can never escape, to refuse the 'hooks' of its human, all too human seductions, whatever may be the price in terms of *realisation*. . . .

This is the profound reason for his 'hatred of conventional work',[77] a work that aims only to facilitate 'realisation' by making the materiality of the picture disappear into the panoramic self-evidence of the image.[78] To give the term 'realisation' its full force, we must set against the 'realisations' of the Salon the primary sense of the word: that of *rendering something real*, after the example of Balzac's Frenhofer (who effaces the image beneath the accumulation of retouches, in 'a slow and progressive destruction').[79] 'By 1904', emphasises Lawrence Gowing, 'no other sense of the word fits Cézanne's use of it. [. . .] [The motif] could only be made real through whatever was intrinsically real in painting'.[80] That is, the construction of the picture as the incessant deconstruction of the image at work in the work, a work that may appear less and less 'finished'[81] when it is more and more real-realised; a deconstruction, an *undoing and a defeat of the image* that is of a piece with the opaque reality of the work, according to the always singular modes of a process driven by excess or by lack. So it goes with *Three Skulls on an Oriental Carpet* (1898–1905): the 'thick impasto' technique and manifest 'overlabour' of which accentuate its sombre character excessively,[82] to the detriment of the beauty of the image (a thick 'crust' encircles the skulls . . .)—against the *trompe-l'oeil* image of those too well-painted *Vanities* (which is not to say too well-imitated: 'The seventeenth century, that's perfection'[83]—a perfection to which we no longer have access). The macabre trio seem to sink into the thick 'fake oriental'[84] carpet, which furnishes not so much a support (or a local ground) as a yielding, entirely chaotic surface, studded with the remnants of vegetative motifs in warm dark colours, against which the foreground of the large reddish flowers stands out. The visible 'spherical' heart of the two flowers (on the left) and their coupling incorporate the cavernous eye-sockets *into* the thickness of the carpet haunted by vague globular forms. The carpet is thus presented as an expansive projection, as a *true hallucination* of

the 'eyes' of the skulls, soliciting the viewer to displace himself across the whole plane. It is not that the figure-ground relation is reversed in a constant to-and-fro movement: here, it is even destroyed/deconstructed by retracting the independence of each term (figure/ground) as it finds itself *confused* in this exchange, in the depths of the globe of the seeing/seen/voided eye qua dialectical support of the image. (A deconstruction of the 'Western' image on an 'Oriental' carpet? It will hardly come as a surprise to see the fake Orient return through the device of a canvas whose blackness and 'tragic tones' recall the Cézannian cult of Delacroix. *The dark magic of colours against the contemporary cult of images*, then, considering that the image is what remains once the suggestions of colours, even the most stifled and barren colours, are no longer evident: 'now that the background has gone [. . .] only the image is left. [But] only colors are real for the painter', according to a remark of Cézanne's reported by Gasquet.)[85]

If it is still a matter of 'dedicating [one]self totally to the study of nature and try[ing] to produce paintings which enlighten',[86] the pencil and watercolour sketch of the same subject made in parallel (and also entitled *Three Skulls*, 1902–1906)[87] seeks, so it seems, to test out the dispositif by submitting it to possibilities that are in every way the inverse of watercolour technique—that is to say, the 'default' possibilities offered by the transparency and lightness of the relations of almost immaterial colours, of 'light, moving, "*informel*" spots'[88] diluted on the surface of the paper, which Cézanne increasingly leaves 'in reserve' in order to bring forth, in order to *construct* in this unprimed whiteness a space without any effect of illusion, devoid of that light, that peculiar atmosphere that is the whole Impressionist Idea.[89] As we can see in the white 'reserved' roundness of the skulls which only exist(s) in relation to the paper—and here it is not just a question of the omnipresent 'ground' of the watercolour which shows, 'ground on ground', the skull placed in the upper portion, left almost naked, but rather what is fundamental to the whole affair ('what is fundamental for me', Cézanne says)[90]—namely, that 'light [. . .] does not exist for the painter'.[91] In a manner both crude and precious, the watercolour of *Three Skulls* exposes a new state of painting in which the white—of the surface/of the enucleated eye/of depth brought to the surface by the enucleated eye—replaces atmosphere by inscribing at the very heart of physical reality its new cerebral unity, that figure-ground entity of 'the shiny skulls, whose deep eye-sockets are made into receptacles of colour',[92] animating the oriental carpet with dark contrasts to their bright tones. Another watercolour, *Skull on a Curtain* (1902–1906), presents just one skull of startling whiteness (but with deep eye-sockets enhanced by a dark green) heightened by the purely 'constructive' deployment of coloured planes (those of the wrinkled fabric) reinforced by the four white triangles of the corners of the sheet of paper, which serve as its own highlights. (A fold

of fabric gags the skull, making it look as if it is grimacing with pseudo-lips emphasised by a curious red that is inexplicable—unless it is a way of cutting short any possibility of the painting presenting itself as a *speaking image.*) It is in his prodigious last years that Cézanne understands best through his watercolours 'the general direction of [his] studies' *since* the break with Impressionism that governs their inhumanity, a break with the phenomenology of light and the painting of those 'most subtle reflections of the ambient air' (Duret, on Monet) that bring into play on the scale of optical sensibility a 'nature' that is very far from Cézannian. Cézanne as Incorruptible, positing that one must therefore not so much perceive as conceive—from which can be deduced the 'truth in painting' in so far as *pictorial reality is the modulation of the Brain-Eye*.

4

Always starting again, given the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of displacing a 'motif' that owes less to its own force, to its particular properties, than to the *force of realisation* attained through these slow approaches that belong fully to the work that is always in progress. But it is also this infinite recommencement which, in an inevitably 'laborious' fashion, from one painting to another, whatever may be the subject (in so far as the motif *is not* plainly and simply a 'natural' subject)[93] and its optical weight, calls for a permanent circulation and remaking that tends to draw compositions into the erratic continuum whose inflections Cézanne's gesture traverses and whose concretion it modulates.

And the same will go, from the middle of the 1870s onwards, for those *Baigneurs* and *Baigneuses* (115 paintings catalogued by Rewald in the *Catalogue raisonné*, more than 200 works in all) that so baffled the critics, haunted by the mytheme of the provençal Cézanne with 'nature as his sole mistress in painting'.[94] The *Baigneurs* and *Baigneuses* enter into the series of series upon which their conception depends (in the varying arrangements of the figures),[95] and into the Cézannian oeuvre *tout court*, only on the basis of the destruction of the sensible image of the subject (real bodies in a natural setting, bodies *in the state of nature*: in short, *Nudes in a Landscape*) *and* of the ideal image that it represents (an *Arcadia*). Far from seeing this as the effect of studio work on a painter who can only conceive (of himself) after nature, we wish on the contrary to emphasise the 'paradigmatic' status of these strangely 'abstract' bodies, with their poorly defined anatomy, involuting into their natural surroundings (often within sight of Sainte-Victoire), the schematism of which renders them no less deformed and artificial. In fact, what these studio works remind us is that a motif *is* nature, all of nature

(just as one speaks of 'human nature'), invested from the sole point of view of the schematisation of the painting. In the exclusive solitude that is the lot of Cézanne because it is of a piece with the radicality of his enterprise, *the painting instructs the motif, constructs the motif, by destroying its images*—that is, the sensible images of the motif, in so far as it manifests itself as a given which offers of itself (a 'landscape', a 'nude' . . .) to the subjectivity of the artist, *plus* the transcendent images of painting (painting elevated to the horizon of its transcendence by the *image* of that which it must be in order to unveil its ideality), those transcendent images to which we owe the succession of 'schools' (but 'schools of art, a priori, do not exist'. . . .).[96] It follows that the motif in its Cézannian sense signifies, in the language of the studio, precisely the *destruction of the motif* [97] qua identificatory *topos* of the painter and sublimatory *topos* of the viewer. By the same token, we can appreciate the *violence* of the assertion that 'art is a harmony parallel to nature' *when it is Cézanne who says it*,[98] operating a *détournement* of the symbolist ground from which are drawn the 'interior harmonies' of Puvis de Chavannes, that eternal communicant of a 'pictorial Platonism' that sees him respond to 'materialists' with the '*parallelism* to nature' of an 'ideal hieroglyph'.[99] The stark unicity of Cézanne's motifs has literally nothing to do with *the freeze-frame on the ideal image* proposed by Puvis in his idyllic landscapes 'unspoilt by civilised profanations', and which seem to bid us to 'call to mind a happy, spiritualised life sanctified by nature'.[100] No more, in truth—and for the same violent reason—than it has to do with a classicism that cannot conceive itself outside of an equilibrium, a harmony between nature as it is found and as it is constructed in art. For the continual deformation Cézanne inflicts upon the field of the image in the name of the motif mandates a parallelism to nature only in so far as the latter is no longer rendered by the modelling of its forms: nature is perceived in itself as a process of a permanent formation of relations that one can only learn to *read* by *modulating* them, having schematised them into a syntax that stands as a law of harmony of interpretation. Thus, 'to look upon nature, is to identify the character of its model'. Immediately following, as an explanation of this first affirmation, we read, 'Painting does not mean slavishly copying an object. The artist must perceive and capture harmony from among many relationships. He must transpose them into a scale of his own invention while he develops them according to a new and original logic'.[101] The rule of this logic is given in one of the 'opinions' reported by Bernard: 'To read nature is to see it beneath the veil of interpretation, to see it by means of color patches, following upon each other according to a law of harmony'.[102] In the absence of any *unveiling*, here harmony is exclusively a function of painting: a pure plastic harmony 'generated by a specifically pictorial pressure',[103] a pure plasticity, interpretation is an experimentation in relations of colour

to which one submits the visible by making it dependent upon the work of realisation. Placing ourselves at the common nexus of this set of statements, we can 'read' over Cézanne's shoulder as he paints (just what he hated!) that the deforming succession of 'coloured patches' *realises* in the painting the formation of nature, a nature to which one can only legitimately submit oneself by mastering its mode of inscription in a *writing of relations* (which will then, *in a loop*, found the idea of a 'harmony parallel to nature'). All of this as if, in Cézanne's eyes, as a painter one can read a natural formation only by writing its pictorial de-formation in the medium of touches of colour that 'interpret themselves' in their relation to all the others before being the designated colour of any particular thing. . . . Against any conclusive anticipation (of the painting) and against any unveiling opening (of the world), Cézanne's painting presents itself as a continuous de-formation indefinitely reprised from one touch to another, from one canvas to another, a deformation long ascribed to Cézanne's own 'awkwardness' when all along it was a matter for him—paraphrasing Klee—of *abstracting himself at all costs from the metaphorical possibilities inscribed in the* (ready-) *formed objects of nature.* The 'chaotic results' (Maurice Denis) of this process signify that there was no other way than to launch an assault, to make a work of abstraction in painting.[104] The violence that presided over the reception of Cézanne shows well enough that one cannot attack the beauty of the image without affecting the image of painting. (The 'messy painting' of the first Cézanne[105] and the *messily unfinished* / *messily abstract* painting that follows, both are equally opposed to a clean, *proper* painting.) Such is the 'nihilism of art' from which Denis claims to be saving the painter by arguing from Cézanne's legendary 'clumsiness', against his supposed 'abstractions'.

'The picture of nature'[106] is thus the product of a writing we might call *diagrammatic*, in the sense that it exposes the course of an operation that depends only upon what it *sketches out* as it evades the point of view of the image with a gesture.[107] Namely, the gesture Cézanne *makes* when he tries to describe what the motif *is*: 'I have my motif [. . .]. (He clasps his hands together.) A motif, you see, it is this. [. . .] (*He repeats his gesture, spreading his fingers apart, and brings them slowly, very slowly together again, then joins them, clenches them, intertwining his fingers*.) My painting joins its hands together'.[108] This gesture, which Gasquet could not possibly have invented, and which is that *of Cézanne at his motif*, this gesture recalling the ogive movement of the bowing trees of the *Grandes Baigneuses*,[109] is not that of the hands framing, 'out there', a fragment of landscape to be rendered independent on the canvas so as to produce a *piece* of painting. Although not unrelated to the inherence of he who sees to that which he sees, neither can it be circumvented by the 'magical theory of vision' (Merleau-Ponty's expression), lit up by the spark of the seer-seen, senser-sensed, of a body

whose enigma would fuse with the flesh of painting.[110] Indissociable from his will to 'render the cylindrical essence of objects'[111] (on the basis of the concentric 'side' of seeing), Cézanne's gesture 'deploys a depth of field that he compresses into the painting' so as to activate the forces freed by this curvature from near and far, forces that 'join together, [. . .] interpenetrate, passing through one other'. . . .[112] Thus, the motif is a *forced articulation* of the near and the far that does away with the drawing/design [*dess(e)in*] of linear perspective along with the time of perception (through which the visible is given and recognised) in favour of a *work of topological realisation* of which space is not the visual support, but the material resultant, in the form of *planes*. The plural is important here since in a Cézanne painting we find a multiplication of planes linked to each other through the same play of curves: a multiplicity of planes operating so many local deformations of a unique central point ('centric points' plural),[113] sealing the victory of topology over morphology ('If I go too high or too low, everything is lost');[114] the triumph, over organic form, of the plastic unification—always yet to be realised—of a space become unstable. In consequence, if the intervals between planes replace the plane of convergence that projects distances between the near and the far, the *logic of the painting* is such that there is no longer anything but 'coloured patches' to fill (or not) these intervals by expressing 'all changes in depth. That'—Cézanne continues—'is how to recognize talent in a painter. He showed exactly where he had succeeded at suggesting depth and where he had not quite succeeded'.[115]

The intervals between tones—their differential gaps and not the tones 'themselves'—thus become the constitutively interdependent 'signs' of a pictorial 'language' whose 'syntax' must *realise* the logical transposition of intervals between planes.[116] Not only is this form of Saussurian expression confirmed in its generality by Cézanne's declaration that 'the technique of any art consists of a language and a logic';[117] its differential logic is transposed pictorially in canvases made 'all at once, as a whole' and where 'there is no line; [. . .] no modelling; there are only contrasts'. As the painter—the painter who will be a painter 'through the very qualities of painting'[118]—specifies: 'Modeling results from the perfect rapport of colors. When they are juxtaposed harmoniously, and when they are all present and complete, the painting models itself'. Following this, we find the following statement, which here proves to be not so much a distinction of vocabulary as one of the grammar or syntax of those intervals between the (tones of) patches-signs (themselves empty of signification) as they plot the sequence of their sense: 'One must never say "model"; one should say "*modulate*"'.[119] Because 'theoretically no brush stroke is allowed [since] a form is created only by its neighboring forms'[120]—*because relation is everything*. This last statement testifies to a surprising proximity between Cézannian 'language' and

Saussurian 'language' (developed, let us note, very much contemporaneously). Their common axiom is that the elements cannot have any status in themselves: 'Every linguistic fact', says Saussure in the text entitled *Semiology*, 'consists in a relation, *and consists in nothing other than a relation*'. Now, if we are to believe Cézanne, it is indeed on the basis of relations that *it models itself*—making 'modelling' pass into a verbal pronominal form of which the painting is the one and only 'subject'. Cézanne, as we have seen, is not satisfied with a first transformation that, to his eyes, expresses still insufficiently the difference in language—*and its difference in his painters' language*. With the 'modulate', he passes into *another state of language*, into a language whose differences no longer address 'in our mind the idea [or the image] of two positive terms between which difference would be established'. *The language 'of differences without any positive term. Here is the paradoxical truth*', as Saussure concludes. The paradox—coming back to Cézanne—of a truth in painting that *visibly* (in the language of the School) holds only to a 'chromatic concept of modelling',[121] but which only *speaks itself* (when one must say *truly* what one does with the juxtaposition of simple colour contrasts) by bringing out the internal nullity of this notion ('line and modelling do not exist')[122] and replacing it with that of modulation, which alone can assure the play of differences outside of formal identities that come *linearly*—to cite Saussure once again—'from the introduction of any positive term whatsoever'. (Rivière and Schnerb: 'Cézanne did not use lines to represent forms'.)[123] In short, *things are modelled, but planes are modulated*, and from the point of view of things, the chromatic modulation of planes is 'numerically' the same across the whole canvas (it is not differentiated as a function of that which it represents) but is really, differentially fragmented in Cézanne's use of 'discrete quantities' of little touches (the differenciating and differenciated deformation of form). A paradoxical truth, also and above all, because it indicates—beyond a mere 'resonance'—the common *topos* shared by Cézanne and Saussure when the latter is led to posit—according to a consequence that is not without analogy (an *analogy of relations*) with Cézanne's *deformation* of the 'model'—that '*there are not, properly speaking, signs, but only differences between signs*'. This, in the last analysis, is what allows us to associate Cézanne's 'geometry of colour'—which is actually a topology—with a linguistics that has no general property other than 'the vacuity of sense in itself', no *solidity* other than that of a 'system of geometry'.[124]

5

So much, on the plane of method, for Cézanne's 'stubborn geometry'—understanding that the methodology can be stated in this way because 'work',

as conceived and practised by Cézanne, is not the symptom of the 'impotence of the craftsman' but the sign of the definitive *destruction of craftsmanship*.

(Let's not forget how, in his first article on Cézanne, 'decadence in craft' makes Maurice Denis nostalgic for the 'ancien regime'. Deploring the fact that 'enthusiastic critics preferred Cézanne to Chardin and Veronese', he already finds that Cézanne can only be excused by considering him a 'naïve artisan'. He then opts for the other choice—that of 'earlier artists', in virtue of their providing a 'sure criterion' for 'the execution of the work of art'.)[125]

Which is to say that, at the antipodes of the geometrical construction of perspectival space, the represented object-subject disappears into the motif (rather than its modelling *producing* a motif) *because while the method is construction, it is also necessarily the most visible expression of the forces in the painting*.[126] It is in virtue of this regime of expression wherein tones are invested as forces (as Matisse perceived)[127] that Cézanne can *constructively* take up from 'nature' on the basis of the 'colour' of the painting. The '*picture of nature*' will thus be the *logical* result of the *expression*, through intervals of tones, of the *construction* of plane intervals. This shows well enough that the *nature of the picture* can no longer depend on anything but the principle of equivalence between Construction and Expression (along with the deformation that follows from this).

'*Planes, colored planes! [. . .] It is necessary to see planes [. . .] clearly [. . .] and fit them together and fuse them. They must simultaneously keep turning and interlock*'.[128] They must keep turning in order to establish that rhythmic equilibrium by virtue of which the spatial construction is unified and singularised, encompassing and expressing its 'content' in the play of coloured vibrations that undo the 'image'[129] by mobilising the energy of the surface. They must interlock so that space, no longer relating to a transcendental intuition that underpins the continuity of experience, becomes visibly an integral part of the constructive expression of the content. Through their 'ruptures in depth' they denounce any principle of spatial illusion (linear perspective) or atmospheric illusion (aerial perspective).[130] Here we can say, with Delaunay: 'From now on, there is no longer any relation to space qua visual space: you have the space of the painting, the relation of colours, the height and width of colours, the phenomenon of the vibration of one colour by others'. That is to say that 'you have passages. And you have everywhere, all the same, the plane'.[131] Cézanne tells us: Planes must both keep turning and interlocking in order for the space of the painting to present itself always at the extreme of a tension whose experimental modalities confer upon each motif a singular place—which is at once the place of the painting in its immovable gravity and of the painting in Cézanne's production (which it displaces by making it 'advance'—in discontinuous leaps). Cézanne's slowness goes hand in glove with a way of feeling out the place that results from

the generative tensions of the space (which endow it with a place to be) by deforming it: a non-visual space both in the sense of the representation of space and that of the space of representation, a certain way of making the experiment of a place in every point/touch/patch inseparable from the experiment of what a plane is in the pictorial order of its construction, since no plane fuses visually with the others. To set up the plane in colour, then, is to discover, from one painting to another, an immanent principle of distinction that is locally sufficient to interrupt the sequencing of the visual images of representation as well as the enchantment of the virtual images of the series, by conquering a topos that is visible only on *this* canvas, and through which one will feel the pictorial force of a skull or the 'applish' character—that is to say, the Cézannian character—of the painted apple (those non-edible cooking apples), when the body of the fruit is related to the planes of the place that exert their force on the retraction of its mass.

In so doing, one must save the painting from the natural overflowing of colour, spattering onto the floor of the studio, smeared across the walls and the painter's living quarters, so as to obviate the dissolution of the bodies that precipitate painting into the shipwreck of their melée. Even if it means rendering them impenetrable, like those heavy and massive apples, impossible to dislodge from the table upon which they weigh with an unshakeable gravity (*Still Life: Fruit, Jug, Fruit Bowl*, 1892–1894). Their optical weight, which discovers a 'tactile vision',[132] brings to the fore an *atmosphere* as anti-Impressionist as can be, that atmosphere defined by Cézanne as the 'enduring foundation [. . .] the screen [. . .] upon [which] all oppositions of colours, all the accidents of light are decomposed'. 'This atmosphere, then', he continues, 'envelops the painting, contributing to its synthesis and general harmony'.[133] To seek, to produce the immutable envelope to fix 'eternal' nature along with what is 'below her', and which refers to ourselves when we join her errant hands. 'I pick her tonalities, her nuances from the left, from the right, here, there, everywhere. I fix them; I bring them together'.[134] But these tones, these colours, these nuances . . . are they conceivable otherwise than in painting, by he who posits that 'sunlight could not be reproduced, but that [he] had to represent it by something else [. . .] by color'?[135] *By something else*: colour is not that variation of light that the Impressionists could somehow claim to represent at once immanently and transcendently, by rendering the atmospheric vibrations of the pure phenomenon as it shows itself in its own light (*phainomenon*) as in the first day (*Fiat lux, Fiat imago*). If colour relates exclusively to the construction of the plane of the painting, the '*painting joins its hands together*' when it is able to express through its own device alone, at once open and compact, by way of a de-forming atomic and multiplicative process (colours do not mix, they multiply), like 'an iridescent chaos with a thousand entangled planes'[136] that must hold together through the force of

compression, THE '*plane*' that '*interposes itself between the painter and his model*'—that *plane of nature* that Cézanne (still) calls '*atmosphere*',[137] and which must be opened up on the basis of each touch-patch as it expresses the proximity of each of its points.

Whence the continual reprises, hesitations, and reformulations that will make of each canvas a permanent construction site, and which always—but increasingly around 1900—expose the 'modulation' of planes, volumes, forms . . . *by* colour, at the risk of their disappearance *into the marks* of colour. A risk that the Cézannian 'formula' of equivalence between construction and expression forces one to confront as never before—in so far as 'there is no line [. . .] no modelling; there are only contrasts';[138] a risk one must avert at all costs in order for colour to harmonise, creating the design—so that the painting models itself/is modulated by itself, confirming that 'contrasts and relations of tone [are] the secret of design and of modelling'. *Which means that the indistinction of design and colour*[139] *is read as the logical proof of the identity between expression and construction in its non-identity with all forms of phenomenism*. (This is precisely what Matisse means when he claims: '"*If Cézanne is right, I am right*". Because I knew that Cézanne had it right'.)[140] Cézanne will thus only ever conceive of his canvases as worlds under construction, in which the very idea of 'world' is distanced (neither sublime nor intimate), including in its modernist axiological sense . . . .

This is the case with *Forest with Boulders* (around 1893), in which each of the four principal zones of the painting sets out its own chromatic spectrum and its own system of modulation. The flat soil is rendered in parallel horizontal strokes of yellow and brown ochres, skimmed with mauve so that they agree with the boulders (the touches being of equal size, there is no perspective effect, even though the zone narrows towards the top). The leafy zones are brushed in slightly oblique vertical green and yellow-green strokes, the soil forming a mound on the right in touches of the same two ochres. The zone of foliage amplifies the modulation of greens and yellow-greens (it is here that we find the darkest and lightest of these colours) over a light blue ground, balancing or crossing the bands of modulation. In all evidence, this textural play does not respond to any representational logic governed by the *drawing of the motif*: for example, on the left, above the boulder, a long 'branch' is ruled out as a 'branch' since it comes out of two (or three) distinct tree trunks, and forms an arabesque with another ('branch') that rhythmically develops the same effect just below it. Similarly, the modulations of the foliage correspond to no imaged motif (see, e.g., the dark green band that crosses the aforementioned branch). A central yellow, a pure solar patch in the foliage, brings the sky back into the foreground. It is logically of a piece with the hypermodulation through the bright colours that enframe it: the two white trunks (of 'birch'). On the left, the whole lower zone of the boulder, in which the modulations of

the rocks, the plants, and the earth palpitate, unified by their sloping gradient, is properly unidentifiable: its 'place' is rescued from chaos only by the oblique orientation of the stroke that vectorialises the construction of *this* space. . . . All of the zones mentioned thus far are embedded *concentrically* one within the other, and contain ('comprise' in depth) the two *obstinate* boulders whose faces, packed into the soil, are immutably wedged one against the other. Their modulated spectrum, multidirectional and multitextured, is organised around a blue, passing through the bright yellow ochre and the violet-mauve-brown. The interval between the curved planes expressing 'ruptures in a depth', a compromised depth, is particularly visible on the boulder on the left. On the third and fourth planes of the latter, just above the two blocks with clear edges, the 'modelling' of the rock is undone so as to be (de)composed in a modulation where all distinction between boulder and soil is lost: the interstice between the two boulders telescopes the near (the foreground) and the far (behind the rocks). *It* is situated just above the place where the faces of the two *join*: and it is 'there', not without certain accidents of the uneven terrain making themselves known, that everything is held and *holds together*. . . .

Such a setting to work of the painting—only the most precise description of which can take account of its uneven [*accidenté*] character—is inevitable once painting turns away from the false alternative between the *objective* reproduction of the visual and the *imaginary* representation of the visible; in doing so, it must enter into a struggle with coloured matter that does not define it without dangerously infinitising it. Far from 'the literary spirit which so often makes the painter part from his true way',[141] two painters, Delacroix and Manet, had confronted this paroxystic difficulty according to the inverse principles of their respective logics.

Delacroix's colourism (from which Cézanne retains the dissonances of colours and the swirling dance of touches), in which he made his own the idea that heightened colour itself makes a painting, faces a problem when it tries to 'join' the colours by giving a consistency to the plane, such is the importance of the mobility of these colour fusions, which one might qualify (turning the term away from its Poussinian usage) as *Prospect*. The solidity of the *Aspect* finds itself immediately threatened by the prospectral effusions of a colour so convulsive that it tends to prohibit all organisation of sensations. Something that Charles Blanc, in his classical fashion, as we saw above, perceived as the greatest danger: 'Art is materialised and inevitably declines *when the spirit that draws is vanquished by the sensation that colours* [. . .]. In the colourists, [. . .] colour, even despite themselves, governs the composition. It is obliged to secure its ascendancy at the expense of form, and this superiority of colour, which is necessarily a usurpation by colour, is precisely what makes for the inferiority of the colourist, when he is nothing else, when he does not have, like Delacroix, qualities of another order'.[142] Delacroix may have possessed,

'scientifically, and extensively', a theory of colours (which partly saves him in the eyes of the Academician), but nonetheless 'the sensation that colours' is regarded as a violence liable to pulverise forms, unleashing the construction of the plane towards the type of chaos that *Lion Hunt* must confront in the vertiginous attraction of the crimson towards which the melange slides, placed at the limit of all places, threatening every line in the gyratory turning of a painting that fuses every thing together. To the extent that Delacroix can write that '*the viewer's imagination makes the picture that he sees*'.[143] Such an oeuvre continually imperils the construction of the plane, threatened as it is with being absorbed by the vertiginous black hole of colour, which it must defend against by trying to master it. Something that Delacroix, that 'splendid and passionate decorator' (Charles Blanc again), can only attempt to do through a feverish sketch, an execution that tries to schematise the plane that conditions the unity of the effect. The visitor to the Musée Delacroix, installed in the painter's studio, is inevitably struck by this way of vectorising colour with a set of broken and rapid lines which make a portrait of the 'stirring drama'[144]—the trace of which Giacometti will exploit by multiplying its speeds. The Delacrucian figure does not converge towards a place without taking many paths of actualisation, necessarily divergent ones, implying the incompletion of the work, a lack of 'finality' that will give it the allure of a perpetual sketch, an infinite vertigo.

Faced with the danger of colour for colour's sake (with which, according to his friend Théodore Duret, he threatens to sacrifice himself to an *all-at-once painting* [*peinture de chic*], of 'too rapid and hasty a manner'),[145] Manet turns the risk around by imposing on his canvas a mutism of immobility that corresponds to the montage of the *fixed plane* and the delimitation of its framing. In this conquest of stability, we recognise Mallarmé's concern for the pure Aspect, drawing the work towards the circulation of an anonymous instant; one no longer knows what eye might fix its absent presence. Delocalised, the image is set to float, for itself and at the behest of a painting without qualities, neutral, inhospitable, set before no one, in a sandy desert that reduces the expression of colours to silence, arrested, immobilised on the icy limit of the too pure Nothing that haunts them with its explosive whiteness. So that the entirety of the visible is confronted with a regime of absence dispensed by the idiocy of the eye, the eye no longer knowing any 'reflection' other than the disjoint assemblage of the gazes of *The Balcony*. Manet's concern for the plane, his will to posit the work outside of itself (in the absence of its presence), suspended in the intangible appearance of the autonomous planarity of the canvas (in the presence of the absent), leads colour towards a mute immobilisation that is testified to by the swathes of white fabric that alleviate the figures in *Reading*, freezing the opposition of whites and blacks that surround beings and things. This is a *fixation* of colour: like an arresting of its

forces on an ideal frontier that participates in the abstraction of *taking a shot* [*prise de vue*], in the absolute speed of the photographic instant (*Le Déjeuner dans l'atelier*), an abstraction to which is linked that mysterious effect of highlighting that cools the polarisation of colours on the icy thread of the Aspect. Cézanne could not help but mock this 'too cleanly scrubbed' painting of an *Olympia* 'laying on white sheets, forming a great pallid patch on the black ground' (Émile Zola). Twice he responded with *A Modern Olympia* (1869–1870/1873–1875), otherwise scandalous from the point of view of the aforementioned 'pure painting' when the latter encloses the destruction of the subject in the parentheses of the 'pure' image.

The field of painting can thus be *glimpsed in between* Delacroix and Manet: either colouring sensation (Prospect) comes to threaten the construction of the plane under Delacroix's exaltation of complementary colours, whose shower of tiny touches of pure colours risks leading back towards the unformed through its incessant brushings and hatchings; or the plane stands upright in favour of the stellar blink of the eye that eclipses colour tension in favour of a diaphanous highlighting, a purified apresentation in the desolate absence of figures (Aspect). *Embrace* or *withdrawal*: draw the forces of chaos towards their precarious stabilisation in the imagination that pictorially animates them (Delacroix); or erect against them the empty localisation of a Mallarméan purity (Manet) when one can no longer carry on 'as before'. In all evidence, Cézanne, who never represented a figure or a scene in movement, proposes, in his always at once concrete and theoretical manner, a topological response to this problem of the plane: *demotivate the image by motivating the painting qua field of tensions organising colour events. Now, only the plane can be the tensor of this space, setting it in motion qua motif. Hence, the plane as motif of the picture of nature, the plane as* natural sense *of the motif (motivus=that which moves*). Although in far too static a fashion—as Élie Faure describes when he recalls that, for Cézanne, 'there is not [. . .] in nature, any *subject* other than the plane. It matters little that the object should be exactly followed in its outlines and finished in all its details. It should be in its place in the depth of its extension in relation to other objects; the gradations of its edges should at the same time give it its own existence; the object in relation to the world, the world in relation to the object, should be in perfect solidarity'.[146] But is it really correct to speak of 'solidarity' after the world has been objectively/subjectively deployed/projected into the depth of field of a plane, if this latter suspends or upsets [*accidente*] any kind of synthesis or totality? One of two things must be the case: Either we have not gone 'far enough', because of a constraining periodisation of the work that wants to believe only in the achievement of a hybrid 'New Impressionism' in whose light one will judge the failure of this or that canvas where, to speak à la Cézanne, 'it doesn't work' because *it desolidarises itself* (and twice over rather than

once: e.g., the natural harmony of the object is preserved in a space which is, however, far too abstract a construction . . .); or else we are 'beyond' all 'solidarity' because of the Cézannian *gesture* which no longer conceives of the 'topological' difference between container and content on the basis of the non-phenomenal identity of touches-patches (which, as we have seen, are never 'constructive' without also being 'destructive'). . . . Which does not mean that we don't need, *all the same*, to confront the inverse problem: namely, how does a plane rise up in 'colouring sensation' to organise its tensions? (But we must observe here that we have so far made no mention of that eminently Cézannian notion of 'colouring sensation', travestied by Bernard as '*colourist sensation*'.)[147] And therefore, if you like: how to conceive, on the basis of an enlarged touch (Manet) and irregular patches (Delacroix) that radicalise the non-imitative use of colours (Delacroix × Manet), a plane of composition sufficiently *tense* for the painting to stand up in and by itself as the picture of nature: the *nature of the picture* taking control, in a non-imaginary way, of the Delacrucian glissade of its Prospect, without evaporating into the Manetian purity of the Aspect?

6

Cézanne's laborious experimentation cannot pertain to the sole necessity of making colour 'consist' by detaching it from the rapids of colour (inundation of light or bath of obscurity: the colours/streamings [*couleurs/coulures*] of Impressionist light) in order to relate them to the plane and thereby make them benefit from the stability of the support.

Let's begin by examining the protocol of *Still Life with Plaster Cupid* (around 1895): Cézanne seems to choose a vertical format to give a surprising impression of monumentality to a *putto* arranged in the centre of the painting and forming the *pivot* of a staccato swirl of planes on which onions and whirling fruits mingle. The plaster on its rounded pedestal, the angle of the table projecting out [*faisant saillie*] into the great empty plane of the verticalised floor, the canvases leaned against the wall in a row as broken as it is indecomposable—forming, as Isabelle Cahn writes, an 'array of geometrical panels'—constituting so many 'visual traps'[148] whose 'Representation' the disjointed play of mirrors draws into a *mise en abyme*, not without breaking with a certain (entirely classical) idea of the plane. 'The cupid statuette in the foreground is echoed in the background by the *painting* of another cast owned by Cézanne, an *écorché* figure formerly attributed to Michelangelo',[149] cut at the waist; the top of the Cupid's body is framed on the ground by a painting's ground; a coupling of sculpture and painting to which responds in turn the coupling, going all the way to a true 'fusion', between the still life with fruits

and vegetables in the foreground and the painting placed just behind them. And—paroxysm of a disjunctive synthesis between fusion and fracture—what can we say of the triangular white and cream plane situated but unsituatable 'in between' the Cupid's pedestal and the still-life painting into which it seems to penetrate without being localisable between exterior and interior, nor identifiable as a part of the floor, a corner of the table, or a piece of cloth? All of this in a veritable montage of montages: a 'montage' of the plaster 'in' a 'Cézannian' still life (a plaster, that is to say a *modelled substance*, whose painted torsion implicates the sculpture in the Cézannian modulation); and also a 'montage' of the plaster enframed/deframed 'between' the figuration of a painting that represents another plaster and a painting that itself figures a quite Cézannian still life whose fabric of motifs develops outside of the painting in the painting (and vice versa); whereas, conjointly, to reinforce once again the (montage) effect, 'the limit between the bulb and the stem of the onion (disproportionate, to the left of the plaster) is deliberately confused with the line of the stretcher of the canvas' whose diagonal is supposed to indicate the dis-articulated depth of the space. The important point, in our view, is that here we have not so much a 'critique of the traditional conception of the *trompe l'oeil*'[150] as a material disorganisation of the plane, in a *formally* independent idea of the spatialising dynamic of colour. So that, at whatever distance one stands from the painting in the Courtauld Institute, the impression will be twofold: on the one hand, the impression of a *dismantling* [*démontage*] of space such that the planes vacillate rather than vanish into three dimensions, and on the other, the impression of a chalkiness that mutes the bright colours deposited at Cupid's feet by tending to isolate them and submit them 'objectively' to the *linearly arrested* 'cubist' nesting of rhythmic tensions (and this despite the 'allusive' rendering of the surface of the floor and the ground of the canvases re-presented in very freely brushed patches; and, above all, despite the attempt at a chromatic placing-in-tension of a de-construction that is no doubt linear, but also brightly coloured, in the left diagonal half of the canvas—which all contributes to making this *Still Life with Plaster Cupid* a veritable theoretical experiment whose stakes are effectively set out in its title).

Cézanne cannot be satisfied for long with this house of cards that threatens to collapse the plane into the arrangements and derangements of a linear composition that does not come *directly* from the coloured modulation of space. The solidity of the plane must be conquered once again in order to be opened up as fully as possible to the tensile movements of coloured fluxes and the deformative power of their variations (see the three vertical planes of *Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from the Bibemus Quarry*, around 1887). The plane must be the experiment of a 'jointedness' which is not the entirely traditional one between substance, fixed by the drawing, and accidents, produced by colour

(statuified into a sculptural outline that would resist smearing or the confusion of mixtures . . .), but that of the inwardly rising *motif* of the *mobility* of colours haloed by the painter's brain-eye. It follows that this mobility does not only involve a simultaneity of/in the space whose constitutive 'bringing together' (or 'compression') of the motif (in the 'concentric eye' of the painter) it expresses; it implies no less immediately a simultaneity in time, that of the integration within the work of the coloured surface and of the permanence *in depth* of nature. This is a 'simultaneity of depth'[151] that is constructed in the *concentric space-time* wherein the existence of the picture of nature is at stake. According to Joachim Gasquet's transcript, 'I bring together all the scattered elements with the same energy and the same spirit. [. . .] Everything we see is fleeting, isn't it? Nature is always the same, but nothing about her that we see endures. Our art must convey a glimmer of her endurance with the elements, the appearance of all her changes. It must give us a sense of her eternity'.[152] In his espousal of this theoretical point of view (which takes us beyond the plaster *Cupid*—but we quickly grasp that it had to pass through this, and not only so as to finish tearing down Impressionism by opposing to it the construction of 'discrete spatial levels'),[153] we perceive in Cézanne the assiduous reader of Baudelaire that he was right until the end. Because 'it was only Baudelaire who spoke properly of Delacroix and of Constantin Guys'[154]—Delacroix for *the vibration of colour that obliges all moderns to paint after his example*, Guys as *Painter of Modern Life, painter of the 'transitory' from which the man of 'modernity' must 'draw the eternal'*. . . . But precisely: it is impossible to adopt the plane of development of Cézanne's theory without conceiving that the self-proclaimed painter of a (temperamental) anti-modernity is in the process of proposing the only radical reading possible (without tipping into nihilism) of the *without-remainder*, the *without-outside* signified by the Baudelairean substitution of the *historical* for the *originary* (according to the observation that *there remains nothing* to the Modern *except to* 'extract the poetic from the historical'. . . .). A formula that projects artistic modernity against the pseudo-present content of an ingenuously modern painting: the eternal cannot be drawn out of the transitory without extracting the transitory from the circumstantial (still following Baudelaire: the man of modernity seeks 'something other than the fugitive pleasure of circumstance'); without reversing the transitoriness of a time in which the present is voided of the 'eternal element' that has no resource other than 'our art', no destination other than 'always the same nature' the 'frisson of [whose] duration' one must render in order to 'make us taste it eternally'. . . . A time which, as will immediately be remarked—a remark that involves Cézanne in a kind of Baudelaire *oltre* Baudelaire[155]—speaks in terms of *Duration* and *Simultaneity* (or *Thought and the Moving* [*Pensée et Mouvant*])[156] only in so far as nature is topologically invested as the 'object-play [*objeu*]' *of painting*

and the exclusive 'stake [*enjeu*]*' of culture.* This, in our view, is precisely what Cézanne calls 'the picture of nature', in its reversionary effect in regard to the Cézannian nature of the painting. We should cite at length the words of Michel Pouille, with their perfectly Baudelarian resonance:

> artistic modernity may be precisely that which, inside historical modernity itself, succeeds in 'epoch-making [*faire époque*]' in the etymological sense: interruption, suspense, stopping point (state of doubt, astral position). And it is indeed in demarcating himself from modernity that Cézanne places his imprint upon it, in rejecting it that he joins with the force that tears it apart. It is in evacuating from painting all historical content that he manages to make history itself turn around its median, 'pre-historic' void. *It is in making of the mode of representation of nature the sole stake of painting that he makes this stake a stake for culture* [. . .]. And in fact, such a point of view is what is called, in the most noble sense of the word: a theoretical point of view.[157]

A theoretical work that consists in *ex-posing* what 'appears to us' in a tension whose determination necessitates and ensures that *what remains* is to uphold *the appearance of that which takes place* in the continually moving. Convoking duration in a simultaneity without which one would not be able to 'live in harmony, my model, my colours, and me, together [to] give nuance to the very minute that is passing by'; without which one would not be able to 'paint it in its reality',[158] Cézanne realises the irreality of the balancing of bodies closed upon each other in the uncoloured mirror of the space that assembles their intemporal graph as the irrealism of their evaporation in the atmosphere. To one and the other tradition alike (which reproach him in unison for his *lack of balance*), he opposes *the reality in painting* of their 'modulation' by colour; a colour whose mobility will be rendered sensible by the suspended solidity of the plane, which is none other than the immobile plane of all of its variations 'in a work whose space has the depth of time'.[159] Such a house, as Gaëtan Picon will say, 'is neither a mirage of light, nor an undetectable bloc, it is like a ship that looks immobile, but which we know is crossing the sea'.[160] This only allows itself, in Cézannian truth, to be seen, far from all presence, in a landscape 'rarefied to the point of absence',[161] through the plane which *is* (logically) 'the unchanging form in which change is produced',[162] and which *appears* (topologically) as that plane of continuous deformation that the duration comprised within the work prevents from closing up on itself. It is a set that always remains open *to the maximum of its elements*, so that its forms never cease to slide towards other forms, the whole deforming itself in the manner of an 'unfolding with asymmetrical breaks'.[163]

Destined from the start for that torsion of the motif on a plane whose space collects all the times of the work within the work—like the fifty prints of the *Baigneuses* developed 'in only taking one canvas for this slow and ardent

elaboration',[164] and in which one sought to conserve the sensations of all of Nature (for a tree, for a 'grey-white wall', for a 'sky', the greens of all seasons, etc.)—the canvas becomes in itself a sort of stratified memory that magnetises the work in the direction of a continuous exacerbation of the 'point of view' *on* nature. This reminds us of Bernard's idea: 'every day a more exasperating vision comes to superimpose itself on that of the day before', of which the 'most *supernatural* [vision] would be the definitive one'—*and the most unfinished* (from the point of view of the viewer of 'nature'). Think here of these extraordinary 'gothic' canvases of the Château Noir (1900–1904) 'shrouded in pines, as if accessible only through the veil of memory'.[165] But it is before *Landscape: Study after Nature* (1876, also called *The Sea at l'Estaque*), 'of a surprising size and an unprecedented calm', that the critic of *L'Impressionniste*, struck by its eccentricity, the very opposite of the subtle rendering of the modelled, has the sensation that 'this scene takes place [. . .] in memory, in leafing through his life'. . . .[166]

7

'*To the motif*'—in the entire history of painting, there is no proposition more alluring than this phrase with which Cézanne invites those rare souls he brings with him '*on the motif*' to witness (so they think) the landscape and its recomposition upon the canvas. Having been lured into this proposition, everything follows implacably and unstoppably. Once on the motif, the master having prepared his palette, the best thing would be to come away so as not to hear him say: 'I have never been able to tolerate anyone watching me paint; I can't bear to do anything in front of anyone'.[167] But we stay—to observe, inevitably, what we already knew about Cézanne's painting: we find no concern for the composition without which there could be no 'landscape', if by this term we mean the 'premeditated assembling of objects to make up the subject of a painting and placing them in such a way as to produce a harmonious ensemble of lines, values, and colors, whether the artist cooperates objectively with his motif in choosing his point of view, or whether his imagination provides his motif subjectively'[168] (with the artist, in order to do so, being inspired—as they say—by what is before his eyes). Do we seek then to draw the *neither subjective nor objective* Cézannian operation in the direction of the phenomenal accord of an object and a subject that is 'ungraspable and unprepossessing' (Jules Laforgue), in a motile Impressionist-type vision? Not at all, since 'for this artist, who worked for several years on the same motif, a ray of sun or a reflection were only rather bothersome accidents of secondary importance. [He] saw beyond the atmosphere, not satisfied with merely contemplating its multiple variations as the Impressionists had done'. The

conclusion is inescapable: 'According to Cézanne, composition must be developed through work'.[169] 'Because the artist does not note down his emotions as the bird sings his song: he composes'. Or again: 'For the artist, seeing is conceiving; conceiving is composing'.[170] So we understand that we must stick by the painter's side for these months of work and study before the motif in order finally to *see* his '*logic*' at *work*—Rivière and Schnerb's word, following their anti-description—in the hypermobility of colour sensations and in the slow conquest of their reciprocal support. To the extent that it stands up by itself (like a 'whole', as they said). To conquer a *motif*, to make a living form rise up within the incessant tension of *mobile* colours, carefully avoiding the spinal column of drawing—this is the most pressing exigency that Cézanne receives from *his history of painting*. An almost insoluble problem, in the lineage that leads from Delacroix to the Impressionists: that which consists in extracting the *motif* of the *mobile* (once one has had to renounce the ecstasy of the dissolution of bodies in the mirroring play of light . . .) and in producing corporeally consistent strata in the transitory universe of colours. On the support where the motif is to be consolidated, every touch is stayed by a continual discontinuity with those that neighbour it, fixing, at the points of the incessant passages of colour, traits of adjointment, and sparing little zones left in reserve, where the fabric of the canvas shows through, as that absolute relative beginning where the 'system' produces its anchorage in the form of the most brutal seating. Thus, a canvas by Cézanne sometimes requires several years to concretise, in so far as the patches must press one against another while neither fusing nor mixing into a chaotic mass—so much meshing of brushstrokes calls for care and prudence in order not to reduce it to a mere accentuation of outline. For one need only modify one single touch in order for the whole distribution to need to be redone, as the painter regularly complains. Like a puzzle, or a mosaic, or a tapestry—as in Maurice Denis's twofold simile[171]—everything hangs together, and the displacement of the least nuance would have repercussions on the whole work. This means that one cannot fill with impunity, at will, the empty spaces left on the canvas; and that, most often, one can only proceed by starting again *from elsewhere* (in regard to the 'subject', since, as for the method, it cannot but come back always *culturally* to the same, to the Motif, whether in the Studio or in the Louvre).[172] Thus, Cézanne tells Vollard, as he paints his portrait: 'If this afternoon's session at the Louvre goes well [. . .] maybe tomorrow I'll find the right tone to cover these white patches [on the hand]. But please understand, Mr. Vollard, if I were to put just any color there at random, I would be forced to redo my painting on the basis of that place!'[173] One would have to *concentrically* recommence all of the points, setting out from the new topology implied by the retouching. . . . (Note, in the *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard* [1899], how the curved line of the dark wall, passing just above Vollard's

shoulders, is 'broken' at the level of the head, imparting a tension to the whole painting regardless of any 'perspective-linear' resemblance; and the abstract oval and cylindrical objects detained in the depth of the window.) But to support the plane by means of these 'constructive touches' and the plasticity of their proximity is not enough, if the motif is not raised to that state where the greatest mobility attains simultaneously the greatest stability in the wavering/breaking of the 'facture'. The absolute speed of the passages, the 'psychophysiomotor' logic of colours, must be founded in the eye at lightning speed, and in order to do this one must wait, for hours if need be, for a particular atmosphere to manifest itself—an atmosphere that Cézanne sought, that of the *brightest grey*: a grey which, tempering the tonal values without weakening the colours, is the most conducive, the most abstract and the most concrete at once, and in which, therefore, rather than effacing or dissolving in too much shadow or too much natural light, or escaping into 'the delicious unity of the [. . .] Sacred [impressionist] Light',[174] the colours make visible the evidence of their passages, their gateways, as if offering the painter the possibility of making the patchwork of colours hold together in the most effective fashion. 'M. Vollard, [. . .] if the weather tomorrow provides a bright gray light, I think that our session will go well'.[175] This *brightest grey* is also that of the front of Ambroise Vollard's shirt—with which Cézanne declares himself 'not unhappy' at the end of his 150 (?) sessions—and which *clears* all the passages between the darkest greys, reds and browns. . . . At the risk of discouraging the 'model', the painter waits for this grey neutrality that neutralises Impressionist-type light effects, allowing him to heighten or subdue the spectrum of colours to some degree, to find the most favourable transition from one touch to another, as if the atmospheric/abstract blue-grey constituted in some way the interchange between nature and painting, through which they can be placed into correspondence. The colours flow towards grey, but they must still be drawn, extracted, abstracted towards grey, having tried out all of the 'transducts'[176] through which their tensional relations meet, and are already delivered from the shipwreck, provided that the painter knows how to operate this differentiation that will be torn from them step by step, one approximation after another. In a deduction that cannot be unrelated to this process, Cézanne concludes, from the fact that 'nature exists for us humans more in depth than on the surface', that painters must introduce 'into our vibrations of light, represented by reds and yellows [. . .] sufficient bluish to make one feel the air'.[177] A formula that, in its Cézannian employment (hardly indicative of the effect of an aerial perspective) is enigmatic enough that it might account for a certain peculiarity of his painting: rather than starting again randomly, the strokes of the brush are aligned systematically according to a transversal movement that is multidirectional and completely dissociated from the individual configuration of objects, which are taken up

in a sweep that draws them away, deforms them according to a rendering that presents itself as systematically effaced. Far from reproducing any sort of dissolution of objects in the Impressionist *informe*, this transversality operates a fabrication of the plane, passing via the different strata, the different layers of time that its energy liberates, multiplying 'materially' the initial force of the gesture in which the motif originates. In its hypermobility, this transversality moves *all* of space 'directionally', but not without mobilising time 'dimensionally' by making the touches pass, via successive modulations, from one layer of duration to another in order to stratify the plane in depth, at the behest of the multiplication of the relations of colours that the motif pares away 'like detached accents' (Gowing). *Great Pine and Red Earth* (1890–1895) is exemplary in this sense, in the way in which it implies the durational tensions of smoothing/shifting/breaking space according to a movement of modulation of what can no longer be called anything but 'coloured sensations'. The last vestiges of any possible dialectic between plane and colour, between being and becoming, between support and motif . . . have been swept away by this 'new and original logic' without which the painting cannot *modulate itself*. This follows from a living articulation that plays on the hardest and most delicate sensation in which the eye discovers its *difference in itself*, with itself in its optical specification: in the *body* and its drives (the raising of red Earths?), in the *brain* and its temporalities (the tentacles of the Great Pine[178] that exits the frame at the top), *and in the continuum they ultimately share in virtue of the 'work'* (a continuum pushed to the point of paroxysm with the *Big Trees* of 1902–1904). Despite all of the 'discontinuities' that assail him with doubts and threaten his reason, as he battles between eye and hand with resistant matters and fluent colours, when it can only be a case of projecting the motif on a plane whose entirely virtual—and absolutely non-'imaginary'—reality is governed by the '*concentration line*' of the Brain-Eye. . . . Cézanne will complain of his 'lack of optical qualities: of his impotence to realise like the old masters [. . .]; but he believed he had *sensations*'.[179]

With all due respect to 'formalists', the Cézannian plane, in its stratified bulk, is not to be confused with the 'literal' surface of the support, any more than with *that 'Signifiant Form' whose unpronounceable name is Reality*.[180] Certainly, a 'support' is necessary in order to fix colours and to contrast them with one another, but the 'joining' of colour sequences proceeds elsewhere, as they are heightened by amplifying the lateral vibration of their borders, and are concretised ahead of the painting. This takes place in a forced reaction to Monet's canvases, when the Impressionist decides no longer to air the 'legitimate construction' of the Albertian prospective, when the grey-blue comes to invade the support of such a *unified* materiality that the plane disappears into the indistinct thickness of the painting itself. For the effects of light on the

successive facades of *Rouen Cathedral* (1892–1894) present an oversaturated pigmentation of a density so extreme that it disrupts all difference in a unifying presence that *immobilises* the motif in the name of 'the perfect equivalence of art and the phenomenon'.[181] Close to, by virtue of the pursuit of 'the ungraspable nuance of effects' (Pissarro), the plane is mired in an indistinct depth, a cloying thickness, and does not succeed in rising to the surface. The canvas plastered with colours appears as a zone of indiscernibility bogging down the pictorial depth in a 'phantom cathedral' (not without a certain assonance, as has been said, with the *revival* of a 'gothic' mysticism).[182] Inversely, Seurat will think himself able to save (something of) Impressionism (against itself) only by submitting it to the most gaseous and most precise pointillism so as to impose upon it the 'clarifying' rules of an optics at once oneiric and machinic. Under these conditions, the neo-impressionist plane can only come forth in the manner of an event excessive in regard to the materiality of the canvas, which is kept at a distance by the purification [*épuration*] of colour. The effect of the enveloping of the painting in a plane that bears forms beyond themselves here depends *at every point* on the distance between the canvas and its viewer. In comparison to this enterprise, one cannot help but observe the singular nature of the entirely different way in which Cézanne identifies aesthetic construction with the logic of a method ('a good method of construction'),[183] which will confer upon the question of the plane its highest power as pictorial event only at the price of breaking every possible image of *Mont Sainte-Victoire* into pieces, into a set of patches impossible to articulate *visually* at the level of the support alone. It is as if Cézanne were presenting himself, within the history of painting, as the extreme point where support and plane enter into a mutual *détournement* so necessary and so necessarily 'unverisimilar' (by the lights of a purely optical truth) that one will forever have to return to it—in an 'eternal return to Cézanne' of modern art where repetition only stands by virtue of its differences (Matisse, Braque, Picasso. . . .). Since the Cézannian operation retains of the surface only the tension of blank spaces with painted colours, it is thus not exactly *on the canvas* that the patches of *Mont Sainte-Victoire* are focalised, not exactly on the canvas that the motif becomes conceivable in its 'harmony parallel to nature'. But neither—as in the neo-impressionist teaching—does the plane of the motif stand out in the pure optics of the eye, since it projects itself *ahead in a radical non-representation* (Cézanne's patches represent nothing, and are not standbys for the filling-in of pre-established forms) that only brings 'space' into play through the transversal lamination of spatio-temporal layers in an essentially variable shallow depth whose centrifugal explosion provokes the impossible focalising of the crystalline, overflowed by the rhythmic coexistence of spatially heterogeneous and temporally dispersed elements. One might then suppose that the motif is—literally and pictorially—never 'seen',

that it is set up 'always ahead [*en avant*]'[184] in a *project* that the matter of painting, never crystallised, will *in the end* mirror (*Sainte-Victoire Seen from Les Lauves*, 1904–1906), and where 'the thing is to convey as much *rapport* as possible'. . . .[185]

So that phenomenology, in order to regain its bearings, goes astray, submitting the construction of the Cézannian plane to the sole 'pathic' plane of the visible, albeit ontologically and rhythmically posited as non-integrable into the system of 'ordinary' perception, of the 'objective perception of things', in the movement that bears us beyond subjectivity. In the name of an 'interrogation of the seeing of the thing' ('how it becomes a thing, and the world, a world'),[186] it is always a matter of overcoming the vertigo in which the visible finds itself (and the notions that reflect it) taken up, in virtue of a *faith* that unites us with the antepredicative world (Husserl's *Urglaube*, Heidegger's *In-der-Welt-Sein*. . . .).[187] But then, it will be asked, where does this Cézannian plane *pass*, this plane that *advances* in the thickness of the braiding of the touches that make it up, if in its virtuality it escapes the dimension of the support at the same time as the intention of the gaze and its 'dis-covering' sublation [*relève*] of 'the open of space' in 'the opening of being' (the ecstasy of *seeing in painting*)? In what construction, then, will the event be expressed, in this uneven [*accidentée*] transversality that animates the plane? At what 'distance' from the eye, on what 'ground' is this psychophysical membrane set up that governs the space of the painting and the focalisation of colours on the basis of what Paul Klee, qua post-Cézannian, will qualify as the 'grey point' (the 'non-dimensional point, the point between the dimensions and their intersection')?[188] In what hallucinated place, on what decentred plane of the retina will it be *concentrated* once the latter is no longer 'pictorially' an organ addressed to the recognition of the world 'as it appears', an opening of the innocent eye to the co-nascent surprise of its appearing? And further: according to what topology are different layers of space-time superposed in the plane in order for the uninterrupted variations of 'abstract' colours to constitute the very sense of the motif? Since the exercise is more difficult than any dialectic of notions, and since it implies, from this rigidly abstract point of view, constitutive contradictions which, however, function de facto as veritable '*pictorial shifters*' (to use Friedrich Teja Bach's expression), Cézanne will always be suspicious of discourses in which an overconfident reason oversteps its mark. Through painting 'in contact with nature', a contact which, for Cézanne, always signifies the contrary of *communion* ('I see a little as if in a void'),[189] it is a matter of constructing the articulation of the plane and of the motif, of colour gradations and of the transversality according to which they are aired on a *virtual-real plane* (such that the reality of the virtual involves the mode of existence of all planarity) projecting itself disproportionately ahead of the support according to the effects sought in this new order/

new disorder of colour. Which calls for—let us agree—a more violent and more risky synthesis than the Kantianism invoked by Gasquet.[190] All the more violent and risky in that, in order to realise this new order of relations, what is required is not a 'doctrine' but '*theories, sensation and theories*'.[191]

It is called a living logic.

Meaning to say, by *it* ('that's it'), that Cézanne is this painter who cannot *conceive* the construction of the plane otherwise than as sensible and living, because he seeks to *motivate* the 'articulation' that the eye, in its natural perception (i.e., faced-with-nature) carries out, unperceived, through the projection into space of an invisible limit, a mobile cut to which the effects of light will be adjoined, united, following the retinal focalisation by means of which we estimate distances. Translated into (the colours of) painting, into a schematisation that has the status of a project, this means that '"the principal thing in painting [. . .] is finding the correct distance"'—given that 'it is color that expresses all the ruptures of depth'.[192] But this surface of expression is, to tell the truth, neither in the eye nor on the painting. In each of its aspects, there is the montage of a plane that is relatively independent and absolutely intermediary, and upon which will depend the modulating dynamics of the juxtaposition of colours with the manner in which the gaze will posit itself *overall*, displace itself between the front and back of a shallow depth, but always ahead of an abstract limit conditioning the variations of tension of the crystalline according to a compression such that everything becomes '*spherical and cylindrical*'—because, '*with regard to the eye of the painter*, light rays coming from a given surface, flat or otherwise, are such that the amount of light the eye receives from one area is not the same for any of the other areas of the surface'.[193] Sight itself, seeing as such, is here levied from a virtual surface that exists nowhere qua already effectuated, since its autonomous construction is effected according to a proper, autonomous, pictorial morpho-topology, without which the eye-of-the-painter would have nothing to see. It is a matter of a surface different from the states of things that incarnate it, irreducible to pigments of colour and to retinal localisations alike: a 'convex' dimension, flat, and voluminous *ahead*, which Deleuze would doubtless compare with and assign to that plane of events, isolated by the *Logic of Sense*, according to a concrescence of effects become relatively independent of the situation of bodies. A strange region, incorporeal and structural but in becoming; one that Goethe, had explored for his part, in the name of a visual thought, as *Urphänomenon*. It is this exacting *phaneroscopy*—to take up a notion forged by Peirce[194]—that Cézanne's painting explores at the behest of a logic of sensation never thematised in advance (a pictorial phaneroscopy). The individuation of the motif passes via a movement of concretion—Cézanne uses the verb 'to concretize [*concréter*]'[195]—which extracts the visible *from itself—abstracts it*, therefore—at the joint

between the plane of the curve whose axes of deformation the brain must track, and the colour placed in tension by the retina. It seems that every last tree, every plant, once it accedes to the motif of variation, since the painter brings together in the plane the green of all landscapes and of all seasons *which he sends to Heaven* [*au ciel*]. . . ,[196] will come to be concentrated *between* the different coloured layers of duration, not in the eye or upon the far too static and 'linear' support in its spatial distinctness. It is the *gestured* presence of this incorporeal/overcorporeal plane of the visible, the event of its cut and of its mobile construction, that is immediately involved in the strangest effects obtained by Cézanne: like the perforation, practised in *The Great Pine* (or *Great Pine near Aix-en-Provence*, around 1889), whereby the edges of the painting are effaced by a concentric blur whose centre is set out gradually by successive touches, as if the eye were following the gradients of a virtual cone that pre-existed its seeing.[197] Let us note, in passing, the extent to which different layers, fused into the same plane, are mobilised, raised up in favour of the diagonal alignment of touches that thus set to trembling the superposed layers of a movement and of a life that can hardly be attributed to (the phenomenology of) perception (or to its sublation in an 'oneiric universe of carnal essences': the style of the *infans*). Thus is obtained *very concretely* a distension of the plane that passes from one stratum to another, creating a singular effect of concentricity.

The primary element within which this strange sphere is conquered is, as Cézanne states, *atmosphere*: 'Atmosphere forms an enduring foundation, the screen [. . .] upon [which] all oppositions of colours, all the accidents of light are decomposed. This atmosphere, then, envelops the painting, contributing to its synthesis and general harmony'.[198] The atmosphere thus is not/does not have the Impressionist air which one must guard against 'ceding' to; *the atmosphere is the concrete-abstract matter of the plane*, its incorporeal/over-corporeal stuff [*étoffe*] upon which the plane will be able to crystallise and displace itself in depth. It is charged with virtual-real localities, with tensile forces that the painter must confront without allowing himself the 'easy way out' of fusing them together: 'All of painting is here, cede to the air or resist it. To cede to it is to deny localities, to resist it is to give localities their force, their variety. Titian and all the Venetians worked in local colors; that's what makes them true colorists'.[199] Thus it is atmosphere that makes possible the differential mobility of the plane that it projects ahead of the fixed support of the painting. It is conceived as the heterogenetic envelope of the visible, the primary adjointment of *aisthesis* and *energeia*, as a relatively neutral screen from the point of view of the *ergon*, preferably blue-grey, which colours will find a way through in order to acquire their surface of concrescence, their *forced* degree of curvature. For it is not colours that curve the atmosphere into its virtual topology—no more than it is the brain, which also depends

on the plane to establish a truth in the sensible (and not to *establish the truth of the sensible*) on the basis of the rhythmic articulation of little coloured touch-patches. Placed in tension by the resistance of the plane, by its resistance to the 'air', it is the colour-work of the concentric eye that generates the painting's force of curvature. . . . Motif: 'light, therefore, does not exist for the painter'—all that exists is 'the planes represented by color sensations'.[200] Considering that, for Cézanne, *colouring sensation* is not the same as *optical sensation*, an optical sensation that 'is produced in our visual organ' *without ever undoing the image of the world* (the landscape-motif: how can the *visual organ* be undone?) In order to (un)do this, 'the picture of nature' necessitates a mobilisation of the different coloured layers of duration in a sensation of rhythmic simultaneity which *forces* the eye to *concentrate itself*, to distend towards the outside, realising, in an atmospheric pulsation, a motif. The motif is thus materialised by 'dimensioning' colours according to a particular spacing of time (a *temporal simultaneity*) which is that of the traversing of a shallow, *infra-thin* depth, soliciting the brain-eye to displace itself along the mobile line of the greatest speed and the greatest slowness so as read off its gradients *from nature*, and to express the virtualities of the latter. Paraphrasing he who begins by saying that painting is a 'means of expression of sensation',[201] the Cézannian advance is written as follows: *to read nature in the ruptures of depth so as to realise (in them) her sensations*.

8

With Cézanne having told us that he set to work with all his energies and began to work from nature at the same time and very much belatedly[202] (but only so as to add: 'It wasn't as if I didn't work before, I always worked')[203] under the influence of the 'humble and colossal' Pissarro (but he draws him seen from behind),[204] the case seems settled: *it begins in the middle, and certainly not at the beginning*, at a point when we would seek in vain any announcement of a 'harmony' between art and nature, any 'mutual development' whatsoever of the eye and the brain at which one must constantly 'work: at the eye through the vision of nature, at the brain through the logic of organised sensations, which gives the means of expression'.[205]

Even if it seems to clash with the logic of these statements, we must nevertheless resolve to take a look at the 'couillarde' period[206] of the young (and not so young) Cézanne, the hallucinatory violence of which has spelt scandal for public and critics alike (of the past and of today). For everyone, reactionary classicists and progressivist modernists alike, finds themselves in Cézanne, finds themselves in celebrating a giant of painting who had been able to turn his back on the 'unbridled romanticism' (Castagnary) of

his feverish youth and on the obscene expressionism (of manner, of matter, and of content), the convulsive 'baroquism' or 'molochism'[207] of these first avowedly failed attempts. And indeed, on this *couillard* horizon we spot no premonitory sign of Impression, of 'possible verification in reality',[208] or of Pure painting and pure Painting, identified and capitalised by those whom D. H. Lawrence calls 'the prophets of the new era in art'. And yet it is during this period that the question of the *image* is taken up in the most radical fashion, with a 'wall of painting' that is not so far from the 'thick impasto' that Cézanne laid out at the beginning of every painting,[209] the repressed that cannot but return—according to evidence that increasingly mounts up in so far as we gain (or lose) a foothold in the 'final years'.[210]

Confronted with the extreme difficulty of dating certain works in reference to the frontier of 1872 (the turning point of the work with Pissarro, and of what is consensually called 'the brightening of his palette', of his installation with his future wife, Hortense Fiquet, and of the birth of his son . . .),[211] Lawrence Gowing's commentary on *Portrait of the Artist* (which closes the exhibition dedicated to the 'Early Years 1859–1872' that he supervised, although the painting had been dated '1875–1876' by Venturi and Rewald) may well, in spite of itself, open up the perspective of a certain continuum in the disorder of the painter's creations—on condition that we are attentive to a certain hagiographic tone we scarcely expect from the author of *The Logic of Organized Sensations*,[212] without letting it put us off course:

> The art of Cézanne's twenties was a dream from which he awoke in the furious temper that he portrayed in this picture—awoke from a nightmare of loneliness and sexual aggression to insist on being reconciled with life. He was wakened not only by the grace of Hortense, the colossal humility of Pissarro and the beneficent faithfulness of truth to sensations—he was awakened by the clear sight of genius, which at the crucial moment does actually know its greatness.[213]

But was not this 'dream' itself—let us immediately point out—also quite 'furious'?

A curious awakening, then, one that prolongs the dominant quality of the preceding state. . . . Close, according to some, to *delirium tremens* (from the pen of a lady signing herself 'Marc de Montifaud': 'A kind of madman, agitated, in painting, with *delirium tremens*'). As for the appeal to a 'faithfulness [. . .] to the truth of sensations', it was only able to break the spell and to be 'benificent' at the price of a sacrifice of the artist's *temperament* (which Cézanne still calls the '*initial force*', that is, his *internal truth*), and which here would inevitably lead sensation back—and we know how vividly Cézanne lived this experience—to 'interior visions', to that 'troubling quality which borders on hallucination', according to Roger Fry's characterisation of

the young Cézanne's paintings before his meeting with Pissarro.[214] (Merleau-Ponty will go on to evoke Cézanne's 'schizoid' temperament. . . .) That this second commentary could evoke, in its turn, the vision peculiar to the painter's last period, when objects are deformed, when forms dissolve into blocs of sensation independent of any transcription of perception, and the fact that it is thus the whole ecstatic matter of the first manner that, in this last period, transformed, lightened by a turbulence more 'flat', or—better—*differently gestural*, sees Cézanne 'rediscover the passion of his beginnings',[215] leads us to propose the following hypothesis: far from all classicism, and without ever joining with the Impressionist innocence of an eye supposed to see naturally via 'coloured vibrations' (J. Laforgue),[216] Cézannianism might deploy itself historically between the material projection of a *pure hallucination* and the elaboration (or the construction, i.e., organisation), from the point of view of the painting alone, of a *true hallucination*. (The expression is Taine's, when he delivers the formula for the overturning of common notions: 'Thus, external perception is an internal dream which proves to be in harmony with external things; and instead of calling hallucination a false external perception, we must call external perception a true hallucination';[217] which Taine says after drawing his conclusion from the paradoxical truth of a hallucinated skull: 'A person laboring under hallucination who sees a deaths's head three paces in front of him, experiences at that moment an internal visual sensation precisely similar to what he would experience if his open eyes were then to receive the luminous rays coming from a real deaths's head. There is no real death's head in front of him'.)[218] A *true hallucination* which, in truth, can only qualify the 'harmony with external things' of the mental image enveloped in the most elementary sensation by integrating the centrifugal forces at work in the crisis of perception that will continually deepen throughout the course of the 1870s.[219] This 'mental image' here participates, in the tradition of Helmholtzian 'physiological psychology' which is that of Taine, in the most radical problematisation of the very notion of the image, once perception is processually demarcated from all 'naturally' or 'objectively' veridical relation to the world and to external reality (unknowable in itself).[220] A dislocated or deterritorialised image bathing all perception in a matter not so much 'optical' as 'oneiric', that is to say hallucinatory (an 'internal dream'), such that perception can no longer take on any 'form' other than that denatured process of formation whose *difference from itself* is now required by the sensed in order to become sensible . . . . There would thus be a hallucination proper to the becoming-sensible of the sensed, a hallucination which, far from resulting from a dysfunction of the system of perception (what Merleau-Ponty calls 'the hallucinatory imposture'),[221] would itself render this system possible according to the principle of an internal excitation *dis-organising* the eye (qua visual *organ*) by broadening it to 'non-optical' functions—*to those functions which,*

in Cézanne, become the stakes of painting: they govern its break with any form of scenic space ('space *thrusts itself forward*')[222] like a vertigo of indistinction between '*focus* and *out of focus*'[223] testified to already by a number of his early paintings, without any relation to any form of Impressionism whatsoever. . . .

This sensation *that takes place in advance of* the commonly sensed is, in all evidence, what is implied by the *Phaneron* and the *Phaneroscopy* evoked by Peirce in 1904 to designate a region of the mind wherein ferment universes still undifferentiated in regard to any reality that might re-present them:

> If you ask present *when*, and to *whose* mind, I reply that I leave these questions unanswered, never having entertained a doubt that those features of the *phaneron* that I have found in my mind are present at all times and to all minds [. . .]. It will be plain from what has been said that phaneroscopy has nothing at all to do with the question of how far the *phanerons* it studies correspond to any realities.[224]

Grafted onto the most neutral, the most anonymous, and the least objective sensation, which, in Condillac (from the *Traité des Systèmes* [1749]) becomes 'successively attention, memory, comparison, judgment, reason, reflection, abstraction, imagination, that is to say the whole of intelligence', this hallucinatory character of all consciousness is correlated with the discovery of the brain as the foundational instance of a physiology of perception dynamically engendered from within (a *cerebral dynamics*), upstream of any established distinction between subject and object. Thus the brain will be conceived as the active principle of a mental image, of an image that is 'in its nature *hallucinatory*',[225] at best *corresponding* to the external object with which it is *associated* in the ordinary run of 'events'—whence the formula of a *painter brain* as the paradigm of a physiological optics.[226] Whence, also, an effect of convergence with Taine's positivist psychology, in which symbolist aesthetics tried, through the immediate experience of hallucination, to found the subject of art on a psychic reality to which the artist would possess the key. Maurice Denis thus foregrounds the fundamental question *of what the brain can do*: 'Who does not know the power that cerebral habits have over vision?'; a question in the form of an affirmation that will see him go on to write that 'what writers later call temperament' is nothing but 'a mode of hallucination'.[227] Now, if this convergence has been studied since the works of Richard Shiff,[228] far too little attention has been paid—with the notable exceptions of Meyer Schapiro,[229] John Gage,[230] Paul Smith,[231] Jonathan Crary[232] (although the latter limits his account to Cézanne's last period), and, in France, Jean-Claude Lebensztejn[233]—to the importance of psychophysiological theories in the formation of Cézanne's thought (and in the constitution

of the Cézanne-character as a hallucinatory painter) when the very vocabulary employed by the painter actually depends upon such theories, when he implicates the 'vision of nature [*vision sur nature*]' in 'the logic of organised sensations that gives the means of expression' of a Brain-Eye. This would explain how Cézanne could have become, in spite of himself, 'the universally recognised link between the impressionist and symbolist generations';[234] and gives us to understand that he *generationally* became this link because 'his vision was centered much more in his brain [. . .] than in his eye' (as Bernard tells us).[235]

If 'all of physiological optics rests on [the] principle' that the 'direct, necessary and sufficient condition [of colour] is the excitation of the retina, far more than the optical centres of the brain'—so that 'the color and visible figure are but internal events, *which appear external*'[236]—it is indeed when the 'colouring sensation' reaches its *cerebral* plenitude that it will be permissible to maintain indifferently that 'colour is the site where our brain and the universe join' and that 'art is a harmony parallel to nature'. . . . Colouring sensation is not to be confused with coloured sensation—no more than, inversely, the perceived is to be identified with its condition, with the still inobjective and asubjective impression that constitutes its possibility (a possibility that, in truth, is far from symbolist). *Colouring* implies the thousand and one hallucinatory potentialities that colour perception must conquer in order to attain the order of the pictorial. In Cézanne, reader of Taine[237] (like his whole generation), this new pictorial economy is unhesitatingly adopted, in so far as optical sensation is related to the colouring sensation that defines 'planes'[238] (whose 'concentric' conjunction replaces perspective), and to the hallucination that necessarily results from this relation wherein the *unconscious* reality of pictorial 'logic' replaces the realism of nature, verifying after its own fashion that 'There are sensations of light which are not produced by light, and light that can arouse no sensation of light'. (Helmholtz's general proposition tells us that the quality of our sensations 'is not determined by the object sensed, but by the nervous apparatus that has been activated. [Thus] the sensation of light in general corresponds neither to the extent nor the quality of a determinate external object, namely light'.)[239] It is this hallucination realised in painting that, upstream of all consciousness, upstream of all unity of perception related to 'a pure form of the self' (Kant), synthesises through colour alone the dark matter of that which is not yet subject or object, in its radical nervous immanence with the pulsions of bodies . . . . And his whole life long, Cézanne identified himself with the hallucinating painter par excellence, the Frenhofer of Balzac's novel *Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*, after which, 'around 1868–71', he had made two drawings: *Painter Holding his Palette* and *The Painter*;[240] he would later project the two versions of his *Modern Olympia* (1873–1874) by bringing onto the scene a seer/voyeur painter exhibiting

Manet's 'bottom'—this 'bottom' hallucinated by the critics (as 'packets of naked flesh') which he renders, à la Frenhofer, with a 'Chaos of colours, of tones, of indecisive nuances' (Balzac). Was it, as Jean-Claude Lebensztejn argues, 'as if he had, from his youth, prefigured his destiny as a painter. Or as if this destiny found its formula in the memory of that prefiguration'?[241] A prefiguration, also, in a name—that of Frenhofer—separated by a mere dipthong from the name of the German optician Fraunhofer, known for his studies in the spectrum of solar light ('Fraunhofer lines'), which Ernst Mach picks up on in an argument which concludes that 'see[ing them] in mind' is enough to make them 'stand out before our eyes' in a 'tableau (*Darstellung*) of sensorial facts' such that 'we could not hope for a greater insight into this phenomenon'.[242]

We thus hold that, from the first to the last period, hallucination presents itself in Cézanne as the generic name of a pictorial practice wherein sensation is indissociable from a *sensitive cerebration* sealing the cenaesthetic unity of the vital and the mental rather than, and in place of, any re-cognition of the given-being of things in perception (what Husserl calls *Leibhaftigkeit*: their presence-in-flesh-and-blood). A composite sensation condensing all of the sensible and intelligible faculties, the vector of a phaneroscopy *avant la lettre* but in act, hallucination undoes the phenomenological regime that claims to dissociate 'perception from illusion, the present from that which is not, absent, past, phantom'[243] so as to rediscover the being-in-the-world of a lived body. For the lived of 'presence in the flesh' (*als liebhafer*) in 'perceptual presence' as opposed to 'the merely 'represented' [which] 'does not give itself'',[244] the lived, even in its most 'primordial' form, is not the object of the painter. What the painter seeks with and since Cézanne is the exploration and the multiple expressions of this *area of construction* that is called *brain-image*, the image of sensorial energies, of 'insensible perceptions' (the 'little sensations' or 'confused sensations' mentioned by Cézanne himself)[245] and of 'obscure ideas' coextensive with the nervous system, which psychic life must traverse in order to become what it is, which does not resemble the 'lived' since what conditions and determines it confusedly will be irreducible to that which derives from it. Thus, we can understand why the portraits of Madame Cézanne resemble *her* and resemble *each other* so little, and why the portrait of the gardener Vallier, his last model, 'reduced' to an apparition drowning in greenery, could have ended up as a self-portrait. . . . Gasquet is right to insist on this: one cannot imagine a greater misunderstanding of this work than to claim that the painter could not work 'without an immediate model'. Doesn't Cézanne himself admit one day to the collector Karl Osthaus, in regard to his *Baigneuses*: 'An old invalid posed for all these women'; and who, before one of his *Grandes Baigneuses*, declared, striking his forehead: 'painting . . . is in there'? The whole paradox (but is it really a paradox?) being

that Cézanne's avowed naturalism—that paradoxical naturalism examined, *motivated* above—never means anything but an *effect* of the direct expression not of liveds [*vécus*] or of the perceived, but of the activity that makes them what they are, *intus* and *extra*, for the painter who is nothing but a painter (notwithstanding the doubt 'of an artist specialising in other researches'), namely, their colouring tracing (to the detriment of the usual coloured trace) produced by the pictorial heterogenesis that (de)monstrates [*(dé)montre*] the powers of the neural imbrication of colours and forms by raising them to their most radical indistinction. The fact that *it* shows itself [*ça se montre*] through the disintegration of every kind of spatial illusion and natural landscape, the disintegration of every empirically given figure, at the behest of a perpetual *modulation* of colours, confirms that the forces thus liberated can no longer be *organised*, from a Cézannian point of view, except on the basis of 'the existence of a dominating patch'.[246] (This, following Taine, is at once the task of the analysis 'of physiologists and of physicists'—Helmholtz is cited here—and that of 'colourist painters' who 'come back to it': 'Their art consists in seeing their model as a patch, the only element of which is the more or less diversified, deadened, vivid, and mingled color'.)[247] To carry out the 'radical desymbolization of the world',[248] it will thus not be enough to say that the image of the landscape, the group of figures, or the portrait is in the process of forming before our eyes. Further, the absence of perspectivist depth and the projection of layers of time onto one unique plane will have to be perceived in a *chronic instability* that will make sensation depend upon a correspondence between the duration of painting and that of a vision (dis)ordered by the latter in a beyond of the perception-image of the world. Thus, the quite rightly observed feeling of a 'temporal continuity between sensation and the act of painting',[249] far from proposing that which, of the world, appears in a supposedly 'primitive' vision, is in Cézanne the bearer of an *aberrant image* substituting for the form of the world the force of hallucination that overflows and decomposes it, by replacing its pictorial organisation—as *true hallucination*, that is to say a radical calling into question of the world-image. This is the lesson of Cézanne, beyond Impressionism and phenomenology (which furiously tries to resuscitate the latter in philosophy: a superior Impressionism), a lesson that he makes vacillate beneath the arbitrary touch of a few green patches in the sky of Sainte-Victoire (*The Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from Les Lauves* [1902–1906], Philadelphia Museum of Art) . . . before transposing into a sky of blue blocks prowled by heavy green clouds a '*couillard*' effect so powerful that 'it ends up rendering improbable the knowledge of what is painted' (*The Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from Les Lauves* [1904–1906], Pushkin Museum, Moscow).[250]

In its radical pictorial phaneroscopy tending to 'trace back' the always already constituted affections of a subject to a pure *affect*, and perceptions

of objects to that which, in Peirce's language once more, would be called a pure *percept*, in thus undertaking to invest painting to the point of a cerebral knotting of percept and affect, the Cézannian formula of sensation manifests, outside of the re-presentation of the states of things, the *motif* of a new state of painting—sensitive to events, to what comes over sensation in its colouring part. That this state must be properly *hallucinated* in order to '*marry the curves of women to the ridges of the hills*' did not at all escape Cézanne's contemporaries. And yet they were in general more attentive to the supposed pathology of the painter (as Huysmans writes: 'an artist with diseased retinas, who, in the exasperated perception of his gaze, discovered the precursors of a new art') and to his 'monomaniacal' eye (between a hysteria of the gaze and ophthalmic neurosis) than to the incessant researches carried out by Cézanne in order to 'fuse in painting, with the same intensity, and in the same instant, observation, memory, the imaginary and mental construction'.[251]

This is the reason for the singular status of the almost infinite series of *Baigneurs* and *Baigneuses*, apparent to all the painters who felt themselves to be the contemporaries of or the recipients of Cézanne's research: from Pissarro, Monet, Renoir . . . to Matisse ('the *Three Bathers* was the origin of my art') and Picasso ('If only I'd known Cézanne! He was my one and only master!'), Klee, and Kandinsky . . . . Whereas casual passers by are happy to see in him an outrage to art, aggravated by indecent exposure (Vollard *dixit*), all of them perceived in these paintings a new state of painting, breaking with the receptivity of the Impressionist eye. For it cannot be a case here, for Cézanne, of 'reconciling his old sensations, founded on memory and imagination, with sensations before nature, in the form of a landscape'[252] (which would place Cézanne very much short of the modernity of Manet's *Dejeuner*, of that 'Monsieur Manet' whom he confronts with his *Modern Olympia*, and indeed of the Impressionists themselves); but to plunge, as a painter, into 'the genesis of an "unknown body" which we have in the back of our heads',[253] otherwise disquieting than the stripping-bare of the voyeurism of painting even in its most crudely pornographic exposition (more than a helping hand—a thumb up the ass: *Lot and his Daughters* [1861]). These paintings offer only an artificial assemblage of phantoms, with neither grace nor natural beauty, anatomically equivocal, with badly sketched faces (mask-faces) whose distant and impersonal attitudes, with no relation to one another, 'improbably grouped in a non-existent landscape',[254] seem to mimic a crude genre painting, surrounded by the insane lines of a misshapen design. Whipped up 'by a fever of spoiled colours, screaming in relief, on the weighed-down canvas' (J.-K. Huysmans), it is *the image itself* that thus finds itself doubly attacked from the point of view of the *true hallucination* of the painting. True because it has substituted the violence of sensation, the sensible quality of hallucination, for the figuration of the sensational, which is

the subject of certain paintings of the first period (*Lot and his Daughters, The Orgy, The Strangled Woman, The Murder*. . . .). True also in its *realisation*, in the way in which it defines the visible exclusively on the basis of the constructive function of the 'touch', which no longer tells any story. This work of realisation which Charles Camoin believes we get closest to in explaining that the painter from this point onwards no longer has 'any other aim than that of "making images"',[255] we can understand on the contrary as an *undoing of the image*, the genesis and birth of a new era of and for painting in its most composite powers. Through the discovery of this cerebral de-formation which makes the *subject* disappear into the motif (the Bathers are treated as still lifes whose distortion grows with the complexity of the arrangement) to *motivate* 'a' nature ('Nature' is that living theatre of all the displacements, all the metamorphoses belonging as much to the figures as to the scene) which is a pre-text (*to read* nature) for modulating the plane under the sign of the rhythm of colours 'through oppositions and contrasts'.[256] The logic of colouring sensation here decides between sensible correspondence, homeomorphic relation, or true hallucination relating painting to 'nature' qua '*combination of effects*'. A *composition of visual facts*, then, from which the architecture of bodies will not escape, for 'painting is composing'.[257] It consists in arranging a multiplicity of elements that will no longer hang together by way of the flesh in the promise of a reconciliation between man and nature, but in favour of a rarefied atmosphere, as colours, *sensing* one another on the surface of the canvas through the sensorial energies of the brain that has invested them, call for the construction of a painting as their proper heterogenesis. So that, before a Cézanne, 'we dream only of painting; neither the object represented nor the subjectivity of the artist gets our attention',[258] in the words of Maurice Denis, author of the famous phrase according to which a painting is nothing more than 'a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order'—which should be understood 'after the example of Cézanne' *and the example of Taine*.[259] But we must immediately emphasise, with Gottfried Boehme, that if 'the Cézannian conception seeks to return to the means themselves, because they are the condition of a new 'truth' in art', it is in the sense that, in the most intangible possible way, 'nonorganic means, like the construction of the painting, metamorphose everything that is organic'.[260] (Without sparing the higher organic Form of Painting . . .) To the extent that they make the nude float in the least academic *and* least natural context: that of these artificial Bathers almost every element of which originates in the violent energy of the first figurative compositions.[261] The reality of this origin owes to the fact that the bodies, these bodies unknown in the register of the image, could only be 'imagined', that is to say hallucinated, through and in the intensity of sensation which, upstream from the flesh, has de-formed them, projected them beyond all organic representation by giving *matter* to the 'discontent with the

optical cliché' that is the whole life of Cézanne—and 'the most perceptible thing in his pictures'.[262]

9

So let's start again from the beginning and, necessarily, with Cézanne's 'couilles', which will be praised in so far as they prefigure a *material practice* embodying, *giving body to* painting. A brain-body into which the painting, which thinks in it, must plunge so as to attain its unthought and so as to break through the idealist obstacle that separates it from itself—'the hoped-for establishing of spiritualism in art' advocated by Aurier, in a symbolist and/or neo-classical destination of a 'gaze exempt from desire', celebrating in colour 'the spirit manifesting itself in the sensible [. . .] through the intermediary of light, this immaterial matter' celebrated by Hegel, and which Cézanne says does not exist for the painter.

What does it mean, 'the eye in heat' and the violent expressionism of the young Cézanne multiplying the impasto of colours and the encrusted flat surfaces of painting, piling up pictorial matter as never before, applying paint with the spatula in thick patches into which the stripes of the knife and sometimes the finger would impress manhandled forms, modulating with equal intensity still lifes (*Sugar Bowl, Pears, and Blue Cup*) and portraits (the series of *Uncle Dominique*), if not the throwing into crisis of the subject and of the painting-form as it is exposed to the most ferocious economy of desire (*Portrait of the Artist*—all paintings dating from 'around 1866')? Cézanne's painting calls for the corporeal investment of the artist in order to render visible the exertion of a force upon a body led back to its most intense zone of life, pushed towards the limit where its *phantastic* appearance extracts itself from the virtual immensity of the phanerons that accompany it, accelerating it or slowing it down. Like those rapidly brushed 'Wagnerian'[263] *Baigneurs* and *baigneuses* (around 1870), deposited by the forces of colour into an immediate, direct confrontation with the black matter of the oeuvre. . . . The question being, then, less that of the 'means' of expression than that of a *matter of expression* returning on the 'subject' to demand that painting depend, before anything else, on a gestural unity, an *unleashed manual power* (as Deleuze says), such that 'a picture that was touched with the knife should be painted with the knife throughout'.[264] This *intrinsic material unity* that Cézanne, in the most disturbing tracks of Courbet,[265] was the first to produce, reducing the subject of painting to the expression of the matter mobilised by the brain-body of the painter, reducing the painting to the manual work of its constitution entirely in impasto, soon overtaken by a technique involving 'stabbing strokes of the brush',[266] and then by the thick touches of the brush identifying,

altering both figure and ground—*defigured and ungrounded at the same time*—before the knife reappears to mark the differentiation of colour in a painting as decisive as *The Etang des Soeurs at Osny* (1877) . . . well, this *gestus* conjugating the deformations of bodies and the hallucinations of the brain is incontestably 'the sign of a new aesthetic, the aesthetic of extreme standpoints and total solutions [. . .] which effectively and finally isolated the avant-garde'.[267] Let us understand here that the avant-garde is born, 'as such', from this decisive overthrowing which sees the corporeal immediacy of the coloured canvas and the cerebral immediation of colour on the canvas replace both the proximity of its objective referent and the evidence of its subjective autonomy, to express a new *figural* order detained in the virtual-material texture that allows for its gestation.[268] As if springing forth from the patch in the expressive work of the knife, the strokes of the brush, large or small [*brosse*, *pinceau*] feverishly sculpting the ravines of painting, the Figure is in effect a *de-formation* that involves the becoming of matter in the pictorial modulation of colour that Cézanne employs, 'in his beginnings', *in his struggle against his own clichés*.[269] Exceeding the figuration of the object through the *denaturalisation* that he inflicts on his most subjective optic, imposing the compulsive hand of the Body on the Brain-Eye, the Figure rises, or *abducts itself* (cf. *The Abduction* [1867], *The Eternal Feminine* [1877]) as that hallucination that affirms its truth in the movement of the sensible experience of 'the canvas itself, a flat surface coated with colours [. . .] without there being any need to interpose the memory of another older sensation (like that of the natural motif used)'.[270] Without there being any need, let us be clear, to evoke the *Idea signified*, posited by Aurier as 'otherwise interesting and philosophical than a vulgar question of the cuts of the knife'.[271] Here we have in view the extensive vulgarity of the young Cézanne dismissing with the knife of his crepuscular pulsions the unity of the viewing subject, thereby losing control of the description—whether 'realist' or 'idealist'—of the object. The perspective of drawing is effaced, leaving to triumph the violence of an imagination whose brutal virtualities animate the matter of a world which is less that of 'pure painting' than that of *naked painting*. This leads us to give a definitively Cézannian clarification of Jean Clay's formula: 'The painting no longer makes a sign [*faire signe*], it makes a mass [*faire masse*]'. For, from the 'wall of painting' of the first canvases to the 'plastic mass' of the last, not forgetting the thick impasto of *View of Auvers sur Oise* (1873), considered to be the masterpiece of his so-called 'impressionist' period,[272] it is indeed the pictorial fact of a 'painting by masses'[273] in which the affirmation of the 'pictorial mass' stands as 'the real, new autonomous body that acts upon us without mediation';[274] it is the arrival of that *body* in painting that will, for his contemporaries, be the mark of Cézanne's entire oeuvre. A mark so *pregnant* that one will be able to project it onto the painting of the beginning

of the century, which, however, had *nothing to do* with it, at least until the fauvist chaosmos emerged, in writing that painters seek to see themselves 'as sculptors, in surfaces'. Something that is not frowned upon: Cézanne endows the eye with a no longer optical but *haptic* function which determines the accidents of colour as that living matter that seems to emerge from a *point culminant* of close-up vision.

That the consideration of this sculptural expression of a 'painting by masses'—in which we perceive the proximate echo of the first long text dedicated to Cézanne, authored by Émile Bernard in 1889[275]—is accompanied by certain essential reservations, should therefore come as no surprise:

> The attempt is itself interesting as a reaction against the analytical excesses [of the impressionists]. While being a work in progress, it is however negative because of the deformation that is an indispensible condition of this art. It has a fault, which is to have left its domain of special research and to be presented as a definitive fact, taken for granted [. . .]. To produce patches and nothing but patches, giving outlines arbitrary forms, breaking the equilibrium and destroying the construction of the painting, seems to me excessive, since outlines, equilibrium, and construction are the primordial elements of an artwork. [. . .] Enough! From a distance, the heads of Cézanne's card players give me the impression of billiard balls suspended in the void.[276]

Let us make a correction, then, on what is to our eyes the 'definitive' point: deformation is the 'indispensible condition of this art' that constructs (itself) through 'patches' because, in Cézanne, the pictorial Fact always depends directly on the projection of figurative data and their visual coordinates into the chaos of sensations. This is how, '*as in a catastrophe*',[277] a manual, gestural cataclysm was able to carry away, to regenerate, the sensational of *pure hallucination* by discovering the rhythms of colour in a molecular composition of sensation. ('Only his colour [Cézanne] knew was not a cliché', as Lawrence insists.) Sensation, qua colouring sensation, can from then on discover itself as *naturing*, as a *true hallucination* of the powers of nature in the brain assigned to an energetics of colour 'which makes the painting itself an unparalleled catastrophe (rather than illustrating the catastrophe romantically)'.[278]

In its diversity of manners, Cézanne's excess over all of his 'classical' recuperations fuses with that unity of matter which makes Gauguin say that now nothing resembles a 'lousy painting' so much as a Cézanne masterpiece . . . which evokes in its own way the monster, invented by Clement Greenberg, of a *sculptural Impressionism*. For our part, we will insist, with Cézanne—with the painter who affirms that 'light, therefore, does not exist for the painter',[279] for the painter has only, as Malevich strongly emphasises, 'the sensation of his pictorial matter'[280]—that hallucination does not result in any way from the excess of coloured sensations that the eye registers

(impression), but will be *unified with the very life of matter* (expression);[281] or to put it differently: hallucination is identified with the productive, differential, *constructive* force without which there could be no visible. In opposition to all 'classicism of impressionism',[282] Cézanne's concern is absolutely not that of reintroducing *modelling* into the subject (even, as Greenberg says, through 'differences of warm and cool'),[283] but on the contrary, as one can see in the studies of *Rocks* grasped in their fragmentation (at Bibémus or below the Château Noir, at L'Estaque with their already discontinuous forms), about breaking up the volumes so as to 'put [in them] as many rapports as possible' and to extract from the material forces thus liberated the virtual *modulation* of a non-organic life as the encounter of planes under the contrasts of the purest colours—as the 'self-sufficient texture of colour contrasts'[284] that will allow the coming forth of the evidence of the materiality of the canvas or of the paper, in the interval between the diluted touches that punctuate the last works, paintings and watercolours alike, and which transforms like 'a living animal under our gaze'.[285] Far, then, from Cézanne 'accept[ing] in their virtuality all the suggestions of the image [. . .], the very conditions of its mobility' and of its 'expan[sion] in untold directions',[286] in Cézanne's struggle against cliché, the image finds itself confronted with the expressionist deployment of the accidents of plasticity, all the way to the final explosion of the series of *Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from Les Lauves* (1904–1906), where *the true hallucination of the world of painting* extracted from cliché is entirely projected from the brain towards the hand that assembles the strata, the stratified layers of the plane, to the point where it brings forth, in a gesture, a motif capable of assembling many figures grasped at different times.

The same goes for *The Gardener Vallier* (1905–1906) at the Tate, which brings together the crossed legs of a young man with the beard of an old man. His gaze is veiled by a hat pulled down over his eyes, which concentrates him on himself while inscribing him at the summit of a virtual cone—a sort of cone of material memory encompassing the fragmented times and spaces of which he is the pivot. Sitting resting his legs, his hands fused together leaving the arms to weigh down, absent-present, he seems to be absorbed in himself as if better to let himself be entirely absorbed, ever further, into the weight and the density of the living matters that compose him along with those that surround him. Come from a time outside age, *The Gardener* is carved into a minerality subdued by the dark patches of vegetation with which a pair of green shoes 'agrees'. His yellow shirt and blue trousers respond to the scission of the space on the left, vertically divided by a thick black line into two halves, one a yellow-ochre wall (eaten into by vegetation, outside of age, like him), the other an intensely blue young sky. Everything is suspended and as if detained in the intemporality of a mute and multiple chaosmic germination which leaves open a void under the chair. It is as if the painter had wanted

to reveal through colour the hidden fundament of time which makes the present pass, but not without conserving the past in a world-memory never given/giving, always constructed, doubling the space of the layers of a non-chronological time. . . .

So it is no longer an aerial, 'impressionist' description of objects, of specific subjects, that is realised: it is colour that 'realises' (a singular operation), that gives us back *a* world on the basis of that which signifies the absence *of* the world (the painting *of* Cézanne), in the discontinuity of tones, in the sequences of relations and contrasts, of lines and of planes structured into as many events as there are illegitimate encounters and unlocalisable relations between different elements—so many events forming a unique, *chronic* event, whose elements can no longer be explained 'spatially' and/or 'optically'. It is colour, then, that *makes* real the rhythmic energy of sensation by discovering, by exploring its figural identity with the matter of an unknown world. Whence this sentiment of strangeness, of a hyperaesthesiac inhumanity, which announces itself between the first solitary landscapes (around 1865), empty of all presence, and the paroxystic *Pastoral* or *Idyll* (1870), sprung solely from the brain of the man in black. Cézanne will have been recognised as a modern Sardanapalus who arrived at the hallucination of a distant and as if absent image, outside of age, which is no longer his, projecting us into the universe with neither interiority nor exteriority of all the Bathers, all the Sainte-Victoires to come, 'where the air that circulates is no longer [. . .] one that we can breathe'.[287]

10

Under the sign of colouring sensation and its procedures that multiply levels or layers 'of skeins of molecules more or less loose'[288] that no longer allow anything to subsist apart from events across blank spaces and interstices, Cézanne's painting leads towards a radical problematisation of the Image, through the inclusive disjunction of an *image/non-image* opened up between the Brain and Nature. A paradoxical image that the phenomenology of art has ceaselessly circumvented by projecting the most 'strict "switching off" [*mise hors circuit*—Husserl's *Ausschaltung*] of the intellect from taking any existential position' (Husserl), the 'suspension of expressive values' (Merleau-Ponty), through the long-awaited dialectic of the Visible and the Invisible, so as to restore *something essential* upstream of the broken link between man and world. But the 'appearing of that which appears' in the Cézannian gesture itself always appears in accidents at once material and cerebral, whose constructed hypervisibility is not that of the 'nascent organism', 'this side of constituted humanity', but that of the *inorganic* (hence the whole inhumanity

of the Cézanne effect); it is not retrenched in the hidden secret of an origin (converted by the painter into a 'visible object');[289] it does not imply and does not explicate an 'inappearing' (brought to emergence by the painter in the colour of that which *exists*) qua ontological expression of 'the things themselves' (in the original language: 'in that paradoxically non-present presence [*die nichtgegenwärtige Gegenwart*] which is that of pure *Erscheinung*').[290] Thus, if Cézanne 'expresses' something, it is neither 'of the nascent order' of nature (Merleau-Ponty), nor, which comes back *in fine* to the same thing, the condition of possibility of 'art in itself' (Éliane Escoubas)—but *the condition of the critical realisation of modern art* of which he will have been the privileged *go-between*, in the *longue durée* of its history, for a twentieth century on the way towards the total crisis of the Painting-Form identified with salvation by the Image (Matisse *and* Duchamp *versus* Kandinsky).

If Cézanne invests the pure determinable of the image as a mode of construction of the 'vertigo of spacing' (Blanchot) in the variety of colours that fuels it (= the 'vertigo of spacing') and whose dissonances he nurtures, it is not so as to paint the effect (an effect, that is to say an image) in its pure appearance (for a 'disinterested spectator'), but the vertiginous conditions of the production of a fact (the pictorial fact as the reverse of the image). This is why the construction begins with the superposition of colours whose non-mixing impresses such a tension in regard to perception that perception 'sets out' from the three-dimensionality which is 'naturally' its own, only to find itself prisoner of a flat depth held together by the paring away of colours and their mutual exaltation (affect) as it unfinishes all forms (percept). Gaëtan Picon can thus affirm quite rightly that 'painting had never translated into terms of visuality a sensible experience so vast and multiform. Cézanne suggests a respiration, a traversal via panels of colour that rise up or sink down, via these planes in their staggered heightening, at the same time as he discerns the colours of the uncoloured, the shimmerings and mirages of the void, the riches of the interstice'.[291] To see the uncoloured interstices between the panels of colours in an image unchained and non-correspondent with itself, is to show at work the logic of construction of the plane after that singular method that would oblige Cézanne to start with the shadows cast by one colour upon another, 'with a patch that he covers with a second which extended beyond the first, then a third, until all these colors, like folding screens, model [understanding: *modulate*] and at the same time color the object'.[292] The exposition of this screen-making, whose layers, however few they may be, must nevertheless remain distinct as such, gives us a first image of the plane by realising the milieu of the overlapping of the visible. In this non-linear perspective, the modulation is that of colours, of 'depth through colours': it comes from the always relative covering of colouring touches and patches that have absolutely detached themselves from any imitation of objects, and

from the Impressionist grasp of the visibility/invisibility of the object in light, to express all ruptures in depth. For in Cézanne, it is never the object, or that which is between objects, that induces the modulation; it is the intervals, the interstices of the colouring plane that support the pictorial heightening and which require, in privileged fashion, 'a sufficient sum of bluish to make one feel the air',[293] to give the sensation of this 'coloured aerial logic' which in truth signifies the *reduction of 'the automatism of nature' to the uneven* [*accidentée*] *construction of painting*. And indeed: this blue used outrageously by Cézanne, these blues that rise up between the superimposed leaves of colour, making the layers of the plane fall onto one another[294] without being reducible to any particular one of them—these blues succeed in defining the plane of colour that they supplement by raising colour to the plane and the plane to the pictorial construction that it exhibits. It is the Blues of the Cézannian Brain-Eye that air the heavy or light earths of *The Garden at Les Lauves* (around 1906) and churn up the sky, into which they draw up the evanescent phantom of a Mont Sainte-Victoire in a floating roseate patch. This confirms that, if painting undertakes its traversal of the visible with an eye that stacks up all the coloured strata on the axis of its immersion and extracts from them a molecular agitation, the vision of this eye is constituted upstream of its perceptive intent (which it solicits in an 'atomic' and 'turbulent' sense): it exists in the very screen of the 'atmosphere' that the brain must invest in order to assemble the 'geometrized' touches (through the *abstraction* that is the *fact* of the Cézannian *gestus*) outside of all monocular perspective, to the point where it all holds together through a construction that will accentuate yet further the clashing multidirectional pull of coloured plates, split open by the interstices that fragment or unstick them. So that 'his optic was much more in his brain than in his eye',[295] and what becomes visible through the work of the encephalus is the time of the pictorial fact itself in which the layerings of the plane are superposed.

Cézanne's concentric eye is not an organic eye. It is not in the organ of the eye that *it is given*. *It works* in the indetermination of a forcibly abstract vision, on the basis of which visibility is extracted from a 'quantity of ascending visions, increasingly lively, lilting, abstract, harmonious, of which the most *supernatural* would be the definitive one'.[296] These, as we have seen, are what Bernard calls Cézanne's 'expressive syntheses', but they cannot be reduced to the painting of an expressionist.[297] For these visions form so many stratifications of the unleashed image which, accordingly, are not problematised in such a way without mobilising the brain to find, to create the accord in depth, in the depth of the plane, of superposed layers of colour and broken touches of the brush. The screen of atmosphere is not enough; it is necessary also to construct with the aid of the brain the concentric mesh required to provide the plane in the vision of time, to grasp duration in the

disappearance of the image, and to realise the tracing of colouring sensation by selecting its coloured intensities. The passage from the colouring to the coloured, from the virtual totality of colouring strata to the coloured painting, demands the intervention of the brain, the actualised bifurcation of its meanderings, its neuronal pathways. It is the brain that plunges into colouring matter, into colouring sensation, so as to thereby explore its webs and actualise its crossings, as if grey matter were bathed in the 'grey point' encompassed by this cloud of bridges, of virtual transducts [*transerelles*] before contracting into more definitive (i.e., less 'unfinished') trajectories. This is confirmed by the cloudy tremulousness of the celebrated Bern self-portrait (*Portrait of Cézanne*, or *Portrait of the Artist in Hat* [1879–82]), in which we can see the time of 'study', the time spent paring away the innumerable leaves of the plane distributed on the dark (in its lower part) and blindingly bright (top part) figure, stage by stage—a motif emerging from a pellicular matter, catalysed by the diagonal penetration of touches of the large ochre-red band of the glass door which seems to ensure 'the cohesion of molecules on the point of breaking apart'.[298] Whence the strangely vibratory character of this *Portrait of Cézanne*, trembling with a duration the totality of whose fibrated plane the eye alone, in its entirely cerebral mobility and neutrality, seems capable of traversing, because it is the eye that draws it out, machining the whole painting. One could say that the eyes of the portrait sink all the way into the most ancient zone of colour: the black tension of the pupil enveloped by the white of the ocular globe and by the *concentrated* brain, whose fixity and 'fixation', in contrast, place the canvas in supertension. Whence, also, that analogy proposed by Rivière and Schnerb between the act of painting and 'three-color printing proofs badly out of register, like the effects obtained by isochromatic photography. One can recognize in such proofs, where the mixing of colors by superposition is imperfect, that each of the three primary colors is found in all the tones. Only the proportions differ'.[299] The colour blur, the poor definition of the photographic matter, the imperfection of the isochromatic agitation *un-condition* the quality of the coloured image. But unlike the photographic procedure, which precipitates colours into the definition of the final development, Cézanne's Brain-Eye sets out a tension between interleaved colours that definitively prohibits their overlapping. It thus produces gaps, interstices, or voids between the leaves of colour that make its touches-patches vary from one zone to another, thereby suggesting a feeling of depth so contradictory that it often seems to project itself towards us, breaking apart in a thousand ways.

Thus it is not perspective that yields depth here, but colours, whose superposition does not adopt the same interstices in one place as in another, a little as if the *millefeuille* opened up on the painting were susceptible to a more tense or loose overlap, inducing differences between the layers that will not

be recomposed in the same way by the brain across the whole surface of the canvas, in flagrant violation of the homogeneous continuity of visual space. There is a struggle, a battle between the still hazy atmosphere in which the eye bathes and the nervous centres which bring precision to it, zone by zone, in order to extract from it a mental depth that is none other than the first construction conquered (and incessantly reprised) from and with colouring sensation. To credit Cézanne, as Rilke does, with the remark that 'no one before him ever demonstrated so clearly the extent to which painting is something that takes place among the colors, and how one has to leave them completely, so that they can settle the matter amongst themselves'[300] is thus a little *quick* so long as one has not shown that this reciprocal explication is the doing of the brain that complicates colour, *renders it otherwise deep*. It is at the heart of this process that 'it's as if every place were aware of all the other places'[301] in a kind of 'glandular activity within the intensity of colors'; and that, 'in the hither and back of mutual and manifold influence, the interior of the picture vibrates, rises and falls back into itself, and does not have a single unmoving part'.[302] As if every neuron had to realise the counterpoint of those mobile points which, in the painting, know all the others, in a circuit that makes of the canvas a reality as neurophysiological as it is material. For it falls definitively to the brain to sound each point, each zone, in its infinite accords which make of depth a mobile spacing for which only colour can provide the plane.

The Cézannian universe is thus no longer given by a point of view (even one that breaks with the codes of perspective in the name of a more 'aerial' dimension), but always constructed on an abrupt ramification of colour, on the basis of the colouring sensation into which a concentric eye cuts, an eye concentrated by the brain on each patch that decentres it and which will remain identifiable as such in a general effect of convexity with which Mont Sainte-Victoire is definitively associated. 'For a long time', confides Cézanne, 'I was powerless, I didn't know how to paint Sainte-Victoire, because I imagined, just like all the others who don't know how to see, that shadows were concave. But look, it's convex; its edges recede from its center'.[303] In its constitutive tension, this principle of sphericity attained by the eye that has become 'concentric by looking and working' renders particularly misplaced the formula of Madame de Staël, evoked by Bernard so as to submit Cézanne to the *French model*: 'The French consider exterior objects to be the motive behind all ideas, and the Germans consider ideas to be the impulses behind all impressions'. If 'he knows how to attain a depth in his art which is rare among our contemporaries',[304] it is indeed because, unlike them, inscribed in the avowed lineage of Delacroix,[305] he knew how to maintain a distance from this consensual opposition by refusing to choose between the Eye and the Brain, instead seeing 'things, not

in themselves, but in their direct rapport with painting'.[306] That this direct rapport should be nothing less than immediate is sufficiently emphasised as much by the difficulty in 'realising' and in 'organising' his sensations of which Cézanne ceaselessly complains, as by the importance of the pictorial paradigm (a *painting brain*) in the development of 'physiological optics', to the extent of a reversal of the relation between perception and hallucination.

Here we rediscover, from a new angle, the question of photography.

Whether it is a matter of Rivière and Schnerb, or of Gasquet (of transcribing or of rewriting Cézanne), the traversal of the depth immanent to colour is envisaged through a common metaphor borrowed from photography (a medium to which Cézanne himself had recourse, declaring in passing that he was not hostile to a 'painter using it').[307] What gives us to believe that this metaphor has its origin in the remarks of the painter himself, is that in this case is not that the eye is directly implicated, but that—citing Gasquet—'when liberated, the brain of the artist [. . .] should be like [. . .] simply a recording device when he works'. Rivière and Schnerb, it will be recalled, refer to the procedure of 'three-color printing proofs badly out of register, like the effects obtained by isochromatic photography', where superposed planes of colour stratified in successive layers bring about a blurry depth foreign to the drawing of perspective lines; as for Gasquet's Cézanne, he compares the process of cerebral depth with the photographic labour of that 'sensitive plate' which 'many skilful baths have brought [. . .] to the point of receptivity where it can be impregnated with the conscientious image of objects'.[308] A sensitive plate that Bergson had made the very *milieu* of the image *and of things* in *Matter and Memory*: 'is it not obvious'—the philosopher asks—'that the photograph, if photograph there be, is already taken, already developed in the very heart of things and at all the points of space?'[309] For photography, just like the Cézannian painting vibrating in the singular floating of its non-developed colours, shows us images that are not our own—as if they existed (real-virtual) independently of us, a simple extension of the totality of indices that refer back to the chromatic particles of matter. If the fascination that these mechanical images exert on Cézanne and his companions participates in that sentiment that 'images do not wait for us', perhaps it also announces this contradictory *self-evident truth*: that the painter's concentric eye, slipping between the leaves of matter, is no longer, *qua Brain-Eye*, merely the eye of Cézanne-the-individual. (Won't Cézanne go as far as to declare that if the artist—who 'is only a receptacle for sensations, a brain, a recording device'—'intervenes, wretched thing, if it dares of its own will to intervene in what it should only *translate*, if its weakness infiltrates the work, the painting will be mediocre'?)[310] In its asserted 'abstraction', standing for the subversion of natural perception confronted with 'an infinite copenetration of levels that

nevertheless remain discrete'[311] (but sufficiently present to entertain a mirage effect), this eye is thus not so much organic as—inseparably—material *and* cerebral. It is a *machinic* eye, an eye-machine that deploys itself by sinking itself into the coloured foliation, like the dark pupil that, in the self-portrait with hat, hollows out the plane to the point of touching on the uncoloured force opened up between the black of the iris and the white of the ocular globe. For one must bring the plane all the way back to the black that places it in tension.[312] So that it falls to the painter, to this painter who conceives 'nature' only as grasped in a 'contemporary aesthetic'[313] (an aesthetic at every point contemporary with photography, which latter must be 'interpreted [. . .] as one interprets nature'),[314] to *reveal* the in-itself of that image though the inorganic screen that it applies to the world when the world is already undone in its phenomenal totality. . . . The Cézannian revolution/revelation would be nothing without this hallucinatory immersion of the Brain-Eye, which, with the rising of the support that it exhausts itself in realising qua medium, becomes the manifestation of that 'force from the outside which hollows itself out, grabs us and attracts the inside' (Deleuze) in an immanence whose address (the for-us) must always be constructed and actualised 'from the point of view of the painting and of the development of the means of expression'. This 'cerebral activity' precedes, prepares, and solicits the montage of the plane under the non-analogical jurisdiction of a *true hallucination* governing the specific resequencing of the interstices of lacunary layers that are never actualised (in Cézanne's painting) without being juxtaposed according to irreducible variable orientations.

If the concentric eye is placed in things, since the convexity of the least point implies a spectral concentration that draws the universe outside of any enframing, one also needs the black plate, the screen upon which the virtual image will be able to fix itself and emerge in a lasting manner. Thus, as Bergson explains, 'When we consider any location in the universe, [. . .] we can regard the action of all matter as passing through it without resistance and without loss, and the photograph of the whole as translucent: here there is wanting behind the plate the black screen on which the image could be shown'.[315] It is this function, it seems, that Cézanne attributes to the artist's brain. Informed by this optics that 'teaches us to see', the painting projects itself like that sensitive plate that cuts into the whole of the universe to fix on its hallucinated membrane the floating image between all the grains of incandescent matter; it invests colours in the same way as the sensitive emulsifiers capable of capturing the indices of the universe reflected in the mirror of each atom thus cerebralised. Rilke was able to glimpse the points of overlap of this process, the repetition in depth that makes each of them imply a vibratory action of all the parts of matter, and projects an image of the world without stabilising it as an 'image', since the process merely sets free a seeing that is

virtually present in every last particle, in which the indefinite lines of force that constitute it qua centre of radiating forces cross over. Matter 'reveals' itself to be memory, the memory of a universe depositing in each particle an indexical trace, a kind of hologram that repeats the de-formation of its total force in each of its points (the very same one that Cézanne's topological gesture seeks to repeat for and in the painting). Matter thus produces its first images, those asignifying, asyntactic images whose spectres traverse the infinity of space to project themselves into a brain, composing an inorganic memory in each elementary particle of the filter, that general rotundity of the black screen constructed by the 'Cézannian' brain so that they may be expressed and organised into a pictorial web within which the painter traces his colouring pathways via 'vortices and lines of force'. In doing so, 'they show us, pervading concrete extensity, *modifications*, *perturbations*, changes of *tension* or of *energy* and nothing else'.[316]

Since painting has never been exposed to the 'turbulence of the world in the base of a brain',[317] 'no one has ever painted the landscape, man absent but entirely within the landscape'. That the Cézanne depicted tendentiously by Gasquet goes on to evoke '*the great machine*', and that the latter is immediately reduced to a 'nirvana' of circumstance,[318] indicates sufficiently that we are here at the crossroads of interpretations—and that a choice has to be made: between an interpretation that inevitably leads Cézanne back to an Impressionism of pure intuition (and) of the flesh of the world (then, like Husserl, and later Merleau-Ponty, one will not worry how close this comes to 'the language of mystics'); and another approach, more experimental, that credits Cézanne with a constructivism of expression that composes the crisis-image of the world as the body of an unthought in thought whose 'true hallucinations' have the status of a modern truth of painting. In so far as, even down to its romantic inheritance, the 'classical-modern' perspective of an equilibrium between (re)discovered nature and organically (re)constructed art is broken for good, the fact that Cézanne himself could have oscillated and could have sought to compose, between a delay-effect (that 'vague cosmic religiosity which moved [him]', in the words of the poet from Aix) and the omnipresent necessity of 'planes' ('everything that keeps [his] reason straight'),[319] to 'treat nature',[320] is not necessarily an objection. More crucial will be the experiment of the painter, an experiment whose fundamental strangeness owes to the opaque *critical revelation* that keeps him at a distance from Impressionism and from 'the most prodigious eye in the history of painters', the eye of Monet:[321] if the supposed Brainless Eye is assured of its disappearance (there can be no return to faith in perception), Art itself cannot survive without the modern machinations of the Brain-Eye.

For *the flesh is too tender*—and this precisely in view of that 'bit of phosphorus burning in the meninges of the world'.[322]

NOTES

1. Joachim Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', in *Conversations with Cézanne* (henceforth *CC*), trans. Julie Lawrence, ed. Michael Doran (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001), 110 [translation modified]. Along the same lines Émile Bernard writes in 'Paul Cézanne', *L'Occident*, July 1904: 'In this intense and patient progress all parts are led directly forward, accompanied by all the others' (in *CC*, 32–44: 36).

2. Hans Belting, *The Invisible Masterpiece: The Modern Mythology of Art*, trans. Helen Atkins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 202 (*Möglichkeitsform*).

3. F. Jourdain, *Cézanne* (Paris: Braun, 1950); reprinted in *CC*, 80–83. This is a story of a visit paid to Cézanne in the company of Camoin in the last months of 1904: 'There was Cézanne! I saw the shining dome of his head' (*CC*, 82).

4. According to the famous phrase of Maurice Denis: 'He is the one who paints' (M. Denis, 'Cézanne', *L'Occident*, September 1907; *CC*, 171).

5. Belting, *The Invisible Masterpiece*, 202 (*fortgesetzte Entwürfe*).

6. C. Morice, 'Paul Cézanne', *Mercure de France*, February 15, 1907.

7. Cézanne to Manet, when asked what he was preparing for the Salon (the scene took place at the Café Guerbois). In the eyes of the one he calls 'Monsieur Manet', Cézanne will pass for a 'foulmouth'. These two stories are related by Ambroise Vollard.

8. A. Danchev, ed. *The Letters of Paul Cézanne* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013), 256.

9. Noted by Maurice Denis in his *Journal* at the end of January 1906, following a meeting with the painter (*CC*, 241).

10. Cf. E. Jaloux, *Les Saison littéraires 1896–1903* (Fribourg: Éditions de la Librairie de l'Université, 1942), 75. Cited by Doran in *CC*, 107. Jacques-Émile Blanché had already written, on the eve of Gasquet's death: 'The Platonic dialogue between Cézanne and the poet was nothing but a conversation of Gasquet with Gasquet and the multiple Gods of his Olympus', J.-É. Blanché, 'Gasquet "l'Animateur"', *Comoedia*, May 13, 1921; cited by John Rewald in the conclusion of his pioneering work *Cézanne, Geffroy et Gasquet* (Paris: Quatre chemins-Éditart, 1960), 55. Following Rewald, Michael Doran recalls in his notice the spacing of meetings from 1901 onwards, remarking that they 'were hardly in contact between then and 1904, when, however, they seem to have met once more, only to part in violent disagreement' (*CC*, 107).

11. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC,* 108. In the introduction to the second part of his *Cézanne* (Joachim Gasquet, *Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne: A Memoir with Conversations*, trans. Christopher Pemberton [London: Thames & Hudson, 1991]. In the writing of this memoir, which did not take place before 1912–1913 (that is, more than six years after the painter's death), Gasquet recognises the help of Cézanne's letters, 'both those written to me and those I have been able to borrow or which have been published by others to whom they were written'. *CC*, 108. For the factual deconstruction of this presentation, see Rewald's Preface, 7–8 (and his Conclusion, 53–55).

12. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC,* 157.

13. Ibid., 127, 124. This 'religious' approach to Cézanne has been systematically developed in its 'existential' aspect by Kurt Badt, *Die Kunst Cézannes* (Munich: Prestel, 1956).

14. É. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', 1904; *CC*, 40–41.

15. 'The pig-headed old macrobite' is how Cézanne signs a letter to Bernard on September 21, 1906 (*Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 372; CC, 49). In the letters to his son during the same period we read: 'I found Émile Bernard's letter. I'd hope he pulls through, but I fear the contrary' (*Letters of Paul* Cézanne, 381; October 13, 1906): 'I'll let the wretch (you know who) imitate me as much as he likes, he's not much of a threat' (Ibid., October 15, 1906). The reprimand from Cézanne figured in a letter of March 26, 1894, after he had read a first draft of the article to appear in *L'Occident* (Ibid., 256; *CC*, 28).

16. P. Conisbee, 'Cézanne's Provence', in Philip Conisbee and Denis Coutagne (eds), *Cézanne in Provence*, catalogue of the exhibition *Cézanne in Provence* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, January 29, 2006–May 7, 2006; Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence, June 9, 2006—September 17, 2006) (New York: Yale University Press, 2006), 27. Frédéric Mistral was the inspiration behind the Félibrige 'regionalist' movement to which the Gasquets were closely linked. The American commissioner of the exhibition concludes, 'In spite of the painter's initial warm endorsement [of Gasquet's essays], reflecting his pride in the culture of Provence, there is nowhere any suggestion that Cézanne thought his own art had any connection to the efforts of the Félibrige', Ibid., 4.

17. This last citation is taken from an unpublished manuscript of Bernard's, dated May 27, 1940, reproduced in R. Rapetti, 'L'inquiétude cézannienne: Émile Bernard et Cézanne au début du XXe siècle', *Revue de l'art* 144 (2004), 48.

18. M. Denis, in his first article on Cézanne, which appeared in *L'Occident* in September 1907 (*CC,* 165–179: 178).

19. M. Denis, 'L'influence de Cézanne', *L'Amour de l'art*, December 1920; reprinted in *Nouvelles Théories. Sur l'art moderne, sur l'art sacré (1914–1921)* (Paris: Rouart et Watelin, 1922), 132, 118.

20. É. Bernard, *L'Esthétique fondamentale et traditionnelle* (Paris, 1910), 138–139; cited and discussed in Shiff's conclusion to *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, second edition 2014), 222sq; 272. n.43 for the precious reference to Aurier's 'Boniment Initial' in *Le Moderniste illustré*, April 1, 1889.

21. É. Bernard, 'La technique de Paul Cézanne', *L'amour de l'art* 8 (December 1920); reprinted in *Propos sur l'art*, ed. A. Rivière (Paris: Séguier, 1994), vol. 1, 211. In 'Ce que c'est que l'art mystique' (1895), Émile Bernard defined himself as follows: 'I who cannot deprive myself of placing art below calculation, faith above science'. . . .

22. É. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 60 (emphasis added).

23. R. M. Rilke, letter to Clara Rilke, Paris, October 21, 1907, in R. M. Rilke, *Letters on Cézanne*, trans. Joel Agee (London: Jonathan Cape, 1988), 77.

24. According to the now classic expression put forward by Theodore Reff in his article 'Cezanne's Constructive Stroke', *Art Quarterly* 25:3 (Autumn 1962), 214–227.

25. Cézanne, letter to Gasquet, September 26, 1897, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 287.

26. Cézanne, letter to his mother, November 26, 1874. *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 154. We give the complete sentence below.

27. For in this letter of October 13, 1906 we read: 'So I must *realize* after nature. Sketches, canvases, if I were to do any, would only be constructions after [sic], based on the methods, sensations and developments suggested by the model, but I'm always saying the same thing' (*Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 380). At that time, he does not 'do' oil paintings, but only watercolours.

28. R.-P. Rivière, J. F. Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *La Grande Revue*, December 25, 1907; *CC,* 84–90: 89.

29. M. Matieu, *La Banalité du massacre, suivi de la lettre de Paul Cézanne à Félix Klein* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2001).

30. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, 1905; *CC*, 150.

31. M. Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne's Doubt', in *Sense and Non-sense*, trans. H. L. Dreyfus and P. A. Dreyfus (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 9–25.

32. Taking up a critical tradition contemporary with the first 'impressionist' exhibitions, this is, to the letter (quote marks included—'to "bracket out"') Georges Bataille's presentation in his review of several works (Rewald, Leymarie, etc.) for the journal *Critique* in January 1956, 6.

33. According to the synthesis proposed by Jules Laforgue in his article on Impressionism (1883), trans. William Jay Smith, *Art News* LV (May 1956), 43–45: 43 [translation modified].

34. É. Escoubas, *L'espace pictural* (Fougères: Encre Marine, 1995), 17.

35. Cf. T. J. Clark, 'Phenomenality and Materiality in Cézanne', in T. Cohen et al., *Material Events. Paul de Man and the Afterlife of Theory* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 106.

36. M. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 169. (and Doran's note, *CC*, 258 n.7). Gasquet takes this up to the letter, with reference to the same source ('I told this to Maurice Denis', he makes Cézanne say), 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 122. Let us indicate also that on the same page Cézanne-Gasquet gives a most improbable (because neo-impressionist!) definition of Impressionism as 'the optical mixture of colours' through 'dividing colors on the canvas and bringing them together on the retina'.

37. M. Denis, 'Réponse à l'enquète sur "l'orientation de la peinture moderne"', *La Revue du temps present*, vol. 1, no. 6; cited by Jean-Paul Bouillon, 'Le modele cézannien de Maurice Denis', in *Cézanne aujourd'hui* (Paris: RMN, 1997), 162. But according to this author, it is strangely the late 'Cézanne who moves toward Denis, finally adopting his "model"'. . . .

38. Something that did not escape the notice of an expert in the matter, Edmond Jaloux, in his book cited above, published in 1942:

> For this France of Marshal Pétain, with all that it represented in terms of equilibrium, coordinated thought, a living hierarchy not frozen into fixed cadres, in terms of revolutionary movement and a return to our truest tradition, to a set of purely national set of philosophies and mores, is indeed the same one that Joachim Gasquet divined forty-five

years ago, which we spoke about with him and which most of us had lost any hope of ever seeing reborn.

Cf. E. Jaloux, *Les Saisons littéraires 1896–1903*, 100; cited by Rewald, *Cézanne, Geffroy et Gasquet*, 99–100, n.18. Edmond Jaloux was a part of Gasquet's circle of friends, along with Joseph and Charles Maurras.

39. Shiff, *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism*, 262n.56. Thus, Merleau-Ponty will cite Cézanne-Gasquet at the very *beginning* of his 1960–1961 course at the Collège de France on 'Fundamental Thought in Art': '"What I am trying to explain is more mysterious. It's tangled up in the very roots of existence, in the intangible source of our sensations". Something that only offers itself through sensations, but which is beyond, at the root, at the source, hidden-revealed', cf. M. Merleau-Ponty, *Notes de cours (1959–1961)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 167 [J. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 113].

40. A. Vollard, *Paul Cézanne* (Paris: Galerie Ambroise Vollard, 1914; reprinted Paris: G. Crès, 1919), 141. The expression 'perpetual recommencement' appears a few lines further on.

41. This letter from Zola to Baille is reproduced in P. Cézanne, *Correspondance*, ed. J. Rewald (Paris: Grasset, 1978), 100–102. The passage that interests us here runs as follows: 'I leave tomorrow. —And my portrait, I asked him? —Your portrait, he responded, I have just ripped it up, I wanted to retouch it this morning, and since it got worse and worse, I have wrecked it; so I am leaving'.

42. É. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 62, 59. Émile Bernard's visit reported in this passage of the 'Memories' took place in February 1904. Judging by the short description given above, 'the painting of the skulls' before which Cézanne complained that what it was missing was 'realization' (58) was *Three Skulls on an Oriental Carpet.*

43. Ibid., 58: 'Cézanne's was an intelligence passionate about the new; his style was his alone. Although he was not aware of the fact, *his logic complicated his ability to work to such an extent that it became extremely painful for him at times, even paralyzing*' (italics added). More radically, Cézanne himself, in an aphorism collected by Léo Larguier (around 1902), says: 'The quest for novelty and originality is an artificial need which can never disguise banality and the absence of artistic temperament' (L. Larguier, 'Le dimanche avec Paul Cézanne' [Paris: L'Édition, 1925; *CC*, 11–18: 17] [aphorism XXIV]).

44. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907); *CC,* 62. Bernard's conclusion: 'People were wrong to judge Cézanne by his beginnings; even he abandoned them'.

45. Ibid., 63.

46. Ibid. Between the enslavement 'to research' and this twofold necessity, the conjunctive reads as follows: 'He had no conception of beauty; he possessed only the idea of truth'. The 'preoccupations' manifested by Cézanne in the reading of a first version of the 1904 article had constrained Bernard to reappraise the time-honoured anthem of a 'beauty' that manifests theologically the *symbolic correspondence* between the creation of a visible harmony (painting 'as such') and the divine order of creation—and in which the direct relation of things with painting is none other than 'the concrete expression of their beauty' (*CC*, 41). It will be understood that it is the

system of this constraint—from which Bernard will free himself *from above*—that makes us read this passage so closely.

47. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, October 23, 1905, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 356 [translation modified].

48. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 62.

49. Larguier, 'Le dimanche avec Paul Cézanne', op cit., *CC,* 16 (aphorisms XIV and XII) [translation modified].

50. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne' (1904); *CC,* 36.

51. Further on in the 1907 article: 'He never placed one stroke of paint without thinking about it carefully' (*CC*, 78).

52. Larguier, Ibid.,17 (the two expressions cited appear in aphorism XLI).

53. Cézanne, letter to his mother, November 26, 1874; and again: 'I must strive for completion purely for the satisfaction of becoming truer and wiser' (*Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 154)—*to complete is therefore not to 'realize'*. But see also the letter to Bernard from October 23, 1905 where Cézanne explains that his 'image or picture is incomplete' because 'the coloring sensations that create light in my painting are the cause of abstractions that do not allow me to cover my canvas' (Ibid., 355 [translation modified]). The recipient, not unreasonably, doubts the rather too *immediately* psychological character of this explanation.

54. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, May 12, 1904 (*CC,* 30); letter to the same, September 21, 1906 (*CC*, 49).

55. Renoir, cited by A. Vollard, in *Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)* (Paris: G. Crès, 1920), 32–33. One will think here of Rivière and Schnerb's description of 'Cézanne's studio': 'He never worried about the care of his paintings and they were lying around in corners either rolled up or still on their stretchers. Some rolled paintings had been left on chairs and were surely crushed' (*CC*, 85).

56. R.-P. Rivière, J.F. Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 80. Let us point out that it would be difficult to employ Rivière and Schnerb's testimony to found any sort of 'geometrical' reading of Cézanne.

57. The 'anecdote' of decoupage is reported by Ambroise Vollard, *Paul Cézanne*, 68. For a learned discussion of the problems posed by these *Two and a Half Apples*—the title adopted by Lionello Venturi—see R. Shiff, 'Cézanne's physicality: the politics of touch', in S. Kemal, I. Gaskell (eds) *The Language of Art History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 129–181. As to the facility with which Cézanne 'gives away' his work, we might again cite Bernard: 'In Paris, his best friend had been a cobbler: "*I liked him so much that when I moved out of the house where he also lived, I gave him all my paintings*"' (Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne'; *CC*, 74–75). As to the paintings that Cézanne kept, it seems that it was only so as better to abandon them: 'thrown to the floor carelessly', or folded in four to wedge up a wardrobe. . . ; rolled up, they are 'left on chairs', 'crushed'. Given or abandoned—the stories are too widespread and concordant not to be significant.

58. A remark reported by Bernard in his 'Memories of Paul Cézanne', *CC,* 57.

59. F. Valloton, *La Grande Revue*, October 25, 1907. And he continues, 'Cézanne continually raises up mountains, for he has no "manner", and no one "fabricated" less than this stubborn worker'.

60. [The reference is to military general Pierre Cambronne's famous one-word reply to the British request for surrender at the Battle of Waterloo: '*merde*!'—Translator's note]

61. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC,* 155.

62. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 76 (in March 1905).

63. We find the trace of both, of geology and of eyes-that-think, in Gasquet's *Cézanne*. The first passage, with 'geological foundations' placed under the sign of Lucretius ('Imagine that the history of the world dates from the day when two atoms met') and actualised by 'the bath of knowledge [. . .] into which we must dip our photographic plate', is conveyed by a 'cosmic' lyricism which is that of its author alone (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me. . .', *CC*, 114–115). As for the second passage ('The material of our art lies there, in what our eyes think'), it is extremely confused, since it is a question of 'colouring' Cézannian logic ('a colouring logic') in such a way as to restore painting in its 'foremost' optical identity—to the detriment of the 'logic of the brain' (*CC*, 120).

64. 'This sort of trophy arrangement', writes F. Cachin in her notice on 'Skulls', in the catalogue *Cézanne* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1996) of the exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais (September 25, 1995–January 7, 1996) and Philadelphia Museum of Art (May 30, 1996–September 1, 1996), 491.

65. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 89.

66. According to Gasquet's telling of it: 'On the last mornings of his life, he clarified this idea of death into a heap of bony brainpans to which the eyeholes added a bluish notion. I can still hear him reciting to me one evening as we walked along the Arc the quatrain by Verlaine: "*Car dans ce monde léthargique / Toujours en proie au vieux remords / Le seul rire encore logique / Est celui des têtes de mortes* [*For in the lethargic world / Always prey to the old remorse / The only laugh still logical / Is that of deaths' heads*]"' (Gasquet, *Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne*, 51–52 [translation modified]). In its original version, Verlaine's 'quatrain' reads as follows: '*D'ailleurs en ce temps léthargique, / Sans gaïté comme sans remords / Le seul rire encore logique, / C'est celui des têtes de morts* [*What's more, in this lethargic time / Without gaity and without remorse / The only laugh still logical / Is that of death's heads*]'.

67. In a letter from Cézanne to Zola on January 17, 1859, we find the following dialogue relating to a drawing entitled 'Death reigns in these places' (reproduced in *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 77), in relation to the 'first' skull 'by' Cézanne:

Dante: Tell me, my dear, what are they nibbling at there?

Virgil: It is a skull, what!

Dante: My God, how frightful.

But why are they gnawing on that detestable brain?

The enucleated eye of the skull appears in the first verse of 'Un Pouacre', one of Cézanne's favourite poems of Verlaine's: 'With the eyes of a death's head / That the moon still emaciates / All of my past, let us say all my remorse / Laughs through my skylight'. One might also think of these verses of Baudelaire's *Danse Macabre*: 'Her eyes, made of the void, are deep and black / And her skull, skillfully adorned with flowers / Sways slackly'.

68. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, undated [1905] (*CC*, 47): 'It is [. . .] painful to have to say that any improvement which comes, with understanding nature from the point of view of the painted picture and the development of one's means of expression, is accompanied by age and the weakening of the body'.

69. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, July 25, 1904 (*CC*, 45–46).

70. This is what Gowing says of *The Woman in Blue* (1900–1904), in a curious opposition to the *Young Man with Death's Head* which is a 'personification of melancholia', cf. L. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', *CC*, 201. The 'indifference' of the young man had not, however, escaped Lionello Venturi in his notice (L. Venturi, *Cézanne, son art, son oeuvre* [Paris: Paul Rosenberg, 1936], no. 679).

71. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, April 15, 1904 (*CC,* 29). Cf. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks . . .', Aphorism XXXI: 'Nature exists in depth' (*CC*, 17 [translation modified]). And in Gasquet: 'They had not yet understood that nature exists more in depth than on the surface. Because, listen, one can alter, decorate, caress the surface, but one can't touch depth without touching truth' (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . . ', *CC*, 117).

72. Having acknowledged that 'one hardly perceives a moral message nor any warning in his picture' (Joseph J. Rishel in his notice for *Chefs d'oeuvre de la foundation Barnes. De Cézanne à Matisse* [Paris: Gallimard-Electa-RMN, 1993], 150), the historian adds, prudently, 'whence the difficulties in interpretation'. *Still Life with Skull* and *Young Man with Death's-Head* are in the Barnes Foundation.

73. Cf. L. Marin, 'Les traverses de la Vanité', in A. Tapié (ed.), *Les Vanités de la peinture au XVIIe siècle. Méditations sur la richesse, le dénument et la redemption* (Paris: RMN, 1990), 23–25.

74. Not unreasonably, *Young Man with a Skull* (1896–1898) has often been associated with the death of Cézanne's mother, on October 25, 1897.

75. See Marie-Claude Lambotte's important article, 'La destinée en miroir', in Tapié (ed.), *Les Vanités de la peinture*, 31–39.

76. Two expressions brought together in the letter to Bernard on May 12, 1904 (*CC*, 30) [translation modified].

77. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *CC*, 90 [translation modified].

78. 'Cézannian painting was insistently particular', Shiff writes, absolutely correctly; 'its surface was opaque, its physicality acting to bar or disrupt comprehensive panoramic vision' (Shiff, 'Cézanne's physicality', 154).

79. For, as we read in Balzac's *Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu* (which Cézanne recommends painters read once a year . . .): 'To realize—we must give this term all of its force'.

80. Gowing, *Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations*, 197. The date of 1904 is retained by Gowing as *shorthand*: he is thinking of the letters between Cézanne and Bernard.

81. According to F. Jourdain's telling of it: 'Camoin was right in thinking that we would see the same two paintings on their easels that he had seen a year before. He noticed, however, that the *Portrait of a Gardener* and the *Bathers* look *less* finished [author's emphasis] than they had at the time of his last visit' (Jourdain, 'Cézanne', *CC*, 82).

82. 'Overwork' is the *excessive* version (of the work) of unfinishedness.

83. A remark of Cézanne's from Denis's *Journal* (June 1906); *CC*, 91–54: 93.

84. Jourdain, 'Cézanne', *CC*, 82.

85. This remark occurs in the context of a long argument about Delacroix and his way of bringing forth *sense in colours* (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 142).

86. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, May 26, 1904 (*CC*, 30).

87. The oil bearing the same name mentioned above is in Detroit, the watercolour in Chicago.

88. Geneviève Monnier, 'The Late Watercolors', in the exhibition catalogue *Cézanne: The Late Work: Essays* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977), 113–118: 115.

89. Cf. L. Gowing, *Watercolour and Pencil Drawings By Cézanne* (Bradford: Lund Humphries, 1973).

90. Cézanne, letter to his son, October 15, 1906.

91. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, December 23, 1904; *CC*, 46.

92. Monnier, 'The Late Watercolors', 115.

93. In this sense, we might say that *one motif deserves another*. Cf. Michel Pouille, *La Nature en Peinture. Cézanne & l'art moderne, un point de vue topologique* (Chambéry: Éditions Comp'Act, 1998), 15.

94. According to the apt expression of Denis Coutagne, in *Cézanne en verités* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2006), 304. The reader is referred to the convincing 'critical' dossier presented by the author (300–306).

95. See the learned study by G. Ballas, *Cézanne, Baigneuses et Baigneurs* (Paris: Adam Biro, 2002).

96. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 18 (aphorism XL). Cézanne here paraphrases a phrase of Courbet's.

97. Gottfried Boehm uses this expression (the 'destruction of the motif') in his article 'Un paradis de peinture. Observations sur les Baigneurs de Cézanne', in M. L. Krumrine, ed. *Paul Cézanne. Les Baigneuses*. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bâle (Paris: Albin Michel, 1990), 18.

98. Cézanne, letter to Gasquet, September 26, 1897, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 287.

99. Cf. É. Bernard, 'Puvis de Chavannes', *L'Occident*, December 1903: reprinted in *Propos sur l'art*, op. cit., vol. 1, 56–62. The phrase in full reads: 'To materialists he responded: 'Painting is not an imitation of reality, but *a parallelism* with nature'. All of the other phrases in quotes are taken from this article, where Bernard gives us the portrait of Puvis de Chavannes as an ideal symbolist model ('a Poet'), *idealist and French*, who announces on every point the (openly) anti-Cézannian aesthetic that Bernard will soon develop.

100. Ibid., 59.

101. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks . . .' (aphorism XLI): *CC*, 18. Recall that this 'Cézanne speaks . . .' is preceded by the following warning: 'I publish [. . .] these notes collected by Cézanne's son, without adding one line of my own, not wanting to alter in any way the thoughts, reflections, and opinions of the artist' (*CC*, 16).

102. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne' (1904); *CC*, 38.

103. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', *CC*, 200.

104. To the effect that one can be abstract as a painter without being an 'abstract painter' . . . . From the fauvism of the years 1905–1907 to his large découpé gouaches,

Matisse will be the major exponent of this Cézannian revolution. It is not by chance that he is Maurice Denis's *bête noire* (and the obstacle that must be overcome for Kandinsky, in his spiritual turn).

105. A remark of Manet's, reported by Ambroise Vollard in his *Paul Cézanne*.

106. The expression is Cézanne's, in his letter to Bernard of May 12, 1904 (*CC*, 30): 'The real and prodigious study to undertake is the diversity of the picture of nature' [translation modified].

107. The diagram is in this sense an anti-image.

108. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 110–111.

109. Think here of the startling photo of Cézanne in front of the Barnes Foundation version, a photo taken by Émile Bernard in 1904 in the Lauves studio, which had been conceived because of the unprecedented dimensions of *Grands Baigneuses* (133 × 207 cm for the Barnes Foundation painting; 172.2 × 196.1 cm for the version in the National Gallery in London; 208.5 × 251.5 cm for the version in Philadelphia, which presents the most characteristic ogive vault).

110. The leitmotif of Merleau-Ponty's *Eye and Mind.*

111. Cézanne, cited by Rivière and Schnerb, *CC*, 234.

112. M. Pouille, *La Nature en Peinture*, 17.

113. The phrase is Hubert Damisch's, 'La géométrie de la couleur', in *Cézanne ou la peinture en jeu*. Documentation of a colloquium held in Aix en Provence at the Musée Granet (June 21–25, 1982) (Limoges: Critérion, 1982), 49.

114. This commentary of Cézanne's is given immediately after having made (and remade) his 'gesture', cf. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 110.

115. K. E. Osthaus, 'A Visit to Paul Cézanne', *Das Feuer*, 1920–1921; *CC*, 95–99: 96. The visit took place on April 13, 1906. From aphorism XXXVIII coauthored by Larguier we shall retain the suggestion that 'painting is the art of combining sensations, in other words, of establishing harmony between colors [. . .] and planes' (*CC*, 18).

116. See here again M. Pouille's argument: 'The logical transposition of intervals between tones is only possible, effective, comprehensible, because it expresses the logical transposition of intervals between planes' (Pouille, *La Nature en Peinture*, 21).

117. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 17 (aphorism XX).

118. Among the 'opinions' of Cézanne transcribed by Bernard in his 1904 article: '[The artist] becomes a painter through the very qualities of painting itself' (*CC*, 39).

119. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne' (*CC*, 38–39).

120. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *CC*, 87.

121. Ibid., CC, 88: 'Cézanne's entire working method is determined by this chromatic concept of modelling'. 'Color and modeling were inseparable for Cézanne, and from the point of view of his technique, they are probably the part of his art which he elaborated most profoundly, the area in which his persistent studies truly made him a master' (87).

122. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 16 (aphorism XXV).

123. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cezanne', *CC,* 86.

124. All of the citations from Saussure are given by Simon Bouquet in his remarkable *Introduction à la lecture de Saussure* (Paris: Éditions Payot-Rivages, 1997), 350–355.

125. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907), *CC,* 174.

126. Here we must cite a passage from the 'Letter from Cézanne to Félix Klein' (Maurice Matieu): 'That approach where the method is the expression and defines the point of view, the motif, and where, therefore, the method has primacy over the subject, is the lot that fate assigned me' (in M. Matieu, *La Banalité du massacre*, 27).

127. H. Matisse, 'Interview with Jacques Guenne', 1925; reprinted in Flam, ed. *Matisse on Art*, 78–82: 80.

128. Gasquet, *Cézanne*, 152; 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 125 [translation modified]. Michael Doran indicates in a supplementary note that this is a 'variant' of a remark of Cézanne reported by Bernard in his 1907 'Memories'.

129. Cézanne on Ingres: 'Look at that *Source*. It is pure, tender, sweet, but it's Platonic. It is an image. It doesn't move around in the air' (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 132).

130. Yves-Alain Bois has quite rightly remarked that Cézanne's 'blues' rarely obey the principle of aerial perspective. See 'Cézanne: Words and Deeds', trans. Rosalind Krauss, *October* vol. 84 (Spring, 1998), 31–43: 32: 'In fact, what is often very striking in his work, and not only in the late work', he specifies, 'is the way an object or a colored plane surges forth from the distance like an unexpected arrow to interpellate the spectator by coming toward him [. . .]—but this type of violent denial of aerial perspective is frequent from the 1880s onward'.

131. Cf. R. Delaunay, *Du cubism à l'art abstrait*, ed. P. Francastel (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1957), 232.

132. Cf. Bois, 'Cézanne: Words and Deeds', 37. Whereas the Impressionist painter *who believes only in light* is bound to translate, without remainder, all tactile values into a purely optical world.

133. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 17 (aphorism XXXII) [translation modified].

134. Gasquet, *Cézanne*, 130; 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 110 [translation modified].

135. According to a remark reported in M. Denis's *Journal* on January 26, 1906, and repeated by Gasquet (*CC*, 172), who replaces 'light' with 'sunlight' (a memory of the 'divine painter of the universe' in *Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*?), following the modification introduced by Denis in the December 1906 article.

136. Pouille, *La Nature en Peinture*, 43. The 'iridescent chaos' appears in Gasquet's transcription of a 'Lucrecian' remark of Cézanne's (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 114).

137. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', (*CC*, 17 [aphorism XXXI]): 'There is a distance—a plane—between the painter and his model; it is atmosphere'. We describe here on the plane of expression of content the counterpart of the constructivist gesture analysed above as deformation. It goes without saying that expression and construction are not only 'theoretically' equivalent: *they are really indissociable*.

138. According to the 'opinion' (already cited) of Cézanne reported by Bernard in his 1904 article (*CC*, 38).

139. The whole of this 'opinion' of Cézanne's reads as follows: 'Drawing and colour are not distinct from one another; gradually as one paints, one draws. The more harmonious the colors are, the more precise the drawing will be. Form is at its fullest when color is at its richest. The secret of drawing and modeling lies in the contrasts

and affinities of color' (Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 39). See also aphorisms XXV and XXIX in Larguier's 'Cézanne Speaks' (*CC*, 17).

140. H. Matisse, 'Interview with Jacques Guenne', 80 [translation modified]. On this Construction-Expression problematic in Matisse, see Alliez and Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse*.

141. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 37.

142. Charles Blanc, 'Un Artiste de mon temps, Eugène Delacroix' (1884); reprinted La Rochelle: Rumeur des Ages, 1998), 38.

143. E. Delacroix, undated letter of thanks, cited by Roque, *Art et science de la couleur*, 225 (cf. chapter 2).

144. In the words of Théophile Silvestre, in *Histoire des artistes vivants. Les artistes français. Études d'après nature* (Paris: Blanchard, 1861), 13.

145. T. Duret, *Les Peintres français en 1867* (Paris: Dentu, 1867), 111.

146. É. Faure, *Histoire de l'art. L'art moderne*, vol. 2 (Paris: Denoël, 1987), 170.

147. In an unpublished manuscript dated May 28, 1936, published by R. Rapetti as an annex to his article cited above (48).

148. According to the notice of Isabelle Cahn in the catalogue *Cézanne* (1995), 390 [cat. 162]. For his part, Richard Shiff observes that 'there is no obvious description for what one sees [. . .] because the picture diverges from a normative view of the recognizable objects within it' (Shiff, 'Cézanne's physicality', 157).

149. Cahn, Ibid.

150. Ibid.

151. An expression of Henri Maldiney's (based on Delaunay's treatment of 'simultaneous depth'), which we *détourne* into a constructivist sense foreign to its author. H. Maldiney, *Ouvrir le rien, l'art nu* (Fougères: Encre Marine, 2000), 203.

152. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me. . .', *CC*, 110. Note that (in connection with the preceding note) we take 'spirit [*l'élan*]' to mean his gesture and not—as Gasquet intends—a 'faith'.

153. R. Shiff, 'Cézanne's physicality', 155.

154. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . . ', *CC*, 129.

155. Denis Coutagne writes: 'Cézanne understood Baudelaire so well that he had no need to follow the lead of the poet's urbane ways', cf. Coutagne, *Cézanne en vérités*, 205.

156. One might think here of the rapprochement between Cézanne and Bergson operated by Lionello Venturi. Cézanne, he writes, 'identifies space with a visual succession of images which, in their repercussion in consciousness, yield that identity of time and space which Bergson—in almost the same years—called real duration [. . .] so as to give to objects—seen from various angles at the same time—a vital intensity never attained before him'. Cf. L. Venturi, 'Cézanne', in *Enciclopedia universale dell'arte*, vol. 3, 1958; reprinted in S. Orienti, G. Picon, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Cézanne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), 12. See also G.H. Hamilton, 'Cézanne, Bergson and the Image of Time', in *College Art Journal*, XVI,1 (1956), 2–12.

157. Pouille, *La Nature en Peinture*, 72–73 (emphasis added). However, it is difficult to countenance the qualification, in the same sense, of the idea of a Cézannian retreat towards the 'originary' as a 'theoretical point of view', as proposed by

H. Maldiney in reaction to the 'Baudelarian' historical (cf. Maldiney, *Ouvrir le rien*, 163).

158. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 152, 115.

159. Maldiney, *Ouvrir le rien*, 210.

160. G. Picon, 'Le motif de Cézanne', in Orienti, Picon (eds), *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Cézanne*, 7. Thus, he continues, 'more numerous than Monet's millstones, [Cézanne's] mountains are neither a momentaneous instant, nor the contingent unity of the realist object'.

161. Mary Tompkins Lewis, 'Les premiers nus de Cézanne: du désordre et de l'harmonie dans le paysage', in *Cézanne aujourd'hui*, 47.

162. According to the Deleuzian version of a formula without which there could not be, *in modernity*, any theoretical practice of time, cf. G. Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Robert Galeta and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Continuum, 2005), 16.

163. Picon, 'Le motif de Cézanne'.

164. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne' (1904), *CC*, 36.

165. Paul Smith, 'Cézanne's Late Landscapes, or the Prospect of Death', catalogue *Cézanne in Provence*, 68.

166. G. Rivière, 'L'Exposition des impressionistes', *L'Impressionniste, journal d'art*, April 14, 1877. Cézanne had written to Pissarro, in a letter from l'Estaque on July 2, 1876: 'The sun is so fierce that objects seem to be silhouetted, not only in black or white, but in blue, red, brown, violet. I may be wrong, but this seem the very opposite of modelling', *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 158.

167. In Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907), *CC*, 61. Ambroise Vollard confirms, 'Very few people had seen Cézanne paint. He could barely stand to be watched while he was at his easel' (Vollard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 10).

168. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *CC*, 89.

169. Ibid. We should cite, as a reminder, this argument of Théodore Duret's:

> Through this system of painting directly in front of the scene, Claude Monet was very naturally compelled to take account of effects neglected by his forerunners. The fugitive impressions [. . .] lost in the transformation from sketch to studio painting become, on the contrary, graspable for the artist who, painting in *plein air*, can rapidly fix the most ephemeral and most delicate effect, at the very moment when they come about before him. Thus Monet could render all the plays of light and the most subtle reflections of the ambient air; he reproduced the ardour of sunsets and those varied tones that the dawn imparts to the mist that rises from the waters and covers the countryside; he painted, in all their rawness, the effects of the full light falling sheerly onto objects and abolishing shadow; he knew how to traverse the whole spectrum of grey tones, in moments that are overcast, rainy, or lost in fog. In a word, his brush fixed these thousand transient impressions that the mobility of the sky and the changes in the atmosphere communicate to the eye of the viewer. Thus the 'impressionist' epithet was first created, and quite rightly, in order to apply it to him. (T. Duret, 'Claude Monet', Preface to the catalogue *Le Peintre Claude Monet* [Paris: G. Charpentier, 1880; reprinted in T. Duret, *Critique d'avant-garde* (Paris: énsb-a, 1998), 65])

170. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC,* 16 (aphorisms XIII and XII) [translation modified].

171. Cf. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907); *CC*, 177. 'The entire canvas is a tapestry where each color *plays* separately and yet blends its resonance into the whole. The characteristic feature of Cézanne's paintings comes from this juxtaposition, this mosaic of separate colors that lightly flow together'.

172. According to the principle of division of Gasquet's book. The 'motif' is thus the site of the *consultation of nature* (Cézanne speaks of 'consulting nature' in a letter to Bernard on October 23, 1905: *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 355).

173. Vollard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 10 [translation modified]. The sessions took place at Cézanne's studio during Autumn 1899.

174. Cf. D. H. Lawrence, *The Paintings of D.H. Lawrence* (Oxford: Mandrake Press, 1929, no pagination): 'The impressionists brought the world at length, after centuries of effort, into the delicious oneness of light. At last, at last! Hail, Holy Light! The great natural One, the universal, the universaliser! We are not divided, all one body we—one in Light, lovely light!' This means that 'their escape was into *le grand néant*, the great nowhere'.

175. Vollard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 9 [translation modified]. See again Maurice Denis's *Journal*, dated October 21, 1899: 'Vollard has posed every morning at Cézanne's place for an infinite time. [. . .] If it is sunny, he complains and works little: he needs a *grey day*' (M. Denis, *Journal*, 157). This obviously does not prevent Cézanne from 'work[ing] at it [his portrait of Gasquet] after I had left', cf. Gasquet, *Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne*, 113.

176. [*Transerelles*—A word coined by Max Dorra (a modification of *passerelle*—bridge or gateway—by way of the concept of the *transversal*) to describe the way in which the associative chains of dream may open a passage to the outside of the closed confines of rational philosophy.—Translator's note] Cf. Max Dorra, *Le masque et le rêve* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994), second part.

177. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, April 15, 1904; *CC*, 29.

178. Of this we can say—borrowing again from Lawrence Gowing—that they are conductors for 'the trembling overlapping of other possible visions perceived by the furious gaze that scrutinizes the space beyond' (Gowing, *Watercolour and Pencil Drawings*).

179. Denis, *Journal*. The beginning of the passage reads: 'When [Vollard] moved, Cézanne complained that he had made him lose his *line of concentration*. He also spoke of his lack of *optical qualities*, etc'. We take the italics to indicate a quotation from Cézanne.

180. Cf. Lawrence, *Paintings* (np). Lawrence here takes aim at Clive Bell's theory of art as *signifying form* (Bell is the author of *Since Cézanne* [London, 1922]), which radicalises Maurice Denis's definition in a 'formalist' direction. Denis is also the great inspiration behind the 'contemplative and disinterested' aesthetic of Roger Fry (cf. R. Fry, *Cézanne: A Study of his Development* [London: Hogarth Press, 1927]). On account of this, Fry is rudely taken to task by Lawrence.

181. G. Clemenceau, 'La révolution des *Cathédrales*', *La Justice*, May 20, 1895.

182. H. Eon, 'Les *Cathédrales* de Claude Monet', *La Plume*, June 1, 1895.

183. Cézanne, letter to Charles Camoin, December 9, 1904. In this letter, Cézanne advocates himself as 'constructor' *beyond all model* (whether it is a matter of the 'reading of the model' or the influence of a master) (*Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 346–347 [translation modified]).

184. Picon, 'Le motif de Cézanne', 9.

185. Cézanne, letter to his son, August 14, 1906, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 366.

186. M. Merleau-Ponty, 'La pensée fondamentale en art' in *Notes de cours (1959–1961)*, 170 (during a 'cézannian' argument where—inevitably—Gasquet is cited).

187. Cf. M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012). In the late Merleau-Ponty, this is spoken of in terms of the 'prepossession of the visible'.

188. See Klee's note on the grey point (*graupunkt*) in *Das Bildernische Denken* (Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 1956), 3–4.

189. Cézanne, letter to his son, August 26, 1906, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 369 [translation modified]. As we know, Cézanne was impatient with any type of immersion in what announces itself in the late Merleau-Ponty in terms of the 'promiscuity of being'.

190. Cf. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 111. With John Gage, one might wonder whether this conversation with Cézanne, if indeed it took place, was less centred on Kant (a highly unlikely hypothesis) than fuelled by the debate between Helmholtz (and his French respondents) and the 'kantians' on the subject of the nature of perception (cf. Gage, *Colour and Culture*, 210).

191. Cézanne to Denis, as this passage reads in his *Journal*: 'I don't have a doctrine like Bernard, but you have to have theories, sensation and theories'; *CC*, 94.

192. Osthaus, 'A visit to Paul Cézanne' (1920–1921); *CC*, 96 [translation modified].

193. According to Rivière and Schnerb's commentary, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *CC,* 87 [translation modified] (emphasis added).

194. Peirce replaces the notion of phenomenology with that of phaneroscopy, designating with this notion a form of sensibility that precedes the constitution of subject and object, cf. C. S. Peirce, Charles Harsthorne, ed. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, *vols 1 and 2* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965), 141*sq*.

195. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, May 26, 1904; *CC,* 30 (translation modified): 'The painter concretizes his sensations and his perceptions by means of drawing and colour'.

196. Cf. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', *CC*, 208: 'It had become apparent that in the new kind of unity the sky must be landscape-color'. This process is far from being limited to the last *Sainte-Victoire*.

197. In one painting at least Cézanne 'pushes' ('push to the limit', he says) this virtual-real cone all the way into a kind of blinding *explosante fixe*: namely, the extraordinary *Undergrowth* (*Sous-bois*) (around 1894) in the Museum of Los Angeles which concluded the exhibition 'Cézanne et Pissarro (1865–1885)' at the Musée d'Orsay (February 27, 2006—May 28, 2006). An exhibition whose device of setting the two painters' works against one another served to confirm in every viewer the perception of Cézanne's absolute difference from Impressionism—even during his so-called 'impressionist' period (during which Pissarro's borrowings from a Cézanne that one might call 'post-impressionist' *avant la lettre* are sometimes apparent: see *Le Petit Point, Pointoise* [1875]).

198. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 17.

199. Cézanne, cited by Bernard in 'La technique de Paul Cézanne', *L'amour de l'art*, 1920 (cited in *CC*, 227, n.5 to Jules Borély).

200. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, December 23, 1904; *CC*, 46.

201. Cézanne to Émile Zola, November 20, 1878.

202. One thing explaining the other in the opinion of Gasquet, who mixes 'the classical sea' of l'Estaque with the provençal countryside that 'restored his equilibrium', cf. Gasquet, *Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne*, 86.

203. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 148.

204. *Camille Pissarro vu de dos* (date uncertain), crayon on paper.

205. An 'opinion' of Cézanne cited by Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne' (1904); *CC,* 38. The beginning reads: 'Within the painter, there are two things: the eye and the brain; they must serve each other: The artist must work at developing them mutually'. It will be noted that this proposition is placed 'naturally' *between* an appeal to 'read nature' ('*We must learn to read nature*') and the development of its logical sense: '*To read nature is to see it beneath the veil of interpretation, to see it by means of color patches, etc*'. Gasquet's Cézanne, on the contrary, denounces the 'logic of the brain' in the name of the 'colour logic' of the eyes, of that which 'our eyes think' faced with nature, who 'always finds the way to tell us what she means when we respect her' (Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 120).

206. *Couillarde* ['ballsy'—Translator's note] is Cézanne's word, as reported by Ambroise Vollard (30). Reportedly, looking back on his early works, Cézanne remarked 'how *couillarde* the handling was, a coarse word for a specifically sexual virility' (Gowing, *Cézanne: The Early Years 1859–1872* [London: Royal Academy of Arts, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988], 92).

207. A Baudelarian term (coined as he writes on the subject of Delacroix) with Flaubertian echoes (*Salammbó, The Temptation of Saint Anthony*)—which the *couillarde* Cézanne is inspired by and *aspires to*.

208. Cf. J.-A. Castagnary, 'L'Exposition du Boulevard des Capucines: Les Impressionnistes', *Le Siècle*, April 29, 1874. The critic, favourably disposed towards the movement, threatens the Impressionists with 'the example of M. Cézanne' whose 'impressions' are 'uncontrolled and with no possible verification in reality'.

209. According to Cézanne's declaration to Maurice Denis: 'When I begin, I always want to paint with thick paste' (Denis, 'Cézanne', *CC*, 176).

210. The concluding paragraph of Mary Tompkins Lewis's work states *a minima* both the difficulty and the necessity of the confrontation:

> It is difficult to reconcile the works after 1872, those that are recognizably 'by Cézanne', with the paintings that went before. Yet we can appreciate neither Cézanne's problematic youthful creations nor his later achievements if we isolate the early from the mature work [. . .]. To the serene essence of later Cézanne, the questing alembics of this first decade are important—and coherent—precursors.

Mary Tompkins Lewis, *Cézanne's Early Imagery* (Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press, 1989), 207. Recall that in 1891, in the first long text dedicated to Cézanne, Émile Bernard wrote the following:

> The last manner [the period that today is called 'constructivist'] is merely a return to the first manner, but by way of the nascent theories of colour and very personal and

> unexpected insights on style. However, the first works are by no means of less interest than the last.

As if the *last*, whatever it might be, necessarily implies the *first* (*or the hallucination of the first*); which is not logically inconceivable.

211. A moment to which, according to Kurt Badt's hypothesis, we could still date the 'religious conversion' of Cézanne. . . .

212. Written for the catalogue of the exhibition *Cézanne, The Late Work*, first shown in New York, at the Museum of Modern Art (October 7, 1977–January 3, 1978), then in Paris at the Grand Palais (April 20, 1978–January 23, 1978).

213. L. Gowing, in *Cézanne: The Early Years 1859–1872*, 196 [cat. 63.] It is to this exhibition (which had first been shown in London, and which would go on, after Paris, to Washington), that we owe the rediscovery of Cézanne's '*couillarde*' period.

214. Fry, *Cézanne: A Study of his Development*, 10, 30.

215. J.-C. Lebensztejn, 'Les couilles de Cézanne', *Critique* 499 (1988); reprinted under the same title by Éditions Seguier, 1995, 25.

216. Note that, for his part, Cézanne evokes something quite different, 'the vibration of sensations echoing the vibration of sensations reflected from the fine sun of Provence, [of] our old youthful memories of these horizons, of these landscapes, of these unprecedented lines, which left in us such profound impressions' (letter to Henri Gasquet, June 1899). As for the famous 'If only we could see with the eyes of a newborn child!', it should be recalled that this expression is found in a text by Jules Borély (dated 1902 but first published in 1911) where the term 'impression' used by Cézanne to qualify his paintings hardly corresponds to his usual terminology (*CC*, 23, and Michael Doran's présentation of Borély's text, 19). Does one explain the other?

217. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 1, 211–213 [translation modified].

218. Ibid., 210.

219. The analysis of this crisis of perception lies at the heart of Jonathan Crary's *Suspensions of Perception*. In particular, 'The various codes which for several hundred years had territorialized the field of vision are discarded, not to uncover a natural "savage" vision, but to allow the free play of newly constructed *centrifugal* forces within the space of perception' (297).

220. On the 'nihilistic' consequences of Helmholtz's work and how they were averted through a functionalist epistemology (founded on the scientist's 'kantian' adhesion to the objectivity of scientific laws), see Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 319–321.

221. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 349, 359:

> The most important fact is that patients distinguish, for the most part, between their hallucinations and their perceptions. [. . .] Thus, we only succeed in giving an account of the hallucinatory deception by stripping perception of its apodictic certainty and perceptual consciousness of its full self-possession.

Merleau-Ponty inscribes the Husserlian *Urglaube* at the foundation of this argument opposed on every point to the conception developed by Taine. Merleau-Ponty: 'positing the hallucination as true [. . .] is precisely what the patients do not do' (350). Taine: 'We have but to look at cases of mental disease to see the germ develop itself,

and obtain the proportions denied it in the normal state' (Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 1, 221). For a contemporary update on these arguments, cf. L. Allix, *Perception et réalité. Essai sur la nature du visible* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2004) (in particular, chapter 2).

222. According to the observation of Walter Benjamin on Cézanne's works, in the *Journal de Moscou* on December 24, 1926 (cited by R. Shiff, 'Cézanne's physicality', 154).

223. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 340.

224. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, vol. 1 and 2, 141.

225. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 2, 225: 'The image, like the sensation it repeats, is, in its nature, hallucinatory. Thus the hallucination, which seems a monstrosity, is the very fabric of our mental life'.

226. Cf. Ibid., vol. 2, 138–139: 'The truth is [. . .] that all the colours with which the surrounding world seems to us to be painted are in us and are sensations of our optical centres, [. . .] of the optical centers of the brain'.

227. M. Denis, 'Définition du néo-traditionnisme' (1890), reprinted in *Théories* (Paris, 1912); reprinted in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, ed. J.-P. Bouillon (Paris: Hermann, 1993), 6–7. On the genesis of the symbolist idea, see 'Notes sur la peinture religieuse' (1892):

> Certainly not, it was not an idealist theory. The immediate result of positivist philosophies, then in vogue, and of the methods of induction that we held in such great esteem, it was indeed an attempt at the most strictly scientific art. Those who inaugurated it were landscapists, still life painters, not at all 'painters of the soul'. Cézanne's influence on Gauguin, Bernard, etc. (Ibid., 36)

228. Cf. Shiff, *Cézanne and the end of Impressionism*, and 'Cézanne's physicality'.

229. Thus Meyer Schapiro argues, in a lecture given at the Museum of Modern Art in New York on October 11, 1977, that 'there is in the French tradition of Cézanne a body of thinking that has a decidedly positivist character; it is often accused of materialism, although certain of these philosophers deny it' (M. Schapiro, 'Cézanne and the Philosophers', reprinted in M. Schapiro, *Worldview in Painting—Art and Society* [New York: George Braziller, 1999], 97). Attentive to his influence on Cézanne, Schapiro recalls that Condillac was a key author taught in the lycées during the years 1850–1860.

230. See, among other analyses, Gage, *Colour and Culture*, 209–211.

231. See P. Smith, *Interpreting Cézanne* (London: Tate Publishing, 1996), 48–50, for a (rather expeditious) analysis of the relation between Cézanne and Taine on the question of sensations, in an argument that tends towards the innocence of vision.

232. See the Cézanne chapter in *Suspensions of Perception*, 281–359: '1900: Reinventing Synthesis'.

233. J.-C. Lebensztejn, 'Persistance de la mémoire', *Critique* 555–556 (1993): reprinted in *Les couilles de Cézanne*.

234. R. Shiff, 'La touch de Cézanne: entre vision impressioniste et vision symboliste', in *Cézanne aujourd'hui*, 119. But Richard Shiff's working hypothesis in his studies is founded on Cézanne's 'impressionist sensation': 'the strong possibility that Cézanne discovered nothing beyond impressionism, but instead used impressionist

technique to *represent* the "original" vision impressionism had been designed to find' (Shiff, *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism*, 217). Designed to find it, if we understand rightly, by way of the inscription of its 'impressions' in the domain of the physiology of perception. . . .

235. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 60.

236. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 2, 51.

237. Cf. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 131.

238. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, October 23, 1905; *CC*, 48.

239. H. von Helmholtz, 'Über die Natur der menschlichen Sinnesempfindungen [On the Nature of Man's Sensible Impressions]' (1852), in *Königsberger Naturwissenschaftliche Unterhaltungen*, 3, 1854, 1–20.

240. One might think of the anecdote recounted by Bernard (the scene took place in 1904):

> One evening I spoke to him of *Le Chef d'oeuvre inconnu* and of Frenhofer, the hero of Balzac's tragedy. He got up from the table, stood before me and, striking his chest with his index finger, he admitted wordlessly by this repeated gesture that he was the very character in the novel. He was so moved by this feeling that tears filled his eyes. [. . .] Oh, there was a great distance between this Frenhofer, who was blocked by his very genius, and Zola's Claude, born without talent, whom Zola had unfortunately seen in Cézanne himself.

Cf. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 65. The 1904 article already bore as an epigraph a citation from *Le Chef d'oeuvre inconnu.*

241. J.-C. Lebesztejn, 'Persistance de la mémoire', 51.

242. Ernst Mach, *The Analysis of Sensations and the relation of the physical to the psychical*, trans. C. M. Williams (Chicago and London: Open Court, 1914), 315 [translation modified]. In his text 'On the nature of sensible impressions in man', Helmholtz observes that 'if one projects a spectrum in a daguerreotype onto a photosensitive plate, [. . .] most of the visible spectrum presents itself with the same Fraunhofer lines'.

243. Lebensztejn, 'Persistance de la mémoire', 75. Or else one must invoke a 'phenomenology of the unconscious' in the sense in which Hartmann uses this expression in his *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, basing himself on Helmholtzian physiological psychology. . . .

244. Cf. E. Husserl, *Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 12 (*Husserliana*, Bd. XVI).

245. See again Schapiro's commentary (*Worldview in Painting*, 99), which emphasises the omnipresence of these Leibnizian terms in Taine's work. From this the art historian concludes that it 'shows that Cézanne was also aware of the discussions in the early nineteenth century as to the question of the activity or passivity of the mind with respect to sensations'.

246. 'The "effect" makes the painting, it unifies and concentrates it: and to produce this, a dominant patch is necessary' (reported by Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne'; *CC,* 39).

247. Taine, *On Intelligence*, vol. 2, 70.

248. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 289.

249. Shiff, 'Cézanne's Physicality', 158.

250. J. Arrouye, 'La Montagne Sainte-Victoire toujours recommencée', catalogue of the exhibition *Cézanne en Provence* (Paris, RMN, 2006), 312 [essay not included in English version of the catalogue]. We reintroduce this scarcely contestable 'couillard' effect which struck us when looking at the painting, whereas the author would draw the conclusion of a 'spiritual dimension' conferred by the late Cézanne on 'the very matter of painting'.

251. Lebensztejn, 'Persistance de la mémoire', 59.

252. J. Wechsler, 'Cézanne: sensation/perception', in *Cézanne aujourd'hui*, 111. It follows that these paintings 'recall the sensations of the first paintings of violent subjects, combined with his observations of the landscape'. But the unfinishedness of these canvases, according to the critic, indicates definitively that 'the set of sensations seems for Cézanne almost irreconcilable. Perception is a process distinct from sensation, even if he combines the two together here'.

253. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 194.

254. M. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907), in *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology,* 57–63.

255. In his response to the 'Enquête sur les tendances actuelles des arts plastiques', published by C. Morice in the *Mercure de France*, September 1905.

256. Larguier, 'Cézanne Speaks', *CC*, 17: 'The form and contour of objects are created by oppositions and contrasts which result from their particular hues'.

257. Ibid., 16 [translation modified].

258. M. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907); *CC,* 167–168.

259. This formula, which opens the manifesto-article 'Définition du néo-traditionnisme' (1890), will be reprised innumerable times by Denis (for the explicit reference to Cézanne, see 'À propos de l'exposition de Charles Guérin' [1905], reprinted in *Théories*, 139–141), before being compared to Taine's definition in his *Philosophie de l'art*: 'Coloured surface in which diverse tones and diverse degrees of light are distributed with a certain choice: this is its intimate being. That the tones and degrees of light form figures, fabrics, architectures, is for them an ulterior property'; cited by Denis in *Charmes et leçons d'Italie* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1935), 177. But in the meantime Denis came back to his formula in the name of an 'edifying' theory of painting which placed 'at the summit of art, history painting, of which religious painting [. . .] is, so to speak, the point of perfection' ('Épilogue de la question sur le sujet' [1924], republished in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 200–201). The rejection of Matisse because of his 'excess of theories', synonymous for Denis with his immersion in the domain of 'abstraction', is the key moment of this development, contemporary with the adhesion to Action Française, marking his definitive passage from symbolism to classicism. The 'pure act of painting' is thus threatened by the production of 'noumena of painting', the sign of a 'nihilism of art' (cf. 'De Gauguin, de Whistler et de l'excès des théories' [1905]).

260. G. Boehme, 'Un paradis de peinture. Observations sur les Baigneurs de Cézanne', in Krumrine (ed.), *Paul Cézanne. Les Baigneuses*, 23—as an explanation for Cézanne's 'copernican discovery'.

261. As has been definitively demonstrated by Mary Louise Krumrine in her magisterial study on *Les Baigneuses*.

262. Lawrence, *Paintings* (np).

263. On Cézanne's identification, in these years, with Tannhäuser, see Lewis, *Cézanne's Early Imagery*, 186–192.

264. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', *CC*, 183.

265. 'I would like to paint entirely in impasto, like Courbet', according to a remark reported by Rivière and Schnerb (*CC*, 90 [translation modified]). Recall that he had begun by denouncing, in Courbet, the system at work beneath the fake rusticity. . . . Théophile Gautier erupts, faced with *The Charity of a Beggar at Ormans*: 'Nothing is more false, more garish, more repulsive in aspect than this pretentiously bad painting' (*Le Moniteur universel*, May 11, 1868). Courbet, Cézanne, Matisse. . ..

266. Gowing, in his commentary on *La rue des Saules à Montmartre* (around 1867), catalogue *Cézanne: The Early Years*, 128 [cat. 29].

267. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', *CC*, 183. And, further on, 'It was in 1877 that color differentiation took its place as a chief medium of definition in Cézanne's art, and no picture has a more crucial place in his development [than *L'Étang des soeurs*]'.

268. On this point, see Damisch's important remarks in the last pages of *Théorie du nuage* (Paris: Seuil, 1972): 'La toile et l'habit'; and also Clay's article, 'Gauguin, Nietzsche, Aurier. Notes sur le renversement matériel du symbolisme', in the catalogue of the exhibition *L'Éclatement de l'impressionisme* (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1982; reprinted in *L'inactuel* 5 [1996]).

269. Cf. Lawrence, *Paintings* (np): 'Cézanne's early history as a painter is a history of the fight with his own cliché. [. . .] Only his colour he knew was not a cliché'.

270. Denis, *Théories*, 10. If the notion of 'deformation' is therefore at the heart of Denis's symbolism, it will be noted that his very classical limitation—the announcement of its overcoming by imitation—straight away renders it incompatible with the disproportion of Cézannian bodies. Thus, 'Applied to the human body, for example, the two deformations, subjective and objective, to which I reduce the notion of art, are limited by the sentiment of the probable and the possible' ('De Gauguin et de Van Gogh au classicism' [1909]; reprinted in *Le Ciel et l'Arcadie*, 171). Having gone through all of this, it remains only to return, 'through Cézanne, to the classical masters' (*Nouvelles Théories*, 132).

271. G.-A. Aurier, on Henry de Groux's *Meurtre*; cf. 'Henry de Groux', *Mercure de France*, October 1891; reprinted in G.-A. Aurier, *Le Symbolisme en peinture* (Caen: L'Échoppe, 1991), 76. One thinks here of that *Murder* painted by Cézanne 'around 1867–1686' to which Bernard's commentary applies perfectly: 'what characterizes this oeuvre [Cézanne's] is first of all its apparent scorn for what the public generally call "Idea"' (É. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *Le Coeur*, 1894).

272. Bernard again, in the 1891 article: 'The clear epoch was his most unhappy; he needed the constraints from elsewhere'. Cézanne 'hanging' on the counsel of his friend Pissarro, Cézanne hanging *tout court*?

273. According to the expression proposed by M. Goldberg, 'Les peintres du salon d'Automne, suite', *La Plume*, XVI: 352 (December 15, 1903).

274. Malevich argues that 'instead of clearly distinguished trees, we see solid masses of verdure amongst which one can feel neither aerial perspective nor the type of the trees; the canvas is completely covered with planes of colour tones which cover and recover each other and thus create a heavy mass of painting'; Malevich,

'An Analysis of New Figurative Art (Paul Cézanne)', trans. Xenia Glowacki-Prus and Arnold McMillin, in Troels Andersen (ed.), *Essays on Art 1915–1933*, vol. 2, 19–30: 25.

275. 'Of a solid impasto, treated by lightly struck touches from right to left, the works of the last manner [those from the end of the 80s] affirm the research into a new, strange, unknown art. Weighted light slides mysteriously in the transparently solid penumbrae; an architectural gravity presides over the ordering of the lines, the impasto sometimes inclining toward sculpture'.

276. Goldberg, 'Les peintres du salon d'Automne, suite'.

277. Cf. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 114.

278. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 74. For it is not enough to observe that Cézanne does not make use of this notion of 'colouring sensation' until the turn of the 1900s. One must try to understand what leads him to it.

279. Cézanne, letter to Bernard, December 23, 1904; *CC*, 46.

280. Malevich, 'An Analysis of New and Imitative Art (Paul Cezanne)', 28 [translation modified].

281. Roger Marx evokes the 'life of matter' in an article on the Cézanne exhibition at the 1904 salon d'Automne (in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, December 1904).

282. Denis, 'Cézanne' (1907), *CC*, 170. Surprisingly, Françoise Cachin, in the catalogue of the Cézanne exhibition at the Grand Palais (1995–1996), presents this article as 'the finest, and perhaps the most correct evaluation to this day' (43).

283. C. Greenberg, 'Cézanne', in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (New York: Beacon Press, 1989), 50–58: 52.

284. Gowing, 'The Logic of Organized Sensations', CC, 209.

285. As D. H. Lawrence writes of Cézanne's best late landscapes—although he conceives 'in *repudiative* [not *innovative*] fashion' the empty spaces on these canvases. The risk being that the cliché returns with the viewer's *imagination*. . . .

286. Cf. L. Brion-Guerry, 'The Elusive Goal', Catalogue *Cézanne. The Late Work*, 73–82: 80 [translation modified].

287. According to the commentary of H. Loyrette, in the catalogue *Cézanne* of the retrospective at the Grand Palais, 122.

288. Bois, 'Cézanne: Words and Deeds', 39.

289. Cf. Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne's Doubt', *Sense and Non-Sense*, 18: 'The painter retakes and converts into visible objects what would, without him, remain walled up in the separate life of each consciousness; the vibration of appearances which is the cradle of things'.

290. E. Husserl, *Phantasie, Bildwusssein. Erinnerung, 1909–1925, Husserliana* Band XXIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1908), 144. Cited by F. Dastur, 'Husserl et la neutralité de l'art', *La Part de l'oeil* 7 (1991), 21. We must also indicate philosopher Forrest Williams's Husserlian analysis of Cézanne in his article 'Cézanne and French Phenomenology', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* XII:4 (1954), 481–492.

291. Picon, 'Le motif de Cézanne', 8.

292. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne' (1907); *CC,* 60.

293. Letter to Bernard, April 15, 1904; *CC,* 29.

294. See the letter to Bernard of October 23, 1905; *CC*, 48 [translation modified].

295. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne'; *CC*, 60 [translation modified].
296. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne'; *CC,* 36.
297. Ibid.
298. L. Brion-Guerry, *Cézanne et l'expression de l'espace* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1966), 84.
299. Rivière and Schnerb, 'The Studio of Cézanne', *CC*, 88. On the same page, we find Cézanne's 'advice': 'You must think, reflect on it. [. . .] The eye alone can't do it'.
300. Rilke*, Letters on Cézanne*, 75.
301. Ibid., 80.
302. Ibid., 82.
303. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 114.
304. The formula of Madame de Staël cited by Bernard is accompanied by a certain reservation, cf. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 37.
305. Cézanne's admiration for Delacroix, whose distaste for ideal Beauty and subjective Beauty alike we have analysed, recurs throughout all of his remarks (see in particular *CC*, 93, 141–142).
306. Bernard, 'Memories of Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 41.
307. Ibid*.*, 69.
308. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 113. The use of a recording device similar to the sensitive plate as a description of the brain finds its source in a letter from Cézanne to Gasquet, July 21, 1896, *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 276.
309. H. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991). The first edition of *Matter and Memory* was published in 1896.
310. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 111.
311. Bois, 'Cézanne: Words and Deeds', 40.
312. Cézanne to Maurice Denis: 'I want to use color to make black and white', *CC*, 93.
313. Cf. Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *CC*, 33, where Bernard speaks of those young painters who '[consult] these works religiously like pages of a book on nature and contemporary aesthetics'. A little further on, the word 'revelation' appears under Bernard's pen.
314. Following the passage cited above, on photography, of Bernard's 'Memories of Paul Cézanne'.
315. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 38–39 [translation modified].
316. Ibid*.*, 201 (the words in italics are emphasised by Bergson).
317. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 110.
318. Ibid*.*, 119 [translation modified]. 'The great Buddhist machine, nirvana, consolation without passions, without anecdotes, colours!'
319. On the same page of Gasquet's account.
320. This is the famous formula in Cézanne's letter to Bernard, dated April 15, 1904: 'To treat nature in terms of the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone'. Now, here also, since this projective geometry of the concentric eye serves to *render* a neighbouring 'section of nature', 'if you prefer', it could be called a section of 'the spectacle that *Pater Omnipotens Aeterne Deus* spreads before our eyes'. He continues,

'Lines perpendicular to this horizon give depth'. The principle of equivalence is thus materially *and* linguistically posited by Cézanne in a formulation that, in truth, is scarcely at all 'mystical'. *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 334 [translation modified].

321. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 122. It is here that the following oft-cited phrase comes in: 'But into the flight of everything in Monet's paintings, must be brought a solidity, a skeleton'—which is but a disguised citation 'of' Maurice Denis. In a letter to Pissarro dated July 2, 1876, Cézanne wrote, 'I say Monet, meaning Impressionists', *Letters of Paul Cézanne*, 158 [translation modified].

322. Gasquet, 'What He Told Me . . .', *CC*, 113 [translation]. '*The flesh is too tender*' is a key expression of Deleuze and Guattari—see *What is Philosophy?* trans. Graham Burchill and Hugh Tomlinson (London and New York: Verso, 1994), 179.

List of Works Studied

DELACROIX

The Barque of Dante or *Dante and Virgil in Hell* (*La Barque de Dante*), 1822, Paris, Louvre.
Massacres of Chios (*Scènes des Massacres de Scio*), 1824, Paris, Louvre.
Still Life with Lobsters (*Nature morte aux homards*), 1827, Paris, Louvre.
The Death of Sardanapalus (*La Mort de Sardanapale*), 1827–1828, Paris, Louvre.
Women of Algiers in their Apartment (*Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement*), 1834, Paris, Louvre.
Fanatics of Tangiers (*Convulsionnaires de Tanger*), 1838, Minneapolis Institute of Art.
Lion Hunt (Sketch) (*Chasse aux lions* [*esquisse*]), 1854, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Young Woman Attacked by a Tiger (*Jeune Femme emportée par un tigre*), 1856, Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie.
Lion Ready to Pounce (*Lionne prête à s'élancer*), 1863, Paris, Louvre.
Study of Two Tigers (*Étude de deux tigres*), 1830, Paris, Louvre.
The Abduction of Rebecca (*Rébecca enlevée par le templier Boisguilbert*), 1846, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

MANET

Bunch of Asparagus (*Une botte d'asperges*), 1880, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz Museum.
Asparagus (*L'asperge*), 1880, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé (*Portrait de Stéphane Mallarmé*), 1876, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Two Roses (*Deux roses*), 1882, New York, Museum of Modern Art.

Self-Portrait with Palette (*Autoportrait à la palette*), 1879, New York, private collection.
The Execution of Emperor Maximilian (*L'exécution de l'Empereur Maximilien*), 1867, Mannheim, Städtische Kunsthalle.
The Old Musician (*Le vieux musician*), 1862, Washington, National Gallery of Art.
The Balcony (*Le Balcon*), 1877, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Woman with Fan (Berthe Morisot) La femme à l'éventail (*Berthe Morisot*), 1872, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Olympia, 1863, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Le déjeuner sur l'herbe, 1863, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Luncheon in the Studio (*Le déjeuner dans l'atelier*), 1868, Moscow, Pushkin Museum.
A Bar at the Folies-Bergère (*Un bar aux Folies-Bergère*), 1881–1882, London, Courtauld Institute.
Before the Mirror (*Devant la glace*), 1876–1877, New York, Guggenheim.
Peonies, with Pruning Shears (*Branche de pivoines blanches et secateurs*), 1864, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Portrait of Jeanne Duval (*Le Portrait de Jeanne Duval*), 1862, Budapest, Szépmüvészeti Muzeum.
Reading (*La lecture*), 1865–1873?, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Autumn: Portrait of Méry Laurent (*L'Automne: Portrait de Méry Laurent*), 1881, Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts.
The Races at Longchamp (*Courses à Longchamp*), v. 1867, Chicago, Art Institute.

SEURAT

The Lamp (*La Lampe*), 1882–1883, conté crayon, private collection.
Under the Bridge (*Homme assis sur un banc* or *Le clochard*), conté crayon, c.1883, Budapest, Szépmüvészeti Muzeum.
Housepainter (*Le badigeonneur*), c.1883, conté crayon, Paris, Louvre.
Factories by Moonlight (*Usines sous la lune*), c.1883, conté crayon, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Barbizon (*Champs à Barbizon*), 1882, New York, Raskin Collection.
Fishermen (*Pêcheurs à la ligne*), 1883, Troyes, Musée d'Art moderne.
Stonebreakers with Wheelbarrow (*Casseurs de pierre à la brouette*), 1883, Washington, Phillips Collection.
Bather at Asnières (*Une Baignade, Asnières*), 1883–1884, London, National Gallery.
Sunday on la Grande Jatte (*Un dimanche après midi à la Grande Jatte*), 1884–1886, Chicago, Art Institute.
Child in White (*L'enfant blanc / Fillette en blanc*), 1884, conté crayon, New York, Guggenheim.
Three Women (*Trois femmes*), 1884, conté crayon, Northampton, MA, Smith College Museum of Art.
Le Bec du Hoc, 1885, London, Tate Gallery.
Poseuses, 1886–1888, Merion, PA, Barnes Foundation.

Poseuses (small version), 1888, Munich, Alte Pinakothek.
Circus Parade (*Parade de cirque*), 1888, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Cranes at Port-en-Bessin (*Port-en-Bessin, les grues et la percée*), 1888, Washington, National Gallery of Art.
View of Le Crotoy from Upstream (*Le Crotoy, amont*), 1889, Detroit, Institute of Arts.
The Channel of Gravelines, Grand Fort Philippe (*Le Chenal de Gravelines: Grand Fort Philippe*), 1890, London, Courtauld Institute.
The Channel of Gravelines, Evening (*Le Chenal de Gravelines : un soir*), 1890, New York, Museum of Modern Art.
A Corner of the Harbour of Honfleur (*Coin d'un bassin, Honfleur*), 1886, Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller.
Chahut, 1889–1890, Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller.
Circus (*Cirque*), 1890, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

GAUGUIN

Still Life with Profile of Laval (*Nature morte au Profil de Laval*), 1886, Josefowitz Collection.
The Artist with the Yellow Christ (*L'autoportrait au Christ jaune*), 1889–1890, St Germain en Laye, private collection.
Jug in the Form of a Head, Self-Portrait (*Pot en forme de tête, autoportrait*), 1889, Stoneware, Copenhagen, Kunstindustrimuseet.
The Vision after the Sermon (*La vision du sermon*), 1888, Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland.
Dream (*Te rerioa*) (*Rêve [Te rerioa]*), 1897, London, Courtauld Institute.
Self-portrait Near Golgotha (*Autoportrait près du Golgotha*), 1896, Sao Paulo, Museo de Arte.
Ia orana Maria (*Hail Mary*) (*Ia orana Maria [Je vous salue Marie]*), 1891–1892, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Parau na te varua ino (Words of the Devil) (*Parau na te varua ino [Paroles du diable]*), 1892, Washington, National Gallery of Art.
Fatata te miti (By the Sea) (*Fatata te miti [Près de la mer]*), 1892, Washington, National Gallery of Art.
Pape Moe (*Mysterious Water*) (*Pape Moe [Eau mystérieuse]*), 1893, private collection.
Where did we come from? Who are we? Where are we going? (*D'où venons-nous? Que sommes-nous ? Où allons-nous?*), 1897–1898, Boston, Museum of Fine Art.
Portrait of Meyer de Haan (*Portrait de Meyer de Haan*), 1889, New York, private collection.
Portrait of Vaïté Goupil (*Portrait de Vaïté Goupil*), 1896, Copenhagen, Ordruppgaard Collection.
Manao Tupapau (The Spirit of the Dead Watches) (*Manao Tupapau [L'Esprit des morts veille]*), 1892, Buffalo, NY, Albright-Knox Art Gallery.
Self-Portrait with Hat (*Autoportrait au chapeau*), 1893–1894, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

Manao Tupapau, 1894, Lithograph, Chicago, Art Institute.
Manao Tupapau (17 × 12 cm), 1894, woodcut in black on Japanese paper, Chicago, Art Institute.
Manao Tupapau (22.8 × 52 cm), 1894, woodcut in black on Japanese paper, with watercolour. Chicago, Art Institute.
Manao Tupapau (20.3 × 35.6 cm), 1894, woodcut in tan and black on vellum. Chicago, Art Institute.
Sunflowers in an Armchair (*Fleurs de tournesol dans un fauteuil*), 1901, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.
Horsemen (*Cavaliers*), 1901, Moscow, Pushkin Museum.
Horseman (*Cavalier*), 1901, monotype in black and grey on vellum, applied to a secondary support, Paris, Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens.
Seascape with Cow (*Marine avec vache au-dessus du gouffre*), 1888, Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs.
Human Misery (*Vendanges à Arles* or *Les Misères humaines*), 1888, Copenhagen, Ordruppgaard Collection.
The Beautiful Angel (*La belle Angèle*), 1889, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Portrait of Gauguin by Himself (*Portrait de Gauguin par lui-même*), 1889, Washington, National Gallery.
Still Life with Three Puppies (*Nature morte aux trois petits chiens*), 1888, New York, Museum of Modern Art.
Te faaturuma, 1891, Worcester MA, Worcester Art Museum.
Vahine no te tiare (Woman with Flower) (*Vahine no te tiare [La femme à la fleur]*), 1891, Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.
Le Vallon, 1891–1892, Basel, private collection.
Matamoe (Landscape with Peacocks) (*Matamoe [Le paysage aux paons]*), 1891–1892, Moscow, Pushkin Museum.
Man with an Axe (*L'Homme à la hache*), 1891, Basel, Galerie Beyeler.
Mahana no Atua (The Day of God) (*Mahana no Atua [Le jour de Dieu]*), 1894, Chicago, Art Institute.
Te nave nave fenua, 1892, Kurashiki, Oharo Museum of Art.
Exotic Eve (*Eve exotique*), 1890, Paris, private collection.
Nave nave fenua, 1894, Woodcut in black on vellum, Paris, Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens.
Oviri, 1894, stoneware, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.
Te nave nave fenua, c.1892, gouache on vellum. Grenoble, Musée de Grenoble.

CÉZANNE

Still Life with Skull (*Nature morte au crane*), 1895–1900, Merion, PA, Barnes Foundation.
Three Skulls (*Trois cranes*), 1898–1900, Detroit, Institute of Arts.
Pyramid of Skulls (*Pyramide de cranes*), 1898–1900, Switzerland, private collection.

Three Skulls on an Oriental Carpet (*Trois crânes sur un tapis d'orient*), 1898–1905, Soleure, Kunstmuseum.

Skull with Candlestick (*Crâne et chandelier*), 1866, Switzerland, private collection.

Young Man with Death's Head (*Jeune homme à la tête de mort*), 1896–1898, Merion, PA, Barnes Foundation.

Three Skulls (*Trois cranes*), 1902–1906, graphite and watercolour on white paper, Chicago, Art Institute.

Skull on a Curtain (*Crâne sur une draperie*), 1902–1906, graphite and watercolour on white paper. Private collection.

Three Bathers (*Trois Baigneuses*), 1874–1875, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

Still Life with Milk Jug and Fruit (*Nature morte: fruits, pichet, compotier*), 1892–1894, Merion, PA, Barnes Foundation.

Forest with Boulders (*Rochers dans le bois*), c.1893, Zurich, Kunsthaus.

A Modern Olympia (*Une moderne Olympia*), 1873–1875, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

Still Life with Plaster Cupid (*Nature morte avec l'amour en plâtre*), c.1895, London, Courtauld Institute.

Mont Saint-Victoire Seen from the Bibemus Quarry (*La Montagne Sainte-Victoire vue de Bibémus*), c.1897, Baltimore, Museum of Art.

Portrait of Ambroise Vollard (*Portrait d'Ambroise Vollard*), 1899, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

Great Pine and Red Earth (*Grand pin et Terres rouges*), 1890–1895, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.

Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from Les Lauves (*La montagne Sainte-Victoire vue des Lauves*) 1904–1906, Basel, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung.

Portrait of the Artist (*Portrait de l'artiste*), c.1872, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

Grandes baigneuses, 1906, London, National Gallery.

The Orgy (*Le festin* or *L'orgie*), c.1870, private collection.

Portrait of the Artist (*Portrait de l'artiste*), c.1866, private collection.

Baigneurs et baigneuses, c.1870, private collection (Courtesy Galerie J.-C. Bellier, Paris).

The Etang des Soeurs at Osny (*L'Étang des sœurs, à Osny, près de Pontoise*), 1877, London, Home House Trustees.

The Abduction (*L'enlèvement*), 1867, London, private collection.

The Eternal Feminine (*L'éternel féminin*), 1877, New York, private collection.

Great Pine or *Great Pine near Aix-en-Provence* (*Le Grand Pin près d'Aix-en-Provence*), 1889, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.

The Gardener Vallier (*Le Jardinier*), 1905–1906, London, Tate Gallery.

Pastoral (*Pastorale*), 1870, Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

The Garden at Les Lauves (*Le Jardin des Lauves*), c.1906, Washington, Philipps Collection.

Portrait of Cézanne or *Portrait of the Artist in Hat* (*Portrait de Cézanne,* or *Portrait de l'artiste au chapeau à large bord*), 1879–1882, Bern Kunstmuseum.

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About the Authors

Éric Alliez (b. 1957), philosopher, is a Professor at University of Paris 8 and at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, Kingston University (London). He has been visiting professor in many universities worldwide (Rio de Janeiro, Vienna, Warwick, Karlsruhe, Weimar, Oslo, . . .). His publications include *The Signature of the World* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), *Capital Times* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), *Transdisciplinary Problematics* (ed., with Peter Osborne and Stella Sandford, *Theory, Culture and Society*, Special Issue, 32 / 5–6, 2015), *Spheres of Action: Art and Politics*, (ed., with Peter Osborne, London: Tate Publishing, 2013), *Diagram 3000 [Words]* (Documenta 13, N°090, Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2012), *The Guattari Effect* (ed., with Andrew Goffey, London and New York: Continuum, 2011), *Capitalism and Schizophrenia and Consensus: Of Relational Aesthetics* (Baglam, 2010), *Metamorphosen der Zeit,* (ed., with G. Schröder, B. Cassin, G. Febel, M. Narcy, Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1999), *Gilles Deleuze. Une vie philosophique* (ed.) (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1998), *De l'impossibilité de la phénoménologie* (Paris: Vrin, 1995).

His most recent work, *Défaire l'image. De l'art contemporain* [*Undoing the Image: Of Contemporary Art*] (Paris: Presses du réel, 2013), is the last volume of a trilogy focused on a critique of aesthetics, and which also includes *The Brain-Eye*, and *Matisse-Thought* [*La Pensée-Matisse*] (with Jean-Claude Bonne, Paris: Le Passage, 2005).

He has been the general editor of the Œuvres *de Gabriel Tarde* (Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond/Seuil [13 volumes published]) and a founding member of the journal *Multitudes*, for which he managed the section concerned with Contemporary Art until June 2009.

Robin Mackay (b. 1973) is director of UK publisher and arts organization Urbanomic and editor of its journal, *Collapse*. He has translated a number of works of French philosophy, including Gilles Châtelet's *To Live and Think Like Pigs* (Falmouth and New York: Urbanomic and Sequence Press, 2014), Alain Badiou's *Number and Numbers* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), François Laruelle's *The Concept of Non-Photography* (Falmouth and New York: Urbanomic and Sequence Press, 2011) and *Anti-Badiou* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), and Quentin Meillassoux's *The Number and the Siren* (Falmouth and New York: Urbanomic and Sequence Press, 2012).