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City University of New York PH.D. 1986

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THE "MARTÍNFIERRISTAS" AND ARGENTINE ART OF THE TWENTIES

by

JACQUELINE BARNITZ

VOLUME I

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The City University of New York.

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosphy.

September 19, 1986
Date

Rose Carol Washton Long
Chair of Examining Committee

September 19, 1986
Date

Rose Carol Washton Long
Executive Officer

Professor Alberto Blasi

Professor Milton Brown

Professor William H. Gerdts

The City University of New York

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Abstract

THE "MARTÍNFIERRISTAS" AND ARGENTINE ART
OF THE TWENTIES

by

JACQUELINE BARNITZ

Adviser: Professor Rose-Carol Washton Long

In the twenties, Argentina enjoyed an exceptionally liberal government, which made it possible for new forms of art and literature to flourish. Literary periodicals provided an outlet for writers. Among these was Martín Fierro (February 1924-November 1927) which also featured art reviewing. One of the journal's aims, declared in a manifesto, was the renewal of art and literature and the rejection of past forms represented by "Modernismo" (equivalent to French Symbolism). With Alberto Prebisch as its main art critic, Martín Fierro was unique in its defense of vanguard artists, perceiving in their work a reflection of its own objectives. Five artists in particular became affiliated with Martín Fierro: the painters Pedro Figari, an Uruguayan, Emilio Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Norah Borges, sister of the writer Jorge Luis Borges, and the sculptor Pablo Curatella-Manes.

When Pettoruti first exhibited Cubist paintings at the Witcomb Gallery in 1924, they created such a controversy that they had to be placed under glass to

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protect them from vandalism. Curatella-Manes met with similar scorn when his Cubist sculpture was shown shortly after. Without Martín Fierro's support of their work and its role as a cohesive force among intellectuals, it would have been difficult for artists like Pettoruti to continue working and exhibiting in Argentina. Curatella-Manes chose to live in Paris. Figari, a Post-Impressionist and precursor rather than a member of the vanguard, promoted the new art by helping to found Amigos del Arte, a gallery which, along with the Witcomb, became a major outlet for Martín Fierro-affiliated artists. Xul Solar, a writer, mystic and linguist as well as painter, wrote for Martín Fierro and influenced the writers including his friend Borges. Norah Borges contributed to the periodical as an illustrator as she had earlier to vanguard journals in Spain. The work of Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Norah Borges and Curatella-Manes was chosen to represent the Argentine vanguard in two exhibitions in June 1926 in honor of Marinetti's visit to Buenos Aires, and Martín Fierro devoted two of its issues to him and Futurism.

Unlike the Mexicans, Argentinians as children of European immigrants--many of them Italian--were proud of their links with Europe. All of the artists had spent many years in Europe before 1924. Yet Argentine culture is distinct from that of Europe. Artists and writers sought to establish a form of art and literature that would reflect their traditions and at the same time their

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concern for modernity. In spite of the apparent absence of a common style in the work of the artists, common denominators do exist and are also evident in the literature. The purpose of this study is to define what these common denominators are.

Although a great number of works on Martín Fierro and the artists have been published since the sixties, information is fragmented, descriptive, often repetitive and lacking in precise data and documentation. There has never been a critical evaluation of the Argentine vanguard of the twenties nor of its specific European links. Key sources for this study can be found in Córdova Iturburu's book, La Revolución Martínfierrista (1962), the collected writings by the art critic Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932 (1934), Pettoruti's autobiography, Un pintor ante el espejo (1968) and numerous accounts by the poets. The articles and editorials in Martín Fierro made it possible to reconstruct and document the cultural highlights of the period.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Argentine art of the twenties has never been the focus of a special study. Yet new forms of art were introduced in Argentina as they were in Mexico and Brazil. This art was not only a reflection of the times, but also of the Buenos Aires intellectuals' perception of themselves as the heirs of European culture rather than as members of a Hispano-American community, a characteristic unique to Argentina. The problem of defining just what about this art distinguished it from that of other contemporary cultures was what first sparked my interest. I have since concluded that this art was an expression of a very specific frame of reference.

Initial research revealed that Argentine art in the twenties obeyed criteria of its own, and deserved to be studied from an Argentine point of view in the context of contemporary literary movements. Unlike artists in the United States, Argentinians never rejected the "literary" in art. In the twenties especially, artists and writers were closely affiliated and often influenced one another. Argentine literature, unlike its art, has for many years enjoyed global recognition as one of the outstanding contributions to western culture. The literature of the twenties seemed

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like an appropriate background source and model for the "reading" of some of the art of the same decade, although not a constant, nor the only basis for interpretation. Figari, Xul Solar and Norah Borges all drew on diverse literary sources not only of the twenties, while Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes did so infrequently. The criteria for Argentine artists in the twenties also differed from those of their Mexican contemporaries. In Mexico the artist as mural painter perceived his role as parallel to that of a worker with a didactic mission, while the Argentinian viewed the role of the artist as similar to that of the poet. The purpose of art was to elevate the spirit and surpass the inherent vagaries of nature.

The original idea for using the periodical Martín Fierro as a point of departure for this study was sparked by a paper presented by Phyllis Freeman at the 1973 meeting of the College Art Association in New York, and subsequently published as an article in the Portuguese periodical Colóquio (1976). The subject, "The Car, Ship, and Plane in Manifestos: Vehicles of Nationalism" dealt with art groups and their collective statements from several European countries as well as Brazil and Argentina. The Argentine manifesto cited in the paper was the one published in Martín Fierro, and the artists mentioned were from among those acknowledged by the "Martínfierrista" writers as affiliated with their group. Taken as a basis, Martín Fierro also provided a way of

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structuring the study of five artists whose work appears to have little in common, just as it contributed in the twenties to giving these same artists a sense of collective purpose.

My research in the United States was carried out in the Latin American collection of the Library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Beinecke Library at Yale University and the Benson Latin American Collection and Perry Castañeda Library at the University of Texas in Austin. For this project I am grateful to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for a grant that enabled me to travel to Argentina and Uruguay in 1980. I am indebted to the staffs of museums, galleries, libraries, bookshops and to numerous collectors and individuals in Buenos Aires, La Plata, Rosario, San Antonio de Areco in Argentina, and in Montevideo in Uruguay. Although in Argentina, my initial quest was fraught with the frustrations of high inflation and a restrictive government at the time, many people came to the rescue and cannot be thanked enough for their help.

In Buenos Aires I owe a special debt to Natalio Povarché, director of the Rubbers Gallery, and to Samuel Paz at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes for allowing me to use their offices, archives and innumerable services, and to the museum's librarians. The staff of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras of the

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Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires extended themselves beyond my hopes in allowing me to xerox and photograph the journal Martín Fierro in its entirety. I am also grateful to the librarians of the Facultad de Bellas Artes of the Universidad de La Plata, for furnishing me with a xerox copy of García Romero's thesis on Xul Solar.

As for the many individuals in Buenos Aires who assisted me, I particularly wish to thank Lyres Giraldes for sharing with me his recollections and collections of books and exhibition catalogues dating from his days as an employee of the Witcomb Gallery in the twenties; the sculptress María Juana (Heras) Velasco, a former student of Pettoruti's for putting me in touch with Lía Pettoruti del Carril, a sister of the artist; and the latter in turn for letting me photocopy press clippings and for other assistance. Xul Solar's widow Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari and the art historians Osvaldo Svanascini in Buenos Aires, and Jorge Lopez Anaya and A. Osvaldo Nessi in La Plata should also be thanked for providing me with catalogues, documents and information. Washington Pereyra, director of the bookshop El Colonial, deserves special thanks for innumerable favors.

In Montevideo, with the help of the staffs of the Museo Histórico Nacional and the Biblioteca Nacional, of Angel Kalenberg, director of the Museo Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Luis Victor Anastasía, Julio María Sanguinetti (the latter now the president of Uruguay), and of the art

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critic Alicia Haber, I was able to accomplish much in little time. I am especially grateful to the late Jorge Faget Figari, nephew of the artist for his generous assistance in providing Figari documents and letters.

I would also like to mention the many delightful interviews with writers, artists, collectors and surviving relatives of the artists in Buenos Aires, and particularly three former "Martínfierristas", the writers Ulyses Petit de Murat and Alfredo Brandán-Caraffa, and Norah Borges, the group's only surviving artist. Their accounts made the subject all the more vivid.

I am also grateful to my committee at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; to Professor William H. Gerdts for his practical advice and defense of the Argentine point of view, to Professor Alberto Blasi for his welcome suggestions as an Argentine expert in the literature of Martín Fierro and to Professor Milton W. Brown for asking provocative questions. I am especially indebted to my director, Professor Rose-Carol Washton Long, whose clear-headed guidance and insightful suggestions were crucial for the conclusion of this work. Finally I must acknowledge some enjoyable conversations with Professors Luis Arocena and Naomi Lindstrom of the Department of Spanish at the University of Texas who share my fascination with Xul Solar's unusual mind.

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99. Emilio Pettoruti, The Dancers, oil, 1918. Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, Córdova (Lía Pettoruti del Carril)

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100. Emilio Pettoruti, Outskirts of Milan, oil, 1919. Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes Juan B. Castagnino, Rosario (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

101. Emilio Pettoruti, Synthesis of a Garden, oil, 1915. Present location unknown (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

102. Emilio Pettoruti, La Pensierosa, oil, 1920. Natalia Kohen, Buenos Aires (author)

103. Emilio Pettoruti, The Blind Flutist, oil, 1920. Pedro González Asuar, Concepción, Chile (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

104. Emilio Pettoruti, The Guitarist, oil, 1920. Luis Arena, Buenos Aires (Lía Pettoruti del Carril)

105. Front page of Martín Fierro with reproduction of Pettoruti's The Dancers, September-9 October 1924

106. Article by Xul Solar and reproductions of Pettoruti's work exhibited at the Witcomb, Martín Fierro, September-9 October 1924

107. Emilio Pettoruti, Tranquil Day, oil, undated. Present location unknown. Reproduced in Martín Fierro, 14 November 1925

108. Article on the "Salón Nacional Ultrafuturista," front page of Atlántida, El Gran Rotativo, 4 December 1924

109. Emilio Pettoruti, Interior and San Giminiano (now lost), reproduced next to an example of "Ultrafuturist" work, Spirit of the Street signed "Esquimal," reproduced in Atlántida, 4 December 1924

110. Emilio Pettoruti, Portrait of Carolita, oil, 1925. Lía Pettoruti del Carril (author)

111. Pablo Picasso, Portrait of the Wife of the Artist (Olga), oil, 1923, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 10 September 1925

112. Emilio Pettoruti, Portrait of Carolita, oil, 1925 after painted study. Stolen from the Museo Municipal Sivori, Buenos Aires in 1960 (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

113. Emilio Pettoruti, Cherries, sand and oil on canvas, 1924. Eduardo Pettoruti, La Plata (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

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114. Emilio Pettoruti, Small Goblet, oil, 1925. Eloisa Garcia Castro, Buenos Aires (Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives)

115. Emilio Pettoruti, Shadows in the Window, oil, 1925. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

116. Emilio Pettoruti, Shadows, oil, 1916. Present location unknown (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1970)

117. Pablo Picasso, drawings of A Thousand and One Nights and from "Harlequin" series, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 12 December 1926

118. Emilio Pettoruti, My Harlequin, oil, 1927. Natalia Kohen, Buenos Aires (author)

119. Emilic Pettoruti, Harlequin, oil, 1928. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

120. Emilio Pettoruti, Song of the People, oil on wood, 1927. Miguel Angel Moreton, Buenos Aires (Lía Pettoruti del Carril)

121. Emilio Pettoruti, Quintet, oil, 1927. Blaquier, Buenos Aires, formerly San Francisco Museum of Art (Lía Pettoruti del Carril)

122. Pedro Figari and son? Cabaret, c. 1922-1925. Isabel Figari, Montevideo (Exposición Pedro Figari, MNAP, 1945)

123. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Family, bronze, 1912. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

124. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Old Florentine, bronze, 1912. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

125. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Study, plaster, c. 1917. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

126. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Boy from Flanders, marble, 1917. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

127. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Isis, marble, 1917. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

128. Pablo Curatella-Manes, La Pensativa, fired clay, c. 1920. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

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129. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Study, plaster, 1919. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

130. Jacques Lipchitz, Seated Bather, bronze, 1916. Irving Moskovitz, New York (Lipchitz)

131. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Three Bathers, terra-cotta low relief, 1921. Present location unknown. Reproduced in Martín Fierro, October-20 November 1924

132. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Woman with a Thick Coat, plaster, 1921. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

133. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Woman with a Thick Coat, plaster, 1921. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

134. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Guitarist, bronze 1921. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author). Another bronze version of this work is in the Archer Huntington Art Gallery, University of Texas, Austin

135. Jacques Lipchitz, Seated Man with Guitar, bronze, 1918. Present location unknown (Lipchitz)

136. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Accordeonist, bronze, 1921-1922. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (Svanascini photo archives)

137. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Man with the Double-Bass, plaster, 1922. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

138. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Santa Teresita, terra-cotta, 1921. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

139. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Bather, bronze, c. 1922. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

140. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Reclining Nymph, bronze, c. 1922. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

141. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Guitar, bronze relief, c. 1922. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

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142. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Creole Theme, plaster, 1921. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

143. Jacques Lipchitz, Still-Life with Musical Instruments, stone, 1918. Present location unknown (Lipchitz)

144. Jacques Lipchitz, Figure with Guitar, bronze, 1922. Present location unknown (Lipchitz)

145. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Cuirassier, plaster, 1923. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

146. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Dragon, bronze, 1924. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

147. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Man with a Lasso, bronze, 1923. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

148. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Acrobats, bronze, 1923. Jorge Helft, Buenos Aires (author)

149. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Acrobats, bronze, large version, placed at site in sixties. Teatro San Martín, Buenos Aires (author)

150. Jacques Lipchitz, Detachable Figure (Pierrot), bronze, 1915. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bollt, New York (Lipchitz)

151. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Spatial Construction, bronze, 1923. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (Svanascini photo archives)

152. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Fall of Icarus, plaster, 1923. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

153. Hernán Gullén Ayerza, The Fall of Icarus, marble, tomb of Jorge Newbery, Buenos Aires (Anaya, Comienzos de la escultura)

154. Double-Page spread with article by Alberto Prebisch on Curatella-Manes, Martín Fierro, October-20 November 1924

155. Pablo Curatella-Manes, La Douce France, plaster version of marble for the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs, 1925, Martín Fierro, 5 August 1925

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156. Antoine Bourdelle, Tragedy, marble relief, 1912, Théâtre des Champs Élysées (Elsen, Origins)

157. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Dance, plaster, 1925. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

158. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Rugby, plaster, 1926. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

159. Jacques Lipchitz, Acrobat on a Ball, bronze, 1926. Baroness Gourgaud, Yerres, France (Lipchitz)

160. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Saint, plaster, 1926. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

161. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Creole Idyll, plaster, 1928. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

162. Pablo Curatella-Manes, The Three Graces, bronze, 1929. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

163. Alexander Archipenko, Standing Concave, bronze, 1925. Present location unknown (Karshan)

164. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Annunciation, plaster relief, 1930. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

165. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Maternity, plaster, 1930. Present location unknown (Svanascini photo archives)

166. Pablo Curatella-Manes, Pomona, plaster, 1930. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires (author)

167. Xul Solar, Burial, watercolor, 1914. Micaela de Schulz Solari (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1980)

168. Xul Solar, Cuatro Anjos, watercolor, 1915. Private collection, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

169. Xul Solar, Annunciation, watercolor, 1917. Private collection, Buenos Aires (author)

170. Xul Solar, Wounded Sun, collage, 1918. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

171. Catalogue cover of Xul Solar's exhibition at the Galleria Arte, Milan in 1920 (author)

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172. Xul Solar, Troncos, watercolor, 1919. Micaela de Schulz Solari (H. O. Casenave)

173. Xul Solar, The Greeting of Maria Perenno (to Pettoruti), watercolor, 1921. Private collection, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

174. Xul Solar, Potes, watercolor, c. 1921. Micaela de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires (García Romero)

175. Xul Solar, Decoras, watercolor, c. 1921. Micaela de Schulz Solari (García Romero)

176. Xul Solar, The Four, watercolor, 1921. Private collection, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

177. Xul Solar, Mask with Visor, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

178. Paul Klee, Villa R, tempera and oil, 1919. Public Art Collection, Basle (Roters)

179. Cesar Klein, Election poster for the National Assembly, Munich, color lithograph, c. 1919 (Art Journal), spring 1984)

180. Xul Solar, Juzgue, watercolor, 1922. Private collection (Amigos del Arte post-card)

181. Wassily Kandinsky, Blue Segment No. 235, oil on canvas, 1921. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (Guggenheim exhibition catalogue, 1972)

182. Pavel Tchelitchew, The Green Man, gouache, brush and ink, c. 1920-1923. Museum of Modern Art, New York (Art of the Twenties exhibition catalogue, MOMA, 1979)

183. Xul Solar, Angel of the Karma, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

184. Xul Solar, The Bark of Isis, watercolor, 1922. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

185. Xul Solar, Nana Watsin, watercolor, 1923. Private collection, Buenos Aires (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1978)

186. Xul Solar, Retrato Renea, watercolor, 1923. Private collection, Buenos Aires (Fundación Lorenzutti exhibition catalogue, 1970)

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187. George Grozs, Republican Automatons, watercolor, 1920. Museum of Modern Art, New York (Art of the Twenties exhibition catalogue, MOMA 1979)

188. Xul Solar, Idyll, watercolor, 1923. Private collection, Buenos Aires (García Romero)

189. Xul Solar, Couple, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

190. Xul Solar, Cintas, watercolor, 1924. Micaela de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

191. Xul Solar, Jefa, watercolor, 1923. Micaela de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

192. Xul Solar, Jefa Honra, watercolor, 1923, Jorge Helft, Buenos Aires (author)

193. Xul Solar, Message, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1978)

194. Xul Solar, The Three, watercolor, 1923. Private collection, Buenos Aires (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1978)

195. Xul Solar, Qero Hipnotismo, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1978)

196. Xul Solar, Jefe de Sierpes, watercolor, 1923. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

197. Xul Solar, Man of the Serpents, watercolor, 1923. Blaquier, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

198. Xul Solar, Septuplets, watercolors, 1924. Private collection Buenos Aires (author)

199. Wassily Kandinsky, Composition 8, #260, oil on canvas, 1923. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (Guggenheim exhibition catalogue, 1972)

200. Xul Solar, Scenery, watercolor, 1924. Private collection, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

201. Paul Klee, Moon Game, watercolor, 1923. State Museums, National Gallery, Berlin (Roters)

202. Paul Klee, Cosmic Flora, watercolor on chalk grounding, 1923. Paul Klee Foundation, Museum of Fine Arts, Berne (Arts Magazine, September 1977)

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203. Xul Solar, A Couple, watercolor, 1924. Private collection, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

204. Xul Solar, Colonial House, watercolor, 1924. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

205. Xul Solar, Añoro Patria, watercolor, 1922. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

206. Xul Solar, Ronda, watercolor, 1925. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (author)

207. Xul Solar, San Danza, watercolor, 1925. Private collection, Buenos Aires (Galería Rubbers exhibition catalogue, 1978)

208. Xul Solar, San Danza, watercolor, 1925. Jorge Helft, Buenos Aires (author)

209. Page from Martín Fierro with border of llamas, 18 July 1925

210. Small bag with llama design from ancient Peru (d'Harcourt, Textiles of Ancient Peru)

211. Mochica warriors. Painting from a vase. North Coast, Peru (Bushnell, Peru)

212. Xul Solar, Angel and Scenery, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 9 July 1926

213. Xul Solar, Milicia, watercolor, 1926. Natalia Kohen, Buenos Aires (author)

214. Xul Solar, Barbaros, watercolor, 1926. Private collection, Buenos Aires (author)

215. Xul Solar, Vignette for the book El idioma de los argentinos by Jorge Luis Borges, 1928

216. Ancient pottery design from the South Coast of Peru (d'Harcourt, Textiles of Ancient Peru)

217. Xul Solar, Otro Drago, watercolor, 1927. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

218. Xul Solar, Vuel Villa, watercolor, 1936. Micaela de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires (H. O. Casenave)

219. Xul Solar, Manifesto, watercolor, 1927. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (H. O. Casenave)

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220. Xul Solar, Southern Cross and Round Dance, mixed media, 1927. Private collection, Buenos Aires (author)

221. Xul Solar, Carpa Fiesti, watercolor, 1927. Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, Martínez (author)

222. Xul Solar, Watercolor, c. 1929. Present location unknown, reproduced in the Nuevo Salón Año Primero exhibition catalogue, 1929

223. Xul Solar, Palacio en Bria, watercolor, 1932. Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, La Plata (author)

224. Norah Borges, Terraces, woodcut, 1920, reproduced in Grecia, Madrid, 15 September 1920 (author)

225. Norah Borges, The Angel of the Violoncello, woodcut, 1920, reproduced in Grecia, 29 February 1920 (author)

226. Norah Borges, The Woman with a Mantilla, woodcut, 1920, reproduced in Grecia, 1 June 1920 (author)

227. Rafael Barradas, Un tranvía, drawing 1917. Present location unknown (Brihuega)

228. Joaquín Torres-García, Drawing, 1917. Present location unknown (Brihuega)

229. Norah Borges, St. Sebastian, woodcut, 1921-1922, cover of Ultra (Videla)

230. Lyonel Feininger, illustration for the first Bauhaus proclamation, 1919 (Selz)

231. Pablo Picasso, Pierrot, pencil drawing, 1919, reproduced in Maurice Raynal, Picasso, 1922 (author)

232. Norah Borges, Garden, woodcut, 1922, cover of Proa, December 1922 (author)

233. Norah Borges, Children and Comets, woodcut, 1923, reproduced in Proa (author from original in artist's collection)

234. Norah Borges, Untitled, woodcut, 1923. Artist's collection (author)

235. Norah Borges, Untitled, woodcut, 1923. Artist's collection (author)

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236. Norah Borges, Landscape of Buenos Aires, woodcut, 1923. Artist's collection (author)

237. Silvina Ocampo, Patio con luna and Almacen rosado, inspired by poems in Moon Across the Way by Jorge Luis Borges, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 10 June-10 July 1927

238. Norah Borges, Landscape of Portugal, oil, c. 1923-1926. Present location unknown, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 8 July 1926

239. Norah Borges, Raúl Gonzalez Tuñón, illustration for Martín Fierro, 5 May 1925

240. Norah Borges, Guillermo de Torre, pencil drawing, 1927. Artist's collection (author)

241. Norah Borges, The Three Sisters, drawing, 1921. Present location unknown, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 14 November 1925

242. Norah Borges, Girls at Sunset, color drawing, c. 1926. Present location unknown, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 12 November 1926

243. Norah Borges, Le Coq d'Or, 1925, illustration for Martín Fierro, 9 August 1925

244. Norah Borges, "The Young Visitors," illustration for Martín Fierro, 26 February 1927

245. Norah Borges, "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura," text by Norah Borges, Martín Fierro, 28 March 1927, p. 3

246. Irene Lagut, Paintings reproduced in Martín Fierro, 20 January 1927

247. Marie Laurencin, Paintings reproduced in Martín Fierro, 20 January 1927

248. Norah Borges, Pablo y Virginia, illustration for Martín Fierro, 31 August-15 November 1927

249. Norah Borges, Guillermo de Torre, oil, 1929. Artist's collection (author)

250. Norah Borges, Santa Rosa de Lima, oil, c. 1929. Present location unknown, reproduced in the Nuevo Salón Año Primero exhibition catalogue, 1929

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251. Julio Romero de Torres, *On the Way to the Wedding*, oil, undated. Museo Julio Romero de Torres, Córdoba, Spain (Salcedo Hierro)

252. Norah Borges, *Landscape*, oil, c. 1930. Present location unknown, reproduced in the *Salón de Pintores y Escultores Modernos* exhibition catalogue, 1930

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INTRODUCTION

In the twenties, vanguard movements emerged in many Latin American countries as they had in Europe before the First World War. But in Latin America, the vanguard was a post-war phenomenon corresponding chronologically to French Purism and Surrealism. This vanguard and the circumstances that led up to it varied substantially from one country to another.

Until the nineteen twenties, the most widespread style in Latin American painting was the Spanish turn-of-the-century form known as Modernismo.[1] The term Modernismo was also used to designate a literary movement of about the same time. In both art and literature, Modernismo represented the Hispano-American and Spanish counterpart of French Symbolism, and like Symbolism, Modernismo was eclectic. In painting it sometimes combined elements of Post-Impressionism and Art Nouveau.

Several countries had avant-garde literary movements, but only three had equivalent movements in art: Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. As is well-known, Mexico had its mural movement and Brazil, the Week of Modern Art of 1922 in Sao Paulo's Municipal Theater which provided a focal point for the local vanguard in

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literature, music and art. Argentina's vanguard movement was more amorphous since it was neither a mural movement, nor was the nature of the new art defined by a collective exhibition. It was in fact launched by an exhibition of the work of a single painter in 1924, Emilio Pettoruti. The only common denominator characterizing the art of the vanguard in all three countries was the artists' debt to Cubism and their rejection of earlier styles.

Each country's modern culture was greatly affected by whether it had an ancient indigenous past or not. In Mexico where there is a large indigenous population descended from ancient Pre-Hispanic cultures, the Spaniard came to be viewed as the enemy, and Mexicans identified with their ancient culture rather than with their European heritage. This is equally true of some western Andean countries such as Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. In these countries artists tended to reject the "School of Paris" whether or not they had been influenced by its art. But in Argentina, while there are some descendants of indigenous nomadic people in the interior and western provinces, most of the established Argentine population was descended from the Spanish conquerors and since Independence in 1816, from other European immigrants. Of all the Latin American countries, Argentina is the most Europeanized, and Buenos Aires its capital, which also became its

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cultural capital, reflected that fact in its art and in its eager adoption of the "School of Paris" as well as of other European trends.

In the cases of both Brazil and Argentina, the vanguard movements began with literary groups rather than with artists since the artists were too few to constitute a group in themselves. But as friends of the writers, they came to be included in literary circles and were promoted by the writers. In Argentina, literary periodicals served as a cohesive force for writers and artists, offering them the possibility of grouping and allying themselves according to their esthetic orientation. Two periodicals in particular Proa (1921-1922 and 1924-1925) and Martín Fierro (1924-1927) served this purpose. The avant-garde in Buenos Aires was restricted to a relatively small group of writers and artists who were affiliated with these and other periodicals. But while a number of such journals emerged in the twenties which contributed to, and reflected, the changes that occurred in literature, Martín Fierro was the only journal to publish articles on contemporary art and artists. Furthermore, it helped to bring together the more daring new artists who would have found it difficult otherwise to launch themselves as isolated individuals.

Martín Fierro was founded in February 1924 by

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a group of young poets with the intention of promoting the diffusion of the new trends in Spanish and Latin American literature. By its fourth issue in May, Martín Fierro had added art reviewing to its pages and published a manifesto stating that "We are in the presence of a NEW SENSIBILITY and a NEW COMPREHENSION, which . . . have discovered for us unsuspected panoramas and new means and forms of expression."

When Emilio Pettoruti exhibited Cubist paintings at the Witcomb Gallery in Buenos Aires in October 1924, the exhibition unleashed such a scandal that his paintings had to be placed under glass to protect them from vandalism. A few days later, Pablo Curatella-Manes exhibited Cubist sculpture at the same gallery to the continued consternation of an unprepared public. It was the first time Cubist art was shown in Buenos Aires and Martín Fierro was the only journal to champion the new art finding in it a welcome expression of its own concerns. More than a mere platform for the defense of new art, Martín Fierro became the rallying point for artists and intellectuals who met regularly in homes, studios and cafes, and held monthly banquets to draw attention. The journal remained influential until November 1927 when after forty-five numbers, it ceased publication.

The artists most closely affiliated with the movement, besides Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes, were

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the painters Xul Solar, Norah Borges, sister of the writer Jorge Luis Borges, and the Uruguayan Pedro Figari who lived in Buenos Aires from 1921 to 1925. Xul Solar who was a writer and linguist as well as a painter, came to be regarded as a catalyst among "Martínfierrista" writers and was considered by the art critic Alfredo Chiabra Acosta known by his pseudonym Atalaya, to be "the genius of the house."[2] Norah Borges, together with her brother, was instrumental in bringing Spanish Ultraísmo--a post-war art and literary movement--to Buenos Aires, she as an illustrator, he as a poet. Ultraism was the precursor of the new literary movement in Argentina and its vocabulary influenced Argentine art criticism.[3]

Argentina's flowering of the arts in the twenties was encouraged by the liberal government that took office in 1916 to 1930--an exception rather than the rule in a country more often dominated by a conservative class. Between 1910 and 1920 while a war raged in Europe, and Mexico had an agrarian revolution, Argentina enjoyed uncommon prosperity which accounts for the fact that neither its artistic nor its literary vanguard was political.[4] This does not mean however that there were no artists or writers with social concerns. There were many of them, and they strongly opposed and criticized the apparent elitism of the "Martínfierristas."[5] But they did not influence the

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direction of Argentine culture in the twenties as did the "Martínfierristas." What united the latter more than anything else was a common desire to reject past literary and art forms represented by Modernismo in favor of an esthetic liberation more in keeping with modern times.

This study proposes an analysis of the work of the artists who were most closely affiliated with the group, and most representative of Martín Fierro's objectives, first in the European context where their formal sources lay, and second, in the Argentine context where certain common denominators exist despite the apparent differences in their styles. It is also the aim of this study to attempt to define what these common denominators are.

Because of the absence of a group objective which invariably helps to define a movement, this selection of five artists from among the many who exhibited in the twenties, might at first seem arbitrary. However these five artists are the ones to be invariably cited as representing the Argentine vanguard both by recent art historians, for instance Romualdo Brughetti in Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico City: Editorial Pormaca, 1965), and by the "Martínfierristas" themselves in their accounts of the movement. The same artists are repeatedly cited in the press of the twenties in this context and

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Pettoruti, Xul Solar and Norah Borges were chosen to represent the vanguard in an exhibition organized on the occasion of Marinetti's visit to Buenos Aires in 1926.

The art historian Osvaldo Svanascini considered Curatella-Manes and Pettoruti to be "the artists who brought the new experience, and who had new eyes for the affirmation of an art that transformed the vision of the world,"[6] and Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, a former "Martínfierrista," credited Pettoruti with having contributed decisively to clarifying the objectives of the "Martínfierrista" movement.[7] Xul Solar also introduced a synthetic vanguard style that had no precedent in Argentina. But the "Martínfierristas" appreciated him as much for his literary abilities as for his enigmatic watercolors which even they found puzzling, and acknowledged him as the silent protagonist of some of the best known Argentine literature to come out of the twenties and later.[8]

Figari's role was less that of a vanguard artist as that of a precursor who paved the way for, and defended, the vanguard. He was the only one of the artists present at the founding of Martín Fierro and was instrumental in 1924 in helping to establish the Asociación Amigos del Arte, a gallery which became a major outlet for avant-garde exhibitions in the twenties. Figari also believed firmly in a Creole[9]

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identity and played a crucial role through his defense of "American" values which he expressed in paintings of Creole themes, in providing a model for the writers who found in him the reassurance they sought in their own identities as Argentinians. Oliverio Girondo, the author of Martín Fierro's manifesto, expressed his unconditional admiration for Figari in letters, articles and poetry,[10] and Ricardo Güiraldes, whose novels paralleled Figari's paintings in their content, also wrote articles about him.[11] Norah Borges whose drawings and illustrations were representative of the post-war Spanish vanguard, contributed illustrations to the magazine and also illustrated books of poems published by the "Martínfierristas", particularly her brother's book Luna de Enfrente (Moon Across the Way) and her namesake Norah Lange's Calle de la Tarde of 1925.

The most frequent criticism launched against Argentine avant-garde art was its apparent Europeanism. The Europeanist image was to some extent created by the Argentinians themselves who, unlike the Mexicans, prided themselves in their links with Europe. The Argentine population is made up in large part of European immigrants. Both Pettoruti and Figari were the sons of Italian fathers; Xul Solar's father was German and his mother, Italian. Consequently it should not be surprising that in a country with no significant

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ancient culture, artists should feel their strongest ties were with Europe. Characteristically, the dominant feature in the art of the five artists, was its close link with European art of both before and after the First World War. The Spanish influence which was so strong in literature and earlier painting, was negligible in the avant-garde art of the twenties with the exception of Norah Borges. One notes especially the influence of Italy, France and Germany.

When Argentine artists went to Europe, it was to seek its past traditions which they felt were also their own. When they stumbled on Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism before and during the war, it was more often by accident and these forms did not always fulfill their own needs. Unlike the Europeans, they did not wish to distort or reject what they had come from so far away to seek. For this reason those who studied with European masters before 1920, as did Curatella-Manes and scores of other Argentinians, chose Symbolists, particularly Paul Sérusier and Maurice Denis in painting and Antoine Bourdelle in sculpture because their art represented a viable synthesis of past and present concerns. In the twenties many also studied with André Lhote as did Curatella-Manes. Lhote's classicizing version of Cubism provided an acceptable alternative to earlier more extreme forms just as it did for contemporary Europeans.

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Yet Argentine culture is distinct from that of Europe as are the conditions in which it developed. Since before the war, intellectuals and artists shared a desire to identify with their country's culture. Güiraldes felt that while Europe demands originality, in Argentina it would be enough "to separate ourselves from foreign standards and allow the subjects themselves to create in one an adequate form with which to express them."[12] On the other hand, for other writers and artists, the subjects had to reflect the modern character of their urban environment. But they also wished to incorporate something linking them to some past or historical continuum--whether Creole or European. That is why some of the "Martínfierristas" could regard traditional themes of gauchos and the pampa in Figari's paintings and Güiraldes' novels just as timely as they could the urban aspects in the paintings of Pettoruti and Xul Solar. On a broader level, the incorporation of Theosophical themes in the work of Xul Solar was as much a manifestation of the need for a link with universal history as it was a reflection of a mystical current prevalent among some European artists such as Kandinsky and Mondrian. The fusion of contemporary with traditional values also reflected the direction of the French Purists and of Maurice Raynal with whom the Argentine group was in contact.

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Although since the sixties, Martín Fierro and the artists have been the subjects of considerable literature, information on them is fragmented, descriptive, often repetitive and lacking in precise data and documentation. There has never been a critical evaluation of the Argentine vanguard of the twenties nor of its specific European links. Yet this period was very influential in establishing the direction of modern Argentine art. Girondo published the first book on the movement in 1949, El periódico Martín Fierro, (Buenos Aires: Directiva de la Sociedad Argentina de Escritores, 1949). Although brief, it provided the material for two later studies by former "Martínfierristas." In 1961, Eduardo González Lanuza in Los Martínfierristas, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1961), took a critical view of the manifesto and its contradictions, and in 1962, Córdova Iturburu in La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), reprinted important articles and poems originally published in Martín Fierro, accompanied by an introduction summarizing and evaluating the history of the journal. While Córdova Iturburu's book remains a key work and the point of departure for this study, its lack of references or citations for the articles makes it necessary to return to the original source for this information.

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Since then numerous more recent articles, books and chapters in literary anthologies have appeared on Martín Fierro and the artists. Simon Maurice Berggrun's doctoral dissertation, "The Journal 'Martín Fierro,' a Critical Index," (University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1968) complements Córdova Iturburu's study by providing a useful quick reference to articles in the journal. However his short critical evaluations of these articles, especially those on art, are often inaccurate and misunderstood. The most reliable source is of course the journal itself. Its articles and editorials have served as the basis for reconstructing and documenting the cultural highlights treated in this study.

Very little was published on Argentine artists before the sixties and the more recent sources are too often recapitulations of the earlier works. In 1948 Maurice Raynal published the first monograph on Curatella-Manes, Pablo Curatella-Manes, (Oslo: Markin Böktrykkeri Nyt, A.S., 1948) focusing on the artist's years in France. Osvaldo Svanascini published two monographs one on Xul Solar, Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962) and a year later another on Curatella-Manes, Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar, 1963). A short monograph on Curatella-Manes by Jorge Romero Brest, Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Buenos Aires, 1967) also

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contributes a helpful chronology. But both the later studies on this artist draw heavily on Raynal's earlier work and are more useful for the artist's later years. Svanascini's study on Xul Solar is the first to be published on him and provides some good insights into the artist's theories. But likewise, it is more helpful for the later years. The most comprehensive study to date on Xul Solar is Jorge O. García Romero's thesis for the degree of Licenciado in art history, "Alejandro Xul Solar," (Universidad Nacional de La Plata, La Plata, 1972) based on Svanascini's study and interviews with the artist's widow. Far less is known about Xul Solar's life before 1924 than his later years, and although García Romero's study offers more information than any other source, it too lacks specific data on the early period. While both Svanascini and García Romero discuss the diverse esoteric sources for Xul Solar's theories and acknowledge his debt to Theosophy, the specific influence of the latter on his work is minimized in favor of the other systems. No one has ever analyzed his early work in the context of Theosophy. For this purpose, the writings of Madame Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner and the English mystic Aleister Crowley whom Xul Solar acknowledged as an important influence, have served for some of these interpretations.

There is little on Norah Borges other than a

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few articles romanticizing the artist, and a short monograph by Ramón Gomez de la Serna whom she had met in Spain, Norah Borges, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, S.A., 1945) with some helpful anecdotes based on statements by, and conversations with, the artist. But as was often the case with books published in the forties, there is no discussion of specific works. A helpful source for this artist can be found in books about her brother. Emir Rodríguez Monegal's Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978) is especially useful for accounts of her early life, culled from earlier biographical studies.

There is considerably more on Pettoruti and Figari. Two key monographs on Pettoruti by Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, the first of which was published in 1963, the second with much information taken from the first, published posthumously in 1980, contribute excerpts from newspaper articles and reviews, and helpful anecdotes not only about the artist but also about the "Martínfierristas." But as is the case for the other artists, Pettoruti's early years in Europe which played so crucial a role in his later development, are only briefly summarized. While his connections with Futurism and Cubism are acknowledged, specific connections between Pettoruti's paintings and their European sources are not made.

Carlos Herrera Mac Lean's Pedro Figari, (Buenos

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Aires: Editorial Poseidon, 1943) offers a good general, if somewhat romanticized and laudatory account with some helpful information about the artist's early life, but it also lacks specific discussions of the works. A Figari revival in Uruguay in the seventies prompted the emergence of numerous more recent studies, particularly on Figari's role as a lawyer and educator. Luis Victor Anastasia's Pedro Figari americano integral, (Montevideo: Ediciones del Sesquicentenario, 1975) focuses on Figari's contribution as an art educator and theorist. This study is helpful for the interpretation of Figari's writings although it does not include a discussion of the paintings.

Both Figari and Pettoruti were prolific writers. Figari left a large body of writing from between 1912 and 1930, notably Arte, estética, ideal first published in 1912 and reprinted in 1960, (Montevideo; Biblioteca Artigas, 1960) which also came out in two French editions in Paris in 1920 and 1926. While Figari does not mention his paintings in this work, it nonetheless provides a rich source for an analysis of their meaning. Pettoruti's autobiography, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar, 1968), although written many years after the fact and filled with self-serving anecdotes, offers invaluable documentation not only for his own encounters with the Futurists in Italy, experiences in

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Paris and life in Argentina after his return, but also on Xul Solar and Curatella-Manes both of whom he met in Italy.

The social and literary encounters of the "Martínfierristas" were an important component of their lives as was their sometimes perverse humor. Their dinners, exhibition openings in galleries and cafe basements, and their conversations have been recorded by several writers. A recent account can be found in Ulyses Petit de Murat's La noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979). Petit de Murat was one of the younger members of the group, and his book offers helpful information for the last year of the "Martínfierristas'" activities.

There was no critic in Buenos Aires who "led" the artists as Apollinaire and Marinetti had in France and Italy, nor did art critics prior to 1924 have a language to accomodate the new art forms. Until Pettoruti's arrival, exhibition reviews revealed a sparse use of art terms and continued the custom of classifying art by subject-matter. When terms were used, more often, they were not those of the pre-war years but alternate ones such as "vanguardia," "arte de renovación" and "ultramoderno," traceable to the war years in Spain and in some cases, to Apollinaire. Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), and Martín Fierro's critic, Alberto Prebisch were among those who

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contributed the most to reforming the vocabulary of art criticism in Argentina in the mid twenties. Atalaya's reviews originally written for La Protesta and other journals, are collected in Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934) published posthumously. Although it is a basic source for the most up-to-date critical attitudes of the decade, the reviews are classified by year only with no reference to original sources. Whenever these were available, citations have been taken from the original source. Alberto Prebisch's reviews in Martín Fierro furnish a major source of first hand information and compliment those of Atalaya.

In addition, three other books of collected writings by critics, M. Frederic, El año artístico argentino 1926, (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1927), José María Lozano Mouján, Figuras del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: S. García Santos, 1928) and Eduardo Eiriz Maglione, Críticas pintura y escultura, (Buenos Aires: Librería el Ateneo, 1927), although less important than Atalaya's, offer many insights into some of the critical language of the twenties.

A first step in this study must be to define what terms such as Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism meant to Argentine artists and critics in 1924. It must be understood that the Argentine definition of

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these terms was based on the Ultraists' and Herwarth Walden's post-war interpretations rather than on their earlier meanings. A consideration of these facts is essential in helping to look at this art in its proper post-war context and not as a mere derivative of earlier models as has too often been thought.

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NOTES

[1]The term Modernismo was used to define a literary and art movement prevalent in Spain and Latin America from the late 1870's to the second decade of the twentieth century. But although it was in common usage particularly in the 1880's and 1890's to designate a "modern" movement that rejected all earlier schools, it did not have a uniform meaning for its practitioners. Stylistically, it refers to painting which combines elements of Impressionism, Symbolism and Art Nouveau. For a discussion of the origin and use of this term see Joseph Phillip Cervera, Modernismo: the Catalan Renaissance of the Arts, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1976), pp. 2-17.

[2]Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, Ed., 1934), p. 267.

[3]For a discussion of Ultraism and the Borgeses' role in the movement, see Gloria Videla, El Ultraísmo, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, S.A., 1971) and Jaime Brihuega, Manifiestos, proclamas, panfletos y textos doctrinales. Las vanguardias artísticas en España 1910-1930, (Madrid: Ediciónes Cátedra, 1979).

[4]Enrique Anderson-Imbert, Spanish-American Literature, 2 vols, 2nd ed., vol II, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969), p. 463. Argentina remained neutral during the First World War. See Chapter I for a discussion of this.

[5]The term "Martínfierristas" to define a group of writers and artists affiliated with the periodical Martín Fierro was not in common usage in the twenties. It was used however by former members of the group in their recollections. It came into common usage in the sixties with the publication of Cayetano Córdova Iturburu's La Revolución Martínfierrista. Prior to that, Oliverio Girondo had referred to the "Martínfierrista" movement in his book El periódico Martín Fierro of 1949, p. 44. Throughout the text I have underlined Martín Fierro the journal but placed the "Martínfierristas" in quotation marks in order to differentiate one from the other.

[6]Osvaldo Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aires: Ediciónes Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 19.

[7]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 55.

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[8]Naomi Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review, (New York: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1980), p. 117.

[9]According to Webster's New World Dictionary, College Edition, (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., 1964 ed.), the term Creole refers both to a native of the West Indies and the tropical areas of Central and South America, and to a person of French or Spanish descent born in the Americas. Figari meant it in the latter sense with its broader meaning. He spoke of the "Creole" as a person born in Latin America of mixed European and Latin American heritage. Figari himself was of Italian descent born in Uruguay.

[10]Oliverio Girondo, Obras Completas, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1968), p. 389. See also letter from Girondo to Figari in Montevideo dated 31 December 1923.

[11]Ricardo Güiraldes, "Don Pedro Figari," Martín Fierro, (August - 6 September 1924), p. 6.

[12]Alberto Oscar Blasi, Güiraldes y Larbaud, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1970), p. 32.

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PART ONE

BACKGROUND AND CULTURAL AMBIENCE IN THE TWENTIES

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND THE FLOWERING OF THE ARTS 1916-1930: BUENOS AIRES AS A CULTURAL CENTER

By the late nineteenth century, Buenos Aires had changed from a quiet colonial town to a bustling cosmopolitan city and with it, art centers and museums opened, salons multiplied and cafes emerged where intellectuals met regularly to discuss the latest literary ideas. Art galleries mushroomed along with luxury shops featuring expensive perfumes and jewelry, photography stores and bookshops with the latest European novelties in literature along Florida Street--a kiosk-lined street closed to traffic in the fashionable section of Buenos Aires.[1] By the early twenties, exhibitions abounded in annual salons and art galleries. This extraordinary activity was however, a relatively recent phenomenon. Until 1896 there was no national museum and until 1904, no academy.

Argentina's cultural and political history are comparatively young--one of the youngest in the new world--and its population in the metropolitan centers is made up largely of European immigrants.[2] Until the nineteenth century, Argentina was a frontier culture like that of the western United States, and Buenos Aires was founded twice. Its first settlement established in 1535

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was destroyed by roaming bands of Indians and it was not rebuilt until 1580.[3] Unlike Mexico and Peru, Argentina had no ancient past and, until the eighteenth century, its colonial culture was negligible compared for example to Mexico's, Brazil's or Peru's. No precious metals had been found by the Spanish conquerors and the vast Patagonian plains were of little interest to them.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Buenos Aires served as a port of debarkation for goods from Seville to be shipped to Lima, Peru and to other South American centers. But by the end of the eighteenth century, the cattle originally brought over by the Europeans had multiplied prodigiously in the ideal conditions of the pampa. As a result, a prosperous cattle industry emerged[4] and with it a rural aristocracy which has remained a powerful force in the country. Some of the land-holding families that made up this aristocracy as well as a few old families established since the early colony, also had town houses in Buenos Aires and maintained close ties with Europe.

Although Independence from Spain was officially declared in 1816,[5] it did not result in an immediate unification of the country. The porteños as the inhabitants of the port city of Buenos Aires are called--belonged to the largely pro-monarchist Unitarian party which sought national unity under the leadership of Buenos Aires. The Unitarios who adopted blue as their symbolic

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color, also represented the educated classes who remained close to Europe in spite of their Independence from Spain. Conversely, the provincial population which included many gauchos, the nomadic cattle hands, belonged to the Federalist party which was divided into provincial factions under the caudillos or local leaders. They sought autonimity and equal status with Buenos Aires, and their symbolic color was "blood" red. Between 1829 and 1852, the Federalistas were ruled by the tyrant and cattle rancher, Juan Manuel Rosas as president of Argentina for twenty three years. The gauchos, often rough, illiterate half-breeds who developed their own oral and local traditions, wanted to be independent from both Europe and Buenos Aires. In the time of Rosas, the wearing of some red article of clothing was obligatory as a mark of support for Rosas' party.[6] During those years the country remained relatively stagnant culturally.

But after the fall of Rosas in 1852, the cultural life of Buenos Aires was greatly stimulated by the return of many Argentine intellectuals who had fled the country during Rosas' regime. One of these was Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a self-made scholar and educator from the western town of San Juan who had lived as an exile in Chile and Europe. As president of Argentina from 1868 to 1874, Sarmiento became one of several leaders to encourage European immigration. He saw immigration as a "cure-all from barbarism,"[7] a term he used to define the state of

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violence and illiteracy of the gauchos of Rosas' Federalist party as opposed to the educated "civilized" elites from Buenos Aires and its suburbs.

The great influx of European immigrants mainly from Spain and Italy but also from France, England, Germany, Switzerland and Austria, made an enormous impact not only on Argentine culture but on the economy as well. Due to the efforts of immigrants, the country's industry and trade greatly expanded in the latter part of the nineteenth century. During the eighteen seventies and eighties, the export of meat and grain had substantially increased and Argentina became the principal supplier of foodstuffs to the world.[8] After 1880 some Poles, Turks, Russians and many Jews came to add to the Argentine melting pot just as they had to that of the United States. These immigrants came to form a major part of the Argentine population. A census taken in 1895 indicated that of a total population of 3,954,911 in Argentina at the time, 2,950,000 were first or second generation Europeans with Italians topping the list at 493,000. Since then Argentina came to be known as the land of the foreigner.[9]

As a result, Argentina's cultural ties with Europe remained considerably stronger than any other Latin country's. Yet in spite of the European influx, Argentina remained conservative. Bartolome Mitre who, as president of Argentina from 1862 to 1868, had established firm ties

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with the Vatican, founded the newspaper La Nación in 1870. La Nación became "the correct, conservative, Catholic spokesman for the rural society and landed gentry of Buenos Aires."[10] It has remained to this day a staple of the Argentine press. By the late nineteenth century, the country was largely controlled by its landed aristocracy which, despite a popular uprising in 1890, managed to remain in power.

During the First World War, President Hipólito Irigoyen (1916-1922) who had some Indian blood in him and unlike his predecessors, disliked foreigners, announced Argentina's neutrality which he resolutely maintained despite sinkings of Argentine ships by German U-boats and widespread sympathy for the allied cause. As a result of Argentina's neutrality, the country emerged as a creditor nation for the first time in its history,[11] and flourished economically as well as culturally in the following years. After the war, Argentina basked in one of the most liberal and expansive periods of its history.

Cultural Background

As early as 1817, Bernardino Rivadavia who was to be president from 1826 to 1827, had aspired to make of Buenos Aires "the Athens of La Plata"[12] and towards this end, founded the "Sociedad del Buen Gusto" in the large rooms of a private home.[13] But Rosas considered art "cosas de gringo"[14] although he did not object to official

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portraits, heroic representations of gauchos and scenes depicting Argentine customs. As a result, until well into the second half of the nineteenth century, art remained in private hands, restricted to a few wealthy collectors who regularly traveled to Europe, bought paintings and other objects in France, Italy and Spain, and upon their return, arranged private showings for small circles of friends.[15] While European art was avidly collected, and by the second half of the nineteenth century, French and Italian painters had opened studios in the capital, painted portraits there and trained future Argentine generations, Argentine artists were largely ignored except for those who had managed to build up a portrait clientele from among the social classes.

The fall of Rosas in 1852 was followed by an architectural boom which contributed to the development and modernization of the city as well as to an increased interest in the arts. Although there were no salons, museums or official art galleries at the time, local artists began to exhibit portraits, landscapes and genre scenes in paint supply, furniture and porcelain shops. These exhibitions were usually launched with a formal opening which would draw Buenos Aires society. Announcements and "reviews" of these exhibitions appeared in the social columns of local newspapers, usually praising the artist for the verisimilitude of his portraits.[16] One of these artists was Prilidiano

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Pueyrredón, a ranch owner whose houses and farm hands provided him with some of his favorite subjects. But there was little market at the time for genre scenes and Pueyrredón, whose economic circumstances allowed him considerable independence as an artist, also painted the portraits of his numerous friends and acquaintances from the higher echelons of society.[17]

Although in 1858 the municipal government appointed Pueyrredón as director of a committee to organize a national exhibition of paintings and sculpture focusing on the work of artists born or working in Argentina which was to culminate in the creation of a National Academy and a National Museum of Fine Arts,[18] the project was thwarted by renewed political unrest and Pueyrredón died in 1870 without seeing the realization of his dream.[19] However shortly after, in 1876, a group of artists and prominent citizens founded the Sociedad Estímulo de Bellas Artes to encourage and promote the arts. The society provided a library, a place to meet and annual juried exhibitions.[20] In 1888 the Argentine government implemented a large French exhibition as a prelude to Argentina's participation in the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition. But there did not exist a proper exhibition space and the more than four hundred works[21] to be included, had to be displayed on temporary partitions hastily erected in the rotunda of the Jardín Florida which was an open metal structure designed for fairs and

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concerts.[22]

The first group exhibition of Argentine artists did not take place until 1891 when the Sociedad de Beneficiencia, a church-affiliated organization, presented as a fund raising event[23] the work of contemporary artists of the generation of the 1880's many of whom had just returned from Europe. In 1893 a group of artists and writers founded the Salón del Ateneo[24] and four consecutive national exhibitions were held there. In addition, the Ateneo offered one of the first public programs comprising art classes, music recitals, poetry readings and lectures. But it did not survive beyond its fourth exhibition in 1896.[25]

In 1896 the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes was founded as an outgrowth of the earlier Sociedad Estímulo de Bellas artes, and the painter Eduardo Schiaffino became its first director.[26] Initially the new museum was housed on a floor of the Bon Marché on Florida Street, built in 1889 and originally intended as a gallery to house expensive stores like those of the Paris and Milan commercial galleries.[27] In 1904 the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes which, like the museum, was an outgrowth of the Sociedad Estímulo de Bellas Artes, was founded on another floor of the Bon Marché.[28]

In 1910, on the centenary of Argentina's May Revolution of 1810--the year officially adopted for the celebration of National Independence--an International

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Centenary Exhibition was organized in which France, England, Germany, Sweden, Uruguay and--ironically--Spain, participated. The 2375 works in the exhibition[29] provided the largest assembly of turn-of-the-century European styles yet to be publicly seen in Buenos Aires. The Spanish representation was particularly strong with works by Isidro Nonell, Joaquín Mir, Santiago Rusiñol, Hermenegildo Anglada-Camarasa, Ignacio Zuloaga, the latter two, residents of Paris. Art Nouveau, Symbolism, Impressionism Post-Impressionism and varying forms of academicism which in Argentina were all indiscriminately designated under the label of "Impressionism" at the time, dominated the exhibition. Included were works by the French Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard and Edouard Vuillard, drawings and watercolors by Auguste Rodin and sculpture by Antoine Bourdelle; by the Italian painters Gaetano Previati, Felice Casorati, Antonio Mancini; by the English painters Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and Sir Edward Burnes-Jones; and by the German painter Franz von Stuck.[30]

The Argentine Centenary pavilion had been brought from France--with all but four of its original fifteen murals allegorizing the sciences, the arts and labor painted by French academicians[31]--where it had served as the argentine Pavilion in the 1889 Paris Universal exposition. It was reconstructed in Buenos Aires piece by piece and was to provide the focal point for the other Centenary exhibition buildings (Fig. 1).[32] The Argentine

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representation in the Centenary included some of the artists who had shown in the 1891 exhibition at the Sociedad de Beneficiencia such as Eduardo Schiaffino and Reinaldo Giúdici with some additions,[33] whose styles were strongly influenced by Spanish Modernismo.

In September 1911 the first annual Salón Nacional de Primavera was inaugurated in the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes which had moved that year from the Bon Marché to the Argentine Centenary Pavilion.[34] Although there had been previous juried annual exhibitions, the Salón Nacional was the first official, government sponsored juried National Salon to be established. It continues today. The first Salon catalogues were illustrated with Art Nouveau cover designs similar to some of the work shown in the Centenary exhibition. This style of illustration was used well into the twenties (Fig. 2).

The establishment of national institutions around the turn-of-the-century coincided with the presence in Buenos Aires of the Nicaraguan poet, Ruben Darío who, in the late nineteenth century, had been the founder of the literary movement known as Modernismo in Spain and Latin America. Darío was disturbed by the fact that in a city of 600,000 inhabitants like Buenos Aires (the count at the turn of the century), books by native authors should not find a hundred readers.[35] Although this situation did not change appreciably until the First World War, Darío was instrumental in establishing an ambience for the

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development of modern literature and in drawing attention to native authors. This was a first step toward creating a parallel condition for the arts. Darío's presence in Buenos Aires had "galvanized literary life." It was he who sowed the seeds of literary independence from Spain. He felt that a cosmopolitan and polyglot city like Buenos Aires could no longer feel that it belonged solely to Castilian tradition when it was open to influences from all over the world. Likewise he felt that "it is not enough to have an Ateneo and an Academy . . . an artistic public is indispensable, a public which loves learning, poetry, art and the beautiful things of the spirit."[36]

Not only did Darío contribute to making Argentine intellectuals aware of their own potential, he also infused artists with a new sense of independence both as Argentinians and as individuals. The new spirit of independence he initiated prompted a group of artists to organize a Primer Salón de Recusados (First Salon of the Refused) in 1914 after they had been turned down by the Salón Nacional. The latter was notorious for its conservative stance ever since its founding in 1911. The exhibiting artists included the sculptor Agustín Riganelli and the painters Santiago Palazzo and Benito Quinquela Martín, the latter a painter of social themes and dock workers who later associated with the "Martínfierristas." This first attempt by Argentine artists at a dissident group--in an obvious emulation of the Paris Salon des

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Refusés of 1863 albeit with somewhat less dash--was not viewed kindly by the press. The exhibition was denounced not "because of any excess of audacity but rather the reverse." The reviewer found "no new direction or orientation in this art."[37]

When in 1918, the same group of artists with a few additions, founded the Salón de la Sociedad de Artistas Independientes--an outgrowth of the 1917 Sociedad Nacional de Artistas, Pintores y Escultores,[38] the reviewer for La Prensa was no more encouraging. He found no resemblance whatsoever between this exhibition and "the French of the Salon d'Automne or the Indépendents." He found the work sufficiently lacking in audacity to be acceptable "in our National Salons."[39] However despite this lack-luster beginning, an initial act of rebellion on the part of artists, whether justified or not at the time, helped to establish in Buenos Aires an atmosphere of polemic which was not to be seriously challenged again in the arts until Pettoruti's exhibition in 1924. Although these "independents" were not introducing radically new art forms, their anti-academic social themes nonetheless, defied the taste of the establishment which had undoubtedly contributed to the adverse press reviews.

The Emergence of Art Galleries

Many of the art galleries that opened before and around the turn-of-the-century had originated as

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photography studios. The Witcomb gallery which was the first to show Cubist art in Buenos Aires, was founded in 1878 as such and acquired its name when in 1880 an English photographer Alejandro Witcomb bought it and converted part of the space into an art gallery. Witcomb died in 1906 but the gallery continues to function today in another location.[40] When in 1887 Rosendo Martínez, a Spaniard, joined the Witcomb staff, he promoted Spanish art and organized a series of exhibitions which included the work of Mariano Fortuny, Ricardo Urgell, Joaquín Sorolla, Eduardo Chicharro, Santiago Rusiñol, Ramón Casas, Joaquín Mir, Darío de Regoyos, Isidro Nonell, Ignacio Zuloaga and Julio Romero de Torres. Zuloaga and Sorolla had been to Buenos Aires before 1921[41] and Romero de Torres to whom the critic and painter Marcel Frederic referred as the "sensual painter of Andalusian women,"[42] lived in Buenos Aires in 1922, exhibited at the Witcomb individually and enjoyed an overwhelming success as a portrait painter.[43] In 1925 the Witcomb featured another large exhibition of nineteenth and twentieth century Spanish artists many of whose works were already familiar from the Centenary Exhibition.[44] In 1904, five works by Picasso had been shown there including La Maja, La Toilette and Ultimos Momentos, the latter of which was sold to a Buenos Aires collector.[45] A biographical note in the exhibition catalogue referred to Picasso as one of "the most courageous Impressionists" whose pastels "have

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been the subject of heated criticism."[46] The Witcomb also exhibited the work of French Impressionists, the Barbizon school as well as academic artists, among them such artists as Claude Monet, Edouard Manet, Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley, Jean François Millet, Ferdinand Cormon, Paul Flandrin, Constantin Meunier, Camille Corot, Henri Fantin-Latour, Edmond François Daubigny, Rosa Bonheur, Henri Joseph Harpignies, who were for the most part already familiar to the Buenos Aires public since the 1888 exhibition at Jardín Florida; and the Italians Antonio Fontanesi, Antonio Mancini, Gaetano Previati and Giovanni Fattori who were not only familiar figures but commercial successes as well.[47]

Another pioneer gallery, the Müller, located just across Florida Street from the Witcomb, was founded by Fedérico Müller, a German who came to Buenos Aires in 1905 and had served as commissioner for the German pavilion at the International Centenary of 1910. Müller was instrumental in bringing German art to Buenos Aires. He did for German painting what Rosendo Martinez had for Spanish painting. In 1909 Müller organized exhibitions of the work of Max Lieberman, Franz von Stück, Ernst Bartels, Heinrich von Zügel among others in his gallery, and in 1912 and 1913, exhibitions of early twentieth century German art at the Salón del Club Alemán on Florida Street.[48]

Undoubtedly the First World War played a role in

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drawing attention to Argentine art. Even though Argentina was not directly involved in the war, Müller as a German, was black-listed and the gallery had to change its policies to focus primarily on Argentine and French art from then on.[49] Argentinians to be shown at his gallery included Jorge Bermudez, Luis Cordiviola, Carlos Ripamonte, Cesareo Bernaldo de Quirós, the latter known for his scenes of gaucho life, Martín Malharro and Fernando Fader.[50] Fader, the son of a German engineer father and a French mother, had studied in Munich from 1900 to 1904, with Heinrich von Zügel. Müller became his staunch supporter and Fader exhibited both there and at Witcomb. An example of Fader's work is Shawls from Manila (Fig. 3) which was shown and praised in the 1914 National Salon.[51] He was one of the original founders of the "Grupo Nexus," a group of Argentine Impressionists whose styles were characterized by robust impastoed brushstrokes, bearing less resemblance to the French Impressionists than to the Germans. They exhibited as a group in 1907 and 1908 at the Salón Costa.[52]

Another gallery to become involved with vanguard art in the twenties was the Van Riel founded by Franz van Riel, a journalist and photographer who had come to Buenos Aires from Italy at the turn of the century. He inaugurated his gallery in 1924 when he moved his photography studio to a new location on Florida Street.[53] The same year the Uruguayan painter and lawyer Pedro

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Figari co-founded the Asociación Amigos del Arte with a group of "select" patrons. The new gallery was to be the first not to charge its artists for exhibition space and made a point of maintaining "the broadest criteria" in its acceptance of diverse schools of painting and sculpture. In addition to its exhibitions, it provided a new meeting place, offered regular music recitals, theatrical performances, poetry readings and lectures.[54] Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Le Corbusier, José Ortega y Gasset, Ramón Gomez de la Serna, Fedérico García Lorca, Pedro Henriquez Ureña, Jules Romains and Georges Duhamel were among some of its foreign guest lecturers and the poets Leopoldo Lugones and Victoria Ocampo among the Argentinians.[55] Within a short time the gallery was to match the Witcomb for its audacious exhibition program.

Numerous other galleries and societies opened in Buenos Aires during the teens and twenties. Although some of them were of short duration, they provided further outlets for European and Argentine art. French and Argentine art could be seen at the Salon Les Fumières and l'Ecléctique, and English art at the Galerie de Londres.[56] By the early twenties the work of Maurice Utrillo, Amedeo Modigliani, André Derain, Maurice Vlaminck, Félix Valloton, Othon Friesz among others was well-known.

But prior to 1924, no Cubist work had been shown in any gallery. Katherine Dreier who spent five months in Argentina in 1919, wrote that although "there are a number

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of people who own extremely modern art, like Picasso and others, it was not my good fortune to meet them, or see examples they owned. The houses into which it was my privilege to enter, had art of which Fader was the latest expression."[57] The Picassos were in all probability those of his blue period since nothing later than the Fauves was known there at the time. Her impression of Argentina was mixed. She felt that rather than being behind the times, Argentina was remote in time and space because of its geographic location, "I never felt the news was old; . . . I had instead the feeling of the difference in time, as if one lived on another planet."[58]

Several Argentine critics offered varying explanations for the apparent chronological discrepancies between Argentine and European art at the time. The art historian Angel Osvaldo Nessi wrote that artists sought "a tradition for our art, right at the moment when countries that had one, rejected theirs." While twentieth century Europe was renouncing its traditions of millenia, Argentine artists of the vanguard "were going through the first stage. In such a contest, . . . an Argentinian--excluded by historical circumstances from the previous steps" might have otherwise been able "to match other competitors, perhaps even surpass them."[59] The critic José Lozano Mouján wrote that while "in Europe a veritable artistic anarchy reigns . . . this anarchy did not reach us" in painting.[60]

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The Flowering of the Arts

Between 1916 and 1930 Argentina was enjoying a more liberal government than it had ever had, first under Hipólito Irigoyen (1916-1922) who returned to the presidency from 1928 to 1930, then under Marcelo T. de Alvear (1922-1928). Córdova Iturburu claimed that the presence of Alvear during those years was "one of the decisive factors in creating the climate of security and peace that one breathed."[61] Furthermore Argentina had not suffered through a war nor through an agrarian revolution as had Mexico between 1910 and 1920. Enrique Anderson-Imbert described Buenos Aires during the war years as the "big circus" of the Hispano-American literary vanguard. While "the world was breaking into smithereens, . . . the Argentinians felt quite confident of the future in those years of prosperity" which was why the literary vanguard was not a political one[62] nor was its artistic vanguard political.[63]

When Irigoyen first came to power, the land-holding Oligarchy felt threatened by what it viewed as his indiscriminate support of the poor, "unstable" economic policies and capricious character. When Marcelo T. de Alvear was elected to the presidency in 1922, intellectuals and the upper middle-class felt relieved by his reassuringly solid land-holding family background, his worldliness and desirable layer of Parisian culture.[64] Alvear was a friend of intellectuals, a frequent visitor

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to the galleries and the cafes, and a supporter of the arts.[65] To have a gallery opening without his presence was unthinkable.[66] He not only encouraged artists and bought their work, but made it possible for some to travel abroad for study through government grants. It was under his presidency that new forms of art were introduced in Argentina, that numerous new periodicals were founded including Martín Fierro, and that an unprecedented number of artists traveled to Europe.

During those years a growing number of cafes came to serve as more than just meeting places for intellectuals. Editors regularly planned future issues of their periodicals on cafe terraces. Writers and artists met regularly at La Cosechera where they could also get inexpensive meals,[67] La Perla, the Aues Keller, the Royal Keller and the Richmond. In addition some enterprising artists, encouraged by the backing of critics and writers, took it upon themselves to create new centers for exhibitions, cultural activities, and workshops. Much of the arduous educational mission of establishing the ambience for an artistic community in Argentina was through their initiative.[68]

When in 1926 the Cafe Tortoni opened on the Avenida de Mayo, the cafe's owner Pedro Curuchet, a shrewd Frenchman who saw the commercial value of attracting the Buenos Aires "bohemia" as bait for wealthier patrons, offered his wine cellar space to the painter Benito

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Quinquela Martín and his friends. These promptly put together wooden benches and tables, a small stage with a red velvet curtain and an imposing grand piano, and transformed it into a club known as La Peña which means "club" or "circle." The walls were used for art exhibitions, the stage for dance and music recitals, harangues and lectures, and there was a space where patrons could dance tangos or strum a guitar.[69] In the following years many internationally known performers went there, President Marcelo T. de Alvear and his wife were among its patrons and Marinetti lectured there shortly after it opened.[70] After 1926 other "peñas" were organized under different names by other artists and writers. These clubs provided an important cohesive force for writers and painters in additon to the periodicals with which they were affiliated.

Yet despite the emergence of these more propitious conditions, in 1924 the Argentine art public and critics remained unprepared for the newer art forms and many galleries continued to show conservative art until well after 1924. Córdova Iturburu stated that a "belated Impressionism without grace or refinement infected the walls of the Salons together with a kind of academizing naturalism inherited from the last painters of the nineteenth century."[71] The critic Osvaldo Svanascini wrote that it took a "crusador" to withstand the "intolerance, egoism and pretension" of the Argentine

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ambience, and that furthermore there did "not exist a compensating form of art criticism, since even . . . the big dailies, limit themselves to journalistic commentaries."[72] During the first three decades of the century he claimed, there were few writers who offered "intelligent art criticism."[73] However new critics did emerge in the twenties who contributed to establishing an analytic approach to writing about art. These included Alfredo Chiabra Acosta who wrote for the leftist newspaper La Protesta and several journals under the pesudonym Atalaya, Leonardo Estárico, a painter and writer who contributed to the journal Crítica, Cayetano Córdova Iturburu and Alberto Prebisch, an architect and writer, the latter two affiliated with Martín Fierro. All of these writers had lived in Europe for varying periods of time and were for this reason, better equipped to bring to their reviews more universally knowledgeable viewpoints. However there still remained in Argentina a problem of definition and terminology which was not to be completely resolved until after the mid twenties.

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NOTES

[1]Francisco A. Palomar, Primeros salones de arte en Buenos Aires, (Buenos Aires: Imprenta del Atlántico, 1962), p. 61; Emir Rodriguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1978), p. 192.

[2]Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America, 3rd ed., with the assistance of Helen Baldwin Herring, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), p. 730.

[3]Ibid., p. 148. Its founding was immortalized in a poem by Jorge Luis Borges "The Mythical Founding of Buenos Aires" first published in 1929 in Cuadernos de San Martín (San Martin Copybook), which ends with the affectionate lines: "Hard to believe Buenos Aires had any beginning. / I feel it to be as eternal as air and water" (Jorge Luis Borges. Selected Poems 1923-1967, ed. with an intro. and notes by Norman Thomas di Giovanni, 4th ed., [New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1979]).

[4]Herring, pp. 198-199.

[5]Ibid., p. 693.

[6]Ibid., pp. 703-714.

[7]Ibid., p. 726. During his exile in Chile, Sarmiento wrote Civilization and Barbarism first published in 1868 in the United States and reprinted as Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants: or Civilization and Barbarism, biographical sketch of the author by Mrs. Horace Mann, (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1971) in which he defended education, "civilization" against the "barbarism" of Rosas and the illiterate.

[8]Ibid., p. 731.

[9]Ibid., pp. 730, n. 7 and 733, n. 1.

[10]Ibid., p. 723, n. 2.

[11]Ibid., p. 740. Irigoyen was accused of being pro-German, but Hubert Herring attributes Irigoyen's stand to a "tough pro-Argentine nationalism" rather than to sympathy for Germany.

[12]Marco Sibelius, "The Beginnings of Argentine Painting," Inter-America, English ed., (New York: II, 1918), pp. 82-87.

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[13]Ibid., p. 85; Herring p. 698. Rivadavia also founded the University of Buenos Aires in 1821.

[14]Eduardo Schiaffino, La pintura y la escultura argentina, (Buenos Aires: Edición del autor, 1933), p. 325; the term "gringo" was derogatory and applied to all foreigners.

[15]Sibelius, p. 83; Vicente Quesada, Memorias de un viejo, (Buenos Aires: Ediciónes Argentinas Solar, 1942), p. 161; Arminda d'Onofrio, La época y el arte de Prilidiano Pueyrredón, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudaméricana, 1944, pp. 82, 109-110.

[16]An example of this type of journalism can be found in a review of an exhibition of portraits by Prilidiano Pueyrredón in La Tribuna, (15 April 1859) quoted in d'Onofrio, p. 72.

[17]d'Onofrio, pp. 82-87, 102-103.

[18]Ibid., p. 80.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Schiaffino, pp. 239-240.

[21]Palomar, p. 74.

[22]The works exhibited were by salon painters such as Alfred Philippe Roll, Ferdinand Cormon, Constantin Emile Meunier, Henri Gervex, Louis Français, Olivier de Penne, Hyppolite Flandrin, Brissot de Warville, Boutet de Movel, Louise Abbema, and by academic sculptors such as Albert Carrier-Belleuse and Gustave Michel. A catalogue was issued and the exhibition was opened night and day in the hopes of inviting great interest and making sales, but the exhibition turned out to be a "disaster" for the artists. See Schiaffino, p. 284.

[23] Ibid., p. 300.

[24]Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico City: Editorial Pormaca, S.A., 1965), p. 49.

[25]Palomar gives the years for the four exhibitions as occurring in 1893, 1894, 1895, and 1896 on p. 99, but on p. 89 he gives 1897 as the year of the last Ateneo exhibition.

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[26]Brughetti gives the year of its inauguration as 1895, p. 49; Palomar stated that the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes was founded in 1895 but inaugurated in 1896, p. 65. The latter date had been cited here for the official opening of the museum.

[27]Palomar, p. 65. The present location of the museum dates from the thirties.

[28]José Lozano Mouján, Figuras del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: A. García Santos, 1928), p. 19. According to Lozano Mouján, part of the academy was to be converted into a School of Decorative Arts with workshops for studying methods of stained glass, mural decoration, stage design along with the regular courses. The first national academy to be founded in the Western hemisphere was in Mexico City in 1785.

[29]Palomar, p. 122.

[30]Ibid., pp. 119-124.

[31]Schiaffino, pp. 295-298; allegories of agriculture, astronomy, physics and sculpture among others were painted by Alfred Roll, Ferdinand Cormon, Luc Olivier Merson and Jules Lefebvre.

[32] Palomar, pp. 119-120.

[33]Ibid., p. 122; besides Eduardo Schiaffino and Reinaldo Giúdici, the painters included Carlos Pablo Ripamonte, Cesáreo Bernaldo de Quirós, Pio Collivadino, Jorge Bermúdez, Walter de Navazio, Eugenio Daneri and Ernesto de la Cárcova. The sculptors included Luis Falcini, Arturo Dresco and Zonza Briano.

[34]Lozano Mouján. p. 20.

[35]Jean Franco, The Modern Culture of Latin America, rev. ed., (Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1970), p. 30. According to Palomar, Ruben Darío and the Argentine Symbolist poet Leopoldo Lugones who later associated with Martín Fierro, gave poetry readings at the Ateneo. See Palomar, p. 99.

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[36]Franco, p. 53. Franco explains that Buenos Aires could never completely break its cultural ties with Spain, that in spite of political independence from Spain, the continuing cultural identification in Latin America with Spain and the Mediterranean world provided a cultural identification and a bond that dramatized the difference with North America as Anglo-Saxon descended from England. Katherine Dreier who traveled to Buenos Aires in 1919, gives her impression of Buenos Aires' internationalism in 1919:

> "Besides leaving her impression on the schools of Buenos Aires, France also has left a great impression on the arts and letters, and, as everywhere in the world, she has bound the women to her with ties of affection through her lead in the world of fashion. In architecture, though the French dominate, Germany too has left her impress. This may also be said in the world of music where Italy comes in for her share as well. This may also be said in the world and the best and only art store in Buenos Aires is the work of a German [probably the Müller Gallery]."

Nonetheless, she noted "the country which has left the deepest mark is Spain . . ." (Katherine S. Dreier, Five Months in the Argentine. [New York: Frederic Fairchild Sherman, 1920): 219-220]).

[37]La Nación, 8 Oct. 1914, quoted in Palomar, p. 135.

[38]Palomar, p. 116.

[39]Las Prensa, 31 August 1918, quoted in Palomar, p. 116. The artists in this exhibition included Luis Perlotti, Adolfo Montero, Roberto Cascarini, Luis Emilio Radice, Américo Panozzi, José and Octavio Fioravanti, Orlando Stagnaro, Facio Hebecquer and the Peruvian painter José Sabogal. These artists focused on social themes.

[40]Palomar, pp. 81-82.

[41]Excellent quality color plates of their work were reproduced in the luxury magazine Plus Ultra in 1921, n. p.

[42]M. Frederic, El año artistico argentino 1926, (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1927), p. 164.

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[43]Miguel Salcedo Hierro, El Museo Julio Romero de Torres, (León: Editorial Everest, 1973), p. 13; see also Emiliano M. Aguilera, Romero de Torres, (Madrid: Patronato del Museo Municipal de Madrid, n. d.), p. 43.

[44]Eduardo Eiriz Maglione, Críticas pintura y escultura, (Buenos Aires: Libreria "El Ateneo," 1927), p. 95.

[45]Palomar, p. 84. Palomar does not identify the collector. The titles of the works were listed as given, some in French, others in Spanish.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid., pp. 85-86.

[48]Ibid., p. 125.

[49]Ibid., p. 126.

[50]Ibid., p. 127.

[51]Antonio Lascano González, Fernando Fader, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1966), p. 24.

[52]The other Nexus artists were Pio Collivadino, Cesareo Bernaldo de Quirós, Carlos Ripamonte, Alberto Rossi, Benito Lynch and Arturo Dresco. Palomar, p. 87. Malharro now considered to be as one of the first Argentine Impressionists, originally belonged to the group, but he left because of differences and rivalries. See José A. García Martínez, Malharro, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 6. Alberto H. Collazo also gives biographical information on Fader in Fader, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 3.

[53]Palomar, p. 144.

[54]Ibid., p. 146. Figari's part in co-founding the association is mentioned in Córdova-Iturburu's article "La 'Casa del Arte'" in Martín Fierro, 25 July 1924, p. 5; an article entitled "Asociación Amigos del Arte" also appeared in Proa of August 1924, p. 28.

[55]Palomar, pp. 144-146.

[56]The adoption of the French spelling and French names was common. Palomar, pp. 143-144.

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[57]Katherine S. Dreier, Five Months in the Argentine, (New York: Frederic Fairchild Sherman, 1920), p. 100. One of the "modern" collections to which she was referring may have been the Santamarina collection which has since been dispersed.

[58]Dreier, p. 101. She spoke of a "whim" that helped her understand "why thought arrived so much later in the Argentine, and which gave me greater interest in the much talked of aero-service which is being established between London and Buenos Aires. In this service they expect to reduce the distance of three weeks to four days. When once this physical difficulty of time and space is eliminated, Argentine, I believe, will be moved by the spirit which is to me the centre of the world, and which is drawing its forces from all over the universe, into itself."

[59]Angel Osvaldo Nessi, Situación de la pintura argentina, (La Plata - Buenos Aires: by the Author 1956), p. 13.

[60]Quoted in Cayetano Córdova-Iturburu, 80 años de pintura argentina, intro. by Angel Bonomi, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Librería La Ciudad, c. 1978), pp. 40-41.

[61]Idem., Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 34.

[62]Enrique Anderson-Imbert, Spanish-American Literature, 2 vols., 2nd ed., (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969), vol. II, p. 463.

[63]This was not due to the absence of socially and politically committed writers and painters. There were quite a few of them. In the twenties they organized themselves into a group known as "Boedo," named for a street in a proletarian neighborhood. The opposing group was the "Florida" to which the Martín Fierro group belonged which was considered "elitist" by the Boedo people. The two groups and their confrontation will be discussed further in Chapter IV. See also Adolfo Prieto, Antología de Boedo y Florida, (Córdoba, Arg.: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1964) for a discussion of these groups.

[64]Herring, p. 741.

[65]Frederic, p. 176.

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[66]Horacio Butler, La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1966), p. 90; Butler tells an anecdote about his experience with this situation. When he had just returned from Europe in 1924 to exhibit at Asociación Amigos del Arte, he was urged by the gallery's directors to go to the Casa Rosada [the name of the government palace] and personally invite the president to his opening, as was the custom. Butler felt very uncomfortable wondering what his non-conformist Paris companions would think of him if they could see him in this situation "betraying the movement with such a resigned attitude." After a few minutes in the presidential office waiting room, he escaped downstairs "like a burglar" and experienced immense relief upon reaching the street. He celebrated his opening without President Alvear's presence.

[67]Abraham Haber, La pintura argentina; vanguardia y tradición, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1975), p. 3.

[68]Schiaffino, p. 386.

[69]Andrés Muñóz, Vida de Quinquela Martín, (Buenos Aires: by the author, 838 Avellaneda, 1958), pp. 130-131. The intellectuals who had formerly proved ruinous to the owner of La Cosechera by occupying the best terrace tables and drinking a small cup of coffee "for each two hours of conversation" could now sip coffee or wine without hurry. The results were so appealing to Curuchet that he composed a sonnet in French: "Ici on peut causer, dire boire avec mesure, / et donner de son savoir faire la mesure. / Mais seuls l'art et l'esprit, / ont le droit de sans mesure se manifester ici."

[70]Ibid., pp. 132-134; see also Ulyses Petit de Murat, "La Peña del Cafe Tortoni," Revista Gente, (September 1973), pp. 32-37 and Murat, La noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), pp. 209, 215, 219-220.

[71]Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), p. 22; [in this case the title was capitalized].

[72]Osvaldo Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 20.

[73]Ibid., p. 37. Svanascini cited the critic Julio Rinaldini as one of very few exceptions. Rinaldini wrote for the periodical Nosotros from 1914 to 1921 and according to Svanascini had been neglected and not credited for his work.

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CHAPTER II

THE "ISMS" IN ARGENTINA

In the sixties, Córdova Iturburu wrote that the styles of the painters who collaborated with Martín Fierro ranged from "the very personal Cubo-Futurism of Pettoruti to the ingenousness of Norah Borges . . . the "Nabi" sensorialism of Figari and the poetic Expressionism of Xul Solar."[1] But these terms were not in common use in Buenos Aires prior to the twenties. When they did enter the language of art, it was sparingly at first and with meanings modified by time and place. The two main keys to Argentine terminology of the twenties are first, that much of it derives from French and German art critical language of the twenties as expressed by Maurice Raynal, the Purists and Herwarth Walden, and not that of the pre-war period with which Argentine writers were barely familiar; second, much of the terminology they used and the way in which they applied French and Italian terms, was sifted through, and colored by, the post-war literary and art language of Spain.

Before 1924, "Impressionism" was the only European term used to describe a vast spectrum of styles ranging from French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism to Spanish Modernismo.[2] Critics described work according to subject, mood or brushwork, and used the traditional

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"still-life," "figure" and "landscape" classifications in exhibition reviews. Although Argentinians had heard about Cubism and Futurism through articles some time prior to seeing the corresponding work, it was not until Pettoruti's exhibition in 1924 that they were confronted with the need for a language to accomodate the new art forms which had not originated on home ground. When European art terminology did reach Argentina, "Futurism" was the term most often used because, although Argentinians had never seen Futurist art, many knew Futurist literature. For the public at large, the term was most often used in a derogatory sense as it had been in the United States, not so much to denote an art of the "future" as to signify an art beyond reality and reason, even "extra planetary."

When critics did begin to use terminology, they used it cautiously at first and there was little agreement as to its application. On the occasion of Pettoruti's exhibition, the critic for Acción wrote that "it is the first time that an exhibition of those new tendencies classified under the name Futurism, Cubism, Expressionism, etc., is taking place in Buenos Aires."[3] But he carefully avoided applying any of those terms to Pettoruti's work. In 1924 Atalaya referred to Pettoruti as a "Cubist"[4] while in 1927 José Lozano Mouján called him a "Futurist."[5] Even those critics sympathetic to the new art, and the "Martínfierristas" themselves, used little or no

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terminology in their writing. Xul Solar in an article of 1924 on Pettoruti does not use a single standard art term,[6] nor does Alberto Prebisch in an article of the same year on Curatella-Manes. Rather, Prebisch, discusses the artist's going beyond nature (superación de la naturaleza) "which alone constitutes for him [the artist] a point of departure towards an arrangement of forms sculpturally harmonized, that is, architectonically forming an independent organism, master of its own life which is indispensable for any work of art."[7] For many other critics, Pettoruti's and Curatella-Manes' art remained an enigma which shook the art critical community from its previously secure position.

Many local critics did not adjust to the changes that were taking place in the arts in Argentina without reservations and skepticism. Those exposed for the first time to the art of Pettoruti, Curatella-Manes and a growing number of artists who manifested characteristics of Expressionism, saw these forms interchangeably and indiscriminately as mere distortions of reality and as marks of "European decadence." Lozano Mouján felt that although "the theories proclaimed in the old world by those of the so-called new sensibility have interested me many times . . . I am convinced that today one frequently exploits the good faith of the public which finds itself disoriented."[8] Other critics attempted to explain these forms to themselves as well as to their readers. The

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critic of La Prensa explained that

> This principle of plastic unity in which Futurism is founded, and which has its archetypical expression in the school known as Cubist, is nothing more than the immediate application to painting of the simplest Euclidean theorems--therefore, classical geometry--according to which any flat surface immediately generates a volumetric figure if we turn it around along one of its axes.[9]

It is evident that these interpretations were not those of earlier European Cubist and Futurist notions of a fragmented and dynamic fourth dimensional space but rather one sharing characteristics with the Purist school of the twenties.[10]

An important influence on Argentine art criticism at the time was that of Herwarth Walden who published an article "Cubismo, futurismo, expresionismo" in the August 1924 issue of Proa which Jorge Luis Borges translated into Spanish. Walden declared that all formulas in art were unimportant and that all classifications in contemporary art were expressions of a same manifestation which he called Expressionism. He further criticized those who needed "to give to a mountain the attributes of the Virgin" in order to "find beauty" (referring to the Jungfrau) but "the mountain is as independent of the Virgin as a painting representing the Virgin is. The mountain can be a mountain and the painting can be a painting with or without the Virgin."[11] Such exortations to look at art in a new way were directed to the readers of Proa and Martín Fierro with increasing frequency from

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mid 1924 on. The gradual elimination of specific designations of art as Cubist or Futurist dates back at least to 1915 when Apollinaire had written that "We do not give a hoot about formulas and words ending in 'ism' but artists interest us to the highest degree."[12]

As a result of exposure to post-war criticism, considerable confusion existed in the use of the terms Cubism and Futurism when Argentine critics applied them. In order to understand Futurism better La Prensa's critic explained

> One would have to observe carefully the work of Picasso in his summary periods and especially in the many still-lifes which he produced from 1914 on, . . . which can already be conceptualized like the academic works of Futurism . . . . from the esthetic and ideological point of view, Futurism remains an enigma, even though there are those who would nonetheless claim that it would not be surprising if within twenty years, it definitely triumphed in the world . . . .[13]

Marcel Frederic, a French-born painter and critic who moved to Argentina in 1908, wrote in the mid twenties that Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes "were not indifferent to the subversive revisions known as the 'vanguard'." He explained that the dividing line between Futurism and Cubism, "according to a practitioner of the first," is that

> That one is dynamic, this one is inert. While Futurism defines itself by a logical action and an intimate animating force, Cubism, lacks rules, is devoid of lyricism and has no will. Both are in accord in their common desire, to disrupt historic continuity which is classified in more or less

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homogenous cycles.[14]

Although Frederic showed no liking for either Cubism or Futurism, he expressed a clear preference for the latter whose one virtue he perceived as its "animating force." It was this rather than its formal aspects that made the idea of Futurism intriguing to Argentinians even though disconcerting.

In 1926 "Cubism" and "Futurism" were still applied interchangeably. Frederic interpreted "the architectonic elements" which sculpture took from the environment and in which an "esthetic realization" had to exist, as Futurist components.[15] Only much later did Córdova Iturburu interpret Cubism in its Purist sense as "an attempt to reduce painting to its most exclusive specific elements, to its essential values" with an "identical purpose as that of the revolution of Le Corbusier."[16] One should note that Amedée Ozenfant also saw in Cubism the possibility of "ridding plastic language of superfluous expressions."[17]

The meaning of these European terms became clearer to critics generally in Argentina after 1926 through articles published in Martín Fierro by Maurice Raynal, Marcelle Auclair, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and others, all of whom with the exception of Marinetti, wrote in the post-war language of Purism. The fact that Argentinians identified with Futurism more readily than with Cubism was further spurred by the greater number of articles on

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Futurism than on Cubism. As early as 1924 articles on Futurism appeared in Martín Fierro, for instance Piero Illari's "Representación gráfica y cromatizada de los estados de animo."[18] Although articles on Cubism also appeared in Martín Fierro, they were fewer in number and less appealing to the imagination. But perhaps the most important reason for the greater popularity of Futurism as a concept rather than Cubism was the overwhelming proportion of Argentinians of Italian descent which made Futurism the natural choice more by national allegiance than because of esthetic or ideological necessity. After 1926, some Argentine critics began writing about Futurism with more aplomb. That year Frederic wrote that the rationalism that followed earlier forms of art "conjur up 'lines of force' and 'plastic states of mind'."[19]

The Introduction of European Avant-Garde Terminology

"Cubism" and "Futurism" as art terms first made a notable appearance in Argentine newspapers in 1923 through articles sent to them from Europe by Pettoruti who was a prolific letter writer. Throughout his eleven years in Europe, he kept up correspondence not only with his family in La Plata--South-East of Buenos Aires--but also with his journalist friends. At the time, Argentine journalists merely quoted European texts without concerning themselves for their meaning.[20] The first serious discussion of terminology by an Argentinian appeared in an essay,

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Pettoruti, Futurismo, Cubismo, Expresionismo, Sintetismo, Dadaísmo written by Alberto Candioti, the Argentine Consul in Berlin, on the occasion of Pettoruti's exhibition at Der Sturm in Berlin in 1923, and published simultaneously in Berlin and Buenos Aires.[21] Probably with a view towards a forthcoming exhibition Pettoruti planned for Buenos Aires, Candioti directed his essay to an audience he knew would never understand Pettoruti's work without at least some prior acquaintance with its equivalent terminology, although he too, like other Argentine critics, refrained from applying any of it himself. Consequently his essay consists of an interpretation of terms rather than a discussion of Pettoruti's work. Only three out of thirteen pages are devoted to a very subjective appraisal of the artist.[22]

Candioti was a product of post-war German art criticism, particularly of the writings of Herwarth Walden, and by extension, Apollinaire who in 1913 had contributed to the periodical Der Sturm.[23] Some of Candioti's comments were ambiguous. On the one hand he praised Pettoruti for his audacity and courage, but on the other, he warned younger Argentine artists against taking up vanguard styles if they did not fully understand them.[24]

Candioti explained Cubism as an "integral representation, which does not imitate objects in a servile way, and does not limit itself to a determined

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subject; Cubism can represent in the limited space of the canvas an indefinite series of abstract and plastic concepts." The difference between Cubism and ancient painting he wrote, is that Cubism leaves behind "the art of imitation in order to become an art of conception which tends to elevate itself to the level of creation," and he went on to enumerate the four categories of Cubism (Scientific, Physical, Orphic and Instinctive) defined by Apollinaire in 1912.[25]

Candioti devoted considerable space to Futurism beginning with passages quoted from Marinetti's 1909 manifesto (published in Le Figaro), followed by his own interpretations of the movement as it applied first to Europe then to Latin America. In Europe, he wrote,

> It is not only a school, an artistic tendency, but much more: it is a whole social aspiration, a vehement desire for perfection, to come to CONSTRUCT the superman, but, as Marinetti says, without the Hellenism with which Nietzsche charged his vision of the future man. Futurism wishes to construct a man-action, a man-machine, violent in his thrust, war-like in his struggle, reckless and thoughtless.[26]

He felt that while in Italy Futurism "lifted the spirit of the people leading them to war" and by organizing itself into a Futurist political party[27] "it carried out the conquest of the government with the Futurist Mussolini at the head," in other countries, Futurism manifested itself

> Solely in an intellectual manner, without taking on the role of social reformer as it did in its country of origin . . . . Be it as it may, Futurism has two

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> virtues, very big ones to be sure: its eagerness for struggle and work, its creative restlessness. Its candidness in speaking truths in its eagerness to correct errors, makes it seem disagreeable, but in this sense it is extremely moralizing."[28]

While Futurism is recognized in Europe and the United States, it is still denied in Latin America for two reasons:

> First because they don't know for certain of what it consists, and second, and this is the most important reason, because Futurism is not applicable in Latin america except in the single aspect of its energetic and radical program: its love of activity. The rest, the love of violence, the passion for war, the denial of family and love, the aversion to the feminine woman, the invitation to sterility, can perhaps be understood in Europe, where the overabundance of population generates a fierce struggle for existence and makes understandable the wars of conquest, the selfishness in relations between the sexes, the voluntary sterilizations . . . but in Latin America fortunately, the problems are different and for this reason social Futurism cannot and must not prosper there. Conversely, it is to be desired that an intellectual movement, intelligently directed, shakes up young spirits, stirs them to action, getting rid of the apathy of interminable siestas and the debilitating somnolence of nights wasted in the cafe, poisoning their bodies with alcohol and subjecting their spirit to cheap verbal vulgarities.[29]

Candioti emphasized the fact that "the problems of our race in our continent are different from those of Europe," and the moment had come to stop being "imitators to become creators."[30] His didactic appraisal of the virtues and pitfalls of Futurism was clearly directed to the young intellectuals of Latin America: "The physical and intellectual apathy of the majority of Latin American youth must convert itself into action through the whip of RESTLESSNESS in order to conquer the supreme beauty, the

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supreme love and the supreme creative activity."[31]

The focus on night and its attendant lack of constructive action was emphasized by Candioti in his discussion of "Inquietismo," a term of his own invention to describe a more appropriate alternative to Futurism for Argentina's particular needs. He viewed the state of Inquietismo meaning restlessness or disquiet, as an antidote to Latin America's "denial of the sun" which offers so much to them, but instead they sneak off into

> Silent and placid shadows, in order to sing inocuous and childish serenades to the moon, while at the same time looking at her in ecstasy; it [Latin America] discovers in her pallor, mysterious worlds and boasts of the inaccessible grandeur of the COUNTRY OF FANTASY which it thinks she possesses because it dreams it in its day dreams."[32]

In his discussion of Inquietismo, he exorted young artists and intellectuals to look "always ahead, always to the future", but also to continue turning

> Their eyes prudently towards the past in order to better understand the present, and to walk with a sure step towards the future. They must look to the past to find inspiration it it, to the future to give actuality, adapting the inspiration which we have drawn from the past, to our mentality of today.[33]

The notion of looking to the future without forgetting one's past was echoed in the manifesto formulated by Oliverio Girondo and published in the fourth issue of Martín Fierro in May 1924.[34]

On the other hand, Candioti viewed Expressionism less favorably. Paraphrasing Herwarth Walden's words from the latter's recently published catalogue Die Neue

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Malerei, Candioti explained that "Expressionism is not a style, but a concept of the world; it is a concept of the senses and not of objects."[35] However he revealed some antagonism to Expressionism in his discussion of Kandinsky as the "creator of this school and whom the Germans of the vanguard consider the master of ABSOLUTE PAINTING." He noted Kandinsky's use of color and line to produce "musical sensations" but felt that "before his MUSICAL PAINTINGS one experiences no other sensation than that of being before work owed to the childish whim of a bad student who takes pleasure in doodling on the pages of his books while the professor teaches the lesson."[36] He concluded that "anyone who has seen Pettoruti's work exhibited at Der Sturm (in 1923) and has compared it to that of other vanguard artists would have noted the superiority of our young painter."[37] Pettoruti who shared Candioti's dislike of Expressionism saw it as the result of "the excesses produced by the war."[38]

Unlike Expressionism, Candioti considered Synthetism as a means for Latin Americans to do with their local cultures what Gauguin had done with Brittany and the South Seas. At the time Synthetism had several different meanings. Candioti used it specifically in its Post-Impressionist context. He praised it as an antidote to the "exaggerations of Monet, who painted Hay Stacks entitled 10, 10'15, 10'30, 10'45" and to those who sought only "the impressions of the moment." Conversely

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Synthetism sought permanence and purity through primitiveness such as the art of the blacks and authochthonous American Indian art: "In reality, all primitive painting is Synthetic, and furthermore it is endowed with great expressive value . . . The art of the Calchaquí [a North Argentine tribe of Indians] and all the other authochthonous people of America, are highly synthetic."[39]

European Terms and the "Isms" in Argentina

In 1924, within a few months of the publication of Candioti's pamphlet, the poet and "Martínfierrista," Ricardo Güiraldes published a short monograph on Pettoruti, 13 obras. Emilio Pettoruti, in which he defined many of the same terms. His title page, set up like a poem with the words "FUTURISMO," "EXPRESIONISMO," "CUBISMO," "CONSTRUCTIVISMO," "SINTETISMO," ". . . ISMO," ". . .ISMO" spread diagonally down the page,[40] was similar to, and probably derived from, the form used by Vicente Huidobro in his poem "Tour Eiffel" in which musical notes "do," "re," "mi," etc. rise on the page in the shape of a staircase. Huidobro's poem was published in Spain in the teens and was known in Argentina.[41] Güiraldes eliminated capital letters throughout his text but unlike Huidobro, used some punctuation.

Although this monograph was written in a metaphorical literary style popular with the

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"Martiñfierrista" writers, along with a blend of mystical references and fantasy, it was clearly modeled on Candioti's essay and like Candioti but in more straightforward terms, Güiraldes exorted young artists and intellectuals to catch up with the present "anticipated by clocks and calendars."[42] His definition of Futurism had a touch of parody, spoofing Candioti's cautious definition of Inquietismo:

> FUTURISMO. there are those who paint a face on the back of their neck and walk backwards in order to resolve the problem of progress . . . . since that day I think of the excellence of futurism with the face in front--to dig more deeply into truth and beauty and I think of the impotence of futurism with the face in the back--merely to thwart what has been accomplished.[43]

But in spite of Güiraldes' satirical treatment of those who would use Futurism to "walk backwards," like Candioti, he shared in the notion of using a culture's heritage as a source in art, and expressed it in his definition of Cubism:

> CUBISMO. some ancient religions said: god geometrizes. the significance of numbers might go beyond that of the brush but how can one make a sudden shift to abstraction without dragging along on one's moving heels the clay of a concrete past?[44]

Aside from the obvious Purist tone of his definition, Güiraldes' cryptic reference to the significance of numbers and geometry as a means to "go beyond" derives from Spanish Ultraism (Ultra means to surpass or go beyond) brought to Buenos Aires by Jorge Luis Borges in 1921, and also indicates a Pythagorean interpretation.[45]

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Cubism for him represented a means to order and geometrical structure in a mystical as well as a physical sense.

His discussion of "ISMO" begins with a question:

> What does an ismo have in its favor if not its realization in a work or in an individuality? . . . ismos became effective in some who were not istas. istas group themselves together. the creator cannot be anywhere but in the center. of the groups those who survive are those who have lived because it is necessary to have lived in order to survive. what remains then are names, works. the theory is not interchangeable.

He then praised Pettoruti for being "an individuality living in the present because he survives out of a past" and found in his work "an extraordinary synthesis" in the sense of past and present.[46] "Ismos" became a catch-all term that gained popularity in Spain during the war and got to Argentina by way of the poets. It was used by Ramón Gomez de la Serna who later wrote a book entitled Ismos first published in Madrid in 1931.[47] As was the case with Herwarth Walden, Güiraldes' reduction of art terminology to a single general term can be traced to Apollinaire's reference to the "isms" in 1915.[48]

"Synthesis" like "Futurism" was a more favored term in Argentina. It has appeared frequently in Futurist literature and in titles of art works from 1912 on in Europe[49] and found a willing audience in Buenos Aires. In 1921 Lozano Mouján had described Figari's style as "synthetic"[50] and Candioti found that in a portrait Pettoruti had painted of Xul Solar, "in spite of the

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synthetism" that dominates in the painting, "it bears a great resemblance to the original."[51] From a literary point of view Jorge Luis Borges saw Synthetism as embodying several aspects of the "new modes," a pulling together of may things into a single work. In 1921 he defined the Spanish post-war characteristics in art and poetry--which emerged as Ultraism--as a "synthesis of two or more images in one, which thus enlarges its capacity for suggestion."[52] Borges' interpretation corresponded of course to his advocation of the use of the metaphor in writing.

Güiraldes wrote about Synthesis in Futurist terms as a synthesis of object with time and space rather than in Candioti's Symbolist sense:

> Why this urge for synthesis? why complicate our understanding with summaries of objects and emotions? it would be like asking trains, automobiles, translatlantics and airplanes why by reducing distances through their velocity, they have changed our unit of time. it would be like asking why today we prefer rapidity to the lingering, the light-weight to the heavy. today, we do not confuse the augmenting with the powerful. boxing matches (something everyone understands) are defined by the efficiency of a single blow. we are evolving . . . , in favor of efficiency in speed. why struggle along with all of yesterday's dead weight against the possibility of tomorrow?[53]

Güiraldes' metaphorical statement also contains some of the themes expressed in the Martín Fierro manifesto which Güiraldes signed, in which Martín Fierro finds itself "more comfortable in a modern transatlantic than in a Renaissance palace."[54] The notion of compression of time

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and space through travel metaphors, and the preference for the light-weight over the pull of gravity were frequent themes among the writers.[55]

Other words such as "prism" or "prismatic" and "constructive" came to be in common usage in Argentine art criticism from 1924 on. A review of Pettoruti's 1923 Der Sturm exhibition was published in the La Plata newspaper El Argentino in which the critic quoting from an article that appeared in Der Sturm, wrote that "what there is especially in all the work of Pettoruti, abstract as it is, even though it is a matter of simple prisms with a constructive end, is the plasticity which lends life to the dynamism of the lines."[56] In 1926 Marcel Frederic referred to Curatella-Manes' sculpture as "prismatic."[57] The word had of course undergone a change of meaning after the war. In 1913 Apollinaire had written that "Delaunay believed that if a simple color really determined its complement, it does so not be breaking up light into its components but by evoking all the colors of the prism at once . . . ." But Apollinaire's comment focused on color[58] whereas in Argentina the word referred not to the spectrum colors but to the multi-faceted geometric shape of the prism itself. The image of the prism was used by the Ultraists both in Spain and in Argentina to denote the new complexity of life and language as compared to the single facet of mirror imagery. Eduardo González Lanuza wrote about the prism for Martín Fierro in 1925 in

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precisely those terms,[59] and used it as the title of a book of poems, Prismas. It was also the name of a magazine he had directed and co-founded in 1921 with Borges.

Alternate Terminology and the Spanish Connection

Although Argentine critics did adopt the language of Cubism and Futurism as well as other terms, they preferred more general references such as "arte de renovación," "nuevas tendencias," "tendencias avanzadas" and "ultramoderno," which had their most immediate sources in Spain. Córdova Iturburu published an article in El Hogar in January 1925 entitled "Las nuevas tendencias en la pintura."[60] By far the most frequently used term in Spain by 1915 was "vanguardia" to define the great diversity of styles that were to be seen there during the war. Spain had become an active center of vanguard activity during the war years as many artists from other countries moved there as war exiles. Vanguard art was first introduced there in 1912 at the Dalmau Gallery in Barcelona where the work of Jean Metzinger, Albert Gleizes, Marie Laurencin, Juan Gris, Marcel Duchamp, Joaquín Torres-García and a group of Polish artists was introduced.[61] Other artists whose work was frequently exhibited in Barcelona and Madrid during the war included the Uruguayan Rafael Barradas, later to become active with the Ultraists, the Mexican Diego Rivera, Francis Picabia,

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Jacques Lipchitz, Pablo Picasso and especially Robert and Sonia Delaunay.[62] Some of these artists illustrated for the numerous vanguard journals that emerged in Spain during and after the war such as Alfar, Tableros, Helix and Reflector.[63]

In Madrid, vanguard artists received the support and encouragement of writers, particularly of the young Guillermo de Torre and Ramón Gomez de la Serna. The latter had organized an exhibition entitled "Pintores Integros" in 1915 near the Cafe Pombo where he regularly held his literary meetings.[64] In 1916 the municipal government of Barcelona held an exhibition of French Cubist work directed by Ambroise Vollard which had included Diego Rivera and Joaquín Torres-García.[65] Knowledge of this vanguard reached Argentina through Norah and Jorge Luis Borges who had lived in Spain right after the war.

The Spanish Diccionario enciclopédico Espasa of 1978 defines "vanguardismo" as the "generic name used to designate certain artistic tendencies, . . . such as Cubism, Ultraism, etc. with the intention of renewal, of advance and exploration."[66] The term had gained popularity early and was applied to the previous modernist literary movement in Argentina of 1893 to 1914 as "the first vanguard."[67] The notion that in order to have a vanguard one needed an "enemy" was the most important catalyst for the use of the term among the writers and

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artists. In Argentina as in Spain the literary and artistic vanguard of the twenties came to represent the rejection of the earlier Modernismo introduced by Ruben Darío, which had come to be associated with French Symbolism and Impressionism.[68] In Argentina, the term invariably referred to a literary or artistic manifestation that rejected a previously established "enemy," the Modernismo of Leopoldo Lugones in poetry for instance and the "Impressionists" in art. "Arte de renovación" was used to mean the same thing. Marcel Frederic, in a review of the 1926 annual Salón Nacional found evidence of "the renewals sustained in the big centers of Europe" in the exhibition.[69]

Although "Cubism" as a term was known and had been defined in Spain, it was so briefly, and was not in popular usage since the Spanish Cubists were in France and not Spain. The writer José María Junoy who lectured on Cubism in Bilbao in 1912, perceived it as "linguistic meditations" suggesting a familiarity with Apollinaire's Les peintres cubistes known at the time as Méditations esthétiques of the same year, but not published until 1913. Cubism was also the subject of an article and a book by Junoy, Arte y artistas, both published in Madrid in 1912.[70] In Spain as in Argentina, Futurism rather than Cubism was the more popularly used term.

One of the reasons why Futurism was better known than Cubism in Buenos Aires was due to the fact that it

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was written about in Spain from 1910 on, and its meaning in Argentina as a catalyst to action was directly derived from Spanish interpretations. Ramón Gomez de la Serna had brought literary Futurism to Spain in 1909 and translated Marinetti's 1909 manifesto soon after it was first published in Le Figaro in Paris. In 1910 he also published a "Futurist Proclamation to the Spanish People" in Prometeo composed of short aggressive sentences:

> Web of cypresses! Iconoclasm! Stone thrown in the eye of the moon! Seismic movement of a wooer who turns up the earth to renew it and make it luxuriant! Spear for ploughing! Secularization of the cemetaries! Liberation of woman to keep her free and in its time without the great promiscuity of the idylls of marriages! Harangue in a field of pyramids! Conspiracy to the sunlight, conspiracy of aviators and "chauffers!"[71]

Futurism continued to preoccupy and intrigue Spanish writers during and after the war but in a much modified form. The Spanish writer Mauricio Bacarisse mentioned a post-war manifesto signed in Milan in 1920 by Leonardo Dudreville, Achille Funi, Luigi Russolo and Mario Sironi which was reprinted in 1920 in España in Madrid in which they declared that "now, in the period of reconstruction and synthesis, the sublime analyzers can return, . . . to ancient models."[72] In Spain, Futurism influenced literature more than it did art. In art, it manifested itself in a descriptive rather than in a formal sense leading to a diagrammatic style of urban iconography that owed more to Léger and the Delaunays than to the Futurists.

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Jaime Brihuega, who compiled Spanish manifestos and documents for the period of 1910 to 1931 concluded that "It is methodologically useless to try to attempt a clear-cut distinction between tendencies" in the Spanish vanguard as compared to the rest of Europe.[73] In 1920 the Spanish writer Antonio Espina García wrote that "Futurism, Creationism, Expressionism, etc. are similar tendencies" that mean the same thing, "the surpassing of the real" and share the same principle, "the rebellion against the old."[74] Herwarth Walden, Brihuega, Güiraldes and Espina García all concurred on the irrelevance of accepted terminology, and the latter further expressed what became the main focus in Spanish literature, the "surpassing of the real" and the rebellion against the old. It was this language that Argentine art critics adopted.

Some terms were used interchangeably such as "tendencias mas avanzadas," "vanguardismo," and "ultramoderno." However "ultramoderno" usually was used to signify a more extreme degree of "vanguardismo" and like "futurismo" in Argentina, it was sometimes used in a derogatory sense.[75] The sarcastic or derogatory use of the term can be traced to a request in 1916 by the members of the Association Art et Liberté in Paris, founded "for the defense and affirmation of modern works," to Apollinaire "the habitual spokesman for the most avant-garde artistic doctrines" to write an article, (published in Paris-Midi on December 9, 1916) even though they were

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not "wholly in agreement with the convictions he expresses." However they wished to keep their readers "abreast of one of the most recent developments in ultra modern art."[76] Candioti gave the term a more exalted meaning: "The painters and sculptors of the ultra modern schools, . . . do not seek to produce 'beautiful' works. They have an ideal concept of beauty, and they maintain that they can conquer beauty without subjecting themselves to the imitation of natural forms, and by means of an unlimited freedom of line and color.[77] "Ultramodernismo" was often used to describe Hispano-American literature and art at the time in order to differentiate contemporary currents from the earlier "modernismo." In literature, "ultramodernismo" also came to represent an equivalent of Ultraismo.[78]

The terminology used in Argentina was largely determined by literary movements since specific terms to describe artworks were sparse. The language of Ultraism came to play a part. The dictionary definition of Ultraism as "a poetic movement promulgated in 1918 and which for several years assembled Spanish and HIspano-American poets who, while preserving their individual and particular esthetic ideals, concurred in feeling the necessity for a radical renewal of the spirit and of form,"[79] applies very well to the artists. Although Ultraísmo was never used specifically in reference to painting or sculpture with the exception of Norah Borges

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who worked primarily as an illustrator in the twenties, Pettoruti and Xul Solar were certainly aware of its significance. Xul Solar wrote of Pettoruti's art in 1924 that it brought a "relief and a liberation."[80] If Xul Solar's painting were to be classified in any category, it would come closest to fitting the Ultraist epithet than any other. When "Cubism" and "Futurism" were used in Argentina, it was more often within a poetic Ultraist frame of reference, colored by concepts of liberation from the slavish copy of nature and from the pull of gravity. While the artists themselves had shared the European experience and were fully aware of the meaning of European terms (Pettoruti wrote articles and gave lectures explaining them after 1924), they themselves avoided labeling their own work. Rather they thought of their art as the powerful and dynamic expression of a flowering new world culture which was developing its own corresponding language thus fulfilling the need for a radical change and renewal in Argentina.

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NOTES

[1]Gayetano Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), p. 27.

[2]M. Frederic, El año artístico argentino 1926, (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1927), p. 99. The work of Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne as well as Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir, Pissarro and the Barbizon artists were all called "Impressionist." Futurism was perceived only as a literary movement in Argentina in 1920.

[3]Acción, Buenos Aires (15 October 1924), n.p. [The clippings are from the family archives and the page numbers are not recorded in most cases. They will be given wherever possible].

[4]Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), p. 64.

[5]José Lozano Mouján, Figuras del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: A. García Santos, 1928), p. 35.

[6]Xul Solar, "Pettoruti," Martiñ Fierro, (September-9 October 1924), pp. 1 & 7.

[7]Alberto Prebisch, "Pablo Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, (October-20 November 1924), pp. 6 & 7. [The text is on p. 6, but reproductions appear on p. 7]. The notion that art had to exist independently of nature was a central theme among the "Martínfierristas."

[8]Lozano Mouján, p. 32. His reference to the "new sensibility" or "nueva sensibilidad" alluded to the Martín Fierro manifesto of May 1924, see Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), pp. 1 & 2 in which the "Martínfierristas" perceived "that we are in the presence of a NEW SENSIBILITY . . ." See appendixes I and II for the whole text of the manifesto, respectively in Spanish and English.

[9]"Emilio Pettoruti," La Prensa, (Sunday 19 October 1924): "Este principio de unidad plástica en que se funda el futurismo, y que tiene su expresión arquetipo en la escuela llamada cubista, no es otra cosa que la inmediata aplicación a la pintura de los mas simples teoremas euclidianos--geometría clásica, por lo tanto--según los cuales una superficie plana cualquiera desarrolla inmediatamente una figura de volumen si hacemos girar sobre uno de sus ejes."

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[10]See Linda Dalrymple Henderson, The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), especially pp. 302, 308 and 310-311 in which she discusses the later Purist artists as returning to classical geometry.

[11]Herwarth Walden, "Cubismo, futurismo, expresionismo," Proa, (August 1924), pp. 21-24.

[12]LeRoy C. Breunig, ed., Apollinaire on Art, trans. by Susan Suleiman, (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), p. 439. Apollinaire's essay seems to have been in the form of a wartime report on the many artists who were at the front then.

[13]La Prensa, (Sunday 19 October 1924): ". . . habría que observar detenidamente la obra de Picasso en sus períodos de fijación definitiva y sobre todo en las innumerables naturalezas muertas quo ha producido desde 1914 en adelante, . . . que pueden conceptuarse ya como las obras académicas del futurismo . . . . Desgraciadamente, la unidad de concepto indispensable para el exito inmediato de todo mensaje nuevo, se extravió a partir de 1909 . . . Es así como se llegó hasta el absurdo de la supuesta escuela 'dactilista' que consiste en la supresión total de toda objectividad artística, limitandose a producir por el tacto emociones mentales más o menos unidas y coordenadas . . . desde el punto de vista estético e ideológico, el futurismo es, todavía un enigma aunque existe quien admite empero que no sería de extrañar que antes de veinte años triumfara definitivamente sobre el mundo, . . . [Unless otherwise noted, all translations into English in the text are mine].

[14]Frederic, p. 264: ". . . no asistieron con indiferencia a las subversivas revisiones llamadas de 'vanguardia' . . . según un expositor del primero, aquel es dinámico, este es inerte. Mientras el futurismo se define por una acción lógica y por una intima fuerza animadora, el cubismo carece de ley, está desprovisto de lirismo y no posee voluntad. Ambos concuerdan en un anhelo común: el desobrepujar la continuidad histórica clasificada en ciclos más o menos homogéneos." This statement bears some resemblance to Boccioni's 1913 manifesto "Plastic Dynamism" in which he states that "pre-Impressionist studies of form have inevitably resulted in dead forms and, as a consequence, immobility; and this immobility is one of the main characteristics of Cubist sculpture." See Umbro Apollonio, ed., Futurist Manifestos, (Ne w .ork: The Viking Press, 1973), p. 93.

[15]Frederic, p. 275.

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[16]Córdova Iturburu, Revolución Martínfierrista, p. 20.

[17]Henderson, p. 302.

[18]Piero Illari, "Representación gráfica y cromatizada de los estados de ánimo," Martín Fierro, (25 July 1924), p. 6.

[19]Frederic, p. 275.

[20]"Emilio Pettoruti," Revista de Arquitectura, (December 1923). The author in a review of Pettoruti's exhibition at Der Sturm in May 1923, based on clippings sent to him, does not give any sources. The article is his own interpretation: "Una exposición de las obras de un joven pintor argentino, realizada en Berlin, es, sin duda, una novedad; pero aumenta la curiosidad el hecho de que el joven pintor que se presenta al público berlinés es uno de los pocos pintores sudamericanos que está enrolado en las extremas izquierdas del arte." As was the case with others, he wrote about "los jovenes cubistas y futuristas . . ." without applying any term to Pettoruti but rather in the context of a brief history of modern art.

[21]Alberto Candioti, Pettoruti, (Berlin-Buenos Aires: Editorial Internacional Berlin-Buenos Aires, 1923).

[22]The practice of prefacing monographs on artists with lengthy run-downs of European precedents from Post-Impressionism on which led up to the artist's style, persisted for several decades in Argentina and can still be found. An example of this is Romualdo Brughetti's monograph Ramón Gomez-Cornet (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1945) in which one must read through the whole history of modern European art before getting to a short uninformative discussion of the artist.

[23]See for example Guillaume Apollinaire, "Modern Painting," Der Sturm (February 1913), in Apollinaire on Art, pp. 267-271.

[24]Candioti, p. 6.

[25]Ibid., p. 7. Candioti took this information from Apollinaire's Les peintres cubistes, chapter 7, written in October 1912 and published in 1913. See Edward F. Fry, Cubism, reprint of 1966 ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 116-117.

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[26]Ibid., p. 2: ". . . no es solo una escuela, una tendencia artística, sinó que es mucho mas: es toda una aspiración social un vehemente deseo de perfección, de llegar a CONSTRUIR el superhombre, pero, como dice Marinetti, sin el helenismo con que Nietzsche recargó su visión del hombre del futuro. El futurismo desea construir el hombre-acción, el hombre-máquina, violento en su empuje, aguerrido en la lucha, temerario e irreflexivo."

[27]This took place specifically in 1918 when Fascist Futurist clubs were established in Ferrara, Florence, Rome and Taranto. See Umbro Apollonio, Futurist Manifestos, p. 221.

[28]Candioti, p. 3: ". . . ha levantado el espiritu del pueblo conduciendolo a la guerra . . . organizandose en 'partido politico futurista' ha realizado la conquista del gobierno con el futurista Mussolini al frente, . . . el futurismo se ha manifestado únicamente en el orden intelectual, sin asumir el papel de reformador social, como ha hecho en su país de origen. Sea como sea, el futurismo tiene dos virtudes, y por cierto bien grandes: su afán de lucha y de travajo, su inquietud creadora. Su franqueza en decir las verdades, en su afán de corregir errores, le hace ser antipático, pero en ese sentido es altamente moralizador."

[29]Ibid., p. 4. "El futurismo está reconocido en Europa y en Norte América, pero aún es negado en América Latina, por dos razones: primera, porque no se sabe de una manera cierta en que consiste, y segunda, y esta es la causa más importante, porque el futurismo no es aplicable en la América Latina sino en un solo punto de su enérgico y radical programa: su amor a la actividad. Lo demás, el amor a la violencia, la pasión por la guerra, la negación de la familia y del amor, la repugnancia por la mujer femenina, la invitación a la esterilidad, puede, tal vez, comprenderse en Europa, donde la superabundancia de la población origina una lucha encarnizada por la vida y hace comprensibles las guerras de conquista, el egoísmo ne las relaciones de los sexos, las esterilizaciones voluntarias . . . Pero en América Latina felizmente son otros los problemas y por eso el futurismo social no puede no debe prosperar en ella. En cambio, es de desear que un movimiento intelectual, inteligentemente dirigido, sacuda los espíritus jóvenes, les inquiete, quitándoles la modorra de siestas interminables y la claudicante somnolencia de las noches perdidas en el café, envenenándose con alcohol, el cuerpo y subalternizando el espíritu con vulgaridades verbales de dómine de baratillo." Carlos Mastronardi, a former "Martínfierrista" noted the frequent reference to night in

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the writings of the "Martínfierristas," and interpreted this desire metaphysically as a desire for "liberation." See "El movimiento de 'Martín Fierro'" Capitulo, No. 39, series La historia de la literatura argentina, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1979), p. 92. In 1912 Apollinaire had become interested in Futurist ideas, and had wanted to adopt the word Futurism for all the diverse manifestations of modern art. See Marianne W. Martin, Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915, (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978), p. 205.

[30]Ibid. Candioti's reference to "creation" and "creators" derived from "Creationism," a term and literary form introduced in Argentina by the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro when he lectured in Buenos Aires in 1916. The term was disputed between Huidobro and Pierre Reverdy with whom Huidobro worked in Paris on the journal Nord-Sud. See Gloria Videla, El Ultraísmo, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, S.A., second ed., 1971), p. 94. See also Enrique Anderson-Imbert, Spanish-American Literature, 2 vols, 2nd ed., (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969), vol. II, p. 491. Ultimately one must credit Apollinaire for the original use of the term in 1912 when it appeared in his December 1912 article published in Der Sturm, "Reality, Pure Painting" in which he wrote that artists sought "to be understood directly and to arouse the simultaneity that alone is creation." See Apollinaire on Art, p. 265. Also see Par Bergman, "Modernolatria" et "Simultaneity," (Uppsala: Svenska Bokforlaget/Bonniers, 1962), pp. 263-278 for a discussion of "simultaneity" as used by Boccioni and the Futurists, and by Delaunay and Apollinaire.

[31]Ibid. There is no adequate translation of "Inquietud" which Candioti capitalized in the text. Although the best translation in this context is "Restlessness," it also implies anxiety and concern, and can also be used in the sense of disquiet: "La quietud física e intelectual de la mayoría de la joventúd Latino Americana [usually written as one word but printed as two] debe convertirse en acción por el látigo de la INQUIETUD para conquistar la suprema belleza, el supremo amor y la suprema actividad creadora." It is important to note that Futurism was also originally intended to spur to activity and move youth out of its lethargy and "sleep" in Italy. See Bergman, p. 100.

[32]Ibid., pp. 11-12: "América Latina reniega del sol, que tanto se prodiga a ella, y se escurre por las sombras, silenciosas y apacibles, para cantar a la luna serenatas inocuas, serenatas pueriles, al mismo tiempo que, mirándola extasiada descubre, en su palidez, misteriosos mundos y se ufana con las grandezas

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inaccesibles del PAÍS FANTASÍA, que cree poseídas porque las sueña en su soñar despierto." Apollinaire had included a chapter on the "simultaneous" description of night in his L'Enchanteur pourissant of 1909, see Bergman, p. 367.

[33]Ibid., p. 12: "Mírese siempre adelante, siempre al futuro, pero volviendo prudentemente la mirada hacía el pasado para que se comprenda mejor el presente y se sepa marchar con paso seguro hacía el porvenir. Mirando al pasado, para encontrar en el la inspiración, mirando al futuro para dar actualidad, amoldando a nuestra mentalidad de hoy, la inspiración que recojamos en el pasado."

[34]Oliverio Girondo, "Manifiesto de 'Martín Fierro'," Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), pp. 1 & 2. The manifesto proclaimed the value of transatlantic trunks, marconigramas and the rotary engine without preventing Martín Fierro from owning an album of photographs to discover itself through some forebear. See appedices for full text.

[35]Ibid., p. 8.

[36]Ibid.: "El creador de esta escuela es Kandinsky, ruso, a quien los alemanes de vanguardia consideran el maestro de la PINTURA ABSOLUTA . . . Kandinsky ha pintado obras realmente interesantes, pero ante sus CUADROS MUSICALES no se experimenta otra sensación que la de estar ante la obra debida al capricho infantil de un mal alumno, que mientras el profesor dicta su lección se complace en garabatear las hojas de sus libros."

[37]Ibid., p. 9. The Berlin critic Dr. Max Osborn had also praised Pettoruti for the "buen gusto" of his paintings, in Vossische Zeitung according to Candioti.

[38]Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1968), p. 141.

[39]Ibid., p. 8: "Nació este movimiento como oposición al impresionismo que buscaba solamente las impresiónes del momento, llegando a las exageraciones de Monet, que pintó parvas tituladas: 10, 10'15, 10'30, 10'45, para dar la impresión de un mismo sujeto en distintos momentos . . . En realidad, toda la pintura primitiva es sintética, y dotada además de un gran valor de expresion. El arte negro es la más pura manifestación de síntesis y expresión . . . El arte de los Calchaquí y de los demás pueblos autóctonos de América es altamente sintético."

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[40]Ricardo Güiraldes, 13 obras, Emilio Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Ricordi, 1924), n. p.

[41]The Spanish writer and Ultraist Cansinos-Asséns described Huidobro's poem in a 1919 article "La nueva lírica" published in Cosmopolis, (III, Num. 5, 1919), p. 78. ". . . un poema cívico, trarareado con la desenvoltura y frivolidad aparente de una canción de music-hall, en el que los retruecanos y las gracias traviesas, espejean como lentejuelas y las estrofas semejan." Quoted in Videla, Ultraíso, p. 125. The notion of verticality was a key aspect of Ultraism.

[42]Güiraldes, 13 obras.

[43]Ibid. "FUTURISMO. algunos se pintan un rostro en la nuca y caminan hacía atrás para solucionar el problema del progreso . . . desde ese día pienso el la excelencia del futurismo con la cara para adelante--excavar más profundamente en la verdad y la belleza, y pienso en la impotencia del futurismo con la cara para atrás--hacer simplemente por contrariar lo hecho." Güiraldes used lower case throughout his essay. The correlation between Futurism and beauty is of Ultraist origin. See chapter III.

[44]Ibid. "CUBISMO. algunas religiones antiguas dijeron: dios geometriza. la significación de los números podría ir más allá que el pincel pero como brincar de golpe a lo abstracto sin arrastrar en los talones caminadores el barro de un pasado material?"

[45]Although Güiraldes' writings have not been analyzed in a Pythagorean context, the work of several other poets of an older generation have. For a discussion of Pythagoreanism and the treatment of the notion of time, space and movement in literature see Theodore Wayne Jensen's "The Pythagorean Narrative of Darío, Nervo and Lugones, (PhD dissertation State University of New York at Buffalo, 1976). See also Harry Weiss's "Ricardo Güiraldes, argentino (1899-1927)," PhD dissertation, (Syracuse University, 1955) and Armando Efraim Zárate's "Espacio, tiempo y movimiento en Don Segundo Sombra de Ricardo Güiraldes," PhD dissertation, (University of California at Riverside, 1970). Güiraldes had traveled to India in 1910 and wrote poems and essays that reflected his Theosophical leanings as in his book of poems El cencerro de cristal first published in 1915 and in Poemas místicos published posthumously in 1928.

[46]Güiraldes, 13 obras: "ISMO. que tiene un "ismo" en su favor sino su realización en una obra o en una individualidad? una teoría que no se plasma en arte

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es tan ridicula como una explicación de hijo a una mujer que quiere. los "ismos" se han hecho efectivos en alguno que no fué "ista." los "istas" se agrupan. el creador no puede ser tino centro. de los grupos sobreviven los que vivían porque es necesario haber vivido para sobrevivir. quedan pués nombres, obras. la teoría es intransferible."

[47]Ramón Gomez de la Serna, Ismos, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943).

[48]Apollinaire on Art, p. 439.

[49]The term appears as the title of numerous works by the Futurists as well as in periodical titles. Boccioni entitled two works of 1912 Synthesis of the Human Body [since destroyed]. Carrá painted Circular Synthesis of Objects in 1914 (see Marianne W. Martin's Futurist Art and Theory. p. 192) and Pettoruti entitled a work of 1915 Synthesis of a Garden. After the war, Marinetti directed a periodical Il futurismo, rivista sintetica. But also Apollinaire had published his L'Antitradition futuriste. Manifeste synthese in Milan in 1913. See Apollinaire on Art, p. 502.

[50]Lozano Mouján, p. 182.

[51]Candioti, p. 10.

[52]Emir Rodriguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (Ne w .ork: E. P. Dutton, 1978), p. 170.

[53]Güiraldes, 13 obras: "SÍNTESIS. porqué ese afán de síntesis? porqué dificultar nuestra comprensión con extractos de objectos y emociónes? igual sería preguntar a trenes, autómoviles, transatlánticos y aeroplanos, porqué reduciéndo con su velocidad las distancias han cambiado nuestra unidad de tiempo. igual preguntar porqué se prefiere hoy lo rápido a lo insistente, lo liviano a lo pesado. hoy no confundimos lo aumentativo con lo fuerte. los asaltos de box (algo que todos comprenden) se definen por la eficacia de un solo golpe. vamos revolucionando hacía lo sutil en la esencia, en bien de lo eficaz en lo rápido. porqué tirar con todo el peso muerto de ayer contra la posibilidad de mañana?" Güiraldes' reference to boxing indicates an acquaintance with Ballá's sculpture of Boccioni's Fist of 1915 or at least with an illustration of the same object which appeared on the cover of Marinetti's post-war periodical Il futurismo, rivista sintética in Pettoruti's possession.

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[54]Girondo, "Manifiesto de 'Martín Fierro'."

[55]Besides the Martín Fierro manifesto, these symbols had a personal meaning to some of the "Martínfierristas" who traveled frequently to Europe. Güiraldes especially had come from a wealthy landed family and traveled to Paris regularly until his death in 1927 which occurred in Paris. See also Bergman, p. 385 for a discussion of Apollinaire's poem "Zone" which alludes to travel, distant locations and time and space. Portions of this poem were published in translation in Martín Fierro (4 August 1926).

[56]"Notas de Arte," El Argentino, (La Plata, 13 October 1924).

[57]Frederic, p. 276.

[58]Apollinaire was referring to Delaunay's Orphism which he saw as coming "closer than others to the sensibility of several modern German painters," published in Der Sturm in February 1913. See Apollinaire on Art, p. 270.

[59]Eduardo González Lanuza, "El instrumento de la creación: la metáfora," Martín Fierro, (19 December 1925), p. 2.

[60]Córdova Iturburu, "Las nuevas tendencias en la pintura," El Hogar, 9 January 1925. Samuel Glusberg wrote an essay with the same title in the April 1925 issue in answer to Córdova Iturburu's. Roberto A. Ortelli published an article on Pettoruti entitled "Arte novísimo" in the December 1924 issue of Inicial. Superlatives were frequently used in articles about the "new" art.

[61]Jaime Brihuega, Manifestos, proclamas, panfletos y textos doctrinales, (Madrid: Ediciónes Cátedra, S. A., 1979), p. 31.

[62]Ibid., pp. 31-33. Picabia was in Barcelona in 1916. See Harold Osborne, ed., The Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century Art, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 433.

[63]Ibid., p. 33.

[64]Ibid. The exhibition included Rivera's Cubist portrait of Gomez de la Serna and work by Marie Blanchard, Luis Bagaría, Romero de Torres, Nestor Echea, Tomas Borrás and Canovas Cervantes. Bagaría exhibited caricatures.

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[65]Ibid., p. 34.

[66]Diccionario enciclopédico Espasa, Vol. 12, (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, S. A., 1978).

[67]Hector René Lafleur, Sergio D. Provenzano and Fernando P. Alonso, Las revistas literarias argentinas 1893-1967, corrected and expanded edition, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1968), pp. 13-49. 1893 was the date of the arrival of Ruben Darío to Buenos Aires. See Lafleur, p. 17.

[68]Brihuega, pp. 20-21.

[69]Frederic, p. 274. Renovación was also the name of a review that focused on Latin American literature and came out in the twenties. See lafleur, p. 118.

[70]Brihuega, p. 31.

[71]Tristán (Ramón Gomez de la Serna), "Proclama futurista a los españoles," Prometeo, (Madrid, num. 20, 1910), quoted in Brihuega, p. 89. This manifesto is mentioned by Emir Rodriguez Monegal in Jorge Luis Borges: a Literary Biography, p. 162. Monegal claims this was a translation of Marinetti's manifesto, but Brihuega does not mention this. It is possible that Gomez de la Serna's piece is his own interpretation of Marinetti's manifesto. This portion of it as quoted in the text is given here in Spanish: "Tela de cipreses! Iconoclastía! Pedrada en un ojo de la Luna! Movimiento sísmico resquebrajador que da vueltas a las tierras para renovarlas y darlas lozanía! Rejón de arador! Secularización de los cementerios! Desembarazo de la mujer para tenerla en la libertad y en su momento sin esa gran promiscuación de los idilios y de los matrimonios! Arenga en un campo con pirámides! Conspiración a la luz de sol, conspiración de aviadores y 'chaufeurs'! . . ."

[72]Mauricio Bacarisse, "Afirmaciones futuristas," España, (Madrid: 1 July 1920), quoted in Brihuega, pp. 264-269. Pettoruti mentions these people in his autobiography. He described the "neoclasicismo" of Achille Funi and was not partial to the type of metaphysical work many were producing after the war. See his Un pintor ante el espejo, pp. 128-131.

[73]Brihuega, p. 77.

[74]Antonio Espina García, "Arte nuevo," España, (Madrid, 16 October 1920), quoted in Brihuega, pp. 197-202.

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[75]After Pettoruti's Witcomb exhibition in 1924, his detractors organized a "Salón Ultrafuturista" as a parody on his exhibition. See Chapter VI on Pettoruti.

[76]Guillaume Apollinaire, "Art and the War: Concerning an Allied Exhibition," Paris-Midi (9 December 1916), quoted in Apollinaire on Art, pp. 447-455.

[77]Candioti, p. 6. "Los pintores y los escultores de las escuelas ultra-modernas, . . . no desean hacer obras 'hermosas.' Tienen una concepción ideal de la belleza, y sostienen que se puede llegar a su conquista sin someterse a la imitación de las formas naturales y mediante una ilimitada libertad en las lineas y en los colores."

[78]Oscar Collazos, ed., Los vanguardismos en la América Latina, (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1970), p. 259, fnte. 1.

[79]See Sapiens enciclopedia ilustrada de la lengua castellana, (Buenos Aires: ed. Sopena argentina, 1975). This encyclopedia gives a definition of "vanguardia" which is almost identical to that given in the Spanish Diccionario enciclopédico Espasa, see fnte. 79.

[80]Xul Solar, "Pettoruti," Martín Fierro, (Sept.-9 Oct. 1924), pp. 1 & 7.

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CHAPTER III

THE JOURNAL MARTÍN FIERRO, ITS GENESIS AND ULTRAÍSMO

If an avant-garde movement in art had not existed in Buenos Aires before 1924, Martín Fierro must be credited with having created one by bringing the most daring artists into its orbit and promoting their art as a concrete example of its own esthetic position. Pettoruti wrote that "when it came to the struggles I lived in my land, the blow of the spear which was launched in my defense from the moment of my arrival, was "Martínfierrista."[1] Córdova Iturburu stated that Martín Fierro was the only publication in Argentina to pay any attention to the "magnificently new" work Curatella-Manes was doing in Paris.[2] For Xul Solar, Figari and Norah Borges, the journal became the core of their activities in Buenos Aires during the three-and-a-half years of its existence. Besides acting as a focal point for artists and writers, Martín Fierro also provided a source of diffusion for Argentine as well as European art and literature.

The Founding

Between February 1924 and November 1927, Martín Fierro published forty-five numbers in tabloid form some of them double, and came out thirty-eight times. Its

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first four issues seemed to have been planned during somewhat informal meetings at La Cosechera and the Cafe Richmond.[3] But by its fifth issue in May 1924, it was located at the first of three editorial offices it was to occupy during its existence. In May 1926, the editors published a double issue in which they announced a new location at Tucuman 612, overlooking Florida street[4] where they remained until the magazine ceased publication a year-and-a-half later.[5] At its peak in 1925, Martín Fierro boasted a circulation of 20,000. Besides its regular newsprint edition, it published a small number of "luxury copies" of each issue printed on more expensive glossy paper.[6]

Its editor was Evaristo González better known by his pseudonym Evar Mendez. Besides Evar Mendez, the original founding group comprised Samuel Glusberg and Oliverio Girondo (Glusberg soon resigned due to policy conflicts).[7] Within a short time, numerous others joined the editorial staff of which Ricardo Güiraldes, Macedonio Fernandez, Eduardo González Lanuza, Leopoldo Lugones, Leopoldo Marechal, Cayetano Córdova Iburburu, Jorge Luis Borges and the architect Alberto Prebisch as the chief art critic, were to be most closely affiliated with the artists. Of the artists, Pedro Figari was the only one present at the periodical's founding.[8] Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Curatella-Manes and Norah Borges were all abroad at the time.

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By November 1924, Martín Fierro's "active nucleus" had grown to over eighty members which included founders, stockholders, collaborators and "sympathizers."[9] The journal came out irregularly, a fact Girondo attributed to a lack of discipline and informal attitude towards deadlines.[10] However, the reason was also due to economic problems. Evar Mendez who held a post in the municipal government library, often used part of his meager salary to help finance Martín Fierro supplemented by some advertising mainly from bookshops, publishers, art supply stores and piano dealers, but also building and pharmaceutical firms.[11] Nonetheless, according to Girondo, during its first months, "the amplitude of its spirit and vitality, its free combative impetus, its eagerness for renewal, its sense of humor at times caustic, always jovial and uninhibited, as well as . . . its comforting faith in itself and in the possibilities of our destiny" kept it going, irregularly as that may have been.[12]

The magazine's name was taken from the title of the nineteenth century epic poem Martín Fierro by José Hernandez whose hero, a gaucho by that name, symbolized freedom as well as an Argentine tradition. The poem's rhyming stanzas were based on easy-to-remember popular gaucho ballads[13] which was a novelty in nineteenth century Argentine literature. The fact that the gaucho, known for his illiteracy and hostility to European culture, should

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have become the symbol of a magazine for which European culture was one of its important features, may seem paradoxical. But while the gaucho symbolized Argentina's national traditions, for the poets, he also symbolized a liberation from past poetic rules: "the gaucho . . . can roughly be defined by the word 'freedom'." Not only did they claim to reject all forms of literary restrictions but of political ones as well. They declared themselves free of all political affiliations.[14]

In the fourth issue in May 1924, the editors stated their position in an arrogant manifesto formulated by Oliverio Girondo which was also distributed in the streets as handbills:

> Faced with the hippopotamic impermeability of the honorable public,
> . . . . . .
> Faced with the ridiculous necessity of establishing our intellectual nationalism by puffing up false values that collapse at the first puncture like balloons,
> . . . . . .
> MARTÍN FIERRO feels the inescapable necessity of making its position clear and of calling on all who are capable of perceiving that we are in the presence of a NEW SENSIBILITY and of a NEW COMPREHENSION, which we have agreed, have discovered for us unsuspected panoramas and new means and forms of expression.
> . . . . . .
> Aware of its past, of its anatomy, of the meridian in which it travels, it consults the barometer, the calendar, before going out into the street to experience it with its nerves and with its mentality of today.
>
> MARTÍN FIERRO knows that 'everything is new under the sun' provided everything is seen with today's eyes and expressed with a contemporary accent.

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> MARTÍN FIERRO finds itself, for this reason, more comfortable in a modern transatlantic than in a Renaissance palace, and maintains that a good HISPANO SUIZO is a much more perfect work of art than a Louis XV sedan chair.
>
> MARTÍN FIERRO sees the architectonic possibility in an "innovation" trunk, a lesson in synthesis in a marconigrama, a mental organization in a rotary engine, without preventing it from owning--as do the best families--an album of photographs it leafs through, from time to time, to discover itself through some forebear . . . or to laugh at his collar and tie.

The independence movement

> . . . initiated in the language by Ruben Darío, does not however signify that we must renounce, nor much less pretend to ignore the fact that each morning we use a Swedish toothpaste, towels from France and English soap.
> . . . . . .
> MARTÍN FIERRO artist, rubs its eyes each instant to get rid of the cobwebs which, constantly weave, habits and customs! To give to each new love a new virginity, and the excesses of each day be different from the excesses of yesterday or tomorrow![15]

Some of the manifesto's statements clearly derived from Marinetti's 1909 Futurist manifesto while others, from Le Corbusier's 1923 manifesto in Vers une architecture parts of which had appeared earlier in L'Esprit Nouveau.[16]

The Martín Fierro manifesto generated a "disproportionate repercussion of scandal" and an "attitude of frank hostility," and the "Martínfierristas" were accused of "extreme profanation."[17] It was evident that some of the journal's scandalized readers did not realize that the pitting of a modern transatlantic against a Renaissance palace, and of a Hispano-Suizo (a luxury car never mass-produced) against a Louis XV sedan chair,

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represented locally appropriate equivalents of Marinetti's comparison of a racing automobile to the Victory of Samothrace in 1909--the latter as chronologically relevant to Italy's weighty past as a Renaissance palace and a Louis XV sedan chair were to Argentina's compressed history. The manifesto's reference to the architectonic potential of an innovation trunk also echoed the functional orientation of Le Corbusier.

The choice of imagery reflected the upper class concerns of many "Martínfierrista" poets some of whom came from old and landed families. Transatlantic travel, the Hispano-Suizo,[18] the indulgence of repeatable daily excesses, the old photo albums in "the best families" and imported goods affordable only by the very rich, focused on objects for their luxurious and esthetic value rather than on the cathartic value and dynamic vigor of Marinetti's imagery. In the August 1925 issue of Martín Fierro, Alberto Prebisch had also exalted the "esthetic efficiency of a Packard" which "had not even been surpassed by any contemporary artist."[19] Martín Fierro created an altar to the symbols of travel--some of them static in themselves--rather than to velocity and motion. Because of the manifesto's reference to the "New sensibility," the "Martínfierristas" were jeeringly referred to as "neo-sensibles."[20] On the other hand, Serge Panine wrote of the advantages of the "new sensibility" because Argentina "chews and digests all the

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menu that old Europe presents to it, from Etruscan sculpture to Marinetti's manifesto."[21] Martín Fierro appropriated all the art and literature it felt best reflected its position which at the time seemed very eclectic. But for this reason it could become a platform for the promotion of writers and artists of very diverse persuasions.

Unlike some of their contemporary Mexican writers and painters, the "Martínfierristas" identified with "the avant-garde culture of the modern city rather than with the folk culture of the backlands."[22] Yet they also sought to express a national identity. But Nationalism in Latin America generally was not an urban but suburban expression.[23] The "Martínfierrista"'s desire to identify with the modern city and at the same time with national roots and traditions, presented an apparent conflict at the time which was seen as polarization. Yet these characteristics were very much those of the French Purists. They manifested themselves with predictable regularity in the writings of Alberto Prebisch. Besides French Purism, the influence of Ultraism, with its own peculiar focus on urban imagery and concepts of compressed time and space in modern life, was crucial to the development of Martín Fierro's ideas.

Spanish Ultraism and Borges

Ultraism was first brought to Buenos Aires in 1921

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by Jorge Luis Borges. At the time, it was seen by Argentine poets as a refreshing alternative to the Symbolism of Leopoldo Lugones. The Borgeses had gone to Spain in 1919 from Switzerland where they had spent the war years. Borges had attended school and Norah his sister had studied art at the Academy of Geneva. From 1919 to 1921, they lived in Mallorca, Seville and Madrid. In the latter city, Borges met the writers Rafael Cansinos-Asséns, Ramón Gomez de la Serna and Guillermo de Torre all of whom were involved with the new literary ideas that emerged as Ultraism.

In 1920 Borges began to attend the cafe meetings in Madrid where Cansinos-Asséns and Gomez de la Serna held weekly reunions respectively at the Cafe Colonial and the Pombo[24] and soon began publishing and taking an active part in Spanish literary circles. His reputation grew and he contributed to the "organization and diffusion" of Ultraism[25] which was a composite of Cubist, Futurist, Dadaist and Expressionist ideas. The name "Ultra" suggests its cosmic orientation with notions of the "infinite."[26] It was chosen not only because of its "dynamic significance, to designate the search for a 'beyond' in esthetic directions, but also because, . . . in vanguard lyric, the artist creates ultra-objects, invents a world beyond the real."[27]

The Ultraists' main objective was, in the words of Gomez de la Serna, to combat "the greatest of intellectual

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epidemics, archaism . . ." and to promote free verse. They seemed as concerned with shocking audiences as with a desire "to fumigate nature with new images."[28] Between 1918 and 1921 they published numerous statements and manifestos as well as poetry in the journals Grecia, Alfar, Ultra and Reflector in Seville and Madrid.[29] Ultraism was first announced in a 1919 manifesto "Ultra" signed by several poets including Guillermo de Torre in which they stated that "our motto will be Ultra, and our credo will include all tendencies without distinction, in as much as they express a new concern."[30] Isaac del Vando Villar, another Ultraist writer whom Borges had first met in Seville and again in Madrid, announced that "before the nineteenth century eunuchs" the Ultraists would "unveil the apocalyptic Beauty of Ultra, sure that they [the eunuchs] will never be able to break the hymen of the Future."[31]

In 1920 Guillermo de Torre published a "Manifesto Vertical" in Grecia with a typographical layout resembling a telegraph pole which Norah Borges and the Uruguayan painter Rafael Barradas then living in Spain, both illustrated (Figs. 4 & 5). De Torre had urged "young poets to rise vertically" like the "standards aboard the youthful transatlantic ship in the Ultraist ocean . . ."[32] The notion of verticality in the title was explained more concisely by Cansinos-Asséns as evoking the idea of a "vertical jet, which is the unstable lead weight [used to

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determine a vertical line], . . . dynamic and rebellious, which does not resign itself to supporting the back of an ancient statue like the hidden armature found inside some sculpture, but rather strives to reach higher levels in order to extend itself in the direction opposite that of the inevitable law of gravity . . ."[33]

The presence in Spain of the Delaunays during the war years contributed greatly to establishing Ultraism as a movement in the arts as well as literature.[34] Delaunay's work was also the subject of poetic musings by Guillermo de Torre: "Figures distend their elastic lines, and there are harmonic ascensions of novistructural color-form in the paintings of Delaunay.[35] In 1919 Delaunay illustrated Vicente Huidobro's poem "Eiffel Tower" for Cosmopolis[36] and in 1920 one of his "Windows" of 1912 was reproduced on the cover of Grecia along with two lines from Apollinaire's poem "Windows" which had originally been inspired by Delaunay's paintings: "The window opens like an orange / The beautiful fruit of light" (Fig. 6).[37]

Ultraism comes to Buenos Aires

When Borges returned to Buenos Aires in March 1921, he became the leader of a group of young poets which included his cousin Guillermo Juan Borges, Eduardo González Lanuza, Francisco Piñero and Norah Lange, all of whom joined Martín Fierro in 1924. Borges published his first Ultraist statement "El Ultraísmo" in 1921 not in

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Spain but in Buenos Aires in the journal Nosotros, in which he called for "the abolition of ornamental implements . . ." and the use of the metaphor.[38] But, as Gloria Videla noted, when he returned to his native city, it was not to a cosmopolitan and dynamic city, but rather to "the gentle street of the suburbs, bordered by trees and sunsets, . . ."[39] According to Borges, the Argentine Ultraists felt that, like Futurism, "Spanish Ultraism was overburdened . . . with modernity and gadgets. We were unimpressed with railway tracks, by propellers, by airplanes, and by electric fans . . . what we wanted to write was essential poetry--poems beyond the here and now, . . ."[40] He advocated a modified form of avant-garde poetry more in keeping with local circumstances in a statement that paralleled Candioti's rejection of Futurism in favor of an Argentine variant which he called Inquietismo.

In 1921 the Argentine Ultraist group founded the "mural" magazine Prisma which published two issues (December 1921 and March 1922) as single sheets which the poets pasted up on the walls of downtown Buenos Aires at night like the billboard adds they had seen.[41] In 1922 Borges co-founded Proa (The Prow) with Macedonio Fernandez, an older poet and friend of his father's.[42] Between August 1922 and July 1923, Proa published only three issues one of which was illustrated by Norah Borges. But it was reactivated a year later in August 1924 as

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Proa, "second epoch"--six months after the founding of Martín Fierro--by Ricardo Güiraldes, Alfredo Brandán-Caraffa, Pablo Rojas Paz and Jorge Luis Borges, the latter just back from a second trip to Europe.[43] Up to its last issue in January 1926, Proa, like Martín Fierro, published articles on art. It featured essays on art by the European writers Herwarth Walden and Guillermo de Torre[44] as well as by Brandán-Caraffa and other Argentinians. But unlike Prebisch's sometimes controversial reviews of contemporary exhibitions in Martín Fierro, the articles in Proa were primarily theoretical.[45]

Both Proa and Martín Fierro inherited from Spain what Simon Berggrun defined as a "toned down Ultraism." He suggested that rather than "Ultraism" they referred to their movement of renewal as a "new sensibility,"[46] Following Borges's suggestion, the "Martínfierristas" advocated and adopted the metaphor in poetry. Borges began contributing to Martín Fierro in August 1924 with his poem "Montevideo." In 1925 González Lanuza published a suggestive article in Martín Fierro on the metaphor in a clearly Ultraist style:

> There are two arts, . . . the art of prisms and that of mirrors; this one mirrors life, the other interprets and lives it. Those who wish to pass themselves off as artists in the immobile sterility of mirrors can abstain from the vitalizing luxury of metaphors; but those who wish to create new states of mind, to penetrate the feline femininity of life, always surrendering themselves and always defending

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> themselves, whether they wish to or not, they will have to seduce and envelop her [life] succeeding in possessing her through the glorified short cuts of the promises of metaphors.[47]

But while some of the writers of Martín Fierro retained many aspects of their Ultraist sources, the majority were more concerned with the subjects themselves--modern life, urban imagery, nightlife, cafes, jazz, travel to foreign cities as well as shadows, windows, stars, women and the moon--than with new ways of expressing them. Even Girondo, generally considered to be the most avant-garde of the poets, continued to name things in preference to finding an equivalent literary form throughout the decade. Onomatopoeias were used sparingly, and although González Lanuza, Norah Lange, Pedro Juan Vignale and Borges had all written poems without punctuation--Borges only in Spain--it was unusual in the twenties for Argentine poets to omit punctuation. In its August 1926 issue, Martín Fierro even published a translation by Lisandro Galtier of Apollinaire's poem "Zone" to which punctuation was inexplicably added to the unpunctuated original. (Fig. 7).[48]

Martín Fierro's role in the Buenos Aires Avant-Garde

Between 1924 and 1927 Martín Fierro published articles by European writers as diverse as Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Ramón Gomez de las Serna, Jean Prevost, Marcelle Auclair, André Salmon, Maurice Raynal, André Lhote, Le Corbusier, Germaine Derbecq de Curatella-Manes,

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Waldemar George, Herwarth Walden, and reproduced the work of George Braque, Marie Laurencin, Paul Gauguin, Fernand Léger, André Lhote, Cornelius Van Dongen, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Antoine Bourdelle, Alexander Archipenko, Marie Blanchard, Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí, Carlo Carrá, Umberto Boccioni, Fortunato Depero and Pablo Picasso as well as of older masters such as El Greco and Lucas Cranach. Besides articles on literature and art, it included essays on architecture, music, theater, cinema, as well as poems, ballads, odes, burlesque romances, parodies, epitaphs and epigrams. It was the first journal in Argentina to consider cinema as a major art form and its musical coverage included articles on the twelve-tone compositions of Stravinsky and Schönberg as well as jazz and the tango.[49] Theater and stage design also held an important place. Robert Delaunay's stage sets with paintings by Sonia Delaunay for Le Somptier's film "Le Petit Parigot" of 1926 (Fig. 8) and Léger's sets for Marcel L'Herbier's film "L'Inhumaine" were reproduced in the April 1927 issue.[50]

The cover of Martín Fierro's first issue featured a caricature of a dapper figure enticingly dangling a packaged candy (Fig. 9) illustrating a satirical "Ballad of the Mayor of Buenos Aires" by Jorge Mora, another of Evaristo Gonzalez's pseudonyms. The capital's mayor was not the only target. In the words of Emir Rodriguez Monegal, Martín Fierro's first four issues "attacked the

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Pope and the Argentine catholics, the czarist Russian ambassador (still active in Argentina in spite of the October revolution), the Liga Patriótica [equivalent of the American Legion] . . . , the Spanish immigrants from Galicia and a few of the most famous poets of the old generation."[52] Political and social satire was a carry over from a previous periodical by the same name published in 1919 under the same editor with clearly defined political convictions. But unlike its predecessor, by the fifth issue, the new Martín Fierro focused exclusively on cultural subjects without, however, losing any of its farsical and satirical touches. Although it neither embraced the left-wing concerns of the Surrealists nor the growing fascist ones of the Italian Futurist movement, it thrived on polemical debate and shock-value statements.

The journal's main feature was of course literature. Collectively, the Martín Fierro poets were prolific writers. Besides poems and essays which they regularly published in the journal, they also published numerous books. Each new publication was celebrated by a banquet, followed more often than not by a laudatory review in Martín Fierro by a colleague.[53] During the first year, a puppet in a horse-drawn carriage announced the "insolent poems" of Oliverio Girondo on Florida Street.[54] The poems were a selection from his book Veinte poemas para ser leídos en el tranvía (Twenty Poems to be Read on the Trolley) written in 1920 and 1921. Many of

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them were like travel notes with as titles the names of places--"Rio de Janeiro," "Venice," "Biarritz," "Verona"--in keeping with the "Martínfierristas" taste for travel metaphors, but generously interspersed with sacrilegious allusions.[55]

One of the journal's regular features was the "Cementerio de 'Martín Fierro'" (Martín Fierro's Cemetery), known as "Parnaso Satírico" from June 1924 on, in which they "aired their prejudices in comic and sometimes outrageous epitaphs in verse"[56] usually signed with more or less identifiable initials. They were not only the authors of these epitaphs but often their targets as well. Borges, Pettoruti, Figari and Xul Solar were all in turn the subjects of at least one, if not two or three of them.[57] The format of these epitaphs was in the epigrammatic style originated by Ramón Gomez de la Serna in his greguerías which Gloria Videla defined as a combination of humor with metaphor.[58] The "Martínfierrista" poets were generally in agreement in their rejection of rhyme and in their use of the metaphor whose purpose, according to Carlos Mastronardi, was to "reveal the hidden meaning of whatever it presents."[59]

But in spite of the poets' vanguard platform, they also published the poetry of the Symbolist Leopoldo Lugones, and defended artists whose work did not represent a radical departure from traditional forms such as Pedro Figari, Horacio Butler, Emilio Centurión and Juan Tapia

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although these artists felt themselves to be, and were treated as, members of the avant-garde. On the one hand, the readers of the magazine were exposed to articles on French Cubism and Italian Futurism for the first time on a regular basis, and on the other, to articles by and about such defenders of regional traditions as Figari. Martín Fierro featured articles on contemporary Mexican, Uruguayan and Argentine art as well as European. Articles on and by the Mexican painters Manuel Rodríguez Lozano and Julio Castellanos, both living in Buenos Aires in 1925, as well as reproductions of the work of the Mexicans Diego Rivera, Agustín Lazo and José Clemente Orozco were also published (Fig. 10).

European literature and art became an increasingly important feature of the magazine. In 1926 Jean Prevost published an article on Jules Romains whose 1908 book La vie unanime had just come out in a new edition in Paris.[60] Coverage of European art included articles on Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism and Surrealism. Cubism had been the subject of articles by Sandro Piantanida and Maurice Raynal. Raynal whom the "Martínfierristas" considered to be "one of the best art critics of the period," made the Paris Salon des Indépendants exhibition a spring-board for a discussion on the origins of Cubism in Purist tones. The exhibition included work by Fernand Léger, Robert Delaunay, Louis Marcoussis and Amedée Ozenfant but not Picasso, Braque or Gris although works by

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Picasso and other artists such as Rousseau and Seurat, not included in the exhibition, were illustrated. Raynal noted that the work of Cézanne and Seurat led to "architectural harmony," and Cubism, whose "universal influence" on "decoration in general" seen in the "recent exposition of decorative art," (of 1925) contributed "above all to a veritable return to the sobriety of lines and colors . . . ."[61] In 1926 Germaine Derbecq de Curatella-Manes in a lyric mood, wrote a review of an exhibition of George Braque and Suzanne Roger commenting especially on Braque's understanding and love of "poetry" and on the "oficio" (metier) of the "beautiful subjects" of his paintings.[62]

A frequent contributor to Martín Fierro in 1926 was Marcelle Auclair, a French-born writer who was educated in Chile and had returned to France with her parents in 1923. Her familiarity with Latin American literature prompted the French writer Valéry Larbaud, a close friend of Güiraldes, to recommend her for the translation of Güiraldes' 1926 novel Don Segundo Sombra into French. She had just published a book of her own poems, Une oeuvre un portrait illustrated by Marie Laurencin, with an introduction by Larbaud.[63] In less than a year's time, she contributed six articles to Martín Fierro in which a Purist bent was often detectable. In her article "The New Esthetic" she noted that the characteristics in the new architecture and furniture

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tended to "clean functional lines of great simplicity" in which "individual personality is not evident."[64]

Her article on Picasso's drawings reflected notions familiar to the Ultraists as much as it did the characteristics of the drawings themselves: "instead of cubes he had adopted as an element of composition, the prism, and he calculated the dimensions and angles of this prism with a rigor that could seem more scientific than artistic." Although Picasso abandoned Cubism, he remained a "geometer . . . . He did not wish essentially to represent objects, but rather to suggest ideas." His drawings were "squematized like Egyptian hieroglyphics; he did not pretend to represent nature, but rather to invent a writing to use for his own needs.[65]

In August 1926, Max Ernst, then living and exhibiting in Paris, was the subject of an article by Auclair.[66] Martín Fierro was the only journal in Buenos Aires at the time to publish articles on surrealism if one discounts Guillermo de Torre's essay "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo" which appeared in the January 1925 issue of Proa denouncing Breton's rejection of the "process of intellectual reasoning."[67] Although Surrealism had existed in literature in Argentina since the late twenties, in art it was not officially launched until 1939 although individuals such as the painters Antonio Berni and Juan Batlle-Planas had brushed with it long before.[68]

More provocative than Cubism or Surrealism

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however, was Futurism. Martín Fierro's coverage of Italian art and Futurism were regular features since 1924 prior to Pettoruti's exhibition. Throughout its three-and-a-half years, Martín Fierro devoted space to Futurism and Italian art and made its June and July 1926 issues the focus of these on the occasion of Marinetti's visit. In July 1924, Futurism had been the subject of an article by Piero Illari, director of the Italian journal Rovente, who was living in Buenos Aires at the time. The article entitled "Representación gráfica y cromatizada de los estados de animo" (Graphic and Chromatic Representation of States of Mind), written in prose, explained the illustrated spiraling, curved and squirming diagrams (Fig. 11) expressing "passion," "surprise," "a sense of one's own future" in which the specific "color" combined with the shape was to provoke these states in the viewer. The diagrams were reproduced in black and white in Martín Fierro.[69]

Martín Fierro's chief spokesman for avant-garde art and design was Alberto Prebisch who had been in Paris where he met Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes in 1924 before the founding of the journal. Prebisch co-authored a section on design and architecture with his partner E.E. Vautier with whom he ran the architectural firm of Vautier and Prebisch. In his essays on design, Prebisch praised the functionalism and Purism of Le Corbusier, the Bauhaus and the Perret brothers[70] not to mention the "positive

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esthetic results" of a "Pembroke bath tub" manufactured in series as opposed to a Louis XV console;" he exulted over the utilitarian virtues of bridges, "dirigibles by Freyssinct," radiators, hangars, roof-top gardens, a telephone and a bidet.[71] He found no contradiction between the idolization of mass-produced modern machines, the functionalism of modern design, and tradition and classical geometry. Paraphrasing Le Corbusier he expressed his admiration for pyramids and the Parthenon which inspired "the noble satisfaction of the Spirit" originating in the "unsurpassed spiritualization of the laws of geometry."[72]

Martín Fierro as Art Critic

Because of his preference for a "system of esthetics and painting which would be immune from personal interpretations" to quote Le Corbusier,[73] Prebisch was often at odds with the realities of the contemporary art scene in Buenos Aires at the time. Geometry was used only by a handful of artists, and his machine esthetic applied to even fewer. Pettoruti and Xul Solar were the only ones to incorporate such themes in their work. Most of the artists in the exhibitions he reviewed were completely lacking in either an evident geometric structure or the machine esthetic. In a review of the "Salón de acuarelistas, pastelistas y aguafortistas" in June 1924, Prebisch criticized the organizers and artists for their

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lack of "actuality."[74]

His stand was a reflection of Martín Fierro's own attitude towards most contemporary art in the country. The editors had launched a campaign in the May-June 1924 issue to denounce artists who failed to have "the profound sense of the relationship of man with contemporary life"[75] and to attack the art establishment. Often they expressed subjective and categorical opinions in their reviews and did not spare artists they did not like, sometimes frankly declaring their work "bad" or "terrible" (Fig. 12).[76] Reviews sometimes came out anonymously satirizing both the art and the public viewing it.[77] In order to combat the "academismo pompier," they were known to go to gallery openings where "barcaroles, the marines, the waters of the Riachuelo [the canal that runs along the western boundaries of Buenos Aires] and the federal gauchos" were shown, push their way through the crowds, and put up signs cautioning viewers to "watch out for the paint!"[78]

The Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes and the annual Salón Nacional in September became prime targets for Prebisch and the editors. An editorial appeared in October 1926 criticizing the museum for "not accomplishing its obligatory destiny." The writers disapproved of the museum director's choice of work for the museum collection finding it "shameful that in a country like Argentina, there do not exist four heads capable of directing the museum."[79] Prebisch's annual reviews of the Salón

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Nacional were invariably adverse. But he usually managed to single out a handful of more "adventurous" artists, generally the same ones, from one year to the next. In 1924 he noticed Horacio Butler, Alfredo Guido, Hector Basaldúa and Fray Guillermo Butler among the painters, and José Fioravanti and Pascual Buiges among the sculptors as superior to the rest. All of these artists had been to Europe or were living there at the time. In 1925 Prebisch singled out the painter Juan Tapia and Curatella-Manes.[80] Predictably, the latter's participation in the Salón Nacional was to be the last for several years.

Typically in 1926, Prebisch noted that "an aura of bad taste circulates through these rooms in which the ingenuous optimism of some, accepts annually the mistaken fruits of this deplorable spring flowering." There was little "to attenuate" for this bad taste or to "make it tolerable." One's attention was drawn to a group of paintings of a most "common vulgarity." Furthermore "the ridiculous provincial prudence of these painters" ignored the problems that have preoccupied "the contemporary artistic world" already for twenty years. Using an Ultraist metaphor, he stated that the Salon's "spirit maintains itself chastely closed to all curiosity" and he bemoaned the "stagnation of an art that eternalizes itself in the facile commodity of a childish formula."[81] The only artists he found worth looking at were the same ones he had praised in the previous salons.

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Although the 1927 Salón received Prebisch's customary disapproval, he noted an "increasingly large concurrence of new artists" and a more clearly defined distinction between two "radically antagonistic" sections, the first "the most numerous" not worthy of any comment, but the second, of far more interest although not uniformly good. To the customary group he added the names of Antonio Berni, Victor Pissarro, Aquiles Badi, Juan del Prete, Lino Eneas Spilimbergo,[82] some of whom belonged to a Paris-based group known as the "grupo de Paris."

The militant defense of artists rejected by the Salón Nacional became a regular feature of Martín Fierro. In the October 1925 issue, Leopoldo Marechal accused the members of the Comisión Nacional of being "narrow-minded old fools" and denounced them for rejecting an expressionist painting of a girl standing boldly, weight on one leg, arms akimbo with knickers showing beneath a short skirt. The work was painted by a twenty-three year old woman, Raquel Forner (Fig. 13).[83] Five months prior to the incident, the editors had announced the organization of a Salón de Arte Moderno planned for the following August in the form of an ad, inviting "all rioplatense artists [from Argentina and Uruguay on both sides of the Rio de la Plata] and foreign artists residing in Argentina and Uruguay, even those of the most advanced and audacious tendencies to compete . . ." The organizing committee which included Figari, Pettoruti, Prebisch,

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Girondo and the Italian critic Sandro Piantanida, added that "we do not accept left-overs from the Salón Nacional" but that "yes we accept works rejected by the Salón for audacity, for being advanced or for their independent esthetic." Figari, Pettoruti, Curatella-Manes, Norah Borges, Xul Solar along with the Mexicans Julio Castellanos, Rodríguez Lozano, the architects Prebisch and Vautier, and Oliverio Girondo who was a fair draughtsman, were among the first to agree to participate.[84] Although the exhibition did not take place as planned, a similar smaller one did in June 1926 at Amigos de Arte during Marinetti's visit.[85]

Poets as Critics and Artists; Artists as Writers

Art reviewing was not restricted to critics such as the "Martínfierristas" Alberto Prebisch and Pedro Blake, or La Protesta's Atalaya, but was taken up by the poets, some of whom also painted. Most of the time, the poets wrote very subjectively, praising the artist unconditionally in a literary style that obscured the purpose. They sought in the art they wrote about, parallels to their own literary concerns and expressed this concern in literary equivalents rather than in critical analysis. While in Spain, writing about art was commonly done by poets like Gomez de la Serna and Guillermo de Torre just as it was in Italy and France, in Argentina, the practice was relatively recent.

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Previously, with few exceptions, art reviewing had been the function of journalists who simply described exhibitions. Yet in the twenties this practice became prevalent. Ricardo Güiraldes wrote on Figari as well as on Pettoruti; Borges, on Figari and later on Xul Solar; Girondo, Marechal and González Lanuza, on Figari and Xul Solar. Córdova Iturburu turned increasingly to art reviewing, and Girondo wrote about art well into the thirties.

However, the poets' role as critics was not always viewed positively by other critics. When Leopoldo Marechal published an article praising the sculptor José Fioravanti for his "pure" sculpture in the July-August 1927 issue of Martín Fierro,[86] Atalaya attacked him in an article in La Protesta for calling Fioravanti's work "pure" since this could apply "equally to many others." Marechal could not know what he meant when he referred to a "pure concept of an art." Atalaya was particularly incensed at Marechal's casual grouping of Fioravanti in the same category as Maillol and Despiau--artists who "aside from their exceptional talents" spent "a whole lifetime of work and tireless search" while Fioravanti achieved it with "only two years of strolling through all the places in which Europe offers artistic interest . . . . These are the boutades of a literato. Frankly laughable!" To Atalaya, Fioravanti's reliefs even lacked the "smooth, clean . . . clarity" of a cameo. He

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bemoaned the absence of critical selectivity demonstrated by the members of a magazine "that called itself vanguard," and the too great enthusiasm expressed for Fioravanti's sculpture when Curatella-Manes whom he clearly favored, had been rejected just two years before by the Salón Nacional.[87] On the positive side, the work of artists such as Norah Borges, Pedro Figari and Xul Solar, lent itself readily to poetic and literary interpretations. In some cases, the artists inspired the poets as much as the poets did the artists. As a result, there emerged a mutual dependence and frequent exchanges of imagery and ideas as well as supportive friendships and encouragement.

Role reversals between poets and painters were common in the twenties. Some of these took place in the spirit of fun. Exhibitions of the drawings and paintings of poets were organized in homes and magazine offices. Ulyses Petit de Murat described "a ridiculous exhibition of poets who painted and painters who wrote poems" which took place at the house of a feminist critic and writer, María Rosa Oliver. He recalled that Norah Lange presented a picture entitled The Family Standard in which she had depicted a roof-top with drying laundry: "On the clothes line of a flat neighborhood roof, a woman's bombacha [the loose fitting drawers sometimes worn by gauchos] bordered with lace, was going up in flames." His own contribution was a painting entitled Jazz-Band of Angels,[88] a title

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apparently taken from a poem of González Lanuza's. The paintings subsequently were sold at auction.[89]

In August 1926, the academically-oriented literary journal Valoraciones published in La Plata, staged a "Primer Salón de Escritores" in which Girondo, Marechal, Córdova Iturburu, Güiraldes, Borges and other "Martínfierrista" writers participated. They had been asked to present "a simple painting . . . , pure and cave-like, bordering on geometric squematization. Free of rules, the writers can present completely original solutions and points of view."[90] Girondo contributed "generously" with several "monkeys some of which were inspired by the personages of Lautréamont." Güiraldes contributed "an India ink drawing: 'Synthesis of the First lecture by Marinetti at the Coliseum of Buenos Aires'" alluding to a lecture Marinetti had given during his visit in 1926, and Borges's contribution "anticipated some of his later literary characters" (Fig. 14 & 15).[91] Güiraldes whose brother Alberto was a painter, had studied in Paris with the Paris-based Spanish painter Hermenegildo Anglada-Camarasa during his frequent visits there in the twenties and was not a bad painter. His subjects were similar to those of his novels about ranch life.[92]

Some of the writers were also fair illustrators. Often, their style was based on the Ultraist grid. González Lanuza illustrated his own poem "Sombras" (Shadows) in the December 1925 issue of Martín Fierro with

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an "Ultraist" drawing (Fig. 16) and Oliverio Girondo displayed some of his artistic abilities in his drawing of "Ramón's brain" in the July 1925 issue as a prelude to Ramón Gomez de la Serna's arrival in Buenos Aires. Girondo's poster-like drawing of a cross-section of Gomez de la Serna's brain revealed the latter's well-publicized Ultraist taste for simultaneous images represented by a maze of wax dolls, naked women, wheels, clocks, phonographs, barrels, wine bottles, chairs, skulls, clowns, flower pots, a hotel entrance, the entrance of the Cafe Pombo, a camera, letters and words evoking the noisy city street (Fig 17).[93]

While the writers did not take themselves seriously enough as painters to exhibit regularly, some of the artists considered themselves, and were considered by others, as serious critics. They published regularly as essayists and art critics, less often as poets. Although Figari did write poems, he was better known for his theories on art and art education. From 1912 on he had published several books and essays including his three-volume work Arte, estética, ideal (1912). In January 1925 he published an article "Artes emocionales" in Martín Fierro which he dedicated to his friend "the beloved poet and humorist Julio Supervielle,"[94] and in June 1925, he reviewed an exhibition of work by Mexican children brought from Mexico by Julio Castellanos and Rodriguez Lozano.[95]

Xul Solar and Pettoruti contributed regularly to

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several journals, the former primarily to Martín Fierro in the twenties, the latter to several others including Revista Oral, Crítica, La Prensa and El Argentino.[96] Xul Solar wrote interchangeably on art or literature. Besides his article on Pettoruti for Martín Fierro, he also published notes on the late German painter, writer and Theosophist, Christian Morgenstern in 1927.[97] Norah Borges also contributed a "synoptic table" to Martín Fierro outlining her theories on painting.[98] Although Curatella-Manes did not write for Martín Fierro, his wife Germaine Derbecq did.

The Social Gatherings

The "Martínfierrista" artists and writers shared many activities. Not the least of these were their nocturnal jaunts in cafes and gatherings in one another's homes. Even those of divergent opinion forgot their differences on these occasions. Martín Fierro advertised its social calendar by publishing a list of meeting places and times for each day of the week, some in cafes, others in art galleries.[99] Besides the daily cafe meetings, the "Martínfierristas" as well as contributors to other journals such as Proa, liked to organize monthly banquets "to attract attention."[100] These reunions were "open to men who felt a certain restlessness in their hearts" and were not just reserved for the "initiates." In the words of Girondo, their discussions on these occasions were a

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veritable "spiritual transcendence."[101] The more memorable banquets were registered and recorded with photographs in the pages of Martín Fierro. Pettoruti, Xul Solar and Jorge Luis Borges appeared in a great number of them. Figari, Girondo, Rodríguez Lozano and Julio Castellanos, Güiraldes, Borges, Córdova Iturburu, Evar Mendez, and Alfonso Reyes who was the future Mexican ambassador in Buenos Aires, were among those to be honored with banquets.

Girondo and Norah Lange held gatherings in their homes on alternate Saturdays. Among those to attend Girondo's famous Saturday night reunions were the Spanish poet Fedérico García Lorca and the Chilean poets Vicente Huidobro and Pablo Neruda, the latter as consul in Buenos Aires at the time. Norah Lange who held parties at her mother's house, was known for her ability to enliven a party with imaginative "improvisations." The guests often came in disguise. While literary discussions also took place, the mood of these reunions seems to have been more in the spirit of fun, where people "shared friends and some favorite tangos."[102] There reigned a "climate of the joke" which Carlos Mastronardi characterized as "aggressive nihilism." He saw in the vanguard of the twenties "a certain inclination for careless play. There was still a sense of humor left over from an epoch that stressed progress." The "Martínfierristas" were even known to play jokes on one another. According to Enrique

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Anderson-Imbert, Borges used to go to printing shops and insert "grotesque errata" in the poems of his friends which would result in parodic twists of the language. A prankish spirit prevailed: "They would invade cafes with masks on. They would stick out their tongues. They were promiscuous in love" and they liked to taunt professors and the serious public.[103]

Within this buoyant youthful climate, the "Martínfierristas" nonetheless served a more serious purpose. They left their stamp on the cultural life of Buenos Aires long after the journal published its last number. Carlos Mastronardi wrote that Martín Fierro as the main organ of "literary non-conformism" of its time, struggled to impose a "new esthetic sensibility," and at the same time realize a synthesis of diverse, separate and even opposed tendencies.[104] Girondo stated that the group was "much more united by its aversions than by its preferences."[105] But while everyone agreed that Martín Fierro was eclectic, its members shared a sense of purpose and a passion for the time and place "which destiny had assigned to them."[106]

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NOTES

[1]Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1968), p. 180.

[2]Cayetano Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), p. 24.

[3]The custom of planning magazine issues in cafes was apparently widespread. Pettoruti mentions such meetings at the Royal Keller for the editing of the Revista Oral. See Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 21.

[4]Simon Maurice Berggrun, "The Journal Martín Fierro. A Critical Index," (PhD dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1968), p. 21.

[5]Oliverio Girondo, El periodico Martín Fierro 1924-1949, (Buenos Aires: La dirección de Martín Fierro, printed at Don Francisco A. Colombo, Hortiguera 552, 1949), p. 37.

[6]Ibid., p. 30.

[7]Berggrun, p. 15.

[8]Oscar Collazos, ed., Los vanguardismos en la América Latina, (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1970), p. 49. In an interview with César Fernandez Moreno, Leopoldo Marechal had recalled a "memorable night" at the house of Evar Mendez with Ricardo Güiraldes, Oliverio Girondo, Macedonio Fernandez, "the Uruguayan painter Pedro Figari," Borges, Bernardez and others, for the purpose of publishing Martín Fierro. Marechal was relying on his memory several years later and may not have given an entirely accurate account of who was present at the meeting. Although Borges became a contributing member, he was in Europe at the time of its founding. He returned to Buenos Aires in mid 1924. See Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968), p. 183. Borges's first contribution to Martín Fierro was a poem "Montevideo" in the issue of 6 August-September 1924, p. 6.

[9]El director (Evar Mendez), "Quien es 'Martín Fierro'," Martín Fierro, (20 October-November 1924), p. 9. See also Berggrun, pp. 15-16 and Córdova-Iturburu, Revolución Martínfierrista, pp. 165-166. The artists on the list included Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Figari, Francisco Palomar, Fernando Fader, Juan Carlos Figari Castro (son of Pedro Figari), Fedérico Boxaca, Quirino Cristini, Lino

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Palacio, Alejandro Sirio, Emilio Centurión, Bonomi, the latter six as graphic designers. The writer Roberto Mariani who wrote for leftist magazines was also included on the list of contributors. Córdova-Iturburu added other names to the list of artists some of whom were in Europe during the existence of Martín Fierro, Hector Basaldúa, Aquiles Badi, Horacio Butler, Raquel Forner, besides Curatella-Manes, who found in Buenos Aires, through the efforts of the journal "un clima de comprensión, para las nuevas corrientes, antes absolutamente desconocido" (La Revolución Martínfierrista, p. 24).

[10]Girondo, El periodico Martín Fierro, pp. 37-38. The journal had been planned as a monthly but by its eighth and ninth issues dated August 6-September 1924, it began compensating for its irregularity by publishing double issues whenever too much time had elapsed to make its publication a single issue. The August September 1924 issue was the first of these. Interruptions became increasingly frequent. One of these extended for five months from December 1925 to May 1926. Martín Fierro published forty-five numbers and came out thirty-eight times between February 1924 and November 1927.

[11]In a letter to Pedro Figari in Montevideo dated 17 March 1925, Evar Mendez had complained of financial problems (Figari archives, Museo Historico Nacional, Montevideo).

[12]Girondo, Martín Fierro, p. 45. "Mucho mas unida por sus aversiones que por sus preferencias, ella se caracterizó principalmente por la amplitud de su espiritu y su vitalidad, su liberrimu impetu combativo, sus anhelos de renovación, su humorismo, a veces caustico, siempre jovial y desenfadado, como tambien por su reconfortante fé en si misma y en las posibilidades de nuestro destino."

[13]Phyllis Freeman, "The Car, Ship, and Plane in Manifestos: Vehicles of Nationalism," Colóquio, (Lisbon, April 1976), pp. 48-51.

[14]"'Martín Fierro' contra la partida," Martín Fierro, (18 July 1925), p. 9.

[15]"Manifiesto de 'Martín Fierro'." Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), pp. 1 & 2. See appendices I and II respectively for the Spanish and English text of the complete manifesto. Most of the translation is mine except for three paragraphs, partially translated by Phyllis Freeman in "The Car, Ship, and Plane in Manifestos: Vehicles of Nationalism," in Coloquio, op. cit. The manifesto is also reproduced in its entirety in Collazos, Los vanguardismos en la América Latina, pp. 203-

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204 and in Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, pp. 15-17. Girondo and González Lanuza both offer critical retrospective discussions of the contents of the manifesto in their books on the movement, respectively Girondo, El periódico Martín Fierro, pp. 16, 45 & 59, and in González Lanuza, Los Martínfierristas, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1961), pp. 36-39. Only Córdova-Iturburu remained staunch in his defense of the manifesto and what the group stood for.

[16]Christopher Green, Léger and the Avant-garde, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 208.

[17]Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución, p. 17. Córdova-Iturburu does not give the sources of these accusations, but one may conclude that they came primarily from more traditional Argentine writers, and from those from opposing esthetic and ideological camps. See "Florida Versus Boedo" in Chapter IV.

[18]Freeman, Colóquio, p. 48.

[19]Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución, p. 104; E. E. Vautier & A. Prebisch, "Hacia un nuevo estilo," Martín Fierro, (18 August 1925), p. 5. See Chapter XI for a discussion of the manifesto in the context of Futurism.

[20]Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución, p. 17.

[21]Serge Panine, "Acotaciónes a un tema vital," Martín Fierro, (9 September-October 1924), p. 2. The digestive metaphor was also used by Girondo in 1922 in which he stated that "in our quality of Latin Americans, we possess the best stomach in the world . . . capable of digesting . . . some Northern herring or oriental couscous, just as well as wild game (becasina) roasted in the pit, or one of those epic Castillian chorizos," from the introduction in his book of poems Veinte poemas para ser léidos en el tranvía, (Argenteuil, 1922). This introduction as well as some poems from the book were published in Martín Fierro, (5 March 1924), pp. 5 & 6. The origin of this notion may have come from Picabia's Manifeste cannibale of 1920. Parallel statements were made in Brazil by Oswald de Andrade in his "Anthropophagic Manifesto" of 1928 in which he boasted that Brazilians were capable of digesting the best of Europe or the "enemy" and of transforming it into something original and native, by absorbing "the sacred enemy" to "transform him into totem." See "Manifesto antropofagico," Revista Antropofagica, (I, #1, May 1928), pp. 3 & 7.

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[22]Jean Franco, The Modern Culture of Latin America, rev. ed., (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books, 1970), p. 106.

[23]Ibid., p. 103.

[24]Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, pp. 158-162.

[25]Ibid., p. 163. See also Gloria Videla, El Ultraísmo, 2nd ed., (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, S.A., 1971), p. 100. Borges read German and had associated with the refugee German Expressionist writers in Switzerland during the war and according to Gloria Videla, he was responsible for introducing Expressionism into Spanish literature.

[26]Videla, pp. 70-71.

[27]Ibid., p. 36. It also reflected "composite Bergsonian, Creationist . . ." ideas. "Creationism" was a term used by Vicente Huidobro in 1916 in a lecture he had given in Buenos aires on the three main conditions for being a poet, "to create . . . to create . . . to create." the paternity of the term was however disputed between Huidobro and Reverdy with whom Huidobro had worked on Nord-Sud in Paris. Huidobro had also stated that "all history of art is no more than the history of the evolution of mirror-man to god-man;" and that a work of art "is a cosmic reality that the artist adds to nature" (Enrique Anderson-Imbert, Spanish-American Literature, 2 vols., 2nd rev. and updated ed., [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969, vol. II: 491]). Huidobro had spent the summer of 1919 in Madrid where the Ultraists were. Many Ultraist notions are traceable to Apollinaire and Max Jacob according to Rodriguez Monegal (Monegal, Borges: 163). Apollinaire's Calligrammes influenced the typographical layout of Ultraist poems and statements, and Marinetti's "parole in libertá" were equally influential. Ultraism also owed a debt to Apollinaire's role in leading the arts from Romanticism and Symbolism to "the new Isms" according to Videla (Videla, Ultraísmo: 99).

[28]Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[29]Grecia for instance had offices in both cities. Norah Borges and other Ultraist artists regularly contributed illustrations to all these journals.

[30]Grecia, (II, No. 11, Seville-Madrid Press, 15 March 1919), p. 11, quoted in Videla, p. 36.

[31]Isaac del Vando-Villar, Grecia (no. 20, 30 June 1919), p. 9, quoted in Videla, p. 66.

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[32]Grecia, supplement (no. 50, 1 November 1920), n. p. given, quoted in Videla, p. 66 and pl. 2.

[33]Rafael Cansinos-Asséns, "Vertical. Manifiesto Ultraísta," Cervantes, (December 1920), pp. 117-119, quoted in Videla, p. 67. "La palabra Vertical evoca tambien en nosotros la idea del surtidor, que es la plomada inestable, la pomada dinámica y rebelde, que no se resigna a sostener el dorso de la estatua antigua como ese travesaño oculto en el interior de ciertas esculturas, sino que se afana por alcanzar un limite mas alto, por prolongarse en el sentido opuesto al que le marca la fatalidad de la ley de gravitación . . . ."

[34]The artists most closely affiliated with the Ultraist poets included Norah Borges, two Polish artists Paszkiewicz and Vladyslaw Jahl, the Uruguayan Rafael Barradas, the Spanish Vazquez Díaz and Francisco Borés, and the Delaunays (Videla: 57 & 117-118).

[35]Guillermo de Torre, Ultra, (No. 18, 10 November 1921), n. p., quoted in Videla, pp. 68-69. "Las figuras distienden sus lineas elásticas, y hay armonicas asunciones del color-forma noviestructural en los cuadros de Delaunay."

[36]"La nueva lírica," Cosmópolis, (III, No. 5, 1919), p. 78, quoted in Videla, p. 125.

[37]Grecia, (III, No. 48, 1 September 1920), personal archives of Norah Borges, Buenos Aires. The lines were from a poem originally published in Alcools (1913) by Apollinaire.

[38]Videla, pp. 68-69.

[39]From his poem "Las calles," in Fervor de Buenos Aires, 1923, quoted in Videla, p. 149.

[40]Jorge Luis Borges, Autobiographical Essay, pp. 225-226, quoted in Rodriguez Monegal, p. 173. Although Borges sought an art "free of local color and contemporary circumstances," his first book of poems Fervor de Buenos Aires which Rodríguez Monegal translated as Adoration of Buenos Aires, contradicts this notion, a fact Borges later regretted. See also Videla, p. 149.

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[41]Borges, Autobiographical Essay, p. 234, quoted in Rodriguez Monegal, p. 169. Just a year later the Mexicans began to use public walls for the diffusion of their political ideologies and to represent symbolically the history of Mexico. But in Buenos Aires there were no public walls and public art was confined to these poster-like displays of Spanish Ultraist poetry.

[42]Ibid., p. 235, Rodriguez Monegal, p. 172.

[43]Rodriguez Monegal, p. 188.

[44]Guillermo de Torre who was to be associated with the "Martínfierristas" owned one of the largest collections of vanguard literature, little magazines, pamphlets, manifestos in Europe which he acquired to a great extent during his frequent trips to Paris (Rodriguez Monegal: 163). In 1925 de Torre published his Literaturas europeas de vanguardia.

[45]See for example Guillermo de Torre's "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo" in Proa, (January 1925), pp. 51-60; see also Chapter XI for a discussion of this article.

[46]Berggrun, p. 19.

[47]Eduardo González Lanuza, "El instrumento de la creación: la metáfora," Martín Fierro, (26 November-29 December 1925), p. 2, quoted in Berggrun, p. 30. "Hay dos artes, . . . el arte de los prismas, y el de los espejos: este devuelve la vida, aquel la interpreta y la vive. Los que quieren pasar por artistas la inmovil esterilidad de los espejos podrán abstenerse de la lujuría vital de las metáforas, pero los que desean crear nuevos estados de animo, penetrar la feminidad felina de la vida; siempre entregandose y siempre defendiendose, esos quieran o no quieran, tendrán que seducirla y envoverla; lograrla por los atajos glorificados de promesas de la metáfora."

[48]Guillaume Apollinaire, "Zona," trans. by Lysandro Galtier, Martín Fierro, (4 August 1926), pp. 4, 11. González Lanuza's poem "Sombras" published in the December 1926 issue has no punctuation throughout the poem but it ends with a period. Borges had written poems in free verse in Spain but he did not include them in Fervor de Buenos Aires, except for one, "Aldea" (Village).

[49]Girondo, Martín Fierro, p. 53.

[50]Martín Fierro, (28 April 1927), pp. 1, 3 & 7.

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[51]Jorge Mora, "Balada del intendente de Buenos Aires," Martín Fierro (February 1924), p. 1. The use of pseudonyms in Spain and Argentina was commonplace.

[52]Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, p. 187. One of the poets of the old generation was Leopoldo Lugones whose continued use of rhyme became a target for the "Martínfierrista" poets.

[53]Books published in the twenties by the "Martínfierristas" included Güiraldes's Xaimaca (1923) and Don Segundo Sombra (1926), Girondo's Calcomanias (1925) besides his Veinte Poemas (1922) already mentioned, Borges' Fervor de Buenos Aires(1923), Luna de enfrente (Moon Across the Way) (1925), El idioma de los argentinos (1928) illustrated with vignettes by Xul Solar, besides Lugones' Lunario sentimental (1920), Romancero (1924), Solariego (1927) to mention only three, Norah Lange's La Calle de la tarde (1925), Macedonio Fernandez's Papeles de recienvenido (first published in 1929), Leopoldo Marechal's Días como flechas (1926). Some of these books contain references to Martín Fierro, for instance Fernandez's Papeles.

[54]Horacio Butler, La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1966), p. 88.

[55]Oliverio Girondo, Obras completas, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1968), p. 88. Many of these poems focused on urban themes and night life, and they evoked the rhythm of cities in a sacrilegious style with sexual metaphors. For example in "Verona," the poem begins with "Se celebra el adulterio de María con la Paloma Sacra!" Girondo introduced the poems in his book Veinte poemas para ser leídos en el tranvía, with a statement exuding Dadaist bravado, "tiro mis Veinte poemas como una piedra, sonriendo ante la inutilidad de mi gesto," (Obras completas: 51). The use of names of cities as poem titles also occurs in his book Calcomanias (1925), such as "Toledo," "Gibraltar," "Tangier," but he also used other evocative titles such as "Calle de las sierpes," and "El tren expreso" in which he used a paradoxical mixture of Futurist noise words in a poem expressing urban solitude: "Campanas! Silbidos! Gritos! y el maquinista, que se despide siete veces / del jefe de la estación; / y el loro, que es el unico pasagero que protesta / por las veintisiete horas de retardo; / y las chicas que vienen a ver pasar el tren / porque es lo único que pasa." (Obras completas; 103).

[56]Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, p. 194.

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[57]An example is "Pettoruti irá al fracaso / si se baja del Picasso," (Pettoruti will meet with failure / If he lowers himself from Picasso.), in Martín Fierro, (10 September 1925), p. 8.

[58]Videla, El Ultraísmo, p. 21. See also Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, p. 162.

[59]Carlos Mastronardi, "El movimiento de 'Martín Fierro'," Capitulo, 1st series La Historia de la Literatura Argentina, No. 39, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, c. 1979), p. 921. Mastronardi described their purpose as an attempt to "desentrañar el símbolo o el significado de cuanto presenta." The "Martínfierristas" paid special homage to Ramón Gomez de las Serna in 1925 just before his visit to Buenos Aires. They recognized him as the source for their epigrammatic style.

[60]Jean Prevost, "El movimiento literario en Francia," Martín Fierro, (18 May 1926), p. 3. Prevost quoted Romains as saying in the preface to the new edition of La vie unanime that "Poetry has separated itself from the innumerable modern men to dedicate itself to being the entertainment and hostage of an intimate 'elite' and people have forgotten how to use simple language."

[61]Maurice Raynal, "Del impresionismo al cubismo. A propósito de la 'retrospectiva del Salón de Independientes'," Martín Fierro, (8 June 1926), p. 7. See also Berggrun, p. 63. An admiring editorial on Raynal appeared in the same issue of Martin Fierro, (8 June 1926: 7). Sandro Piantanida had written a two-part article "Descubrimiento del cubismo" which was published in Martín Fierro (20 October-November 1924: 6 & 8 and 24 January 1925: 4), but his articles were not as clear and concise as Raynal's.

[62]Germaine Curatella-Manes, "George Braque y Suzanne Roger," Martín Fierro, (8 June 1926), p. 6.

[63]Alberto Oscar Blasi, Güiraldes y Larbaud, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1970), p. 108.

[64]Marcelle Auclair, "La nueva estética," Martín Fierro, (10 May 1926), p. 5. See also Berggrun, p. 94.

[65]Idem., "Los dibujos de Pablo Picasso," Martín Fierro, (12 December 1926), p. 7. Her reference to his "scientific" rigor was probably prompted by Apollinaire's classifications of Cubism in which he named four distinct tendencies, scientific, physical, orphic and instinctive.

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He classified Picasso among the scientific Cubists (Edward Fry, Cubism, [New York: Oxford University Press, 1978:117]).

[66]Idem., "Max Ernst y la pintura mitólogica," Martín Fierro, (4 August 1926), p. 5. Two of Ernst's works were reproduced without titles. They were Au dessus des nuages marche la minuit. Audessus de la minuit plane l'oiseau invisible du jour. Un peu plus haut que l'oiseau l'ether pousse et les murs et les toits flottent, and La femme chancelante. Both works are reproduced in the exhibition catalogue of Max Ernst's retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in 1975 (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1975: 83 & 105).

[67]Guillermo de Torre, "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo," Proa, No. 6, (January 1925), pp. 54-60.

[68]Juan Batlle-Planas was the first Surrealist artist to exhibit in Buenos Aires in the thirties. His first Surrealist works date from 1936 and follow the Spanish rather than the French form of Surrealism in which positive/negative and transparent images were first explored. (Susana Sulic, Batlle-Planas, series Pintores Argentinos del Siglo XX, [Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America Latina, 1980]). Berni was a Surrealist for a short time and showed some of these works in group exhibitions in Buenos Aires between 1929 and 1932 but he shortly took up sharp focus realism much like the German New Objectivity artists.

[69]Piero Illari, "Representación gráfica y cromatizada de los estados de ánimo," Martín Fierro, (15 July 1924), p. 6. Illari had commissioned the Italian artist Marasco to make the diagrams especially for his article.

[70]Córdova-Iturburu, La Revolución, pp. 24-25. The Perret brothers were Gustave and Auguste.

[71]E. E. Vautier and A. H. Prebisch, "Fantasía y calculo," Martín Fierro, (5 August 1925), pp. 3 & 4; "Como decíamos ayer . . .", Martín Fierro, (18 May 1926), p. 7; "Arte decorativo," Martín Fierro, (2 September 1926), p. 9. Although Argentinians as a whole were unfamiliar with Duchamp's Ready-Mades, Prebisch was most probably quite familiar with Duchamp's Fountain which was rejected in New York at the Independents exhibition of 1917.

[72]Vautier & Prebisch, "Fantasía y calculo," Martín Fierro, pp. 3 & 4. Prebisch quoted from L'Esprit Nouveau in some of his articles and was well acquainted with the writings of the Purists.

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[73]George Heard Hamilton, Painting and Sculpture in Europe 1880-1940, rev. and corr. paperback ed., (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 267.

[74]Alberto Prebisch, "Sugestiones de una visita al salón de acuarelistas, pastelistas y aguafortistas," Martín Fierro, (15 May-June 1924), p. 3.

[75]Ibid.

[76]Martín Fierro, (26 June 1925), p. 1. On two occasions Aztec or Toltec sculpture was reproduced next to the sculpture of Rogelio Irurtia (sometimes spelled with a Y) and Zonza Briano whose work was academic.

[77]See for example Martín Fierro, (16 June 1925, p. 1 for a conversation satirizing the opening of an exhibition of the work of the sculptor Zonza Briano at Amigos del Arte.

[78]Carlos Mastronardi, "El movimiento de 'Martín Fierro'," Capitulo, p. 934. Marcoussis in 1912 entitled a drawing of his Watch Out, Fresh Paint, (LeRoy C. Breunig, ed., Apollinaire on Art, [New York: The Viking Press, 1972: 493 n. 29]).

[79]La Redacción, Martín Fierro, (5 November 1926), pp. 6 & 7.

[80]Alberto Prebisch, "El XV Salón Nacional. Los nuevos artistas," Martín Fierro, (17 October 1925), pp. 4 & 5.

[81]Idem., "Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes 1926," Martín Fierro, (5 November 1926), pp. 6 & 7.

[82]Idem., "El XVII Salón anual de Bellas Artes," Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), pp. 9 & 14.

[83]L.M. (Leopoldo Marechal), "Un cuadro rechazado," Martín Fierro, (17 October 1925), p. 7.

[84]Martín Fierro, (17 May 1925), p. 4.

[85]The exhibition had no specific title. It was organized by artists at Amigos del Arte in honor of Marinetti. Prebisch wrote about it in an article entitled "Marinetti en los 'Amigos del Arte'," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), pp. 1 & 3. The critic for Crítica referred to it as "Una exposicion semifuturista," (Crítica, [Thursday 17 June 1926]). The artists were Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Norah Borges and Piero Illari, and architectural drawings by Vautier and Prebisch were included.

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[86]Leopoldo Marechal, "Fioravanti y la escultura pura," Martín Fierro, (15 July-15 August 1927), p. 7.

[87]Atalaya (Alfredo Chiabra Acosta), Críticas de arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), pp. 276-277. See also Marechal "Fioravanti," note 86.

[88]Ulyses Petit de Murat, La Noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), p. 152. González Lanuza's poem was entitled "Apocalipsis" from his book Prismas and was published in Martín Fierro, (August-6 September 1924), p. 8.

[89]Ibid., pp. 151-152. Petit de Murat does not give dates or location of the auction but his account of this exhibition is given within the context of Martín Fierro's last year when he joined the group. María Rosa Oliver was to become a friend of Pettoruti's and collaborated with him in 1930 on the journal Argentina.

[90]Hector René Lafleur, Sergio D. Provenzano and Fernando P. Alonso, Las revistas literarias argentinas 1893-1967, corr. & exp. ed., (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1968), p. 122.

[91]Girondo's drawing was entitled Vendedor de helados (Ice Cream Vendor) and Borges's, Compadrito de la via de oro (Little Comrade of the Golden Way). Güiraldes's contribution was described as "un dibujo a la tinta china: 'Sintesis de la primera conferencia de Marinetti en el Coliseo de Buenos Aires'," and Girondo was said to have contributed "generosamente con varios 'monos', algunos de ellos inspirados en personajes de Lautréamont" (Lafleur, Las revistas: 122).

[92]Some of his drawings as well as the paintings by his brother Alberto can be found at the Museo Gauchesco-Parque "Ricardo Güiraldes" in San Antonio de Areco where the family had ranches. Alberto Blasi cites a posthumous homage exhibition at the Salón Kraft in Buenos Aires in 1952, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Güiraldes's death (Blasi, Güiraldes y Larbaud: 41, n. 2 & 116).

[93]As draughtsmen González Lanuza and Girondo worked in the Ultraist style, focusing on crowded urban themes based on a grid derived from Cubism.

[94]Pedro Figari, "Arte emocionales," Martín Fierro, (24 January 1925), p. 2.

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[95]Idem., "Arte infantil mejicano," Martín Fierro, (26 January 1925), p. 3. The exhibition which took place at Amigos del Arte also included work by Rodríguez Lozano shown in an adjacent room.

[96]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 197. Petit de Murat also mentions that Pettoruti lectured regularly with slides: "negaba toda la pintura circundante y afirmaba la suya con transparencias inauditas" (Petit de Murat, Noche de mi ciudad: 152).

[97]Xul Solar, "Algunos piensos cortos de 'Cristian Morgenstern'," Martín Fierro, (28 May 1927), p. 9.

[98]This piece entitled "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura" appears without a name in Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 3. Ramón Gomez de la Serna reproduces it in his monograph (Ramón Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, [Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1945: 19]).

[99]Such a schedule was published in "Ecos de 'Martín Fierro'," Martín Fierro, (August-6 September 1924), p. 10, announcing Mondays at Amigos del Arte at 6 and Richmond at 8. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at the Witcomb 5 to 7, the Richmond Saturdays, Aues Keller at 1 and Royal Keller at night except for some Wednesdays at Proa.

[100]Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, p. 194.

[101]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 179-180; Girondo, Martín Fierro, p. 28.

[102]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 205; Rodríguez Monegal, Borges, p. 215.

[103]Interview with Jorge Lopez Anaya, director of the Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, La Plata, 3 December 1980; Enrique Anderson-Imbert, Spanish-American Literature, II, p. 464.

[104]Mastronardi, "El movimiento de 'Martín Fierro'," Capitulo, p. 916.

[105]Girondo, Martín Fierro, p. 45.

[106]Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución, p. 27.

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CHAPTER IV

MARTÍN FIERRO'S POLEMICS: INTERNATIONALISM VS. ARGENTINE IDENTITY

Throughout its life, Martín Fierro devoted space to Argentine poetry and to the defense of its avant-garde artists. But it also prided itself in its international coverage. Although the journal had focused on Argentine and Spanish poetry in its first three issues, by May 1924, it increased its number of articles and poems about, and by, European and other Latin American writers. This diffusion grew considerably in 1926 as a result of Girondo's travels to Peru, Cuba, Mexico, New York and Europe to spread the word about the "new literary movement"[1] and to solicit contributions by foreign writers. Since its first year, Martín Fierro had published poetry and essays by such Latin Americans as the Peruvian Haya de la Torre, the Chilean Pablo Neruda, The French-Uruguayan Jules Supervielle and in 1927, it added Alfonso Reyes who came to Argentina to serve as its Mexican ambassador. In art the journal reproduced and reviewed the work of Mexicans and Uruguayans.[2] But its eager acceptance of its role as a vehicle of international diffusion and strong focus on European culture led to several polemics as well as to identity conflicts among some of its affiliates.

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"Florida" Versus "Boedo"

Martín Fierro's indiscriminate defense of avant-garde ideas and strong international focus proved to be too apolitical for some circles. In 1924 the first of several polemics erupted between the "Martínfierristas" and the contributors to rival magazines of leftist orientation. These included Los Pensadores, Revista Oral, Extrema Izquierda, La Protesta and Claridad who had formed themselves into a group known as "Boedo" named after a street in the working class neighborhood in the suburbs of Buenos Aires. The "Boedo" writers and artists had their own printing presses, bookshops and cafes and stood for class struggle and social commitment. They were known to distribute leaflets to factory workers on street corners.[3] The writers and artists of Martín Fierro as well as of other "elitist" publications such as the journal El Hogar and the newspaper La Nación were known as the "Florida" group symbolizing the elegant sector of town with its center on the street by that name.

The Boedo writers included Roberto Mariani, Lorenzo Stanchina, Léonidas Barletta, some of whom had also contributed to Martín Fierro, and the painters, Benito Quinquela Martín, Santiago Stagnaro, Guillermo Facio Hebecquer, Adolfo Bellocq. Quinquela Martín had belonged to the "pintores de la boca" group named for the port district of Buenos Aires because of the painters' themes of dock workers and other social subjects.[4] The

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Boedo group believed in an art that "did not seek strict plastic and esthetic values but rather a precise social denunciation of the injustices and miseries of the proletariat" of the Boedo district. Instead of "the voices of Picasso or Cocteau, of Paul Elouard or Ramón Gomez de la Serna, instead of an analysis and clarification of artistic tendencies," they sought "an art of solid social and human basis born of its contact with the Russian literature of Gogol and Gorki, and also the realist action of Zola, Barbusse and Roland."[5]

Following the publication in the May 1924 issue of Martín Fierro of an ode to Marcel Proust by Paul Morand, and articles on Morand and Palazzeschi,[6] the Boedo writer Roberto Mariani attacked the magazine in its July issue accusing it of "elegancia francesa" and political insensitivity. He denounced the "Martínfierristas" for their "scandalous respect for Maestro Lugones" whom Mariani accused of being a fascist,[7] and for denying "our sensibility" by adhering to "brilliant mediocrities like Paul Morand, a Frenchman, and Ramón Gomez de la Serna, a Spaniard" instead of its Argentine writers, who were the fellow citizens of the "authentic and genuine Martín Fierro."[8]

In response the editors of Martín Fierro declared that they never claimed to publish a "gauchesque periodical" and that they had "a sufficiently refined sensibility to respond to suggestions of the moment and

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understand and love such writers as Paul Morand and Ramón Gomez de la Serna and others."[9] On the one hand, Mariani accused Martín Fierro of lacking "the spirit of rebellion and the impetus for promoting change,"[10] and on the other, the "Martínfierristas" accused "those more or less political revolutionaries" of Boedo of being "artistic reactionaries"[11] thus placing Martín Fierro in the "revolutionary" camp, at least from an aesthetic point of view. In a dig at Boedo's political stance, they added that "we all respect our art and we would never consent to make of it an instrument of propaganda. We are all Argentine without any effort."[12]

It was no accident that many of the writers of the Florida group had come from the wealthy classes. Borges's family could be traced back to the conquest. Güiraldes's family owned ranches outside of Buenos Aires and traveled to Europe regularly, and Girondo, like Borges, had studied in Europe as a youth and had traveled to many countries including Egypt. While the Florida artists were not all from such wealthy and privileged backgrounds as the writers, they nonetheless came from comfortable middle class homes. Pettoruti's father owned a prospering tobacco factory in La Plata and represented an Italian wine and oil import company, and Xul Solar's father was a mechanical engineer. Conversely the Boedo artists were from less privileged backgrounds. Quinquela Martín for instance had been abandoned as a baby, was raised by poor

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Italian immigrants and was forced at an early age to earn a living doing menial tasks.[13]

The Florida/Boedo issue however was not as black and white as it seemed. Writers and artists often crossed lines and contributed to journals of the opposite camp. Pettoruti associated regularly with members of both groups declaring himself "enemy of classifying myself."[14] He contributed to Revista Oral, a Boedo journal, and regularly associated with the Boedo affiliated artists, Antonio Sibellino, Gomez Cornet and with the writers, particularly Atalaya. Even Borges admitted to having "preferred to be in the Boedo group, since I was writing about the old Northside [where the proletarian neighborhood of Boedo was] . . . the slums, sadness, and sunsets, . . . but I was informed . . . that I was already one of the Florida warriors and that it was too late for me to change." He did not take the differences between the two groups very seriously and thought "the whole thing was just a put-up job." He referred to the polemic between the two groups as a "sham" created "partly for publicity, partly as a boyish prank."[15]

Although the politically-based position of some Boedo affiliates was much more than just a "boyish prank," the polemic generated by the two groups' differences was what the "Martínfierristas" thrived on. The issue was humorously "buried" by Martín Fierro with the usual epitaph:

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Here lie . . .
the sinister thinkers
who were the geniuses of Boedo.
Now in what ventilators
will they stick their finger?[16]

Martín Fierro and France

Some of the issues raised by the polemic not only touched on a sensitive nerve, they sometimes presented a curious paradox such as the commissioning of an equestrian monument of the nineteenth century Argentine hero, General Carlos Alvear from a French sculptor, Antoine Bourdelle. The strength of Martín Fierro's ties with France were not only cultural but diplomatic as well. By 1926 Curatella-Manes held a diplomatic post in Paris as Chancellor of the Argentine Embassy, a post he obtained through the intercession of Bourdelle with whom he had studied sculpture.

Early in 1927, Martín Fierro published an article on Bourdelle by Waldemar George following the inauguration in 1926 of Bourdelle's equestrian of General Alvear (Fig. 18). The monument, located in downtown Buenos Aires, was set on an exaggeratedly high base decorated with allegorical figures representing "force," "victory," "eloquence," and "law." It had been commissioned some years earlier. Apparently Bourdelle began working on it in 1913. Waldemar George had asserted that Bourdelle was the only one "today" capable of creating monumental sculpture of such spirit and scale. It was necessary to

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leave "the job of exalting great deeds not only to historians but also to the great poets and great sculptured monuments which sing of great exploits and create a more vivid legend that history can."[17] Although the nationalist implications of this monument celebrating the centenary of the general's campaign victory against Brazil for the annexation of Uruguay, coincided with a rising focus on national themes in the art and literature of the "Martínfierristas" in 1926, ironically its execution by a French rather than an Argentine artist was not questioned. One reason may have been that prior to Marcelo T. de Alvear's presidency, it was taken for granted in Argentina that such government commissions were given to foreigners, especially French and Italian artists. It was not until President Alvear's term in office that the government began acquiring work by contemporary Argentine artists.[18] On the other hand, the compliment was returned when Curatella-Manes participated in the Universal Exposition of Decorative Arts in 1925 in Paris not as a foreigner but as a Frenchman, commissioned by the French government.

Another apparent contradiction, that between the promotion of avant-garde art on the one hand and of traditional heroic monuments such as the Alvear equestrian on the other, seemed not to concern the "Martínfierristas" any more than the monument's execution by a Frenchman. The fact that Waldemar George as one of the promoters of

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the new art could write about this monument as a great contemporary work undoubtedly helped to legitimize it in the eyes of the "Martínfierristas."

Italian Art and Marinetti

Martín Fierro's francophilism was not viewed with as much enthusiasm by its Italian friends as it was by its own members. In 1924, the Italian critic Sandro Volta who had come to Buenos Aires following his meeting with Oliverio Girondo on board ship, published a letter in Martín Fierro suggesting that the periodical diminish its "French influence" and emphasize instead "the works of young Italian vanguardists." He offered to contribute articles on Italian art to the journal. Between November 1924 and November 1925, he published seven on artists of the post-war generation including the former Futurists, Carlo Carrá and Ardengo Soffici.

Volta utilized his "Martínfierrista" platform to publicize Italian artists who rejected Marinetti's unchanging Futurist ideas. In a 1925 article entitled "Marinetti and Our Generation," he explained that Italy's new generation of artists did not "accept any pre-established canons, not even Marinetti's 'enchanting anarchism'." He stated that "the current generation has no debt toward, or no influence whatsoever from Marinetti's Futurism." Rather, the artists recognized the influence of Ardengo Soffici, Giovanni Papini, Carlo

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Carrá, Aldo Palazzeschi, Armando Spadini and Enrico Pea, all of whom were then practicing a more traditional form of Neo-Romanticism.[19] But already in 1913, Papini and others had not only opposed Futurism but had openly denounced it in an issue of Lacerba with the blessings of one of the journal's co-founders, Palazzeschi.[20] In accordance with Martín Fierro's liberal attitude towards divergent opinions, articles defending Futurism also appeared. The Buenos Aires-based critic Piero Illari, author of the 1924 article on "states of mind" and contributor to the 1926 "Futurist" exhibition at Amigos del Arte, staunchly defended Futurism and wrote about the "continuing Futurist manifestations" in the work of Marinetti, Gangiullo, Cerati and Depero.[21]

Futurism which received such a scandalized reception when Pettoruti exhibited what was then perceived to be Futurist art in 1924, was given new impetus when Marinetti visited Buenos Aires in June 1926. Marinetti had come from Sao Paulo, Brazil where his lectures had invited considerable polemic. He had been pelleted with vegetables which the Brazilians referred to as "vegetables in liberty" and was advised to "lecture from atop a bamboo." The avant-garde Brazilian writer, Menotti del Picchia had even arrogantly declared that Brazil did not need Futurism because "we are the country of the future."[22] But in Argentina, Marinetti received a more gracious reception. In advance of his arrival, Pettoruti

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who was the only one among the artists to know him personally, stated in an interview with the press that what happened in Brazil would not happen in Argentina where the public "is better prepared to be in tune with Marinetti's real ideas," and that vanguard manifestations in art had always found a more propitious climate in Argentina. Considering the hostility his exhibition at the Witcomb had generated just two years before, these statements seem contradictory. But he may have been expressing the optimistic view that after two years of exposure, attitudes had changed and he predicted that during Marinetti's visit, he would be surrounded by "prestigious intellectuals who would favor him with their presence" at his lectures.[23]

During Marinetti's visit, Martín Fierro reprinted his first Futurist manifesto (Fig 19), published articles by and about him and his wife Benedetta, honored him with a banquet and art exhibitions, and welcomed him with a sonnet in which the author, A(ntonio) V(allejo) did not neglect to satirize Marinetti's links with Mussolini and his admiration for a fellow "fascist," Leopoldo Lugones. The nature of his visit was viewed with polite--even warm--skepticism by some. Although the editors welcomed him with open arms "in a gesture of cordial hospitality," they wished to make their position clear from the start. They recognized the fact that "Marinetti had come to these lands of America with a certain objective of political

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order." But because of Martín Fierro's "spirit and orientation," it did not accept any interference of a political order in its activities "which are already clearly established." In order to allay any "suspicion," regardless of their great admiration for Marinetti, the editors were careful to state that "our journal has nothing to do with Marinetti the politician."[24]

Marinetti's presence invited a spate of pro and con articles and essays. Many of the "Martínfierrista" poets and their foreign correspondents wrote admiringly and even affectionately of their guest. Although today he was "bald and married" wrote Nino Frank, "at the age of forty eight he is even younger than we are" and he acknowledged him as the "Futurist pioneer poet." Piero Illari recognized him as the "force filled with energy and new concepts . . . which had moved Italy from its lethargic literary posture," and Leopoldo Marechal saluted him "not for his literary effort, which will soon, if not already, be forgotten, but for his personal courage in battling against a stagnating state of art." Marinetti for him represented "all men who have had the courage to say that beauty is not a static divinity, but a moving ever-changing unity."[25]

Guillermo de Torre contributed a more sober evaluation of Marinetti's work in a reprint of a chapter on Marinetti from his 1925 book Literaturas europeas de vanguardia. Although de Torre acknowledged "certain

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technical reforms" brought about through Marinetti and Futurism, particularly the "elimination of punctuation in poetry . . . and the expressive force of free typography . . . already totally assimilated by all the vanguard schools," in retrospect, he saw little else of value. In a time of re-evaluation, he wrote, it is enough "to remember its [Futurism's] beliefs and pure fellow-feeling" and simultaneously wave it aside "with a heroic gesture" from a "distance that had already surpassed it."[26]

In Buenos Aires Marinetti gave several lectures based on his earlier manifestos and writings. At the coliseum he recited from "The Bombardment of Adrianopolis" to capacity crowds, spoke about the esthetic of the machine as the "ideal symbol of the new artistic sensibility," and ended by exorting the Argentine public to liberate itself from the old European schools, that it resist the imposition of "capricious fashions" and that it cultivate its own artistic form by elaborating "national material which could only thus come to possess a personality and strength."[27] It would be safe to assume that his main target besides all of past history was French culture since the Italian one was already too engrained in Argentina to be easily displaced.

Marinetti's lectures invited mixed reactions in the press. The reviewers of La Prensa found his talk at the coliseum condescending:

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> The founder of Futurism, like an apostle, has become crystallized in his own dogmas, without taking into account the fact that his disciples have already spread the new truth throughout the whole world . . .

It was as though

> He were attempting to emphasize the advantages of knowing the alphabet to a select, learned audience.[28]

At La Peña where he also lectured, with "a display of his verbal pyrotechnics," according to Andrés Muñoz, one of Quinquela Martín's biographers, "he had to listen to whistles and other sounds that were in no way Futurist but present and eloquent."[29] Muñoz seems not to have been aware of the fact that the reaction he described was in fact an integral component of Futurist events.

Quinquela Martín was among the opponents of Marinetti's Futurism. Although he had been a co-founder of La Peña and an active promoter of cultural events, he openly discredited Futurism in Marinetti's presence. According to his account, Marinetti confided to him that he had to "follow the Futurist farce and die with it . . . . When a Futurist greets me" he presumably said, "it is an imbecile who greets me."[30] Nonetheless, regardless of esthetic orientation, a large crowd of artists and writers turned out to honor Marinetti and Benedetta at the June banquet. The guests included such conservative artists as the painter Juan Tapia and the sculptor Alfredo Bigatti, besides Pettoruti and Xul Solar (Fig. 20).

In spite of the hospitality shown Marinetti,

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Martín Fierro with characteristic bravado published an editorial declaring that while Futurism had been most useful in Italy, other European countries had gone further or deeper in their searches and innovations with more successful results. The editors admitted condescendingly that

> Although many individuals have denied it, the mere fact that Marinetti insisted on proclaiming the beauty of modern life--which for us remains a platitude since we have been practicing it for many years--for the public and the big newspapers, it is an enormous novelty.[31]

If Marinetti did not succeed in convincing every Argentinian to embrace Futurism, after his departure, Martín Fierro kept Futurism alive in its pages until its last issue. During the journal's final year, articles by Marinetti and Lamberti Sorrentino, the latter then living in Buenos Aires, were published with illustrations of the work of Boccioni, Prampolini and Depero (Fig. 21).[32] Italian culture if not Futurism, remained a strong focus of the magazine until the end. Its strongest rival was Spain.

Martín Fierro and Spain: A Controversy

The links between Spain and Argentina remained strong throughout the twenties. The flight of the Spanish hydroplane Plus Ultra from Spain to Buenos Aires in February 1926 was one more demonstration of this bond. The aviators were honored by a commemorative plaque on a wall of the mayor's residence.[33] Spanish artists

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continued to exhibit regularly in Buenos Aires and the still figurative contemporary work of Dalí was reproduced in Martín Fierro (Figs. 22 & 23). In 1925 Ramón Gomez de la Serna had traveled to Buenos Aires and even before his arrival the journal devoted its July issue to "Ramón." The writers exchanged letters filled with Futurist metaphors and exuberant statements. The "Martínfierristas" promised "Ramón" that "the gigantic automobile of the moving banquet awaited him . . . with the motor running." They had the greatest admiration for him and were "opening the faucet of their enthusiasm."

With equal exuberance Gomez de la Serna anticipated with excitement the chance to run through the streets of Buenos Aires "whose light is so admirably radiated by Jorge Luis Borges" just as he had the old streets of Segovia and Madrid in the company of some of them. He would travel "in the trains that travel partly in the sky, partly on the ground, in order to feel myself in the palpitating roller coaster which Güiraldes described with such emotion." As to Girondo, he moved at "one hundred revolutions per second." Girondo's poster-like drawing of Ramón's brain (fig. 17) was published in the same issue along with essays, homages, poems and messages to Ramón from most of the "Martínfierrista" poets, along with the inevitable epitaph which warned him that even in death, he would have trouble escaping such "porquerías" as the Boedo writers.[34]

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During the same year, 1925, Guillermo de Torre was in regular contact as correspondent and friend of the poets. In the June issue, he had praised Buenos Aires' fervor of innovation which it had taken over from Spain, its journals and its poets. But in 1927 when, as assistant editor of a new Spanish journal La Gaceta Literaria, he published an editorial declaring that the "literary meridian" of Spanish America passed through Madrid, he unleashed a polemic of such magnitude that a heated and declamatory exchange of letters followed in the two reviews. Two issues of Martín Fierro including its last, devoted an inordinate amount of space to answering his claim.[35] The "Martínfierristas" sounded like warriors defending their land against invaders. Hostilities began in the June-July issue when Pablo Rojas Paz accused de Torre of "vain imperialism." He denounced the "Pan Americanism" of North America, the "Latin Americanism" of France and the "Hispano Americanism" of Spain which made it possible in Spain to state that Madrid must be the intellectual meridian of Hispano America." Leopoldo Marechal, in an analogous context stated that Spain had never expressed any interest in its overseas "colonies" and that even today, the Spaniards regarded America as a colony which merely produced gold and made possible triumphal returns to the homeland. According to Ulyses Petit de Murat, Girondo remarked that the climate in Spain could not have been so propicious since its best artists-

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Picasso, Juan Gris, Maria Blanchard, even Zuloaga and Anglada Camarasa all emigrated.[36]

Guillermo de Torre's "lack of understanding" of Latin American culture also prompted answers from correspondents from other countries. The Mexican poet Jorge Cuesta wrote criticizing a review by de Torre of the poems of three Mexicans in which he had displayed a "total lack of knowledge" of Mexican poetry. Borges asserted that neither in Montevideo nor in Buenos Aires was there any sympathy for Spain; on the other hand, there was for Italy. Madrid did not understand them. Spaniards could not even play a "tango without taking away its soul." Madrid had no other intellectual claim than its greguerías.

Eduardo González Lanuza could not accept "any foreign meridian" be it Paris, Rome or Madrid: "it would not suit us, we would be living an older life; our day, is always four hours younger than theirs."[38] Nicolas Olivari demanded that Spaniards stop confusing them with America: "Buenos Aires and Argentina are not America; America flows to us without our having to seek it, but we are not America, simply because we don't wish to be. America is for you, an editorial problem. Argentina is for us a possibility of literature.[39]

Evar Mendez considered La Gaceta Literaria's assertion completely "foolish." Argentine literature he remarked, was much closer to such American classics as

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Emerson, Whitman, Sarmiento, Hernandez, Martí, Darío and Rodó, and more recently to important contributors to Martín Fierro, Güiraldes, Ocampo, Girondo among others. He also named Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Prebisch and Norah Borges, all of whose new tendencies contributed to "our intellectual field." Most of these writers and artists he asserted, "refuse to accept the Spaniards as authentic and typical fruits of the new world."[40] In spite of the heated reaction of the Argentinians and of the "unexpected brutality" with which La Gaceta Literaria responded to the polemic, Guillermo de Torre continued to contribute to Martín Fierro until the end. He subsequently apologized, returned to Buenos Aires,[41] and in 1928 married Norah Borges.

On Being Argentinian

The issues raised by Martín Fierro's polemics were invariably questions of Argentine identity. This identity was the focus of lectures, articles and questionnaires. When in November 1924, the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore had visited the country and was a guest at Victoria Ocampo's villa in the elegant suburb of San Isidro, he too had been critical of Argentina's internationalism. Tagore had found Argentina in particular and Latin America in general to be a "newly rich" culture which "had not had time to discover its soul. It is sad to see its absolute dependence on Europe for its thoughts, which must reach

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them [the people] completely formulated. They are not ashamed to boast about whatever fashion they copy, nor of the culture they buy from that continent."[42] Victoria Ocampo who was a great admirer and translator of his poetry, was deeply hurt by these remarks, especially since Tagore had seen nothing of the country: "But where do we go to buy our culture, if not in the countries from which we come, of which we are the children and forceful heirs? Isn't European culture also ours? Can we limit ourselves to the Quechua, Guaraní or Comechingón Indian cultures?" Tagore's criticism only pointed up the "orphanhood" of Argentine culture. She noted that such travelers could understand "the North American melting pot" much better than the "Argentine melting pot."[43]

One journalist used Tagore's visit to satirize Argentina's "imported" cultures. An article entitled "Orientalism and Futurism" signed "Ariel" came out in the newspaper La Fronda in which the author made an unlikely comparison between the oriental literature of Tagore--with its sources in "the sacred books of India" which "conducts us inside the spirit," and Futurism which "takes us outside of ourselves to find in the most unexpected reality, figures filled with color." The author ended by sarcastically suggesting that the "much publicized exhibitor of Florida Street [Pettoruti]" paint Tagore's portrait with the subject's name written at the bottom as a necessary explanation of "one of those arbitrary and

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disconcerting canvases which Pettoruti signs with a free and sure hand" so that the following year "we could have a remembrance of Tagore's visit."[44]

The subject of Argentine identity was taken up in 1924 by the editors of Martín Fierro in a boldly printed questionnaire published in the May-June issue:

1. Do you believe in the existence of an Argentine sensibility, an Argentine mentality?
2. In the affirmative case what are the characteristics?

The answers ranged from the negative declarations by Pedro Juan Vignale that "our pampas are devoid of men and myths," that Argentina has no history, no castles, no aristocracy, no thousand-year-old trees, no stone structures, just "English or Norwegian brick and cement" houses and by Dr. Mariano Barrenechea that "we lack ethnic and social traditions," to Girondo's buoyant assertion that "there is no doubt of the existence of an Argentine mentality and sensibility" exemplified by all the Argentine writers and thinkers of the past who contributed to the culture with which he identified.[45]

Leopoldo Lugones, who, in a series of lectures in 1913, had endowed the gaucho as a national hero with noble and admirable traits,[46] believed that Argentinians were among "the most complete and amiable civilization in existence;" Güiraldes offered a more philosophical discourse on the "essence of being" and the differences between "being" in its temporal and locative sense;[47] and

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Roberto Mariani wrote about the tango,[48] which originated in the slums of Buenos Aires in the nineteenth century and by the twenties had gained favor and popularity not only in Argentina but in Europe as well.[49]

If some writers had expressed doubts as to the existence of an Argentine identity, Figari, one of the respondents to the questionnaire, put them to rest. Like Lugones and Güiraldes, he was a staunch defender of platense values. While he admitted that there was little homogeneity because of Argentina's difficult geographic conditions, as sons of the indigenous and colonial populations, he remarked, there emerged "el criollo" with "a spirit of his own" whose place and character he defined with utopian conviction.[50] Figari's beliefs found a strong voice in Güiraldes who wrote that "our race was born of a very ancient race and of a very new land."[51]

The unequivocally positive answers given by Figari, Güiraldes, Lugones and Girondo were reiterated subsequently by Borges who added his voice in his many writings about Argentine themes. But while some intellectuals did not question the existence of this identity, others bemoaned the "absence of actuality" in the arts.[52] In 1926 Antonio Vallejo, a contributor to Martín Fierro, stated that "Criollismo is not Argentine history or the gaucho, but the 'now' reality of the city and the country."[53] Others took issue as had Victoria Ocampo, with the frequent invocation of indigenous

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cultures as part of their heritage. The painter Ramón Gomez Cornet felt that indigenist art could not be a point of departure for a "national ethic" because "our spiritual concerns and our epoch are completely different from the ones they [the indigenous cultures] lived." Only by "living the present with all of its anxieties" would they be able to form "an argentine art."[54]

In a similar context, the painter and art historian José León Pagano, in a lecture given in 1926, stated that "if we are not derived--as in fact we are not--from a remote indigenist past, and if we exclude from the European focus the evolutionary steps of our mentality, we present to the world a really inexplicable case." He concluded that "if one were to ask me now in what way is our art Argentine? I would answer the only tenable thing: because the men who produce it are Argentinian."[55]

Unquestionably Figari's presence in Buenos Aires from 1921 to 1925 contributed immeasurably to defining for intellectuals what some aspects of their shared "platense" culture were. Girondo a close friend and an admirer of Figari's, found his unshakable confidence in a Creole identity to be like a "tonic." If Figari did not revolutionize the art world with a radically new style, he nonetheless contributed concrete evidence of the existence of local customs and traditions through his paintings.

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NOTES

[1]"Oliverio Girondo en misión intelectual," Martín Fierro, (25 July 1924), p. 3. His 1924 trip was the first of two for the purpose.

[2]Haya de la Torre, "Discurso," Martín Fierro, (1 February 1924), p. 8; Pablo Neruda, "Poetas de Chile: Pablo Neruda y Alberto Rojas Gomenez," (9 September-October 1924), p. 10; Jules Supervielle, "En el tiempo y en el espacio," (20 January 1927), p. 4 and "Tierra," (9 June 1926), p. 8; Manuel Rodríguez Lozano, "Miguel Covarrubias," (28 August 1925), p. 3; Xavier Villaurutia, "El pintor mexicano Agustín Lazo," (12 December 1926), p. 5; Alfonso Reyes, "Verso y prosa," (10 June-10 July 1927), p. 1. Borges was a close friend of Alfonso Reyes and after his arrival, Borges attended Sunday dinners at the Mexican embassy (Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1978: 218]). Works by Rivera, Orozco, Maximo Pacheco and others were illustrated (10 June-10 July 1927: 2 & 3); Alberto Prebisch, "El salón de primavera uruguayo," (28 February 1927), pp. 3-4; short pieces on Brazilian avant-garde literature were also published but there was considerably less contact between Argentina and Brazil than with other countries, particularly Mexico, Peru, Chile and Uruguay.

[3]Interview with Jorge Lopez Anaya, director of the Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, La Plata, 3 December 1980.

[4]Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, 80 años de pintura argentina, intro. Angel Bonomi, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Librería la Ciudad, c. 1978), p. 213.

[5]Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico: Editorial Pormaca, 1965), p. 106. Antonio Berni, Juan Carlos Castagnino, Demetrio Urruchua and Enrique Policastro took up the cause of socially committed art in the thirties. Lino Eneas Spilimbergo painted themes that were peripheral to social concerns.

[6]Paul Morand, "Oda a Marcel Proust, "Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), p. 5; Luis Góngora, "Paul Morand el cosmplólita," (15 May 1924), p. 4; Pedro Juan Vignale, "Aldo Palazzeschi," (15 May 1924), p. 7.

[7]Roberto Mariani, "'Martín Fierro' y yo," Martín Fierro, (25 July 1924), p. 2.

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[8]Ibid., He was referring to José Hernandez's epic poem Martín Fierro, ("The Departure" 1872 and "The Return" 1879) from which the journal took its name.

[9]La Redacción, "Suplemento explicativo de nuestro 'Manifiesto." A propósito de ciertas críticas," Martín Fierro, 6 August-September 1924), p. 2. ". . . una sensibilidad lo suficientemente refinada como para responder a las sugestiones del momento y comprender y amar a escritores como Paul Morand y Ramón gomez de la Serna y otros . . . ."

[10]Ibid.

[11]It was this issue in the polemic that led Córdova Iturburu to use the title La Revolución Martínfierrista for his book on the movement in order to emphasize that the real revolution was the one launched on an esthetic level as opposed to the political which promoted "outdated" forms of literature and art (Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, [Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962: 20]).

[12]La Redacción, "A propósito de ciertas críticas," (6 August-September 1924), p. 2. "Todos respetamos nuestro arte y no consentiríamos nunca hacer de el un instrumento de propaganda. Todos somos argentinos sin esfuerzo."

[13]Alberto H. Collazo, Quinquela, No. 12, series Pintores Argentinos del Siglo XX, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 3.

[14]Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1968), p. 180.

[15]Jorge Luis Borges, "An Autobiographical Essay," in The Aleph and Other Stories, 1933-1969, (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1970), p. 236, quoted in Rodríguez monegal, Borges, p. 192.

[16]Martín Fierro, (10 September 1925), p. 8. See also Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución, p. 31. "Aquí yacen, allo spiedo, / los siniestros pensadores / que eran genios en Boedo. / Ahora en que ventiladores / van a introducir el dedo?" There are several puns in this epitaph that refer to the "sinister" or leftist activities of the group and the names of their journals, Extrema Izquierda and Pensadores.

[17]Waldemar George, "Bourdelle," Martín Fierro, (25 February 1927), pp. 1 & 7. There is a description of this monument in Marcel Frederic (El año artistíco argentino

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1926, [Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1927: 321-322]).

[18]Frederic, El año artístico, p. 178.

[19]Sandro Volta, "Los 'martínfierristas' en Italia," Martín Fierro, (13 October-20 November 1924), p. 5; Volta, "Marinetti y nuestra generación, (8 June 1925), p. 4; see also Simon Maurice Berggrun, "The Journal Martín Fierro. A Critical index," (PhD dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1968), pp. 327-328; Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 97.

[20]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 98.

[21]Pedro Illari, "Representación gráfica y cromatizada de los estados de ánimo," (25 July 1924), p. 6; see also Berggrun, p. 204.

[22]Aracy Amaral, Arte y arquitectura del modernismo brasileño 1917-1930, trans. into Spanish from Portuguese by Marta Traba, (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1978), pp. 159-161. The Brazilians called them "legumes em libertade."

[23]"Marinetti es un hombre de ingenuidad infantil que desconcierta. Pettoruti habla del maestro futurista," Crítica, (Buenos Aires, Friday 28 may 1926).

[24]F. T. Marinetti, "Primer manifiesto del futurismo," Martín Fierro, (8 June 1926), p. 3; A. V., "Soneto de bienvenida," (8 June 1926), p. 12. The editors stated that "se ha dicho que Marinetti viene hacía estas tierras de América obedeciendo a cierta finalidad de orden política. MARTÍN FIERRO, por su espíritu y su orientación repugna de toda intromisión de esta indole en sus actividades ya claramente establecidas. Y acaso no sea innecesario declarar, para evitar alguna molestía suspicacia, que con Marinetti, hombre político, nada tiene que hacer nuestra hoja." See also Nino Frank, "Marinetti y el futurismo," (8 June 1926), p. 3. the connections with Latin American centers, particularly Buenos Aires. Rio De Janeiro and Santiago, Chile, seem to have been established already in 1913 when these cities were listed as members of a joint stock company "La Teatral 'Societá la Accomandita'" see reproduction of this broadsheet in Marianne W. Martin (Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915, [New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978: 152, pl. V]).

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[25]Nino Frank, "Marinetti y el futurismo," Martín Fierro, (8 June 1926), p. 3; Piero Illari, "Marinetti apostol de energía," (8 June 1926), p. 4; Leopoldo Marechal, "Saludo a Marinetti," (8 June 1926), p. 4. see also Berggrun, p. 227.

[26]Guillermo de Torre, "Efigie de F. T. Marinetti," Martín Fierro, (8 June 1926), pp. 5 & 11. See also Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución, pp. 174-180.

[27]Originally published in La Prensa, quoted in M. Frederic, Año artístico, pp. 158 & 162. Frederic does not give the date of the issue.

[28]Ibid., pp. 162-163. ". . . el sustentador de las ideas renovadoras ha llegado mucho después que las ideas mismas. El fundador del futurismo, como un apostol, se ha cristalizado en su propio dogma, sin tomar en cuenta que los discipulos han desparramado por todo el mundo la nueva verdad con el acopio de nuevas conquistas; de suerte que su palabra parece traducir pensamientos viejos a fuer de discurridos, analizados y asimilados." It was as though "intentara a poner de relieve las ventajas que se desprenden del conocimiento del abecedario."

[29]Andrés Muñoz, Vida de Quinquela Martín, (Buenos Aires: privately printed, Artes Gráficas, 1958), p. 132.

[30]Ibid., pp 105-106. It is impossible to verify whether this is true or not. Many rumors were circulated at the time which cannot be confirmed. Pettoruti relates an instance in which a story was circulated about Benito Mussolini claiming that he was born in Argentina and had relatives in the province of Buenos Aires. Presumably when he was questioned about it, Mussolini neither denied or confirmed the story (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 144-145).

[31]Piero Illari, "Benedetta," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 5; "'Martín Fierro' y Marinetti," editorial, (8 July 1926), p. 5. "En cuanto a las conferencias de Marinetti aquí, en La Plata, Córdoba y Rosario, por más que muchos individuos se hayan empeñado en negarlo, el solo hecho de que Marinetti insistiera en proclamar la belleza de la vida moderna, --aunque ello para nosotros resulta una perogrullada, pues lo venimos praticando desde hace muchísimos años--para el público y los grandes rotativos esto es una enorme novedad."

[32]Lamberto Sorrentino, "Fortunato Depero se divierte," Martín Fierro, (28 May 1927), p. 9. According to Sorrentino in an article in the same issue, Marinetti had been especially impressed with Argentina's avant-garde periodicals Proa, Inicial, Valoraciones and of course,

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Martín Fierro, and with the writers Borges, Mendez, Girondo, Güiraldes. See also Marinetti's article "Boccioni y el porvenir de la plástica," Martín Fierro, (31 August- 15 November 1927), pp. 5 & 15.

[33]This plaque still adorns the same wall of the residence which has since been converted into a museum, the Museo Isaac Fernandez Blanco.

[34]Several issues were devoted to Spanish art and literature in 1927. Dalí's work was reproduced in Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), pp. 1 & 3; editorials dedicated to "Ramón," were published in Martín Fierro, (18 July 1927). They included "Homenaje a Ramón," E(var) M(endez)'s, "Epitafio de Ramón," p. 12, and Girondo's drawing of Ramón's brain, reproduced on p. 8. An article by Gomez de la Serna was also published in the same issue, "Salutación," P. 5.

[35]Guillermo de Torre, "Carta abierta a Evar Mendez," Martín Fierro, (26 June 1925), p. 2; Idem., "Madrid, meridiano intelectual de hispanoamérica," La Gaceta Literaria, No. 8, quoted in Rodriguez Monegal, Borges, p. 193. See also Berggrun, p. 306.

[36]Pablo Rojas Paz, "Imperialismo baldío," Martín Fierro, (10 June-1 July 1927), p. 6: Leopoldo Marechal, "A los compañeros de la 'Gaceta Literaria'," Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), p. 10; Ulyses Petit de Murat, La Noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), p. 150.

[37]Jorge Cuesta, "Carta al señor Guillermo de Torre," and Jorge Luis Borges, "Sobre el meridiano de una gaceta," Martín Fierro, (10 June-10 July 1927), respectively pp. 2 & 7.

[38]Eduardo González Lanuza, "Liquidando un meridiamo," Martín Fierro, 31 August-15 November 1927), p. 11. González Lanuza's statement seems like an inversion of a comment made by Paulo Buzzi, a Futurist poet and a lawyer when he stated that Greenwich meantime was belated compared to Europe (Pär Bergman, "Modernolatria" et "Simulatneitá" [Uppsala: Appelbergs Boktryckeri AB, 1962: 51]).

[39]Nicolas Olivari, "Estrangulemos al meridiano," Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), p. 12.

[40]El director (Evar Mendez), "Asunto fundamental," Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), p. 1.

[41]Ibid.; Rodriguez Monegal, Borges, p. 193.

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[42]Victoria Ocampo, Tagore en las barrancas de San Isidro, (Buenos Aires, Sur, 1961), p. 68; Rabindranath Tagore, Imperfect Encounter, Letters of William Rothenstein and Rabindranath Tagore 1911-1941, intro. and notes by Mary M. Lago, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 312. At the time, Tagore was on his way to Peru for the Centenary celebrations of the Republic of Peru, but fell ill and had to remain in Buenos Aires where he had docked. By the time he was well enough to travel, the celebrations were over. His statement as quoted in Spanish was "No ha tenido tiempo de descubrir su alma. Es lastimoso ver su absoluta dependencia de Europa para sus pensamientos, que deben llegarles totalmente hechos. No les averguenza enorgullerse de cualquier moda que copian, o de la cultura que compran a aquel continente" (Ocampo, Tagore: 68). Victoria Ocampo was all the more disturbed because Güiraldes had visited Tagore, placed himself at his disposal and offered him his guitar as a gift, but Tagore never took him up on his offer.

[43]Ocampo, Tagore, pp. 69-70.

[44]"Orientalismo y futurismo," La Fronda, (Buenos Aires, 27 November 1924). "Ariel" as a pseudonym alluded to the character in the Uruguayan writer Rodó's story Ariel y Calibán. in which Ariel symbolized the spirit as opposed to the materialist, Calibán.

[45]"Cree Ud. en la existencia de una sensibilidad argentina, una mentalidad argentina?"
"En el caso afirmativo, cuales son las características?" (Martín Fierro, [15 May-15 June 1924: 7 & 8]).

[46]Walter Sava, "A History and Interpretation of the Literary Criticism of Martín Fierro," (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1973), pp. 3 & 30. Lugones had lectured at the Odeon Theater in Buenos Aires on the gaucho which contributed to a revival of interest in Hernandez's poem Martín Fierro.

[47]In Spanish there are two words for "being", ser and estar, the first temporal, the second locative.

[48]Martín Fierro, (15 May-15 June 1924), pp. 7 & 8.

[49]Petit de Murat, Noche de mi ciudad, p. 63. According to Petit de Murat, the French poet Paul Morand who visited Buenos Aires in 1924, "spoke of nothing but the tango . . . ."

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[50]Martín Fierro, (15 May-15 June 1924), pp. 7 & 8. Figari had lectured on criollismo in 1925 in Buenos Aires and his lecture was published in La Prensa, ("Hacía la eficiencia de América," La Prensa, [27 June 1925].

[51]The statement was made in a prologue to Güiraldes's El Libro Bravo, published posthumously in 1936. He died in 1927 and both the poems in the book and the prologue were written between 1920 and 1925, quoted in Ricardo Güiraldes, Obras completas, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1962), p. 548. "Nuestra raza nació de una raza muy vieja y de una tierra muy nueva."

[52]Alberto Prebisch, "Sugestiones de una vísita al Salón de acuarelistas, pastelistas y aguafortistas, "Martín Fierro, (15 May-15 June 1924), p. 3.

[53]Antonio Vallejo, "Criollismo y metafísica," Martín Fierro, (18 May 1926), p. 3, quoted in Berggrun, p. 314.

[54]Romualdo Brughetti, Ramón Gomez Cornet, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1945), p. 15. There is no indication of when the artist said this.

[55]José León Pagano, "El nacionalismo en el arte," lecture given at the Sociedad de Conferencias in 1926, quoted in M. Frederic, El año artístico, pp. 215-138. This citation can be found on pp. 228 and 237: " . . . . si nosotros no somos un derivado--como no lo somos, en efecto--de una remota preteridad indígena, y excluímos del foco europeo los grados de nuestra mentalidad presentamos al mundo un caso en verdad inexplicable . . . ." "Si ahora se me preguntara 'Porque es argentino nuestro arte?' yo contestaría lo unico atendible: porqué son argentinos los hombres que lo producen."

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PART TWO

THE ARTISTS OF THE ARGENTINE VANGUARD

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CHAPTER V

PEDRO FIGARI IN BUENOS AIRES, 1921-1925

Figari (1861-1938) moved to Buenos Aires from his native Montevideo in January 1921, three years before the founding of Martín Fierro. He was almost sixty. From the magazine's inception in 1924 to its last issue he was closely affiliated with its poets. In 1924 he was instrumental in the founding of Amigos del Arte where he and the other Martín Fierro-affiliated artists exhibited through the twenties. He was the only one of the five artists to depict Creole themes. Unlike Pettoruti, Curatella-Manes, Xul Solar and Norah Borges whose subjects were only marginally related to local culture, Figari focused specifically on the customs of Argentina and Uruguay. As a Post-Impressionist, his art corresponded to Lugones' literature and, like Lugones, he was regarded as a precursor rather than as a member of an avant-garde. Although both Atalaya and Prebisch viewed Figari's regionalism with skepticism,[1] paradoxically he shared much more with the Martín Fierro writers than did the other artists. Figari's subjects had their counterparts not only in the work of Lugones but also in the writings of other "Martínfierristas", particularly Güiraldes and Borges. Although he had painted for many years before his

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arrival, his career as a painter was launched during his stay in Buenos Aires.

First Exhibition and Meeting with Güiraldes

Figari settled into a rented apartment in the center of town on Charcas Street where he lived surrounded "by a cortege of filial love and admiration that reached the point of exaltation . . . ."[2] Figari's son Juan Carlos Figari Castro, a young architect and one of eight children, was his devoted and constant companion. Juan Carlos encouraged him in his art and collaborated with him for a while, sometimes on the same paintings.[3] But he soon abandoned painting leaving the field entirely to his father. Figari's first exhibition in Buenos Aires at the Müller Gallery in June 1921 was a joint one with his son entitled "Exposición de pinturas del doctor Pedro Figari y del arquitecto Juan Carlos Figari Castro."[4] In December, the exhibition was shown in Montevideo. But the subjects of these paintings seemed too unusual for Buenos Aires and Montevideo at the time. Instead of the conventional landscapes, figure compositions and still-lifes, viewers were treated to Creole genre scenes in a style sometimes bordering on caricature.[5]

According to Herrera Mac Lean, the Buenos Aires press was "reticent and amiable, but cold and incomprehending."[6] Fernando Laroche, a French-Uruguayan painter and close friend of Figari's reported "that the

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indifference of the public," and "the almost total silence of the press" had surprised him at both exhibitions.[7] In Montevideo, someone from high society had even criticized Figari for bringing to the public "those black men and women, those ungainly horses, those hungry dogs, those gauchos" which he viewed as "an insult to Montevideo society,"[8] In Buenos Aires, one critic from La Razón condescendingly conceded that "if we can forget certain details such as drawing for example" which lacked firmness, he saw in the paintings "an expression which, within its ingenuousness, enchants us with its perfume of traditional types, architecture and ambiences, of an extraordinary evocative flavor."[9] Nonetheless, the general response to the Buenos Aires exhibition angered Figari who had expected something more of his adopted city. He wrote to a friend that it was apparently "the first time that anyone had painted pericones, media cañas, gatos, chacareras [native dances], and the same can be said of the candombes [the black Uruguayan dances], of the colonial epoch," that some "hypochondriac" apparently reviewed exhibitions without seeing them and that there was "an element of judgement that had eluded everyone around here."[10]

If this first exhibition was not an unqualified success, it did attract the attention of artists and writers who were to become Figari's close friends and staunch supporters. The painter Horacio Butler was

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captivated by "the candid grace and strange power of his evocations."[11] Although at first Figari sold only one painting,[12] it was through this exhibition that he met Ricardo Güiraldes and his father Manuel Güiraldes. The latter had been president of the Comisión de Bellas Artes as well as director of the Centenary Exhibition in 1910, was more nearly Figari's age and was to be one of the most avid collectors of his art. The Güiraldes, who owned ranches in the country and a mansion in Buenos Aires, had been collectors for at least three generations (Fig. 24). Manuel recalled an afternoon in 1921 when he visited the Müller Gallery as usual, and found himself before something new which "he had never seen . . . 'I can't believe that I find myself before my nature, so deeply felt!'" A few days later, Ricardo Güiraldes announced enthusiastically to his father that he had brought Figari with him from the city to their estancia.[13] Thus began Figari's friendship with the Güiraldes and his visits to their La Porteña ranch in the village of San Antonio de Areco some 100 to 125 miles northwest of Buenos Aires.[14]

Figari's circle of admirers and patrons grew to include the historian Alfredo González Garaño, the architect Martín Noël who was then director of the Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes--the post vacated earlier by Don Manuel Güiraldes--the painter and world traveler Raúl Monsegur and the French-Uruguayan poet, Jules Supervielle. Two years later, Figari also met

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Victoria Ocampo who like Manuel Güiraldes, recognized in his paintings things and types she knew well,[15] albeit from a landowner's point of view. Following their meeting, she too invited Figari to her villa in San Isidro. By 1924, Figari's patrons, Girondo among them, had increased sufficiently to help alleviate the economic problems brought on by his expatriation.

The Background

Figari's move to Buenos Aires had been prompted by his frustration and disappointment when his projects for reforming the art educational system in his own country had failed and he felt that his career as a painter would find a more congenial environment in Buenos Aires. He had left behind him a busy career as a lawyer, journalist, writer, teacher and member of the Uruguayan House of Representatives with a profound commitment to the developing culture of his country.[16] He had earned his law degree in 1886. As a criminal defense lawyer, he had cemented his reputation in 1895 with his defense of Lieutenant Enrique Almeida who was accused of assassinating a young nationalist.[17] The case became a "cause célèbre" and was compared to the Dreyfus affair in France.[18] In 1893 Figari founded and co-directed the newspaper El Deber. In 1896 he was elected to the Chamber of Deputees, and three years later, to the Vice-Presidency of the Chamber of Representatives. He was appointed

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honorary member of the Bureau de Conciliation Internationale de Paris in 1905, and as a member of the Comité France-Amérique in 1914, a time when France and Latin America had especially close diplomatic ties. He first went to France in 1886 after his marriage to Doña María de Castro Caravía and returned there on several later occasions. In 1925, he moved to Paris where he was to live intermittently for the following eight years.

In 1909 Figari became a member of the board of directors of the Escuela Nacional de Artes y Oficios (National School of Arts and Trades) in Montevideo. His interest in education, particularly in methods for art education, led him in 1910 to formulate a plan to convert the school into an Escuela Pública de Artes Industriales (Public School of Arts and Industries), and he published his plan as a pamphlet entitled "Reorganización de la Escuela Nacional de Artes y Oficios" in which he advanced an "anthropology of autonomous development of the creative faculties of man, of the young . . . ."[19] His belief in the creative potential of the common man led him to envision a program of mass education in the industrial arts that would become an integral part of everyone's life in all branches of industrial design,[20] something like the European Art Nouveau movements in design. But Figari sought to establish art forms based specifically on "our flora, our fauna, our virgin archaeology" in light of the "anguished exhaustion experienced by the peoples of the

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old world."[21] He was convinced that only industry and artisanry could be effective in advancing the cause of the young republic.[22] He aimed to awaken "a national soul" and produce "obreros artistas"[23] in a way similar to the objectives of some nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals.

When Figari saw his original plan severely modified to a more conservative one, he resigned from the school's board and poured his ideas into a three-volume work, Arte, estética, ideal, published in Montevideo in 1912,[24] which was a composite of Positivist, Marxist, Darwinian and Bergsonian ideas. Lincoln Kirstein called it the "summation of his philosophical and critical thought."[25] A Martín Fierro reviewer referred to it as "the first serious attempt at a national explanation of esthetics by an American author."[26] Although in 1915 Figari was reappointed, this time as director of the Escuela Nacional de Artes y Oficios for the purpose of carrying out his plans as he had outlined them in 1910, rival factions made his years at the school increasingly difficult, and he resigned again in 1917.[27] His disappointment was considerable when his resignation was accepted. It was then that he decided to take up painting as a profession.[28]

Although it was not until after the First World War that Figari could devote himself to his art, he had a solid artistic background behind him. As the son of an

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Italian immigrant father from the suburbs of Genoa, he had grown up in an artistic environment in which family and friends gathered for home concerts. Figari played the piano and sang.[29] He took up watercolors as a youth and spent his leisure hours sketching in the suburbs of Montevideo. One of his favorite haunts was a rooming house where a small black community of descendants of black slaves lived. There Figari could observe the active daily life, rituals and carnivals which were to furnish many of his later subjects.[30]

During his trip to Europe in 1886, besides France he had also visited England, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Italy, going to museums, cafes, artists' studios, and attending concerts and theatrical performances in those countries. In Venice he apparently worked for a while with a Venetian painter,[31] and later in Montevideo he was known to have studied art with Godofredo Somavilla, an academic painter. Although it is difficult to date the latter association,[32] a more than competent academic self-portrait in oil dated 1890 showing him standing behind his young wife sitting at the easel in her crinolines, indicates that by then Figari was already an accomplished painter (Fig. 25). During those years, he sketched "the country and the sea" and went on painting excursions with a fellow painter Milo Beretta.[33] The latter had lived in Paris in the 1890s and on his return to Montevideo, adorned the walls of his studio "with the

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first works by Van Gogh, Bonnard and Vuillard to be seen in Uruguay."[34]

The Work

A watercolor of the Old Market in Montevideo dated 1909 (Fig. 26) indicates that at that time Figari still worked directly from nature. The work he became known for however, was not painted from life but entirely from imagination and "memory." This fact was unusual in the depiction of genre scenes. The places where Figari painted in Argentina such as Guiraldes' ranch and Victoria Ocampo's San Isidro villa, inspired him but did not provide him with literal subject-matter since his scenes did not take place in the present. Desiré Roustan said of Figari's subjects and of his reasons for painting them that "the cult of the past is so rare that forgetfulness threatens to bury epochs that are still close." Figari's paintings comprised "all of American life, from pre-history on, all the folklore of Argentina and Uruguay, all of what generations that have disappeared or are disappearing, had contemplated and felt.[35] Figari favored "indefinite evocations of images, . . . generic scenes through which one relives, not an instant, but an epoch."[36] Victoria Ocampo referred to these "evocations" as his "far away and long ago" with brushes,[37] alluding to the title of a book on the customs of La Plata (the territories bordering the Plata River) by the nineteenth

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century Argentine-born English naturalist Guillermo Henrique Hudson.

The themes of Figari's art represented the whole evolution of *platense* culture in a rapid succession of phases from pre-history to the recent past, in accordance to his (rather Bergsonian) theory of "time" as a "simple succession of presents."[38] In 1922 he painted *Indians in the Pampa* and *Troglodytes* (Figs. 27 & 28), the latter of a pre-historic man and woman in a barren landscape with a cactus and a reindeer, both representing new world flora and fauna that predated the conquest. Although these subjects seem removed from his more customary scenes of ranch life, they were an expression of his theories of the cultural evolution of the human species as stated in *Arte, estética, ideal* and conform to a personal classification of his work into specific pre-historic and historic periods extending from a premordial past of "expressive stones" through "primary life," colonial life, the life and *fiestas* of the black slaves, to the more recent urban and suburban customs. *Indians in the Pampa* and *Troglodytes* belong to "primordial" and "pre-colonial" life in his compressed version of a Patagonian genesis.[39]

Others of Figari's paintings focused on late colonial times and the nineteenth century[40] during which many colonial traditions remained in existence in the new republics. He had barely known the world he painted; "already in my childhood, it had ceased to

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exist . . . those were things I had been told . . . which had keenly struck my imagination."[41] Although Figari's unwavering recourse to imagination in painting also corresponded to the Symbolists' and the Synthetists' idea, he did not share their profound mysticism and religious exaltation.[42] Unlike Xul Solar and others of the following generation, he rejected all theosophical and metaphysical beliefs feeling that the motivating force of the universe was entirely explainable in terms of matter.[43]

His brushwork had more in common with Art Nouveau than with the tortured shapes and themes of the Symbolists, the Post-Impressionists or the German Expressionists. He did not use models as did Post-Impressionists like Cézanne and Van Gogh, for this reason he was sometimes compared to Henri Rousseau.[44] However Figari was not a naive painter either. Nor was he depicting exotic dreams and distant jungles. What made his paintings appealing to Europeans when they first saw them in 1923 in a Paris exhibition, was that they appeared to be exotic because they represented a world unknown to them. Figari's subjects were in fact, very ordinary to him and as close to life, human and animal nature as he could get.

Because of the great number of paintings Figari did in his lifetime, many of which are undated, and the overlapping of themes, the chronology of his work is

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sometimes difficult to establish. He told Francis de Miomandre in an interview in 1926 that "I paint when I feel like it. Today is is the pampa with an ombú [a massive tree native to the Argentine plains outside of Buenos Aires]."[45] He painted some 4,000 cartones (cardboard panels) throughout his life. The bulk of this work was produced during a sixteen-year span from 1918 to 1934 although this production declined after 1927.[46]

Herrera Mac Lean described how he had watched Figari

> During hours and hours, work in small magic brushstrokes. Without notations, without previous studies, without sketches, without the slightest lines, . . . there emerged from the old gold background of the cartones all of the sumptuous kermesse of a past life.[47]

While this may be true for some paintings, it apparently was not for all of them. Marianne Manley stated in a catalogue essay that Figari did make preliminary drawings some of which even indicated the colors he planned to use.[48] He usually worked on several paintings at once, returning to each one to adjust the color.[49] The paintings were of relatively small scale, often not exceeding twenty by thirty inches in size. He had rejected the use of canvas, opting instead for cardboard panels which permitted him to work fast and produce a "dry, richly flaked impasto." He had tried canvas and wood but found he could better jot down his "memories" and achieve the desired impression by working directly on

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unprimed cardboard which soaked up the oil into its surface and left no sheen. He also liked to leave some of the brownish cardboard showing between the patches of paint.[50] He preferred to paint dawn and dusk scenes when the sunlight did not "destroy" forms, and no shadows were cast. Lincoln Kirstein wrote that his "most loved light is dawn, dusk or moonlight, a crepuscular minor vibrance, whose harsh green whites and acrid blues are the solid indicators of porous tree-trunk or ranch house wall." He liked a "shadowless time of day, or the pale luminous flare of a single lantern . . . . "[51]

Although it is difficult to date Figari's work on the basis of themes, some changes did occur in his style. These changes were gradual and sometimes seem experimental. Often one phase overlapped with the next as did his choice of subjects. Up to 1922, he used carried shadows in naturalistic scenes, and up to 1921, suggestions of light and shade made it possible to detect the direction of the light. Only after 1922 did he consistently paint the luminous but shadowless world alluded to by Lincoln Kirstein, in broad swirls of sumptuous color as in Bull Fight (Fig. 29). The origin of the bold color and brushstroke, and his delight in quick dabs of color accents on costumes, patio flowers, or the watery clouds around a moon, are of Spanish derivation, particularly the Spanish modernists such as Ricardo Urgell and Joaquín Mir whose work was known in Uruguay and

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Argentina. Their style of work was also known in Uruguay through the Uruguayan painter Pedro Blanes Viale of Figari's circle. Blanes Viale had worked in Spain and Mallorca. Figari may also have met the Spanish modernist painter Hermenegildo Anglada Camarasa in Paris in 1913.[52] He certainly knew him later through Güiraldes who studied drawing with him in Paris in the twenties. However, Figari's later work appears to be more in the style of Bonnard and Vuillard.

The diffused contours and treatment of light in Figari's paintings of the twenties, were rarely evident before 1922. Scenes of blacks of 1919 painted in Montevideo and exhibited at the Müller Gallery in 1921, not only demonstrate a firm contour but also a solid sense of three-dimensional space quite unlike the frieze-like arrangements of figures in his later paintings. They have well defined shadows, great solidity of form, and the light is clearly indicated as coming directly from above as was customary in Spanish modernist painting.[53] Something of the later style becomes evident in Venice of 1921 (Fig. 30). Herrera Mac Lean referred to this work as a memory of Figari's honeymoon there in 1886 in rather Symbolist terms, with "enchanted palaces . . . sleep-walking waters and clouds of sorcery . . . an evocation of lived remembrances, where another dominating moon watches like a fairy over the dreams of the sleeping city."[54] However, the brushwork in Venice has a solidity related to

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the Post-Impressionists as well as to the Spanish modernists. Although the direction of the light and the moon's reflection in the water are still clearly indicated, this painting represents a transitional stage to his more diffused style of the later twenties.

As early in 1919, Figari had abandoned the solid three-dimensional space and light contrasts in many of his paintings, in favor of a more unified fusion of background and foreground into all-over patterns of flowers, foliage and flowery crinolines as in Dancing the Media Caña of 1919 (Fig. 31). In La Tapera (Deserted Village) also known as The Source of 1921 (Fig. 32), the shadow cast by a tree in the moonlight is barely visible as compared to similar scenes painted much earlier. The three-dimensional solidity of the earlier work has been replaced by an all-over pattern of arabesque brushstrokes. Marianne Manley pointed out that Figari's use of the arabesque was "an important compositional element in order to endow figures with a sense of movement, and natural forms, such as the ombú tree, with a curvilinear accent." She compared Figari's use of it to that of other artists citing Bonnard's use of it "as a static decorative element" in contrast to Figari's dynamic one.[55] The tree branches in The Source for instance, form exuberant Art Nouveau curves. The subject is a desolate landscape with a rock formation and a lone tree. Renascent life is suggested by the horse drinking from the source. Although

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the painting is reminiscent of Segantini's tree in The Evil Mothers[56], it has none of the latter's sinful connotations. In Figari's work, the tree spreads out in a protective and sheltering gesture.

The Subjects

Between 1921 and 1924 Figari painted scenes focusing on the psychological aspects of human behavior. His subjects were caught in a variety of situations, gossiping, in uncomfortable social encounters, or in a moment of exasperation. In Against Gossip of c. 1922 (Fig. 33) the central figure has intercepted the other two in a tense moment gossiping. The background forms an integral part of the design. The faces are simplified with features barely indicated. Several critics noted the caricature-like aspects of this and other genre paintings of Figari's.[57] The gestures of some of the figures owe something to Figari's previous experience as a caricaturist. During the Almeida trial, he had drawn caricatures, not only of the individuals involved in the case but also of himself in a series of psychological self-portraits reflecting his response to the events of the proceedings (Fig. 34), ranging from anger, disappointment to smug satisfaction. The animation of his Creole dances and scenes with blacks owed something to his ability to capture a characteristic gesture by means of the merest notation usually expressed by the whole stance

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of the figure.

In 1922 and 1923 Figari was especially close to the Güiraldes. During those years he painted an unusually large number of Creole and ranch scenes, some of which were done in the peaceful atmosphere of San Antonio de Areco. In Pericón (the name of a Creole version of the European quadrille) (Fig. 35), the figures dancing under the trees are distributed across the surface like a frieze, a little like in Seurat's Grande Jatte, but without its linear precision. Some critics even compared the horizontal line-up of figures and dream-like aspects in this and other paintings like it to Watteau's Fêtes Champêtres.[58] Fiesta at La Porteña, another similar painting (Fig. 36), makes a specific reference to the gatherings that took place there under the trees. But Figari converted a contemporary event into a nineteenth century scene with the participants wearing the regional costumes of the last century. Similar subjects can be found in nineteenth century genre painting such as those of the 1830s by the Argentinian Carlos Pellegrini, but with a documentary precision alien to Figari.

The patio scenes are invariably night scenes sometimes with the moon emerging from behind a tree or above a lavender pink stucco wall with cascading foliage, or hovering near a flat rooftop as in El Palito (Fig. 37). Although the patio and ranch scenes are those of Figari's imagination, certain individuals or types recur

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in several paintings. For instance, the central figure in El Gato (Fig. 38) reemerges in At the Ranch of c. 1923 (Fig. 39), and the central gaucho in El Palito is the same individual dancing under the trees in another version of the same subject as can be seen in a reproduction published in Martín Fierro in 1924 (Fig. 40).[59] Crimson, greens, magentas, pinks, blues, violets, tans, browns, clashing orange, blend in analogous tonalities offset by the black of the gauchos' costumes. Women wear flowered or patterned skirts which define them from the background as one finds in Vuillard's paintings. But Figari's are not intimate interior scenes. They depict exuberant, usually collective exterior activities sometimes interspersed with barking and running dogs.[60]

In 1923 he painted Convoy of Wagons Crossing the Pampa (Fig. 41) at La Porteña. The exaggerated horizontal format which emphasizes the endless flatness of the landscape was used frequently in the nineteenth century in Argentina and was of Italian derivation. It was used in 1861 in Italy by Raffaello Sernesi and Odoardo Borrani in their bucolic landscapes[61] and was taken up by the Argentinian Prilidiano Pueyrredón in Rodeo (Fig. 42), the same year. One finds this format in the work of other nineteenth century artists who worked in Argentina and Brazil, such as Juan León Palliére who had painted such a convoy in 1861 on a canvas whose width was four times its height.[62]

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Figari gave as much importance to the sky as he did to the ground, unifying the two realms by means of his characteristic brushstrokes. In the works of 1924 and after, the sky took on increasing importance. Two paintings illustrating different epochs of pampa life, Indians and Dance on the Ranch (Figs. 43 & 44), show diffused light under a richly variegated cloudy sky and in the former the moon is visible through tree branches. When Victoria Ocampo took Rabindranath Tagore to Figari's studio on 1924, he was especially struck by the sky in one of the paintings and was reported to have said that "the rest just serves as a frame to highlight its splendour."[63] The appearance of cattle in Indians indicates the presence of the white settlers in accordance with Figari's personal historical view of the region.

Figari's love for the land and its customs found a counterpart in Güiraldes who felt that while Europe demands originality, here it would be enough "to separate ourselves from alien standards and allow the subjects themselves to create in one an adequate form with which to express them."[64] Many of the paintings done at La Porteña pay hommage to the place and to Argentine history. La Estancia shows a ranch surrounded by ombues (Fig. 45). Figures, cattle, dogs and a stagecoach from a bygone era stand under a vast cloudy sky and the moon hovers near the edge of an ombú. Stagecoaches appear in several of his works of this period. In Assassination of Quiroga of 1923

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(Fig. 46), Figari evoked a nineteenth century historical episode during the presidency of Juan Manuel Rosas when the latter had Juan Facundo Quiroga, a caudillo and rival of his, assassinated. This theme was also the subject of one of Borges' poems, "General Quiroga Rides to his Death in a Carriage," from his book Moon Across the Way of 1925.

During Figari's visits to the Güiraldes' ranch, Ricardo was working on his novel Don Segundo Sombra published in 1926, about a young man trained in the manly arts by Don Segundo, an old gaucho. Like Figari's paintings, Güiraldes' story was presented as "half-dream" images. In this story which Güiraldes began writing in Paris in 1919, he had sought to "disembowel the poetic, philosophic, musical and pictorial aspect of an inexpressed race."[65] The novel's main character, based on a real person, was also the subject of a conventional portrait painted from life (Fig. 47) by a local artist[66] showing a weathered old gaucho with a black hat and a white mustache and beard. In 1925, Figari painted his own version of Don Segundo Sombra (Fig. 48) as a lean, poetic figure, suggesting an acquaintance with Picasso's Old Guitarist of 1903.[67] Like Picasso's figure, Figari's is set against a wall with a window looking out to a penumbral sky but with the addition of a moon hovering near Don Segundo Sombra's hat. One also recognizes the character of the local portrait with the same black hat, white mustache and beard. But Figari's gaucho is thinner,

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more youthful, as he would have been in times past.

Figari's colonial and nineteenth century salon scenes represented upper class, stiffly dressed men and women in lavish interiors with red drapes and large chandeliers, in contrast to his exuberant popular dance scenes. Soirée (Colonial Epoch) of 1922 (Fig. 49) shows such a reunion with elegant ladies wearing the large headcombs known as peinetones, and the men in tails or uniforms in a room with silk covered walls. Salón de Rosas (Fig. 50) is one of many such scenes alluding to the epoch of Rosas in which red predominates as the symbol of Rosas' party. In this painting, the customary portrait of a deceased relative is on the wall. The unusual animation of the portrait makes its subject seem like a living part of the festivities in the room. The portrait and the live figures become part of the same timeless world.

Unlike Matisse and Bonnard, Figari did not paint many scenes in front of open windows. Most of the salon scenes took place in rooms with closed windows, and when windows were open, little was visible outside them. In Colonial Lady, possibly painted in Paris shortly after Figari's arrival there in 1925, the lady fanning herself stands before a window with the shutters almost closed (Fig. 51).[68] In Spring of 1923 (Fig. 52), the eye is led in a play of curves along the figures and fans to a window through which a minimal landscape is visible. Figari's paradoxical treatment of time and light is exemplified

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here in the contrast between the room flooded with daylight and spring colors, and the exterior view with a dusky sky and a moon.

Blacks as Subject Matter

According to Fernando Laroche, Figari was the first Hispano-American to use blacks as a theme.[69] His treatment of this subject at the time however corresponded to that of the Mexicans Marius de Zayas and Miguel Covarrubias both of whom lived in New York. Covarrubias had done caricatures of famous black performers and some of these were reproduced in Marín Fierro in 1925.[70] In Argentina and Uruguay, unlike Brazil, blacks had worked as domestics during the colonial period, not on plantations, therefore, in closer proximity to their masters. In the nineteenth century, the black population dwindled considerably in Argentina and Uruguay. As a result, blacks were infrequently if ever depicted by artists. Although in Brazil, blacks had been the subject of nineteenth century documentary lithographs, Figari was the first to use the Creole black as a pictorial theme in South America. According to André Salmon, he began painting blacks in Montevideo before 1921.[71] He painted a great number of them in Buenos Aires between 1923 and 1925.[72] But he depicted them not at their hard daily tasks, but at leisure,[73] at their fiestas or in their own environment where they could momentarily forget the

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drabness of their daily lives as the descendants of colonial slaves.

Figari described these scenes as the "impressions I collected as a boy, when seeing the ritual candombes, which seemed to me dazzling, and which presented themselves to my memory in a whirlwind like an enchanted kaleidoscope." He later acknowledged Blaise Cendrars' Antologie nègre published in the early twenties, as a further impetus.[74] Blacks for Figari were "of a genuine humanism;" they represented the part of mankind that is repressed and genuine.[75] Lincoln Kirstein saw a note of mockery in these paintings and Figari had written that the subject "lends itself admirably to humor;" but the "mockery" was often reversed. George Pillement interpreted Figari's blacks as mimicking the customs of their former white masters. In Argentina and Uruguay as former domestics in households, they had adopted their master's way of life and even wore the clothes they were given by them.[76]

There is little doubt that the "picturesque" aspects of the subject were for Figari a source of immense esthetic appeal, but more than that, through blacks, Figari could express the "primal essence of human nature," untouched by civilization.[77] He saw in them the natural and spontaneous enactment of instinct untainted by self-conscious and hypocritical morality, a "spiritual integrity" which he felt was lacking in contemporary

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western society.[78] When he wished to refer to mankind, "and to see it better, I take the black" in the knowledge that all whites "carry a very bruised black inside us."[79] Although Figari was in no way a naïve or a primitive painter, his use of blacks to illustrate his theories must be seen in the same context as Gauguin's Tahitian scenes, as a means of escaping from an overcivilized society which Figari found castrating.[80]

The majority of scenes with blacks were of collective activities, particularly the Candombes, which were a composite of African dances and European quadrille and reel steps of profane character.[81] Compositionally, these scenes are similar to the gaucho and Creole dances. In Candombe of 1924 (Fig. 53), Figari represented the dancing couple very much as he had the Creole couple in Dancing the Media Caña (Fig. 31) with the drummer in the same place as the guitarist in the Creole dance scene. He depicted the Candombes interchangeably as occurring in exterior and interior settings. The dance was usually presided over by a "king" and a "queen", an older man and woman usually elected for the day, as well as a "prince." In another Candombe of 1924 (Buenos Aires Collection) (Fig. 54), the "king" and "queen" are visible on a stage in the back flanking an altar with three cult figures representing saints. A drummer playing a tamboril (a type of bongo drum) and a master of ceremonies are shown to the left. Another version of this dance is shown in a work

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with the same title in an exterior setting (Fig. 55) in which the master of ceremonies presiding over the dance is shown seated on a flat rooftop with the moon hovering close to his head. This dance had been modified since late colonial times and all of the original characters do not always appear in it. This fact is reflected in some of Figari's Candombe paintings in which only the dancers and a drummer appear.

The Candombes were danced on all the special occasions. One of these was the Day of Kings. In The Kings Go to Visit the Governor (Fig. 56), which was exhibited in the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires in 1923, a procession takes place on January 6. Faintly detectable carried shadows suggest a date of 1921 or 1922 for this painting. This colorful procession with the men wearing tall crepe-hung hats and the women in long flowery crinolines and several layers of skirts in gossamer fabrics makes its way through town in horse-drawn carriages as the "king" sits solemnly in one of the carriages.[83]

Figari considered blacks as ideal subjects to illustrate many of his theories. Life of c. 1925 (Fig. 57) paradoxically represents a wake and recalls Edvard Munch's Sick Room. To the right is the coffin surrounded by candles with three mourners. Many other figures mill around the room. A seated man addresses a woman walking towards him. Two barking dogs add a note of playfulness

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to an otherwise solemn occasion. Through an open door one glimpses arriving visitors and the inevitable moon. Figari was certainly familiar with the theme of "life" as a Symbolist subject in the context of a cyclical phenomenon. Munch and Picasso had both painted this theme, the latter in La Vie. But Figari inverted the theme. The wake for him was a commonplace gathering representing an episode in a natural cycle. He wrote in Arte, estética, ideal that:

> The horror of death . . . is not a normal manifestation of the fundamental instinct which directs and governs organisms, but rather a psychosis, a disorder of the instinct, which normalizes it . . . . We must suppose then, that this phobia of death is even a morbid manifestation of the natural instinct. . . . it is, however, possible to reconcile the love of life with resignation regarding a phenomenon as natural as death, that is, with the normal conformity with which one must accept the laws of nature.[84]

According to Figari, blacks were able to accept death as well as other human conditions more naturally than other people. Subjects such as baptisms, marriages, wakes and burials in his paintings were usually enacted by blacks, although marriages occurred also among other popular types such as in Rural Wedding showing a couple on horseback followed by two women riding to the wedding by moonlight.

Figari, the Press and Martín Fierro

Figari's ideas clearly had more in common with the generation Martín Fierro rejected than the one celebrated in its manifesto. Yet the poets adulated him and during

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his last two years in Buenos Aires, Figari enjoyed some measure of success. By 1924 he had built up a reputation not only in Argentina but also abroad. His work was shown in an exhibition at the Drouet Gallery in Paris in November 1923[85] and the same year, a Buenos Aires critic acclaimed Figari as "un pintor nuestro," at last "we can show something of ours! At last we have a painter!"[86] Güiraldes and Girondo both praised him and in October 1924 he was honored along with Jules Supervielle at a banquet sponsored jointly by Proa and Martín Fierro. (Fig. 58)

But everyone did not share in this praise. His work was criticized by other painters as well as some critics. Güiraldes in an article on Figari published in Martín Fierro in 1924, mentioned "some voices of opposition,"[87] without identifying who they were. Similarly, shortly after, the critic José Lozano Mouján referred to Figari's detractors as "painters, who probably did not forgive an artist for obtaining with so little such maximum results."[88] Neither Atalaya nor Prebisch could reconcile themselves with the "literary" or the regionalist aspects of Figari's work. Atalaya had complained of the lack of serious analysis on the part of other critics of his work which was "much discussed by certain painters and always wildly praised by literatos and poets."[89] Figari, he said, did "literary painting" for literary people and had proudly admitted that he found his models "in books." According to Atalaya, the

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paintings were just "a conventional copy of a conventional world with candid vaudeville characters." He especially objected to Figari's repetition of the same themes which he said kept Figari from producing what otherwise might have been "an oeuvre of uncommon interest."[90]

When Figari exhibited at Amigos del Arte in 1925, Prebisch had apparently written an unfavorable review of the exhibition but withdrew the manuscript when his colleagues had objected to its contents. The favorable review of this exhibition published in the July 1925 issue of Martín Fierro was not by Prebisch but another critic Sergio Piñero.[91] Prebisch however, felt it necessary to express his reservations honestly to Figari and did so in a letter. Although he admitted that his opinion was a very personal one, he felt that Figari's point of departure was of a "sentimental order--since his evocative intent constitutes . . . the core of his art," which did not "comfortably accord with a strictly plastic concept of pictorial art."[92]

On the other hand, when the poets wrote about Figari, they invariably praised and defended him. Following Figari's exhibition at the Witcomb in August 1924, Güiraldes defended Figari's rural subject matter in the August-September issue of Martín Fierro. People, he wrote, protested that

> 'The pampa could be musical or poetic, but not pictorial.' 'Who would go and put on canvas our shacks and horrible country houses so lacking in grace

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> and fantasy'? 'How can one go and work where one can't even find a model'? 'Here there is no ambience for an artist', ... Well, Pedro Figari proves that the pampa is pictorial, and that one can utilize the simple houses to great advantage. There is no lack of models for him . . . . Nor does he feel the lack of an ambience because he creates his own. What ambience did José Hernandez have?[93]

Although Figari's scenes were often similar to those painted by nineteenth century artists like Prilidiano Pueyrredón and Carlos Pellegrini, Figari's collective scenes and cast of characters were more than documentary genre paintings evoking past customs. They reflected his rejection of all types of authority[94] and his populist orientation in a manner analogous to some of Jules Romains' beliefs and to those of the Abbaye de Creteil group of before 1910.[95] Figari had been to France before World War I and had been active at that time in diplomatic cultural missions between Uruguay and France. Connections between Martín Fierro and Jules Romains were well established by 1925. A review of a new edition of Romains' 1908 book, La vie unanime came out in the May 1926 issue of Martín Fierro. In the introduction to the new edition, Romains had criticized the exclusiveness and elitist aspects of modern poetry which had separated itself from the "countless modern men" in order to entertain a small intimate group.[96] In an analogous statement Figari had objected to the relegation of the "cult of beauty" to an elite minority who monopolized it and he denounced art for its own sake.[97] He felt that

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human solidarity was more important than the individual and only through the humble people was a sound American culture possible.[98] What appealed to Martín Fierro in the work of both Figari and Romains, however, was not their populist beliefs but their rejection of conventional forms of expression. Both represented a form of artistic liberation.

The correspondences between Figari's and Lugones' themes are obvious. Many of Lugones' poems focused on the moon in a great variety of contexts sometime endowed with human attributes, and many of Figari's scenes took place in moonlight. But there were also parallels between Figari's work and several of the other poets who wrote for Martín Fierro. One of these parallels was noted by André Salmon in an article on Figari reprinted in Martín Fierro in which he compared Figari to Jules Supervielle for the similarity of their subjects and interests.[99] Likewise Güiraldes' novels about gauchos and ranch life found a powerful equivalent in Figari's paintings. Romualdo Brughetti compared Güiraldes' "search for lost times" in Don Segundo Sombra to Figari's "light of memory."[100] Borges wrote about patios and dusk, two frequent themes in Figari's paintings, and according to Brughetti, some of Borges' poems in Moon Across the Way were inspired by Figari's paintings.[101] There is little doubt that Figari's depiction of the moon followed a strong local tradition in both poetry and painting. An earlier example

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can be found in Nocturn painted in 1900 by the Argentine Impressionist Martín Malharro (Fig. 59). Herrera Mac Lean wrote that Figari had painted the moon as a "silvery betwitched mantel" hovering over "nightmarish rocks" and that Figari had attributed human vices to the moon, such as haughtiness, pride and avarice which were also the titles of an earlier series of paintings.[102] But while this may have been the case with Figari's earlier depiction of moons, after 1920 the romantic symbolism attributed to Figari's moons was more likely due to the poets and critics who continued to see mystery and witchcraft in the moon, rather than to Figari himself. There is nothing in his own writings to indicate that he saw the moon as anything but matter.

Figari's theories of time, space and matter contradict all romantic interpretations: "space occupied by matter is not space, but matter . . . . There is substance and there is energy, which are inseparable."[103] Accordingly he did not differentiate between foreground and distance, solid and space in his handling of texture, not because he wanted to make a picture at the expense of subject, but because of his belief in the primacy and ubiquitousness of matter. His treatment of space and volume, near and distant objects as equal pictorial elements, with arabesque brushstrokes, corresponds to Art Nouveau design rather than to the more suggestive complexities of Symbolism. It reflects his earlier

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interest in fusing art and industrial design in his aborted art education programs in Montevideo of before 1917. If one is to go by Figari's own theories, his representation of the moon in most of his paintings, shown in close proximity to the terrestrial activities, has more to do with his Materialist philosophy than to a Symbolist interpretation.

On the other hand, moon imagery dominated the poetry of a great number of the Martín Fierro poets, and Güiraldes wrote "who paints the sun without exposing himself to the hard danger of having to face it"[104] in what seemed to indicate a rather characteristic "Martínfierrista" preference for nocturnal living. In Figari's paintings, the moon did not force itself onto the landscape with strong light but rather existed as a quiet participant. Even Oliverio Girondo wrote about the moon although in a more threatening context:

> When a fantasmal moon
> snows its light on the rooftops,
> the sounds of the neighborhood,
> acquire criminal psychologies,[105]
> . . . . . .

Figari and New World Art

Besides sharing in many of Figari's themes, the poets looked to him as an example of a true "American" and a kind of leader. As a close friend and admirer of Figari's, Girondo had even written a poem about him, "Figari Paints," and praised him for allowing them (the

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"Martínfierristas") to share in his concerns and his work: "nothing could be a better tonic." He admired the "perseverance" and "tenacity" with which Figari worked and in 1923 said to him in a letter that "the sensation of fullness which you are logically experiencing" could not fail to be greatly beneficial.[106] This curious hero-worship from the man who wrote about Hispano-Suizos and Innovation trunks just a year later, might be explainable perhaps if one looks at some of Girondo's poetry of the twenties which was more shocking for its sexual metaphors than for an innovative form. According to later critics, he did not abandon in his style of writing "the round confidence in the existence of a firm concrete reality" until three decades later.[107]

Figari defended "American" values and championed regionalism in artistic expression in articles and lectures as well as in painting. He contributed articles to Proa and Martín Fierro besides to Uruguayan publications. In an article for the Uruguayan journal La Cruz del Sur entitled "Autonomía regional," ironically he denounced "cosmopolitanism," because it "leveled what was ours [by] importing exotic civilizations. . . " He complained that by "looking enviously to the glorious culture of the old world, we have forgotten our own tradition, as though it was not necessary for reasons of dignity and conscience to prepare our own civilization."[108]

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In a lecture given at the offices of La Prensa in June 1925 entitled "Towards the Best Art of America", Figari pointed out the great resources of "our immense territories" but they require "that we work hard and that we work well."[109] Some of the ideas expressed by Figari had been formulated in 1922 by the Dominican poet and essayist Pedro Henríquez Ureña, then living in La Plata. In a lecture entitled "La utopia de América" given by Henríquez Ureña at the University of La Plata in 1922, he pointed out that today there was a preference for "native materials and national themes in the arts and sciences, together with the decision to create new methods when European methods become insufficient before the new problems."[110]

Henríquez Ureña had moved to Argentina just a few months before giving his lecture. He had come from Cuba and Mexico where the mural movement of 1922 had not yet emerged. However he was familiar with the new Mexican educational programs that were established there in 1920 right after the end of the revolution under the new minister of education José Vasconcelos.[111] Rural schools had been established to educate peasants and their children, and interest was revived in local indigenous art forms. Henríquez Ureña had cited in particular the work of the Mexican painter Adolfo Best Maugard who had developed a system of art education for children based on the seven basic symbols that recurred in indigenous and

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popular Mexican art, and he had advocated using these according to rules derived from the popular and ancient arts of Mexico. To this end Best Maugard had written a book published in Mexico in 1923 and translated into English the following year as A Method of Design.[112]

Figari's own work in the field of art education was apparently known in Mexico and Best Maugard regarded him as a precursor. When Manuel Rodríguez Lozano who had studied with Best Maugard, and Julio Castellanos, just twenty-one years old at the time, came to Buenos Aires for a four-month stay in 1925,[113] they had brought with them a copy of Best Maugard's book inscribed "to Maestro Figari with our profound admiration," signed by the two painters.[114] They had also brought work by Mexican children which was shown in an exhibition in June 1925 at Amigos del Arte. In a review of the exhibition for Martín Fierro, Figari praised the Mexicans for providing a language besides the alphabet for children to learn from, which was more appropriate than the classical models usually provided, since the latter proved to be "incomprehensible for children."[115]

Figari's written, spoken and painted contributions to Hispano-American cultural identity, came at a time when national solidarity was a growing force among other intellectuals in Buenos Aires. Writing about Figari's second exhibition at the Drouet Gallery in Paris in 1925, André Salmon had stated that "one must respect this

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legitimate form of modern patriotism." While "Italy was imposing its factories on lovers of moonlight shining over balconies, . . . thanks to Figari, Latin America has nothing to fear."[116] Even Martín Fierro could state in 1926 that "once more--a rewarding example--we have confirmed the certainty of our opinions whose amplitude has permitted us to defend this artist in spite of our esthetic orientation."[117]

Departure to Paris

On July 18, 1925, Figari sailed for France with his son Juan Carlos. He already had numerous friends in Paris many of whom he had met before World War I. Shortly after his arrival he exhibited again at the Drouet Gallery, and in 1926 his book Arte, estética, ideal was reprinted in a French edition under the revised title Essai de philosophie biologique. Art, esthétique, ideal translated by Charles Lesca and with an introduction by Desiré Roustan.[118] Figari's next two years in Paris were productive and successful. He associated with poets and critics who became Martín Fierro correspondents[119] and met Picasso, Léger, Lhote, Vuillard and Bonnard. The latter two reportedly told Figari that he had "grande chance" to have found such "lovely, fresh and poetic" things to paint and that they too would have liked to paint them.[120] By August 1926, Figari felt sufficiently secure to move with Juan Carlos to a spacious sixth floor studio on the Place

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du Panthéon in the Latin Quarter.[121] A short report in the May 1927 issue of Martín Fierro announced that Figari was enjoying considerable success in Paris and that he had "just sold a canvas [sic] for 60,000 francs."[122]

His brushwork took on added richness in his depictions of Patagonian landscapes with vast skies such as in Pampa of 1927 (Fig. 60). His sense of fulfillment was such that he declared that "my success [in Paris] is due to the fact that what I renewed in painting was the concept and not the technique." Between the "intellectualized" Purist school and the emerging Surrealist one, Figari's sympathies went with the latter because he shared with them the notion that painting was "a sphere of dream and wanderings."[123] Without ever becoming a Surrealist himself, he was interested in the Surrealists' method of automatism for obtaining images, an interest he expressed in an article on Surrealism, "Automatísmo" for Cruz del Sur.[124] Conscious, if spontaneous, planning continued to represent a crucial ingredient of painting for him.

In 1927, at the height of Figari's Parisian idyll, both Juan Carlos and Ricardo Güiraldes died in Paris, the former of meningitis, the latter of cancer. Not only did the experience change Figari's life, it profoundly shook his resolute Materialism as well. His painting production declined and he took up writing again. Within a few months he published a short story El Arquitecto which he

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dedicated to his "faithful friend" Juan Carlos, hoping that "our cells might meet again in the eternal route; and they will meet, I hope . . . ."[125] About the same time Martín Fierro published its last number and included a short homage to Güiraldes and Juan Carlos Figari Castro. Although Figari resumed a busy career as a diplomat in 1928,[126] he could never forget his lost son. Shortly after his death, Figari began a series of paintings on the theme of funerals. In 1934 he painted a triptych representing "sad blacks" instead of the animated blacks of the candombes. The back of the work bears the inscription "overwhelmed by my sorrow, I conceived of a triptych which I offered to the memory of Juan Carlos." The individual panels were entitled respectively In Search of the Dead One, Flowers to the Dead One and Apotheosis.[127]

In 1930 he published two more books, Dans l'Autre Monde and Historia Kiria, the former a satire on death which he dedicated "to my lady and gentlemen friends, beginning with Don Manuel J. Güiraldes," and the latter, about a utopian society on a remote Pacific island where there was no violence, no need for police control and where education was free and communally productive.[128] In 1933 he returned to Montevideo and until his death in 1938 he traveled and exhibited regularly in Buenos Aires.[129] Although younger artists did not always acknowledge it, the impact of Figari's four-year stay in Buenos Aires was

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essential to paving the way for the acceptance of newer forms of art. But it was left to Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes to make the final break with the past.

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NOTES

[1]Atalaya, Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), p. 324.

[2]Carlos A. Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943), pp. 15-16.

[3]Giselda Zani, Pedro Figari, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1944), p. 20.

[4]Herrera Mac Lean, pp. 15-16.

[5]The Argentine painter Ramón Gomez Cornet is also cited by critics and historians as having paved the way with Figari for the new art when Gomez Cornet exhibited at the Salón Chandler in 1921. According to Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, the exhibition invited "sarcasm," "amusement" and even "indifference." Gomez Cornet exhibited paintings with "large heads composed of almost flat colors, enclosed within black outlines and projected over background checkerboard patterns of bright tones." It was a "first manifestation, among us, of artistic renewal" with "Fauve-like" colors and "Cubist-derived" form and with the "poetic influence" of Modigliani. Córdova Iturburu referred to Figari as another "harbinger of the renewal" when he exhibited at the Müller the same year (Córdova Iturburu, 80 años de pintura argentina, [Buenos Aires: Ediciones Librería La Ciudad, c. 1978: 41].

[6]Herrera Mac Lean, p. 16.

[7]Fernando Laroche, "El arte de Figari," lecture given at the University of Montevideo in 1921, sponsored by the Comité France-Amérique of Montevideo, published as a pamphlet, (Montevideo: Imprenta y Editorial Renacimiento, 25 May 1923), p. 9.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Originally published in La Razón (June 1921), quoted in Pedro Figari, Salón Witcomb, (Buenos Aires: Asociación Amigos del Arte, July 1924), n.p.

[10]Pedro Figari to Martín Lasala, 25 June 1921, archives of Luis Victor Anastasía, Montevideo. Figari did not identify the critic or the newspaper. Pettoruti later voiced a similar complaint when a reviewer wrote about his work shown in the Salón Nacional of 1924 without seeing the exhibition, basing his review on catalogue information (Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, [Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1968: 184-85]).

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[11]Horacio Butler, La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1966), p. 33.

[12]Carlos Lacalle, "Evocación de Pedro Figari, pintor," (Montevideo: Apartado de la entrega IV, Tomo III, Anales de la enseñanza segundaria, September 1938, p. 12.

[13]Carlos A. Herrera Mac Lean, La exposición de Pedro Figari y una conversación con Don Manuel Güiraldes, (Buenos Aires: F.A. Colombo Editor, 1930), n.p. This conversation records the date of the event erroneously as 1925: "Una tarde el año 1925 [sic] entró, como solía hacer siempre, a la Galería Müller. Y se encontró de pronto con algo nuevo, . . . que jamás habia visto . . . 'no puedo creer que me encuentro ante mi naturaleza, tan hondamente sentida!'" The exhibition at the Müller Gallery occurred in 1921.

[14]Eleven years after the death of Ricardo Güiraldes, in 1938, the family collection was placed on exhibition in a newly inaugurated museum, the Museo Gauchesco "Parque" Ricardo Güiraldes, where the paintings by Figari that remained in the collection are on view today, as well as drawings, watercolors and oils by Alberto Güiraldes, the author's brother, and Ricardo himself. Figari's initial economic problems in Buenos Aires were alleviated by a growing number of patrons which included Oliverio Girondo. In addition, Figari was appointed as legal advisor to the Uruguayan Legation in Buenos Aires.

[15]Victoria Ocampo, "Pedro Figari," Revista Sur, (XIV/131, September 1945), pp. 30-35. The meeting between Figari and Victoria Ocampo had been arranged by Fernando Laroche. The Spanish critic Ricardo Baeza wrote from Madrid to Laroche on 28 March 1923 expressing his wish that Figari make friends with Señora Ocampo in order to sell paintings and to help spread his name. According to a letter from Laroche to Baeza dated 4 May 1923, Doña Ocampo had visited Figari and "was very happy with her visit. . . ." Victoria Ocampo described their first meeting at his Charcas Street studio in March 1923 where she felt herself

> "Entering into those states produced by music when we sink into it as in the sea: liberation of the weight of our limbs. . . . Figari, painter of lost times, spoke with the childlike soul of great poets, I was

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no longer in the small room of one of many houses without character of Charcas Street, but in a great patio filled with azeleas, climbing flowers hanging in curved hoops from the flat roof, creeping jasmin . . ." (Ocampo, "Pedro Figari:" 30-35).

[16]Montevideo which was even younger than Buenos Aires, was founded in 1726 as a bastion against Portugal. The Uruguayan territory known as the "Banda Oriental," east of the Uruguay River and Brazil, won independence in 1830, thirty one years before Figari's birth. By 1900 the Uruguayan population rose from 60,000 in the mid century to 915,000 through European immigration. After several years of conflict with Argentina at the time of Rosas and during later civil wars, a democratic government was established particularly from 1903 to 1929 under José Batlle y Ordoñez who was president twice from 1903 to 1907 and again from 1911 to 1915. Ordoñez, a liberal man, founded the newspaper El Día in 1886, championed freedom of press and speech, compulsory free rural schools, university education for women, fair labor laws, social programs and educational reforms (Hubert herring, A History of Latin America, 3rd ed., with the assistance of Helen Baldwin Herring, [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968: 392-94]).

[17]Luis Victor Anastasía, Angel Kalenberg and Julio María Sanguinetti, Figari-crónica y dibujos del caso Almeida, (Montevideo: ACALI Editorial, 1976), p. 17.

[18]The accused was imprisoned for four years and finally released in 1899 for lack of sufficient evidence. Figari published two pamphlets following the conviction, "Causa celebre--EL CRIMEN DE LA CALLE CHANA--Vindicación del Alferez Enrique Almeida--Exposición de la Defensa a cargo de Pedro Figari, Abogado" in 1896 and "El Crimen de la Calle Chana--Un ERROR JUDICIAL--Publicaciones en defensa del Alferez Enrique Almeida por PEDRO FIGARI, Abogado" in 1899 exposing what he felt were legal injustices. The assassination was known as the Crime of Chana Street for the location where it occurred (Anastasía, Kalenberg and Sanguinetti: 18, 43).

[19]Luis Victor Anastasía, Pedro Figari americano integral, (Montevideo: Comisión Nacional de Homenaje del Sesquicentenario de los Hechos Históricos de 1825, 1975), p. 28.

[20]Figari warned that "either a country industrializes itself or others would industrialize it" (Anastasía, Americano integral: 223).

[21]Ibid., p. 225.

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[22]Julio María Sanguinetti in Figari-crónica y dibujos del caso Almeida, p. 20. Drawings of local birds and plants by Figari's pupils are in the collection of Figari's son Pedro Figari in Montevideo.

[23]Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 42.

[24]Reprinted in 1960, 3 vols., (Montevideo: Biblioteca Artigas, 1960). It was translated into French by Charles Lesca and published in Paris first in 1920 with the same title, and reprinted in 1926 as Essai de philosophie biologique. Art, esthétique, idéal, with an introduction by Desiré Roustan, (Paris: Editions de la Revue de l'Amérique Latine, 1926).

[25]Lincoln Kirstein, "Pedro Figari" (New York: Council for Inter-American Cooperation, Inc., 1946), n.p., reprinted from an article in The Magazine of Art by Lincoln Kirstein, XXXIX/39, (May 1946), p. 105.

[26]José de España, "Art, esthétique, idéal del Dr. Pedro Figari," Martín Fierro, (18 May 1926), p. 6.

[27]Under Figari's administration, some of his educational theories were finally implemented and courses included carpentry and furniture making, pottery, typography, metalwork and decorative art. By 1916 the school had its own foundry for bronze casting. In the design workshop, students were forbidden to copy pictures and worked exclusively from natural models such as leaves, flowers, fruits, insects. After his resignation, Figari collaborated with his son Juan Carlos on an essay entitled Enseñanza Industrial published in 1919 and the same year he sent an essay in the form of an open letter to the Uruguayan government officials entitled "Industrialización de la América Latina - Autonomía y regionalismo" in which he predicted that "either a country industrializes itself or others would industrialize it" (Anastasía, Americano integral: 194, 223).

[28]Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, p. 12.

[29]Sanguinetti in Figari - crónica, p. 25.

[30]Interview with the late architect Jorge Faget Figari, a nephew of the artist on 16 December 1980 in Montevideo.

[31]Sanguinetti, Figari - crónica, p. 9; see also Vicente Gesualdo, ed., "Pedro Figari," Enciclopedia del arte en América, 5 vols., (Buenos Aires: Bibliográfica Omeba, 1968), vol. 4. Although it is difficult to document what specific works Figari saw in Europe at that

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time, 1886 was a particularly rich year. The Macchiaioli were active in Florence, the last Impressionist exhibition took place in Paris which included Seurat's Sunday Afternoon on the Isle of the Grande Jatte, Jean Moréas published the Symbolist manifesto and Félix Féneon, Les Impressionistes (John Rewald, The History of Impressionism, 4th rev. ed., [New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1973): 540]).

[32]Figari apparently was in contact with Godofredo Somavilla just prior to his move to Buenos Aires as indicated by a letter from Somavilla to Figari in Buenos Aires dated January 1921. In an interview with Francis de Miomandre in Paris in 1926, Figari claimed to have taken up painting seriously at the age of fifty, that is in 1911 (F[rancis] de M[iomandre], "Entretien avec Pedro Figari," Le Bulletin de la Vie Artistique, [Paris VII/6, 15 March 1926): 88-89]).

[33]Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, p. 42.

[34]Sanguinetti, Figari-crónica, p. 24, see also "Milo Beretta," Enciclopedia del arte en América, vol. 3. Beretta died in 1926. His collection introduced Post-Impressionism to Uruguay. The style was subsequently taken up by several Uruguayan artists, particularly Pedro Blanes Viale who combined it with a Spanish modernist style.

[35]Desiré Roustan, introduction to Pedro Figari, Essai de philosophie biologique. Art, esthétique, idéal, trans. by Charles Lesca, (Paris: Editions de la revue de l'Amérique Latine, 1926), pp. xxiv-xxv.

[36]Ibid., p. xxv.

[37]Ocampo, "Pedro Figari," pp. 30-35.

[38]Pedro Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, 3 vols. (Montevideo: Biblioteca Artigas, 1960), vol. II, pp. 34-35.

[39]Ibid., vol. I, p. 52. Figari had recorded his classification in an undated manuscript which he apparently enclosed with a letter to his nephew from Paris c. 1926. His classification comprises "I - Piedras expresivas / II - El hombre de las cavernas (vida primaria) / III- Vida pre-colonial / IV - Vida colonial / V - Post colonial / VI - Vida de los negros esclavos, sus fiestas / VII - Costumbres urbanas, suburbanas y

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campaneras / VIII - Corridas de toros / IX - Crimenes / X - Evocaciones venecianas / XI - Conatos épicos. . . ." "Apuntes de Pedro Figari," archives of Dr. Jorge Faget Figari, Montevideo.

[40]Kirstein, "Pedro Figari," (1946), n.p.

[41]F(rancis) de M(iomandre), "Entretien avec Pedro Figari," Le Bulletin de la Vie Artistique, (Paris VII / 6, 15 March 1926), p. 88.

[42]Gauguin had advised Schuffenecker not to "copy nature too much," but to "think more of the creation which will result [without a model]. This is the only way of mounting towards God" (Robert Goldwater, Symbolism, [New York: Harper & Row, 1979: 78]).

[43]Arturo Ardao, "Figari entre Le Dantec y Bergson," Etapas de la inteligencia uruguaya, (Departamento de Publicaciones, Universidad de la República, 1971), pp. 315-27, 326. Figari wrote that "space occupied by matter is not space, but matter. . . . There is no such thing as 'nothingness.'" Rather it is "space occupied by matter." Matter and energy "do not require the hypothesis of their creation, not even the remotest, in order to explain them, since indestructibility presupposes that they were not generated and that they have in themselves their own intrinsic cause." Accordingly he saw his chosen themes in painting as "prime matter to be manipulated" (Anastasía, Americano integral: 236-37). Figari explained emotion and exaltation in completely mundane terms. He defined "exaltation" as a "semi intoxication that has analogies with some of the states produced by hashish, alcohol, opium; it has something of ecstasy, of euphoria. It is a state of vagueness and bliss, a light vertigo, a rapture that defies reasonable examination, "but at the same time it was "a conscious evocative and idealizing condition in a spontaneous sense" (Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, vol II: 120-21).

[44]Camille Mauclair, "Pedro Figari y el aduanero Rousseau," La Nación, (November 1925). Obtained in transcribed form from the archives of Dr. Jorge Faget Figari. Some of these newspaper reviews are recorded without specific dates and page numbers.

[45]de Miomandre, "Entretien . . . ," p. 88. Francis de Miomandre was a friend of Ricardo Güiraldes and Valéry Larbaud, and had translated some of Güiraldes writings into French (Ricardo Güiraldes, Obras completas, [Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1962: 755]).

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[46]Kirstein, "Pedro Figari," (1946), n.p.

[47]Herrera Mac Lean, Figari, (1943), p. 18.

[48]Marianne Manley, Intimate Recollections of the Rio de la Plata, exhibition catalogue, (New York: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1986), p. 19.

[49]Herrera Mac Lean, Figari, (1943), p. 18.

[50]Ibid., pp. 18, 34. See also Giselda Zani, Pedro Figari, pp. 17, 19 for a discussion of Figari's work methods.

[51]Kirstein, "Pedro Figari," (1946), n.p.; see also Zani, p. 19.

[52]Anglada Camarasa was a friend of Ricardo and Alberto Güiraldes and Ricardo's teacher in Paris for a while. An example of a sun-drenched landscape with the sun directly above is evident in Palma de Mallorca by Pedro Blanes Viale in the collection of the Museo Nacional de Artes Plásticas in Montevideo.

[53]See for example figures 23 and 24 in Herrera Mac Lean, Figari, (1943), respectively Quietud en la Quinta and Petiso de Rancho (Tranquility on the Ranch and Small Horse of the Ranch).

[54]Herrera Mac Lean, Figari, (1943), p. 55.

[55]Manley, Intimate Recollections, p. 17.

[56]See Fig. 53, p. 53 in Robert Goldwater, Symbolism, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979).

[57]Alberto Zum Felde, "La pintura de Figari," El Día, (3 May 1924), n. p., see also Paul Fierens, in a review in Paris-Journal, (November 1923) in which the writer compared this aspect to the work of Goya, Daumier and Forain. Archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo.

[58]Alberto Lasplaces, "Pedro Figari en Paris," El Día, (10 August 1926), in transcript form from the archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo. The paper in which this review appeared was not recorded in the archives but Lasplaces wrote regularly for El Día so it seems likely that the latter was the source of the article.

[59]Martín Fierro, (August-6 September 1924), p. 5.

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[60]This aspect is discussed in Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 127.

[61]See for example Sernesi's Mountain Meadows and Borrani's The Fruitful Fields of Castiglioncello, reproduced in the Exhibition of Italian XIX Century Paintings, (New York: Wildenstein, 1949), n.p.

[62]See Eduardo Schiaffino, La pintura y las escultura argentina, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones del autor, 1933), p. 199, reprod. p. 197.

[63]"Tagore ante los negros de Figari," a transcript of a short article relating Tagore's visit to Figari's studio in Buenos Aires from the archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo. There is no indication of author, where published or exact date. The year was given as 1923, but this is erroneous since Tagore visited Buenos Aires in late 1924.

[64]Statement dated La Porteña, 22 October 1920, quoted in Alberto Oscar Blasi, Güiraldes y larbaud, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1970), p. 32.

[65]Ricardo Güiraldes, Obras Completas, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1962), p. 808.

[66]The portrait was painted by Soto Acebal and is in the Museo Gauchesco, San Antonio de Areco.

[67]Picasso's Old Guitarist, in the Art Institute of Chicago is reproduced on p. 47 in Pablo Picasso, exhibition catalogue, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1980).

[68]This painting was reproduced with André Salmon's article "Figari en Paris," Martín Fierro, (29 December 1925), p. 3.

[69]Laroche, "El arte de Figari," p. 16.

[70]Three of Covarrubias' caricatures were reproduced in Martín Fierro. See Manuel Rodriguez Lozano, "Miguel Covarrubias," Martín Fierro, (28 August 1925), pp. 1, 3.

[71]Salmon, "Figari en Paris," p. 3.

[72]Blacks in Argentina and Uruguay virtually disappeared by the mid twentieth century unlike Brazil where they became an important segment of Brazilian culture. Since there were no plantations in the Rio de la Plata as there were in Brazil, the black slaves were

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employed as domestics in households and lived in close proximity with Creole families while in Brazil, blacks were segregated in barracks near the plantations where they retained their African culture in its original form (Alicia Haber, "Vernacular Culture in Uruguayan Art: an Analysis of the Documentary Function of the Works of Pedro Figari, Carlos González and Luis Solari," [paper presented at the Eighth National Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association in Pittsburgh, April 1979: 3, 4]).

[73]Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, (1943), pp. 44-45.]

[74]Unpublished undated manuscript written by Pedro Figari in Paris probably in 1932 and originally included in a letter to his nephew Dr. Faget Figari, archives of Luís Victor Anastasía, Montevideo.

[75]Figari to Faget Figari, Paris 12 August 1932 and 22 January 1933, quoted in Anastasía, Americano integral, pp. 231, 236.

[76]Kirstein, "Pedro Figari," (1946), n.p. See also Georges Pillement, Pedro Figari, (Paris: Editions G. Gres, 1930), n.p.

[77]Haber, "Vernacular Culture," p. 7.

[78]According to Anastasía, Figari believed that the incrimination of instinct, like the incrimination of love, by means of direct repression or by means of its denaturalization has always been identified with the annulment of man's natural freedom, in his earliest years, in order to deprive him of his most essential condition by the time he is an adult (Anastasía, Americano integral: 90, 91).

[79]Figari to Eduardo de Salterain y Herrera, 28 May 1932, Paris, quoted in Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 237.

[80]Anastasía, Americano integral, pp. 90-91.

[81]Haber, "Vernacular Culture," pp. 4, 6. The Uruguayan Candombe must not be confused with the Brazilian Candomblé which is a religious ritual at which gods are invoked. The Uruguayan Candombe is of Bantu origin and is danced at all festive occasions, Christmas, New Year, Catholic holidays, Sundays, Easter, Epiphany (Day of Kings) on January 6, and on certain saints' days. The residual Afro-Catholic rites the Uruguayan blacks

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practiced were those they acquired through contact with Brazilian blacks in colonial times. According to Haber, these dances remained essentially unchanged in Uruguay until 1880 when Figari was nineteen.

[82]Ibid., p. 6.

[83]From the beginning, the black communities in Montevideo were divided into "nations" according to their country of origin in Africa (Angola, Congo, Mozambique) and they remained grouped accordingly. On festive occasions such as the Day of Kings, one among them would be elected "King" for a day, and like a master of ceremonies, he would then lead the group on a solemn parade through the city streets. In some cases the parade would culminate with a visit to the governor (Haber: 4). Jules Supervielle wrote that these people were so proud of their transitory dignity that "no perdían jamás la ocasión de hacercela valer con los rituales visitas al señor presidente y al cuerpo diplomático. Se les recibió ceremoniosamente, con una bonachona sonrisa en los ojos y con ligeras monedas de plata." ("they lost no occasion to make it count through ritual visits to the president and to the diplomatic corps. They received them ceremoniously with a good natured smile in their eyes and with silver coins.") (Jules Supervielle, "Notas de arte. Pedro Figari, La Prensa [Buenos Aires, 29 July 1924: n.p.] archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo).

[84]Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, vol. I. pp. 62-63. "El horror a la muerte, por lo demás, no es una manifestación normal del instinto fundamental que rige y gobierna a los organismos, sino más bien una psicosis, un desareglo del instinto, que lo anormaliza. . . . Debemos suponer, pues que esa fobia de la muerte es más bien una manifestación morbosa del instinto natural . . . . Si bien no puede conciliarse el desdén por la muerte con el instinto vital, porque son contradictorias, es posible no obstante, conciliar el amor a la vida con la resignación respecto de un fenómeno tan natural como es la muerte, es decir, con la conformidad normal con que deben acatarse las leyes de la naturaleza."

[85]Carlos Lacalle, "Evocación de Pedro Figari, pintor," vol. III, Anales de la Enseñanza Segundaria, (Montevideo: September 1938), p. 13. According to a letter to Figari from Julio Raúl Fende la Torre dated 26 October 1923, Figari had intended to go to Europe for the exhibition but there is no indication that he did. He did however, make a short trip to Montevideo in December according to a reference in a letter from Oliverio Girondo addressed to Figari in Montevideo dated 31 December 1923, archives, Museo Histórico Nacional, Montevideo.

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[86]The critic identified himself only by the initials N.N. The article entitled "Al fin un pintor!!" appeared in La Fronda, (Buenos Aires, 14 June 1923), n.p., archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo.

[87]Ricardo Güiraldes, "Don Pedro Figari," Martín Fierro, (August-6 September 1924), pp. 5-6.

[88]José Lozano Mouján, Figuras del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: A. García Santos, 1928), p. 181. In December 1926, an issue of the leftist Boedo review Claridad published an article entitled "El infantilismo de vanguardia" in which the reviewer noted that "La Borjes [Norah Borges] . . . está en la infancia del dibujo, como Pedro Figari está en la senilidad. Por eso tanta afinidad de espiritu los acerca." They referred to Figari as "el viejito" (Adolfo Prieto, Antología de Boedo y Florida, [Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1964: 64]). These remarks may have been directed as much to Martín Fierro and the "Florida" group as they were to Figari who of course, was one of them. The Boedo writers and painters had since the beginning, been critical of Martín Fierro's focus on the country's old traditions as opposed to contemporary social problems. The other painters who were critical of Figari are never identified. There is no mention of Figari anywhere in Pettoruti's autobiography although they certainly knew each other. It is questionable that Pettoruti would have overtly criticized Figari. But his avoidance of any mention of him might be taken as an indication that he did not take his work seriously.

[89]Atalaya, p. 324. Atalaya who wrote this in 1925, neither identifies the critics nor the painters.

[90]Ibid., pp. 114-115.

[91]Sergio Piñero, "Exposición Pedro Figari," Martín Fierro, (18 July 1925), p. 3. Salón de Rosas and Pericón en la estancia were reproduced with this article.

[92]Prebisch had apparently written the review for this exhibition but withdrew his manuscript when his "compañeros Martínfierrista" had objected to some of its contents. In a letter to Figari dated 15 July 1925, Prebisch explained that "the editors of Martín Fierro of which I am a member, considered inappropriate the publication of the article because a few ill intentioned people might have misinterpreted my words." He was apparently subjected to some slander because of this article. In his explanatory letter to Figari, he wished to clarify the situation before Figari heard "distorted rumors" from others. "Thus my objections to your work--

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which I nonetheless admire and respect profoundly--are the result of an understanding that is too personal--but also unilateral and by an interested [lover] of art." Archives of the Museo Histórico Nacional, Montevideo.

[93]Güiraldes, "Don Pedro Figari," pp. 5-6. He was referring to José Hernandez's epic poem Martín Fierro published in the 1870s: "He oído muchas veces protestar contra el país acusándolo de carecer de motivos pictóricos y puedo citar frases que albunos reconocerán. 'La pampa podrá ser musical o poética, pero no pictórica'. 'Quién va a poner en una tela nuestras chatas y horribles casas de campo tan sin gracia, sin fantasía'? 'Cómo se va a trabajar donde ni siquiera se encuentra un modelo'? 'Aqui no hay ambiente para el artista', ... Pues bien, Pedro Figari prueba que es pictórica la pampa y que se pueden utilizar con gran ventaja las casas chatas. Para él no hay carencia de modelos porque no busca hacer el eterno desnudo tirado en un diván con un abánico o una pera en la mano. Tampoco le hace falta el ambiente, porque el ambiente es él. Que ambiente tuvo José Hernandez?"

[94]See Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, vol, I, pp. 90-102.

[95]Ibid., pp. 101-102. See also Haber, p. 7, and for information on the Abbaye de Creteil, see Daniel Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism. The abbaye de Creteil," Art Journal, (XXIII / 2, Winter 1963/64), pp. 111-116.

[96]Romains wrote in the preface to the new edition of La vie unamime that "de nuevo la poesía se ha separado del innumerable hombre moderno para dedicarse a ser el entretenimiento y el rehen de una intima 'elite'" (Jean Prevost, "El movimiento literario en Francia," Martín Fierro, [10 May 1926: 3]). Figari's writings of 1912 indicate that he had a good acquaintance with both Bergson and Romains already then.

[97]Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, vol, I, pp. 27, 127. See also Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 58.

[98]Ibid., pp. 101-102.

[99]Salmon, "Figari en Paris," p. 3. Jules Supervielle had also moved to Paris at about the same time as Figari (Güiraldes, Obras Completas: 766).

[100]Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico: Editorial Pormaca, 1965), p. 77.

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[101]Ibid.

[102]Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, (1943), pp. 54-55.

[103]Figari, Arte, estética, ideal, vol. II, p. 36. Pablo Rojas Paz explained Figari's blurred edges and supposed distortions in Futurist terms: "cuando se pinta la figura de un hombre caminando, la realidad clásica de reposo se deforma en el movimiento" (Pablo Rojas Paz, "Pedro Figari," Proa, [August 1924: 36-38]).

[104]Güiraldes wrote a number of essays about artists from Spain as well as Argentina, usually using their work as a spring board for poetic reference to their imagery. These essays were probably written in about 1924, a time when he was most involved with artists. He died in 1927 and his writings were compiled and published posthumously by his widow Adelina del Carril de Güiraldes. These and other essays can all be found in his Obras Completas, see pp. 664-66 and 808 for his citation.

[105]Oliverio Girondo, "Escorial," Martín Fierro, (5 May 1925), p. 4.

[106]Girondo to Figari in Montevideo dated 31 December 1923. Figari had taken a short trip back to Uruguay in December. Girondo's poem "Figari pinta" is undated and is reproduced in Oliverio Girondo, Obras Completas, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1968), p. 389.

[107]Naomi Lindstrom, "El radicalismo de En la Masmédula: repensar y rehacer el discurso," Explicación de Textos Literarios, (II / 1, 1982-1983), p. 33. Lindstrom discusses the development of Girondo's style in En la Masmédula and other works, and concludes through a series of articles on Girondo that in the fifties he achieved what he had preached in the twenties.

[108]Reprinted in Pedro Figari, Educación y arte, intro. by Ardao, (Montevideo: Biblioteca Artigas, 1965), p. 199. This book is a compendium of Figari's writings on art education.

[109]Published under the title "Hacía la eficiencia de América," La Prensa, 27 June 1925, quoted in Educación y arte, p. 203.

[110]This lecture was published in 1925 in the La Plata journal Estudiantina under the same title, "Utopia de América" and is reprinted in modified form in Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Plenitud América, selected essays,

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(Buenos Aires: Peña, Del Giúdice Editores, 1952), pp. 11-19. Some later revisions in Henríquez Ureña's book make some of this text unreliable. See also Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 231. Henríquez Ureña was well versed in the arts, had lived in Cuba and Mexico until 1914, the United States until 1921, and moved to Argentina after a brief return trip to Mexico. See Pedro Henríquez Ureña, A History of Latin American Culture, (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. vi.

[111]Henríquez Ureña's 1921 trip to Mexico corresponded with José Vasconcelos' establishment of mass educational programs. The mural movement did not begin until the following year but was almost immediately well publicized throughout Latin America. In 1925 José Vasconcelos who was also a poet and essayist published his The Cosmic Race in which he expressed some of his utopian ideals about the four world races fusing into a fifth that would be the Latin American one.

[112]Best Maugard's book was first published in Mexico as Método de dibujo. Tradición, resurgimiento, y evolución in 1923. See also Henríquez Ureña, Plenitúd de América, pp. 14 & 84 quoted in Anastasía Americano integral, p. 231.

[113]Güiraldes noted that the two painters "han sido durante cuatro meses nuestros amigos." They remained in Buenos Aires until July 1925. See Güiraldes, Obras Completas, p. 766.

[114]Adolfo Best Maugard, Método de dibujo. Tradición, resurgimiento, y evolución del arte mexicano, (Mexico: Departamento Editorial de la Secretaria de Educación, 1923). The dedication was signed by the two painters, Manuel Rodríguez Lozano and Julio Castellanos. Figari's copy of this book was made available by Anastasía from his personal archives.

[115]Pedro Figari, "Arte infantil Mexicano," Martín Fierro, (26 June 1925), p. 3.

[116]Salmon, "Figari en Paris," p. 3.

[117]"Exposición Pedro Figari," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 2.

[118]Published by the Editions de la revue de l'Amérique Latine in 1926. In 1908 Ernesto Martinenche, a wealthy Argentinian who was also a professor of Spanish literature at the Sorbonne, founded the Agrupación de Universidades y Grandes Escuelas de Francia para las Relaciones con la América Latina in Paris. Shortly after

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an American library was added. The association soon established itself as a meeting place for Latin American intellectuals living in Paris. In the early twenties, another Argentinian Alejandro de Olazaba, founded the Maison de l'Amérique Latine and in 1923, the Revue de l'Amérique Latine a periodical under the direction of Charles Lesca, whom Figari had met in Paris in 1913. The review published articles on Latin American artists living in Paris. Lesca had apparently begun translating Figari's book Arte, estética, ideal, into French in 1913, but the outbreak of the war interrupted the work. Although a fragment of the translation came out in 1913 in the Bulletin of Martinenche's Bibliothèque Américaine, the first French edition of the book was not published until 1920. In 1926 it was reprinted by the Editions de la revue de l'Amérique Latine under its revised title, Essai de philosophe biologique. Art, esthétique, ideal with an introduction by Desiré Roustan. Some of this information was contained in a letter from Charles Lesca to Figari, 4 June 1923, Paris, in the archives of the Museo Histórico Nacional, Montevideo. In this letter Lesca had written that the 1920 French edition had been hard to sell which accounts for the decision to change its title. See also Ardao, "Figari entre le Dantec y Bergson," p. 318 for information on these publications. The Revue de l'Amérique Latine subsequently published several articles on Figari during his stay in Paris.

[119]Lasplaces, "Pedro Figari en Paris," archives of Dr. Faget Figari, Montevideo. Lasplaces lists among Figari's acquaintances in Paris, Paul Valéry, Leon Paul Fargue, Jules Romains, Francis de Miomandre, Jean Cassou, Desiré Roustan, Georges Pillement, Paul Claudel, Luis Vauxcelles, Count de Chasseloup, Colette, James Joyce, Bertrand Russell, Max Jacob, Gustave Kahn, Camille Mauclair, Jean Prevost, Raymond Cognat, Maurice Raynal, Valéry Larbaud, besides numerous artists from France and Argentina.

[120]Figari to Faget Figari, Paris 9 November 1932, quoted in Anastasía, Americano integral, p. 239. When Vuillard saw Figari's work at the Drouet Gallery, he was quoted as saying "Ah voilá un des nôtres."

[121]Lasplaces, "Pedro Figari en Paris," archives of Dr. Faget Figari.

[122]"Cartas de amigos," Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 8. Figari used only cardboard panels.

[123]Undated manuscript written by Figari in Paris, archives of Luis Victor Anastasía, Montevideo. "Mi exito se debe a que renové en pintura por el concepto, no por la

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tecnica, según se ha tratado de hacerlo copiosamente en nuestros días . . . ." The undated manuscripts by Figari may have originally been parts of letters which he preserved as records of his paintings or ideas. Most of them were written in Paris between 1925 and 1932.

[124]Pedro Figari, "Automatismo," Cruz del Sur, (18 July 1927), pp. 20-21.

[125]Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, (1943), p. 58.

[126]In 1928 he was appointed as Minister Plenipotentiary on a special mission to London where he was knighted, and in 1930, he served as the Uruguayan delegate at the Ibero-American Exposition in Seville in which he was awarded a gold medal. The post as Minister Plenipotentiary was due to the intervention of Herrera Mac Lean who had written to Dr. L.C. Caviglio, president of the National Council of Administration of Uruguay in June 1928 from Buenos Aires requesting that Figari be given either a grant or a post with the French Legation as a measure to alleviate his financial problems. The letter was reprinted in Herrera Mac Lean, La Exposición de Pedro Figari y una conversación con Don Manuel Güiraldes, (Buenos Aires: F.A. Colombo Editor, 1930), n.p. See also Herrera Mac Lean, Exposición Pedro Figari, (Montevideo: Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1945), p. 20.

[127]This work was signed and dated, Montevideo, 13 June 1934. According to Herrera Mac Lean, Figari stopped painting altogether after 1934 (Herrera Mac Lean, Pedro Figari, [1943: 46]).

[128]Dans l'Autre Monde was translated into French by Charles Lesca and published by Editions de la revue de l'Amérique Latine in 1930. The title in Historia Kiria comes from "Kirie" meaning the song of the dead." The latter was also published in Paris by Le Livre Libre in 1930. Both books were illustrated by Figari.

[129]Figari's return to Montevideo preceded that of his compatriot, Joaquín Torres-García by one year. His death in 1938 coincided with the deaths of the Argentine poets Alfonsina Storni and Leopoldo Lugones both by suicide. Both poets had been affiliated with Martín Fierro.

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CHAPTER VI

EMILIO PETTORUTI AND THE "NEW SENSIBILITY"

If Pettoruti's paintings[1] were not understood by the public nor unanimously acclaimed by critics in the twenties, his role among intellectuals in Buenos Aires was seen as galvanizing. Of the five artists, he was the one whose work caused the greatest furor when it was first exhibited. Accused of being a "Futurist" (a great insult in Argentina at the time) and of mystifying the public, he was severely criticized and even ridiculed by some critics, while he was perceived as the messiah of the "new sensibility" in art by others. Córdova Iturburu attributed the "new spirit" which animated Argentine artists in the twenties, to his return from Europe in 1924. Atalaya wrote that Pettoruti's presence in Buenos Aires was "a necessary element in an ambience of artistic cretinism,"[2] and a critic from La Acción stated that his return had contributed to a discovery of the "many unsuspected revolutionaries there were among us."[3] He was credited with having contributed decisively to clarifying the objectives of the "Martínfierrista" movement. Conversely, Pettoruti recognized Martín Fierro as an important binding agent sharing many of his own esthetic concerns.[4] More than a style, he shared a spirit of

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polemic with the writers. During his first years back in his country, the magazine's support of his art facilitated his task of introducing a completely new art form to the public.

Background

Pettoruti had first embarked for Europe on August 7, 1913 on the Cittá di Torino, as a twenty-year old youth from La Plata, a quiet town that had been in existence a mere ten years when he was born.[5] He was the son of an Italian immigrant and the first born in a family of twelve.[6] In La Plata he had studied briefly at the Academia de Bellas Artes, sketched large stuffed birds at the Museo de Historia Natural, studied perspective in the museum's school of drawing, and copied Michelangelo's Moses "many times" from a plaster cast in the museum collection. His sister Aida posed for figure compositions he painted landscapes from nature, and for a short time, taught painting.[7]

During those years, Pettoruti had also tried his hand at cartooning. When a caricature he had done of Rodolfo Sarrat, the minister of the provincial government of La Plata, was published in a local newspaper, it caught Sarrat's eye and he wished to know who the artist was. They met and shortly after, Sarrat awarded Pettoruti a monthly stipend to study in Europe.[8] He decided to go to Florence no only because of its "treasures" but also

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because it was "small, tranquil, and very inexpensive. . . ."[9]

A few days after his arrival there, he met a group of Argentine artists through the sculptor Arturo Dresco who was the Argentine consul in Florence at the time. Dresco introduced him to his student, the young sculptor, Pablo Curatella-Manes who, like Pettoruti, was from La Plata.[10] Within a few days Pettoruti had settled into a studio on the Via Degli Artisti number six, visited the Medici Chapel, the cathedral, the Accademia and the Uffizi. In the church of San Marco he saw the work of Fra Angelico and was dazzled by "the color in a small Annunciation."[11]

But quite another experience awaited him as well. During his first day in Florence, he had inadvertently stumbled on the Caffé delle Guibbe Rosse where the Florence Futurists met regularly. Soon after, he began frequenting the Ferrante Gonnelli bookshop and gallery on the Via Cavour and bought a book on drawing by Ruskin "which taught me many useful things."[12] He also discovered and began subscribing to the Futurist publication Lacerba co-founded by Ardengo Soffici and Gonnelli, and edited by Giovanni Papini. In the September 15 issue, he was astonished to learn that "all men were imbeciles except for the Futurists." But he was intrigued by the journal's "audacity," the "absurd language," and "a few nice more or less intelligible poetic sentences." The

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other texts "were a chant to the new force, to dynamism of pictorial forms." The October 1st issue dedicated to "variety theater and politics," reproduced a drawing by Carrá "about which I understood nothing."[13]

The Gonnelli bookshop also edited and distributed a series of illustrated monographs on artists from France including Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cézanne. This was Pettoruti's first exposure to Cézanne's work. Subsequent volumes in the same series including monographs on Manet, Monet, Renoir, Rousseau and Picasso.[14] Pettoruti first became acquainted with the work of the Futurists through reproductions in Lacerba. When he saw Futurist art for the first time at the opening of the Exposizione d'Arte Futurista Lacerba at the Gonnelli Gallery on November 30, 1913, it proved to be a great shock to his system:

> The crowds and the shouting were such in there that I decided to return the next day . . . . The impact on me was enormous; just think I came from La Plata, a city where the moonlight reigns, . . . I left the exhibition with a dreadful headache and a spiritual turmoil impossible to translate into words: it was as though I had been turned inside out. I had just turned twenty-one and my artistic formation was nil--, it is certain, I loved the classics, but I had no prejudices, and a certain logic spoke to me in favor of the moderns."[15]

He read all the Futurist manifestos which were displayed at the gallery entrance and returned to the gallery every day until the exhibition closed forty seven days later in January 1914. During that time, he met the Milan Futurists Boccioni, Carrá, Russolo and Marinetti whom Pettoruti described as an "excellent and fiery writer who

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understood nothing about art."[16]

On December 12, the Gran Serata Futurista took place at the Teatro Verdi in Florence. Pettoruti was outraged when he could not hear the poetry because of the violent behavior of the public, the screaming, whistling, and the pelleting of the poets and performers with vegetables, eggs and boiled beans which he viewed as the "human bestiality that manifests itself collectively."[17] He read the poetry the following day in the December 15 issue of Lacerba. During these events, he also met the Florence Futurists Giovanni Papini, Aldo Palazzeschi and Ardengo Soffici with whom he subsequently held numerous conversations about art at the Caffé delle Guibbe Rosse.[18]

The Early Work

In the following days Pettoruti divided himself between two worlds, that of the quattrocentisti on the one hand and of the Futurists on the other. He studied for a while at the Accademia Lungo il Mugnone with the Art Nouveau painter and designer Augusto Giacometti,[19] and copied the works of Simone Martini, Uccello, Fra Filippo Lippi, Benozzo Gozzoli, Botticelli, and the artists of the High Renaissance at the Uffizi. His method of copying, however, was selective. He would pick out isolated details to copy such as a head, hands or drapery, as he did for instance with Jacopo Bassano's Family Portrait, in quest of the "technique of the Venetians." Similarly he

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"copied" a Fra Angelico, by redistributing the colors according to his personal formula:

> Two parts of brilliant sky blue (that of the sky), two parts black (dispersed), four parts white (distributed in various places), eight parts bluish gray (the clothing), three parts green, two gold, one red and one rose. . . .[20]

Based on this system, he produced a series of "abstract" studies. He also studied the techniques of stained glass, gilding, mosaics, and apprenticed himself to the painter and decorator Galileo Chini in order to learn fresco.[21]

During the first months, he visited Ravenna, Venice, Padua, San Giminiano and Pisa with Curatella-Manes and another sculptor. He was especially impressed by Giotto and the Ravenna mosaics. On his return he began making mosaics inspired by those of San Vitale in Ravenna. But he applied the tesserae in dynamic undulating designs. He stated that

> Through drawing arabesques on paper, I discovered that the flat surfaces of traditional mosaics could be set in motion, if I applied the techniques I learnt in a different way and adapted different materials of different types, shapes and thicknesses.

Besides the Venetian tesserae to which he referred as "enamels," he incorporated assorted fragments of broken glass, bottle bottoms, porcelain pottery shards which he could break into irregular pieces of different sizes. Each tessera represented the equivalent as a "brushstroke" and he worked on a cement base that combined a smooth with an undulating surface depending on the requirements of the design.[22] In 1914 he completed three mosaics on

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allegorical themes, Spring, Meditation and Dance, which he shipped to La Plata shortly after.[23] Spring (Fig. 61) which Pettoruti entered in the Decorative Arts section of the National Salon of Buenos Aires in 1914 represents a young maiden set against a hilly landscape of cypresses inspired by the landscape of Fiesole and Settignano.[24] The undulating design also echoes the Art Nouveau influence of Augusto Giacometti and performed the same function in the mosaics as Figari's brushstrokes did in his paintings despite the great difference in the two artists.

Between 1914 and 1918 Pettoruti also experimented with Futurist concepts of movement and velocity as a result of having seen an exhibition of Boccioni's sculpture at Gonnelli in March 1914 which "filled me with sufficient enthusiasm to decide me to try this art temporarily."[25] His first works in this category included Centrifugal Forces, Dynamic Expansion and Harmony, Movement, Space, all of them abstract drawings. He later stated that "what brought me to abstraction in 1914 was the desire to obtain movement, velocity, dynamism as I imagined them without a figurative base, on the one hand, and my desire to copy the classics for their constructive lines and not for what their paintings represented, on the other." Córdova Ituburu noted that "the main influence of Futurism on his spirit consisted fundamentally in liberating him from the bonds of the concept of art as an

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illusory representation of visible reality."[26]

Centrifugal Forces (Fig. 62), a charcoal drawing later retitled Harmony-Abstract Drawing,[27] a spiraling form intercepted by vertical bands, is remiscent of Ballá's painting Mercury Passes Before the Sun Seen Through a Telescope (Fig. 63) of the same year. Whether or not Pettoruti was familiar with this work at the time--he met Ballá for the first time in 1915 in Rome--he certainly was with Carrá's and Boccioni's Futurist theories published in Lacerba in 1913. Carrá had stated that:

> . . . There are no equal subdivisions of structural parts, as was customary with the artists of the past--instead we have the applied construction of abstract forms. Constructions of a a-rhythmical forms, the clash between concrete and abstract forms. Constructions of veiled shapes with transparent ones, the repeating of different parts of given bodies which break up, intersect and interpenetrate each other. The right angle serves to give an expression of calm austerity and gravity, when the composition requires a simple rhythm, neutral and without passion. In other cases, with this same objective of neutrality, horizontal and vertical lines are used separately.
>
> . . . The acute angle, . . . is passionate and dynamic, expressing with a penetrating force. And the obtuse angle, as a geometrical expression, represents oscillation, the diminution of this will and this force. Finally, a curved line has an intermediary function, and serves, together with the obtuse angle, as a link, a kind of transitional form between the other angles.
>
> By using this method to perceive the construction of a painting, we Futurists group together abstract forms which are purely geometrical . . . .[28]

In a lecture published in Lacerba in December 1913, Boccioni spoke of dynamism and the search for "the construction of an object's action" rather than of the

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object (in sculpture):

> We have abolished pyramidal architecture to arrive at spiral architecture.
> . . . . . .
> An architectural construction in spiral form creates for the observer a continuity which allows him to understand, through the force-form, which is derived from real form, a new form defining objects and their driving force.[29]

In Dynamic Expansion (Fig. 64), a charcoal, and Harmony, Movement, Space (Fig. 65), a charcoal and color crayon drawing, spirals are intercepted by straight lines. In the first, verticals and horizontals within the spiral, are juxtaposed so as to form a pinwheel. In the second, diagonals radiate from a central point suggesting that Pettoruti may also have seen Carrá's first works to deal with war imagery. However as is immediately evident, Pettoruti's Harmony, Movement, Space shared none of Carrá's pro-war interventionist pleas and "noise" words formed by the expanding and radiating shapes. Rather Pettoruti adhered to a more general interpretation of Futurist dynamic theories. Moreover, the art historian Osvaldo Nessi demonstrated that Pettoruti had used the golden section in this work (Fig. 66), a characteristic of late Cubism.[31]

In March 1914, Carrá and Soffici had traveled to Paris feeling the need to "revitalize" their work at a time when Futurism was declining. Soffici who "openly declared himself a follower of the Cubist 'school'"[32] had published articles on cubism in La Voce and Lacerba,

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notably a series of three articles "Cubismo e Oltre" in January and February 1913 which later came out as a book with the same title published by the Libreria della Voce with illustrations of the work of Ballá, Boccioni, Braque, Carrá, Cézanne, Picasso, Russolo, Severini and Soffici. Furthermore, Lacerba also published articles by French writers, particularly Max Jacob and Apollinaire, and reproduced works by Archipenko (who used the golden section) and Picasso.[33] Books on Cubism by Apollinaire, Salmon, and Gleizes and Metzinger, respectively Méditations esthétiques, La Jeune peinture française and Du cubisme, were certainly known in Florence, and the latter was illustrated with work by Cézanne, Picasso, Derain, Braque, Metzinger, Laurencin, Gleizes, Léger, Duchamp, Gris and Picabia. Gris had also used the golden section. Moreover Pettoruti had numerous chances to discuss Cubism with Soffici and Carrá.

In 1915 Pettoruti painted Lights in the Landscape (Fig. 67), one of very few of his "Futurist" works to be in oil, in which forms in motion receive "light like a whiplash." He stated that his interest in light began in la Plata when he had "painted pictures in which the sun formed part of the composition."[34] This interest received further impetus in Italy. Lights in the Landscape shares its dynamic curves with Ballá's contemporary nationalist Bandiera sull'altare della patria (Fig. 68) which Pettoruti probably saw during a visit to Ballá's studio in

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Rome in the fall of 1915. Ballá had been preoccupied with light at least since 1912 as a result of his trip to Germany which had led to his abstract Iridescent Interpenetrations of 1912.[35] In 1913 Ballá had painted Plasticity of Light X Velocity which may have suggested to Pettoruti further possibilities for depicting intangible forces. His charcoal drawing Dynamism of the Wind (Fig 69) indicates an awareness of both Ballá's concerns and the chevrons in Russolo's The Revolt and Racing Automobile.[36]

Pettoruti had praised Ballá's search for "perfection in the conquest of progressive techniques, a certain light, a certain atmosphere in which to envelop the subjects and objects of his themes," and referred to his work as "a new concept of Futurism, geometric forms in tension, extending from one side of the canvas to the other, identifying themselves one to the other in whirlpools encountered in the center of the canvas."[37] In 1913 Severini also stated that by "using colour analogies one can obtain the greatest luminous intensity, heat, musicality, optical and constructional dynamism . . . . The coloured expression of the sensation Light, in accordance with our spherical expansion in space, can only be centrifugal or centripetal with relation to the organic structure of the work . . ."[38] In Florence Pettoruti painted a series of studies focusing on light through color at its highest intensity, based on experiments

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whereby he placed objects of different colors--a black, a red, a blue and a yellow cube or rectangle or other volume--on a white sheet of paper under bright sunlight, then attempting "to capture, from each of those objects, its luminous color, within the shade that gave them the solar light."[39]

Collages and Still-Lifes

In 1914 Pettoruti had begun a series of collages that are related to those Soffici and Carrá did following their return from France. Like them, Pettoruti began incorporating bits of newspaper and periodicals, colored and painted paper, bits of cardboard, rags, sand, oil and postcards. In City Country (Fig. 70) a fragment of newspaper appears amid semi-abstract tilted blocks suggesting sunlit buildings and landscape. A postcard of the ponte vecchio is inserted on the left, and in the upper right is one of a bird's-eye view of a street.[40] The volumetric treatment of some of the forms also suggests for the first time some acquaintance with analytic Cubism.

In the following months, cafe paraphernalia such as cups, siphons, tables and assorted objects appeared in the work of Pettoruti. In 1915 he painted The Siphon (Fig. 71)[41] in which he included a page from the October 1, 1914 issue of Lacerba. Pages from Lacerba had been used in collages by Serverini, Picasso, Soffici and Carrá.

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Pettoruti's inclusion in this work of a page with an article by Papini "Per la Guerra"--one of many Futurist appeals for intervention in the war--was to be Pettoruti's only known reference to war.[42] Carrá's collage, Circular Synthesis of Objects (Fig. 72) of 1914, was the obvious model for Pettoruti's The Siphon. Carrá's work includes a trompe-l'oeil visiting card, a device used by Picasso and Braque, while Pettoruti's included a fragment of a postcard view of the Florence cathedral and baptistery.

In 1916 Pettoruti painted La Voce (Fig. 73), a collage with a glass, bottle, pages from the journal La Voce and a vertically striped wall like the one in The Siphon. These and similar still-life objects appeared in Soffici's work after his trip to France. But unlike the latter's Watermelon, Fruit Bowl and Bottle of 1914 for example (Fig. 74) with its free substitution of solid for space, newspaper as part of a fruit bowl, Pettoruti rarely abandoned using these elements descriptively. Woodgrain or newspaper did not usually become part of a glass or bottle as it did in the work of Picasso, Soffici and other Cubists. Each object retained its own intrinsic identity. Another artist with this tendency was Juan Gris whom Pettoruti met later. But already then, Pettoruti did not want to "burn the museums" any more than Gris wanted to "break away from the Louvre."[43]

In 1915 Pettoruti subjected himself to a technical discipline designed to overcome his facility with the

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brush. He coated rough canvas board first with glue, then with a layer of plaster in order to keep the brush from "sliding over the surface," forcing him to adopt much smaller, more controlled brushstrokes than those to which he had been accustomed.[44] This approach may also have been suggested to him by the technique of fresco. From then on, he rejected all but the most carefully conceived methods. This technique is evident in Glass and Orange of 1915 (Fig. 75), a small work which also owes something to Cézanne. The glue and plaster base gave the work the appearance of texture which was infrequent in Pettoruti's work.[45]

In Pear, Bottle and Cup of 1916 (Fig. 76) the roughness apparent in Glass and Orange can still be noted but the composition had tightened into a more rigorously geometric design. In both works, Pettoruti simplified the light and dark areas into patterns of solid color with a more conceptual, less illusionistic space, which led to a progressive flattening in later compositions. By 1917 he applied his experience in still-life painting to figural compositions such as Woman in the Cafe (Fig. 77), an oil on canvas board. The woman's face, defined by a single eye and a profile within the oval of a full-face view, suggests that he may have been acquainted with Picasso's Harlequin and a Woman with Necklace painted in Rome in early 1917,[46] in which Picasso divided the face of the woman into a double profile and full-face view.

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Wartime

In early 1914 Curatella-Manes left for Paris. Pettoruti had considered doing the same when the war broke out. Many of his compatriots returned to Buenos Aires. His monthly allowance became irregular then stopped coming altogether. He lived frugally in the coming months and became a "wanderer." In August 1915 he set out with meager funds to visit the south, traveling to Pisa, Lucca, Siena, Assisi, Arezzo, Perugia, Rome, Naples, Pompey, Taormina and Palermo, Sicily.[47] On his way back he spent a month in Rome where he met Ballá, "the only painter among the Futurists" and Anton Giuglio Bragaglia, a photographer, editor of the Cronaca d'Attualitá and director of the Experimental Theater.[48]

He returned to Rome in October 1916 for an eight-month stay and associated with the Futurists of the Cronaca d'Attualitá attending their meetings at the Caffé Aragno and El Greco for polemical discussions with which he now felt very comfortable. He also met Diaghiliev who was working on Parade, Giorgio de Chirico who cared only about copying "the ancients, because he wanted to learn to paint like them," and Mario Broglio, who was to become editor of Valori Plastici in 1919.[49] During Pettoruti's Rome stay, Diaghiliev had organized an exhibition of Leonide Massine's collection of contemporary art which opened in January 1917. It included work by Picasso, Gris, Léger, Gleizes, Goncharova, Larionov as well as by

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the Futurists, Ballá, Depero, Carrá and Severini.[50] Although Pettoruti does not mention this exhibition in his autobiography, it is unlikely that it escaped his attention.

After his return to Florence he painted My Window in Florence (Fig. 78), a composition with sharply titled diagonal planes. These unstable planes were first evident in City Country (Fig. 70) and some diagonal projections are visible also in The Siphon (Fig. 71). But his is the first synthetic Cubist work in which an unstable space appears in a Cubist context. My Window in Florence is also one of the first works in which Pettoruti fused an interior and exterior space--a still life in front of a window looking out to a street. In this collage he substituted pages from La Nación and other Argentine publications for the Italian ones used in his previous collages. Osvaldo Nessi made analogies between this work and the syncopated rhythm of jazz. He also noted that Pettoruti had used the golden section here (Fig. 79) as he had in Harmony, Movement, Space (Fig. 65).[51] The window was to recur in many of Pettoruti's works of the twenties and after. He painted Friend in the Window (Fig. 80) the same year as My Window in Florence. A clearly identifiable hilly landscape appears for the first time in an analytic Cubist style and fuses with the fractured window frame and the man's head.[52]

Between 1916 and 1918 he painted a series of parks

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and gardens based on sketches drawn from nature. His work cannot be dated on the basis of its degree of abstraction or figuration since he painted in both modes throughout his European stay. Although he had previously painted abstract synthetic works on the theme of gardens, he also did figurative watercolors of landscapes, trees, and tunnels such as the undated The Tunnel and The Lone Oak (Figs. 81 and 82).[53] The presence of lakes and the Lombard landscape in these works indicate that they were painted after August 1917 when Pettoruti had moved to Milan. In 1918 he painted Village of Tremosine. Lago di Garda (Fig. 83) a completely figurative work while in 1917 he had painted at least two versions of Corner of a Garden (Fig. 84) in which the ground and trees are indicated by alternating flattened semi-abstract light and dark areas.

In Vallombrosa (Fig. 85)--the name of the town meaning "Shady Valley"--the park theme is as evident in the verticality of the light and dark patterns in this completely abstract work as it is in the more obvious The Park of 1916 (Fig. 86). In 1917 he introduced a figure into his garden and park theme in Little Girl in the Garden (Fig. 87) painted in Florence. This work with its fusion of dynamic straight and curved lines anticipates some of the figure compositions which were to dominate his later production. The spelling of his last name "Petto Ruti" in two parts visible in The Park, coincides with his meeting with Xul Solar whose interest in linguistics and

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word symbolism began at least in 1916.

Meeting with Xul Solar

Xul Solar had arrived in Florence in 1916. Pettoruti described him as "a very tall young man carrying a small suitcase" who walked resolutely up to him as he sat at a cafe terrace, and introduced himself as Alejandro Schulz Solari. He had just come form Paris where friends had given him Pettoruti's address. When he had not found him at home, he sought him at a cafe near the cathedral and although he had never seen Pettoruti before, he picked him out of the crowd because he "could not have been anyone else." During their first day's conversation, Pettoruti found him "filled with artistic, linguistic, philosophic, religious and esoteric preoccupations; everything interested him to the same degree: astronomy as well as submarine science, pictorial and musical techniques; our conversation jumped from one point to another."[54] According to Pettoruti, it was then that Schulz Solari changed his name to Xul Solar.[55] Although he did shorten his name, he did not adopt the spelling with an X until several years later. However, it is evident that they spoke of word symbolism. Pettoruti's own signature at this time as "Petto Ruti" appears to confirm this. Petto means "chest" in Italian and Ruti comes form "rutilante" which means "shining," conforming to the Futurist interest in light. Xul Solar's name

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change was for similar reasons.[56]

Pettoruti's developing interest in verticality, solidified light and structured compartmentalization of the pictorial surface found an appropriate subject in Xul Solar. Shortly after Xul's arrival, Pettoruti painted Luce Elevazione (Fig. 88). He chose that title because the painting did not "represent his features objectively but rather the impression received from knowing him, that of a being who rises above himself all light and spirit." Xul later described Pettoruti's portraits as composed of a "build-up of cubes, cylinders, planes: leading to the portrait of a soul."[57] When Pettoruti exhibited thirty-five works at the Galleria Gonnelli in Florence in July 1916 in his first individual exhibition in Italy, Luce Elevazione was reproduced on the back of the catalogue and Lights in the Landscape on the front.[58]

Luce Elevazione also anticipated Pettoruti's later use of the Cubist grid. Its composite of Futurist solidification of light and the Cubist build-up of planes recalls Delaunay's "prismatic" windows which Pettoruti would have known through Boccioni. The latter had carried on a polemic with Delaunay regarding the paternity of the term "simultaneity" in 1913. Their polemical statements were published in the December 1913 and January 1914 issues of Der Sturm, and Pettoruti could have seen copies of it through Boccioni. One finds a similar use of vertical planes and light in a 1920 work, Portrait of the

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Painter Xul Solar (Fig. 89). It is difficult to ascertain to what extent Xul Solar and Pettoruti influenced each other between 1916 and 1920. But they certainly were exposed to similar ideas and frequently discussed them.

The Post-War Work

Although the war had not been directly felt in Florence and Rome, Pettoruti had sold little during those years. In August 1917 he moved to Milan to seek a livelihood and took on a variety of jobs to survive. He sewed cookie bags for soldiers at the front, worked as a designer for the ballet of the Variety Theater in Milan as he had done earlier in Rome for Bragaglia's experimental Theater, painted portrait commissions and poster designs. Through Raffaello Giolli, the fine arts director of the newspaper La Sera, he received assignments to illustrate children's books and draw caricatures of contemporary events for Il Mondo, Satana and Giornalino della Domenica. He also began designing for the Casa Palmer, a famous fashion house that catered to the wives of the "pesciani" as the war profiteers were called.[60]

Within a few months he had earned enough through his odd jobs to move to larger quarters. He renewed his friendship with Marinetti now married to Benedetta, Carrá and others, and met several new artists and writers which included Piero Marussig, Umberto Notari and Arturo Martini. He joined the Famiglia Artistica group in Milan

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as associate painter in 1919 where he both exhibited and organized an exhibition. Interested in pursuing the disciplined direction of post-war Cubism, he worked in a synthetic Cubist style at a time when many Italian painters had returned to various forms of figuration.

Light, verticality and more lyric color characterized Pettoruti's compositions with figures of this period. In Lady with the Green Hat (Fig. 90) of 1919 painted in Milan, one finds the structured compartmentalization of Luce Elevazione with a similar focus on verticality. But the later work also incorporates the pinwheel which were previously evident only in his Futurist spiral compositions. Some of these elements are also present in another curious portrait known as Ultraist Portrait (Fig. 91) which was listed as Bildnis when it was exhibited at Der Sturm in Berlin in 1923. It was reproduced as Retrato Ultraísta in two Argentine journals, Revista de Arquitectura in December, and in La Época in October 1923 both in Buenos Aires. Its title was in all probability given to it in 1923 by an Argentine correspondent writing about it for the Argentine journals.[61]

Portraits continued to interest Pettoruti. He had begun a series of self-portraits in Florence in 1915 which culminated in Self-Portrait of 1918 (Fig. 92) painted in Milan. This work has parallels with Boccioni's paintings of heads. The concave and convex deformations linking

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volume and space recall Boccioni's sculpture Anti-Graceful as well as his painting of the same subject.[62] The spiraling movement that runs through Pettoruti's Self-Portrait recurs in his work of the twenties and thirties in some of the still-lifes. Yet with all its abstract qualities, the resemblance of the portrait to the model is unmistakable to judge from a 1917 drawing (Fig. 93) which may well have served as the initial model. Pettoruti usually based his Cubist paintings on figurative drawings. Spirals and curves also characterize his portrait of Maria Perenno of 1919 (Fig. 94). Perenno was a friend of Mussolini's and Pettoruti met her through Marinetti. She was also the subject of a painting by Xul Solar in 1921.[63]

From 1918 on, Pettoruti's work shows a gradual fusion of all his previous experience in painting. The Blue Grotto of Capri of 1918 (Fig. 95) painted in Milan, represented the culmination of several transitional versions of this subject begun in Florence, from studies made during his trip in 1915. when he had gone to Capri and visited the grotto, he recalled that "I became enamored of its strange submarine luminosity." In both the Florence and Milan versions "I went in conquest of the transposition of light, which would not be its own light nor the fugitive light of the day which penetrates its cavity, but pictorial light, the light of the painting."[64] He rendered the iridescent greens and blues in an eliptical arrangement of interpenetrating forms, fusing

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the spiraling and orbital movements of Harmony, Movement, Space (Fig. 65) with the bright light effects of Lights in the Landscape (Fig. 67). The use of an oval within the painting harks back to a 1917 still-life Composition (Fig. 96) in which he had enclosed the subject within an oval format on a rectangular canvas. The oval is of Cubist derivation. The scalloped vertical elements in Blue Grotto also appeared in Picasso's Man Leaning on a Table of 1916.[65] However the more distant elements of classicism also emerge in this work whose vaulted shape recalls medieval and Renaissance cloister architecture. In 1916 Carrá had written about Uccello and Giotto for La Voce,[66] and de Chirico among others had sought the classics. Blue Grotto may also owe something to Pettoruti's earlier abstract studies of Fra Angelico's San Marco Annunciation. Significantly he compared the grotto in Capri to a cathedral.[67]

The same year he painted a series of figure compositions, which included The Philosopher, The School Teacher and Dancers. The clearly defined simplified flat planes in these 1918 works show an affinity with some of Juan Gris' work. Gris was the artist Pettoruti most identified with when he met him in 1924. In The Philosopher (Fig. 97)[68] the chair, table and figure are schematized into a geometric network of flat planes. The checkered floor visible to the left was new in Pettoruti's work of 1918. Checkered patterns were used by Juan Gris

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in 1913, and Picasso incorporated diamond-shaped patterns in some of his paintings of harlequins. Pettoruti made use of this pattern many more times later to suggest patio floors or the costumes of harlequins, performers and musicians. According to Lía Pettoruti del Carril the subject of The Philosopher was inspired by Pettoruti's brother Eduardo who was "very studious" and a "dreamer" with an "encyclopedic mind."[69] But also poets and philosophers were frequently represented by the Italian Metaphysical painters as for instance in de Chirico's The Philosopher and the Poet of 1914.[70]

In The School Teacher (Fig. 98), a schoolhouse is visible in the background along with a checkered floor. The inclusion of a compass, the first and last letters of the alphabet, and the first and last numerical digits suggest an acquaintance with the symbolic function of letters and numbers and may have had their source in conversations with Xul Solar. But although Xul Solar had painted esoteric themes since 1914, sages, gurus, teachers surrounded by their corresponding attributes, were later themes in his work.[71] Both de Chirico and Carrá used letters and numbers in many of their works, for instance in the former's Evangelical Still-Life of 1916 which was reproduced in La Raccolta in Rome in July 1918.[72] But also Carrá had exhibited in Milan at the Galleria Chini in December 1917 and January 1918.

Although the simulated pattern of sequins in The

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Dancers (Fig. 99) was quite evidently based on Severini's dance paintings, Pettoruti was less concerned with "the spiraling shapes, and the beautiful contrasts of yellow and blue, that are intuitively felt one evening while living the movements of a girl dancing,"[73] as stated by Severini, than he was with obtaining movement through "the clash of perspectives." He stated that he had derived the idea for this subject from an old drawing inspired by watching Xul Solar dancing "a tango in one of those New Empire style mansions we used to frequent in Florence."[74]

In 1919 he painted Outskirts of Milan and The Lady with the Green Fan on canvases whose heights are twice their width. The unstable composition of Outskirts of Milan (Fig. 100) reproduces elements of My Window in Florence (Fig. 78). Fragmented dotted or grid patterns in the painting suggest a brick walk, a lawn, plants and flowers in somewhat the same manner as they had in the more abstract Synthesis of a Garden of 1915 (Fig. 101). Gris and Picasso had both utilized similar textural clues after 1912.

The Mature Work and Musicians

In 1920 Pettoruti painted The Thinker, The Blind Flutist and The Guitarist. In The Thinker, originally known as Pierrette (Fig. 102),[75] he substituted translucent planes of color for the more opaque color of his earlier paintings, creating a fugitive image with

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"violets, low-keyed reds, warm earth tones, sumptuous yellows and grays." Blue Grotto of Capri was the first painting to hint at this translucence. The cool clarity of his new work ran parallel to that of the French purists although Pettoruti was not partial to their art when he saw it. Soffici had preached similar esthetic principles in 1916 and 1917, stating that

> The fundamental character of true art is lucidity, the cold radiance of the diamond, the divine calm that it should have . . . in pure art all is resolved in a serene enjoyment and ecstatic contemplation, in a perfect equilibrium of the senses and the intelligence.[76]

The Blind Flutist and The Guitarist (Figs. 103 & 104) are the first musicians to appear in Pettoruti's work. He was probably acquainted with Gris' or Picasso's paintings of harlequins playing musical instruments.[77] While Pettoruti did not paint harlequins until 1926 in Buenos Aires, his inclusion of musicians may have been sparked by Diaghiliev's Russian Ballets. Blind musicians were also frequent Symbolist themes as for instance Picasso's The Old Guitarist of 1903. The dark glasses worn by Pettoruti's musician also recall de Chirico's Portrait of Guillaume Apollinaire of 1914 in which dark glasses appear on a marble head of Apollinaire.[78] In both The Blind Flutist and The Guitarist, the urban setting is indicated by houses visible in the background as they appear in some of de Chirico's paintings. Pettoruti's figures also share a sense of anonymity with de Chirico's

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and Carrá's manikins, but unlike them, he never abandoned the human figure, nor did he ever substitute mechanical objects for figures. The only "machines" in his art were the siphons. In his figure paintings, he applied the concept of movement in a subtle build-up of rhythms and counter-rhythms, particularly in The Guitarist in which these counter-rhythms echo those of the music. The musical or rhythmic aspect of Pettoruti's work was hinted at by Osvaldo Nessi in his discussion of My Window in Florence (Fig. 78).[79]

In 1919 Pettoruti had declined to exhibit in the Grande Esposizione Nazionale Futurista organized by Marinetti, because he did not want to be classified as a Futurist. Nor did he like the Metaphysical paintings included in the exhibition.[80] Instead he exhibited individually at the Lyceum in Milan and participated in a number of group exhibitions in Milan and Brescia.[81] In 1920 he participated in several other exhibitions in Milan, Florence, Rome and Venice. When he exhibited individually at the Galleria Arte of the Palazzo Cova, Margherita Sarfatti wrote the catalogue introduction. The same year he participated in the Venice Biennale where he saw firsthand the work of Cézanne, Redon, Maillol, Bonnard, Matisse, Archipenko, Larionov and Gontcharova in the French and Russian pavilions. The biennale had liberalized its stand on vanguard art as was evident in the Italian pavilion compared to previous years. But this

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liberalization did not extend to the Brera Biennale in Milan the same year where Pettoruti and several other artists were turned down. With the backing of the Famiglia Artistica, he and the others organized a counter-exhibition, I Rifiutati di Brera which created a polemic in the press when some writers denounced it. Margherita Sarfatti and Raffaello Giolli were among the few to defend it.[82]

By 1921 most critics favored a more figurative form of art, and the earlier avant-garde art forms were no longer in evidence. Futurism as a style was no more to be seen in spite of Marinetti's continuing efforts to revive its principles. Even Severini in Paris had just published a book, Du Cubisme au classicisme.[83] When Carrá was asked to write the catalogue introduction to Pettoruti's exhibition at the Famiglia Artistica in 1921 where twenty of his landscapes were shown, Carrá did so with some reservations. Several of the paintings in the exhibition were figurative but there were also some of the more abstract park and garden scenes. Carrá felt uncomfortable with these works "of rather decorative character." In a review of the exhibition he wrote that "one even glimpses the risk of falling into abstracting and vertiginous fantasies" although he attributed this "defect" to a transitory "laborious period that has since been overcome."[84] Nonetheless Pettoruti continued to have the support of some painters and a handful of die-hard

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Futurists. In 1922 he traveled to Rome with Marussig and exhibited paintings and prints at the Casa d'Arte where Bragaglia wrote an enthusiastic catalogue introduction.[85]

Munich and Berlin: Exhibition at Der Sturm

In the late winter of 1921 Pettoruti visited Munich where Xul Solar was living at the time. The mark had fallen sharply after the war and travel to Germany was cheap. He bought a great number of "precious" art books and saw an exhibition of Paul Klee's recent work at the Goltz Gallery where he also met the artist.[86] While in Germany, he saw Giorgione's Sleeping Venus in Dresden and an exhibition of Impressionist work in Hamburg.[87] Shortly after his return to Milan, early in 1922, Herwarth Walden, the director of the Der Sturm Gallery in Berlin, invited Pettoruti to exhibit there the following year. Der Sturm was one of few centers to continue showing pre-war avant-garde art at that time.[88] Pettoruti spent the summer of 1922 in Adwinkel, a small village in Tergensee near Munich, preparing for his forthcoming exhibition. In the fall, he went to Berlin where he saw the first Russian Art Exhibition of Constructive Art (1922) at the Van Diemen Gallery which much impressed him.[89]

In May 1923, thirty-five of his works were exhibited at Der Sturm in a room adjacent to an exhibition of the work of the Danish artist, Robert Storm-Peterson. A third room was taken up with a group exhibition of the

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work of Nell Walden, Archipenko, Gleizes, Kubin, Marcoussis, Moholy-Nagy, Schwitters, Jacques Villon, Zadkine and several Germans. Pettoruti sold three works.[90] His exhibition received considerable publicity in the Italian, German and Argentine press. Benedetta Marinetti praised his "Futurist" work of 1914 to 1918 exclusively in L'Impero in Rome, Sem Roam wrote a laudatory piece for the May issue of Der Sturm and Max Osborn praised him in Vossische Zeitung.[91] In Buenos Aires, the critic of La Razón, relying on illustrated newspaper reviews from abroad, called Pettoruti a "most interesting decorator" who had allowed himself to be influenced "by certain ultra-modern movements," and worked "within the futurist tendency." A later article in the same paper declared Pettoruti's work "of a new race with ancestral visions."[92]

Alberto Candioti, in his monograph on Pettoruti, wrote that "the works of this artist have the enchantment of light, a light that does not hurt the eyes, . . . like moonbeams; an incandescent light." Among the happiest manifestations of this art of "ultra-modern orientation," he wrote, was the portrait of "XUL SOL" which must be the work of "restless spirits." But he also expressed the wish that after Pettoruti's return to Argentina, he might spend a few years in the country's tropical and interior regions to fulfill his promise to "study our autochthonous art and undo the European influences which do not agree,

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nor fit our particular mentality."

Plans for the Return to Argentina

In February 1923, three months before the opening of the Der Sturn exhibition, an interview with Pettoruti by Julio de la Paz in Germany came out in the Buenos Aires paper Atlántida in which the author denounced the fact that Pettoruti's work had been rejected at the 1920 and 1921 National Salons in Buenos Aires when he was enjoying so much success in Europe. The interview also announced that Pettoruti would nonetheless return "to my country . . . in order to carry out my objective to develop what I believe should be an American decorative art."[94] This was the first mention of Pettoruti's intention to return to Argentina. He and Xul Solar had apparently spoken about it together. Candioti had also mentioned that "Pettoruti will exhibit these works [those shown at Der Sturm] in Buenos Aires and other capitals of America. . . . Very soon, Pettoruti and his friend the painter-decorator Xul Solar will undertake a trip to their country as well as to other countries of Latin America, prepared to launch a campaign among the young."[95]

Pettoruti's decision to return to Buenos Aires may originally have been sparked by his conversations with José Carlos Mariátegui, the Peruvian thinker and political activist whom Pettoruti met in Milan and visited at his villa in Frascati. In Berlin where Mariátegui was living

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at the time, Pettoruti had stayed at his home in 1923. Mariátegui had told him about "the struggles of our constrained America."[96] Oliverio Girondo had also visited Pettoruti in Milan after the war where he had gone as foreign correspondent for the Buenos Aires journal Caras y Caretas (Faces and Masks). Girondo had spoken to Pettoruti enthusiastically about Argentina as "the country of abundance, the marvelous El Dorado" with "Buenos Aires as the radiant city."[97] The idea of one's country "becomes exaggerated in exile," Pettoruti wrote later, "from Europe, I saw my nation as a real power, and endowed it with the cultural and spiritual attributes of the more advanced countries," especially in light of the fact that so many of his compatriots, intellectuals, scientists, politicians and artists had studied, visited, or spent many years in Europe. After all, Buenos Aires the "great capital" had important newspapers such as La Nación and La Prensa, which are widely distributed abroad. He had also heard about the avant-garde activities of Borges and González Lanuza who had "launched their 'mural' periodical Prisma and the review Proa in 1921." He had assumed that a parallel revolution was occurring in the arts.[98]

The way for his return had already been paved in 1921 through articles by fellow artists in Buenos Aires such as Ramón Gomez Cornet who accused the jury of the Salón Nacional of being "prematurely bald" for rejecting Pettoruti's work.[99] Similarly the critic of the La Plata

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newspaper El Argentino emphasized the fact that since Pettoruti had exhibited and been written about approvingly in Italian papers such as Il Popolo d'Italia, La Sera, Il Mondo and Le Arte, "such words indicate clearly the value of the works of our painter. . . .[100] These articles, many of which were illustrated, must have contributed to a rising tide of curiosity among Argentine critics and artists, particularly in light of Pettoruti's announced lofty reformist aspirations.

This curiosity must have been further sparked by an unusual letter Xul Solar had addressed to the editors of El Argentino in 1921 calling Pettoruti "a pioneer. . . . All branches of decorative art attract him," he wrote, "and it is desirable that more than anything, he fully dedicate himself to them. We lack such artists. . . . When this artist wishes to, without subjection to the architect of the great spaces to be decorated, he will be a liberator of artistic standards." He further mentioned "other witty new things" in "sculpture." Both Xul Solar and Pettoruti had studied decorative art and design. Pettoruti, whose wartime experience in all types of design was extensive, had exhibited puppets and projects for puppet shows as well as mosaics in an Exhibition of Decorative Art in Stockholm in 1921. Xul also wrote of Pettoruti's various projects in theater and costume design as corresponding "to a future scene" which is "more plastic and changing."[101] The

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language of Xul Solar's statement, a reflection of his own multiple esoteric interests as much as it was of Pettoruti's work, must have mystified the readers.

The Paris Interlude and Meeting with Juan Gris

After the closing of the Der Sturm exhibition, Pettoruti shipped the works directly to Buenos Aires from Berlin and returned to Milan. On December 31, 1923 he left for Paris, the "place of encounter" from which all "universal thought radiated." During his six-month stay there, he visited art schools including the Grande Chaumière, cathedrals both in and outside of Paris, met intellectuals and artists from several different groups including the Surrealists, and joined some of them at the Café de la Rotonde. He also frequented the circle of Paul Fort at the Closerie des Lilas.

But when he looked for Cubist work in the commercial galleries and museums, he found it to be almost nonexistent. The museums did not have any.[102] He sought it next in the studios of Gino Severini, Juan Gris and Picasso. But none of them were painting Cubist pictures at the time. With Juan Gris, Pettoruti saw an exhibition of works by Picasso at Paul Rosenberg's which were all figurative and included "several portraits of Olga, his wife." When he went to Picasso's studio, the latter "evaded" questions about Cubism and showed him his recent work. He was then painting harlequins, massive figure

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compositions and still-lifes in front of windows.[103] In Severini's studio he saw a large figurative canvas of "pierrots playing cards" on which he was working at the time.[104] In Juan Gris' studio he saw "some thirty small canvases" none of which were Cubist, but rather fairly figurative with "only slight deformations." Nonetheless Pettoruti could identify with Gris' "geometric rigor" and "rational light overflowing with poetry, order and lyricism. His was the work of a thinking mind and a refined sensibility." Pettoruti also liked Gris' "extremely delicate" gray tonalities.[105] He was responding to the Platonic aspects of Gris' work[106] which were to become so much a part of his own.

In Paris, he also associated with the Argentine group and renewed his friendship with Curatella-Manes who was then studying with André Lhote and had since married Germaine Derbecq, a French painter and critic. In the spring of 1924 Bragaglia and Marinetti visited Paris, the latter to lecture on "Il futurismo mondiale" at the Sorbonne.[107] During his stay, Marinetti introduced Pettoruti to Léonce Rosenberg, in whose gallery of l'Effort Moderne, he saw analytic Cubist work which he had not been able to find elsewhere. In turn, after seeing his paintings, Rosenberg offered to become his dealer. Although Pettoruti was very interested, his wished to postpone this possibility for six months as he planned a short trip back to Buenos Aires in order to exhibit his

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European production there. After eleven years abroad he had wanted to resume contact with his native country. Léonce Rosenberg warned him against such a move calling it a waste of time and money. Just the previous year he had exhibited in New York a "magnificent" selection of modern works none of which sold, and when the press paid the exhibition any attention at all, it was to liquidate the works "with one stroke of the pen." If this happened in New York, what might await Pettoruti in Buenos Aires.[108] But Pettoruti with characteristic stubbornness, stood firm. He regarded Rosenberg's warnings as expressing a typically European attitude with its "supine ignorance of the realities of our America." Rosenberg had typically underestimated Argentina's capacity for progress.[109]

Pettoruti returned to Milan in June to pack two crates of paintings and drawings and a trunk with his belongings. He left these in storage with the Argentine consul in Milan with the intention of reclaiming them when he returned from Argentina. But he did not return for many years and his belongings were lost and never found again.[110] He sailed from Hamburg together with his friend Xul Solar and arrived at the port of Buenos Aires on the 31st of July 1924, five months after the founding of Martín Fierro. Little did he suspect that his exhibition at the Witcomb Gallery three months later would unleash a scandal of such proportions that it would lead to violent arguments and fist fights, and that his planned "short"

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visit would extend to twenty-eight years. He was not to return to Europe until 1952, and not to Paris until 1953.

Buenos Aires and Argentine Art in 1924

In Buenos Aires, Alberto Prebisch, whom Pettoruti had already met in Paris that spring, was at the docks to meet them. Within three days Pettoruti had met the other "Martínfierristas" at the Cafe Richmond and found them in a "dissatisfied spiritual and polemical state" like himself. Wherever he went he was introduced as a "Futurist painter," which according to him in Argentina in 1924 was the equivalent of calling someone a "madman, fibber, freak, apocryphal one, jokster. . . .[111]

During his first weeks in Buenos Aires he visited museums, galleries, the national academy and artists' studios as was his custom everywhere. The artists he visited included Emilio Centurión, Jorge Larco, Ernesto de la Cárcova, Miguel Carlos Victorica, Cesaréo Bernaldo de Quirós, whom Pettoruti had met in Italy, Fray Guillermo Butler and the Spanish painter Julio Romero de Torres.[112] All of them were figurative painters. Two other artists he visited were Ramón Gomez Cornet and Antonio Sibellino, a sculptor whom he had known in Italy. These two artists were among the very few to champion his art. It became clear to Pettoruti that no one else in Buenos Aires painted anything like him.

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The Witcomb Exhibition

The first introduction to the public of Pettoruti's work came when he showed three paintings in the 1924 Salón Nacional at the insistence of Atalaya who intervened with the salon authorities. Ironically they were the same three paintings which had been turned down at a previous salon even though they were figurative.[113] Shortly after his return, Pettoruti had begun planning for an individual exhibition. Although the original plan had been for a two-man exhibition with Xul Solar, Pettoruti claimed that Xul could not make up his mind and kept putting it off but "for me time was pressing." He arranged for an individual exhibition at the Witcomb for October.[114] Rosendo Martínez, then the gallery's director, seemed more than happy to show the work of an artist who already had press notoriety. Ricardo Güiraldes had published his monograph on Pettoruti shortly after the artist's return, and Atalaya had emerged as a ready supporter of the new mode. Candioti on his return to Argentina right after the Der Sturm exhibition, had denounced Buenos Aires for liking the "eternal formula of ancient beauty" and announced that according to "the latest news from overseas, this will not continue. . . . Señor Emilio Pettoruti who, some years ago left for Italy in search of the classical lessons of its museums, and receiving instead, the revelation of the new verb," was going to change all that by bringing to Buenos Aires the

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"primigenial fruit" and the "first exhibition of Cubist paintings."[115]

The date of the opening was set, Alberto Prebisch wrote the catalogue introduction and the poet Pablo Rojas Paz was to inaugurate the exhibit with a short speech. As was the custom, Pettoruti paid a personal visit to President Marcelo T. de Alvear at the Casa Rosada and offered to escort him through the exhibition the morning before the opening, since he expected a large crowd in the afternoon. When they arrived, a crowd had already gathered outside the gallery. On seeing the works, Alvear wished Pettoruti luck and hoped he would not need government assistance that afternoon.[116]

Descriptions of the opening have a distinctly Futurist ring to them. When the gallery doors opened at five o'clock on October 13, the waiting crowd rushed in "like a tide" and within seconds the rooms overflowed and the crowds had invaded the upstairs gallery as well. Atalaya compared the opening to the first showing of Victor Hugo's play Hernani (in Paris in 1830)--as Apollinaire had done for the Section d'Or exhibition of 1912 in Paris. Atalaya described the opening as follows:

> It was as though Pettoruti's paintings were sending out yells, infernal flames, insults and blows, such was the turmoil they provoked. They [the paintings] impassioned the crowds to such an extent that they erupted in the rooms arguing and screaming. The fervor was so intense and the shock effect of Pettoruti's painting was so powerful, that it released all the pent-up indignation of our small artistic world.[117]

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In order to avoid damage to the paintings in the rising tide of violence, Rosendo Martínez improvised a protective "wall" of human volunteers and signaled with lights in order to herd the crowds out of the gallery. As they left, they turned back jeering, arguing, screaming and insulting their opponents as they disgorged on Florida Street. Pettoruti remained inside while in the street the arguments had turned into fist fights and blows with walking sticks.[118] From then on, Pettoruti's paintings had to be put under glass to protect them from vandalism. It was not until 1940 that it was considered safe to remove the glass.[119]

Despite this seemingly inauspicious start, the "Martínfierristas" and their friends celebrated the event with a banquet at the centrally located Sumus restaurant on the Plaza Once and ended at the nearby Cafe La Perla. The latter turned out to be the Saturday night meeting place of a conservative group representing the "pasatismo academico" who opposed the "Martínfierristas;" the evening ended with more scuffles and violence, and the police had to intervene.[120]

The exhibition that caused such a sensation comprised eighty-six oils, watercolors, drawings, studies for mosaics and for stained glass windows, designs for puppets and two mosaics, Spring and Meditation. The oils included Dancers, illustrated on the front page of the October issue of Martín Fierro, The Thinker identified as

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The Young Lady with the Purple Dress, Portrait of the Painter Xul Solar, The Blind Flutist, Outskirts of Milan listed as Landscape, and Lights in a Landscape retitled Landscape at Great Velocity, all of which were reproduced in Martín Fierro (Figs. 105, 106 & 121).

The press indulged in considerable sarcasm: "Thus an exhibition of Futurist, or Dadaist, or simply Cubist art has been inaugurated. . . . At the bottom of this aggressive seriousness, there is . . . a little humor."[122] Critics not only mocked the art, but also accused those who defended it of being pretentious. One reviewer wrote a parody of a supposed conversation between the experts and an uneducated visitor who could not understand that "Pettoruti was not for ordinary beings . . . Pettoruti goes further. Pettoruti is the artist of the future."[123] Another wrote that "the art of Pettoruti should neither be called Cubist nor Futurist. Rather it should be called extra-planetary art. . . ."[124]

Some of the press reactions had as much of a Futurist ring to them as did the tone of the exhibition opening. According to Pettoruti's own account, when an obese visitor to the gallery began laughing hysterically before his paintings, Pettoruti said to him, "You cannot imagine what a great pleasure it gives me to see that my paintings produce such gaiety. The greatest aspiration of an artist is precisely to give happiness to men."[125] In an analogous context, a review in Crítica entitled

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"Against Neurasthenia" accused Pettoruti facetiously of wanting to "interrupt the digestion of the unsuspecting bourgeois" but that on the contrary the exhibition could cure dyspepsia by causing such laughter that the writer wished to propose that the benefits of this exhibition as a cure for nervous disorders, be considered at the forthcoming Congreso Médico de Sevilla! In all the days of Argentine life "never have we celebrated such a hygienic, stomachic and reconstituting exhibition."[126]

If it was the first time Argentinians were seeing "Futurist" painting, writers at least had previously been familiar with Futurist literature and may well have known of Aldo Palazzeschi's 1913 manifesto "Il controdolore" in which laughter was seen as an antidote to the moroseness and self-indulgence of the older generation, and Boccioni had painted Laughter which suggests "a state of gaiety bordering on hilarity."[127] Although these events may have been disturbing to Pettoruti, one cannot entirely dismiss the possibility of his awareness of similarities between his experience and that of some of the Futurists some years earlier. In 1915 Ballá had written about his own career and of the corresponding experiences: "Critics dismayed--incomprehensibility--accusations--madness--bad faith . . . public curiosity--laughs, insults, derision, incredulity--violent arguments. . . ."[128] When Pettoruti exhibited sixteen small figurative landscapes the following year at Amigos del Arte (Fig. 107), Atalaya, who

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was supportive of Pettoruti on the whole, nonetheless noted that none of these paintings were of "that Cubist school" and wondered whether "a secret wish for scandal had induced this Platense painter to exhibit works of a more advanced tendency" at the Witcomb the previous year "and not these exhibited now."[129]

The reaction to Pettoruti's paintings had apparently neither surprised the "Martínfierristas" nor Xul Solar who wrote in a 1924 essay on Pettoruti for Martín Fierro, that "they[the paintings] would probably be hated by our public, when they are exhibited here," accused of being "incomprehensible" and "unbalanced" but that they are immediately accessible for "whomever wishes and knows how to see." He wrote somewhat idealistically of Pettoruti as having returned to his native land "betrayed by nostalgia" in order to struggle so that "the soul of the land [could] be more beautiful. . . . Because the wars of independence have still not ended for our America" and Pettoruti was one of its champions in art. Xul Solar referred to Pettoruti's paintings as "new unqualifiable glyphs, that are curiosities of a secret laboratory," which show to what extent he can go "when he unleashes his desire for fantasy through abstraction."[130] Xul Solar was not the only writer to explain Pettoruti's art in occult terms. The critic for La Acción wrote that "the young awaited the arrival of Pettoruti in order to become aware of his restless and innovating spirit and

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understand, from the first moment, as in a miraculous revelation, the occult virtues and esoteric mysteries of the new painting."[131]

With Pettoruti's presence in Buenos Aires, the polemics that existed between the Florida and the Boedo groups in literature spread to the visual arts. José Lozano Mouján remarked that "public opinion has split into two impassioned camps. One of these, the reactionary, has cried out against killing national art with extravagances; conversely the other, considers that our art is ailing and wants to inject it with 'personality.' All this raises the question of what we mean by national art." The majority of artists, he wrote, did not go along with the new movement. It considers that this art is "not serious," that it is "impersonal" and "easy of execution."[132]

The Ultra-Futurist Salon

A group of indignant painters who called themselves "La Chacota" (the joke) set out to prove they could outdo Pettoruti. They organized a counter-exhibition which they called "El Primer Salón Nacional Ultrafuturista" which opened on November 27 at the Van Riel Gallery, barely a month after Pettoruti's Witcomb exhibition. The participating artists, who had signed their works with pseudonyms, even issued a manifesto and got a speaker to give a lecture at the opening entitled "A

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New Metaphysics of Art." The speaker, known by the name of Señor Equis, and believed to be a certain Dr. Simon Sheimberg described as a "meta lawyer" and a professor, apparently faltered at the last minute and barely got through the introduction. The newspaper Atlántida announced in screaming headlines "the greatest demonstration of art of the century" in which " Pettoruti's blazing light" was "roundly eclipsed" (Fig. 108).[133]

The insult was compounded when the group had invited Pettoruti to participate. He accepted the challenge and contributed two small abstractions of his early Florentine period, Interior and San Giminiano, both of which ironically were stolen from the exhibition and were never found again. These works were reproduced in Atlántida next to one of the "Ultra-Futurist" works (Fig. 109) which Pettoruti described as "a nauseating mess signed Esquimal."[134] Atalaya reported that the exhibition abounded "in grotesque daubs . . . of a tastlessness that stood out all the more for having been concocted with the intention of wounding, mocking and jeering."[135] Most of the entries were recognizable figurative paintings which the artists had halved, quartered and turned upside down or on their sides. Pettoruti recognized the styles in many cases as coming from the studios of artists he had visited when he first returned to Buenos Aires.

The "Ultra-Futurist" exhibition stirred

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considerable indignation among Pettoruti's supporters in the aftermath of the Witcomb polemics. Leopoldo Marechal stated that he wrote his book of poems Días como flechas (Days Like Arrows) "in the heat of the battle."[136] Even critics who had opposed Pettoruti earlier were sufficiently angered to come around to his defense after that exhibition. One of them wrote that "beyond Futurism there is nothing." Pettoruti was a "Futurist, but 'Ultra-Futurism" was not even the void beyond it.[137]

Life in Argentina

A few days after the Witcomb opening, Pettoruti exhibited in La Plata in the editorial rooms of La Prensa and at the School of Law of the University of La Plata. Pedro Henríquez Ureña wrote the introduction to the La Prensa catalogue with the customary apology and statement about the work being disconcerting to "many spirits." People went out of curiosity to see these "exotic" works.[138] During the exhibition at the School of Law--there was no School of Art at the university at that time--Pettoruti lectured on Futurism followed by a counter-attack lecture by a professor José Gabriel. Gabriel described Futurism as evil because it was not an "expression of pure beauty."[139]

With the novelty of his return over, Pettoruti settled into a routine in the following months. He joined in the "Martínfierrista" reunions at Girondo's and Norah

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Lange's visited the Borgeses, the Güiraldes, Córdova Iturburu and his German wife who was a singer, and saw Xul Solar almost every day.[140] But as the days went by, his prospects for returning to Europe grew dimmer. Instead, he embarked on a program of lecturing on modern art, contributing articles to some journals and co-founding others. He wrote on Argentine as well as on Italian artists.[141]

He also resumed painting and began a series of portraits of members of his family to be incorporated into a large painting entitled My Family. He had originally planned the painting as a remembrance of his visit home at a time when he still expected to return to Europe within a short time. The project was never carried out. However, he painted several figurative portraits in preparation for the large work, which included his mother, his younger sister Carolita and a self-portrait. The original figurative portrait of Carolita (Fig. 110) painted in 1925, recalls Picasso's portraits of Olga which Pettoruti had seen in Paris, particularly one of 1923 (Fig. 111) which was also reproduced on the first page of the September 1925 issue of Martín Fierro. Pettoruti subsequently painted a Cubist version of Carolita based on the first portrait (Fig. 112) in which the original play of light and dark areas is converted into diagrammatic patterns of light and dark color planes.[142]

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In the coming years he used both synthetic and analytic Cubist elements in his paintings. In 1924 and 1925 he painted several small synthetic Cubist still-lifes in which he used sand and imitation wood grain. A rigorous reduction of elements is evident in Cherries and Small Goblet (Figs. 113 & 114) respectively of 1924 and 1925. The paintings' compositions are based on straight or fractured axes dividing the objects and surrounding space into dark and light halves. Small Goblet was the first of what was to be a series on goblets. Pettoruti explained that he had chosen the goblet not so much for its pleasing and adaptable shape, as for its universal symbolism and multiple functions. It could be found in "cabins" as well as "palaces," in "sanctuaries and cathedrals, in tombs accompanying the dead" and as urns to contain their remains. Osvaldo Nessi attributed Pettoruti's rather mystical interpretation of goblets to his association with Xul Solar.[143]

Windows, Shadows and Light

In 1924 he began a series of still-lifes set in front of windows, a theme he continued to paint through the forties. Shadows in the Window of 1925, also known as Interior (Fig. 115), is a composite of analytic and synthetic Cubist elements. It anticipated a later series of still-lifes Pettoruti entitled the "Argentine Suns." The subject in this painting is the light and shadow

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rather than the objects themselves. Like Soffici, who saw Cubism as a means to turn lights and shadows into "objects," Pettoruti sought

> Corporeal sun, taken as a personnage and trapped in an interior with objects, walls, doors, balconies; not only does it fill this interior with light and splendor transforming it completely, but also on contact with objects, it produces shadows, and in its double repercussion, luminous half-tones. Objects and bodies live in its splendor, its radiation as well as in its very colors.[144]

Pettoruti's interest in light and dark contrasts was analogous to those Juan Gris had developed after 1913, and especially during the war. Pettoruti's use of shadows as a kind of negative image in contrast to positive sunlight, corresponded to the wartime Platonic theories of some Cubists, but particularly Gris, for whom shadows may have expressed a "Platonic essence, removed from all the accidents of every day, perceptual reality."[145] Pettoruti had used such light and shadow contrasts in Shadows (Fig. 116), an abstract painting of 1916, an indication already then, of his own desire to go beyond illusory reality.

He had several possible sources for his interest in sunlight and theories of "corporeal sun." Maurice Denis with whom Curatella-Manes studied in Paris, had written in 1909 that

> I was satisfied with myself when I discovered that the sun, for example (sunny objects) could not be reproduced but had to be represented by something else than that which I was seeing--by color . . . .[146]

These comments were subsequently published in his book

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Theories in 1920, and this information was accessible to Pettoruti, at least in Paris. Pettoruti, whose own experiments with effects of sunlight on color were carried out in Florence probably in 1914 and 1915, later wrote:

> Logic came to tell me that if natural light is fitting to the forms given to us by nature, then real light turns out to be false when applied to the forms that we think. It was necessary therefore to find autonomous light for the autonomous entity: the light of the invented picture.[147]

On another occasion, Pettoruti explained:

> Ever since I was small I have found in the Sun and in light the greatest mysteries, and . . . , by a secret of their own, these elements exercized a strange attraction over me. When I was an adolescent I read in art books that mystery is in shadows; I mentally objected to the opinion of the writer who fell into such errors. I confirmed this to myself in Italy on seeing the works of the great masters of painting! It was in the light that the mystery lay in dazzling splendor. . . .[148]

The theme of still-lifes in windows may also have been suggested to Pettoruti by those of Juan Gris and Picasso. Pettoruti's painting is most analogous to Picasso's still-lifes painted in the summer of 1924 in Juan Les Pins[149] with their visible sky and passing clouds although they were painted after his departure. Picasso's painting, however, focused on the still-life composition itself whereas Pettoruti's objects--a goblet and a bottle on a table--are mere pretexts for shadows that act as foils to the solidified light. His placing of objects thus against the light in a still-life, also has Futurist precedents. Boccioni had painted figures in interiors against open windows, for instance Portrait of the

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Sculptor Brocchi of 1907.[150] The idea was, according to Marianne Martin, derived from Previati who had advocated the use of an open window which would bring out the contrast between the subdued local color of the room and the brilliant atmospheric color beyond it to heighten the luminous effect of a picture.[151]

Pettoruti's composition is set within, and against, a succession of framing devices tilted at an angle to deflect any possible reading of this picture as an illusion of reality. Xul Solar had also often painted borders over which the subjects of his paintings were allowed to overlap. Pettoruti's use of a window frame as an anchoring device may have been derived not from the Cubists, or Futurists, but from Botticelli's and Fra Filippo Lippi's portraits, particularly the latter's Madonna and Child with Two Angels in the Uffizi. Pettoruti's still-lifes in front of windows came to focus increasingly on the light itself as the main subject of the picture.

¡Mil Pesos de Futurismo!

"Futurism" was revived in 1926 when Marinetti came to Buenos Aires, and the Asociación Amigos del Arte together with members of Martín Fierro, arranged an exhibition of the work of the Buenos Aires vanguard in his honor. Pettoruti along with Xul Solar, Norah Borges, Alberto Prebisch, E.E. Vautier and Piero Illari were

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selected as representatives of this vanguard. Although Pettoruti rejected the Futurist label, he continued to be classified as one, and Marinetti's praise of his work in lectures delivered in Buenos Aires did not help to change that notion.

In August of the same year, a little more than a month after Marinetti's visit, Pettoruti exhibited at the Galería Fasce in Córdoba in the interior. It was the first exhibition of avant-garde art to be seen there and it generated a new wave of polemic in the press. Futurism was again the topic of mocking or skeptical articles. When Córdoba's governor, Dr. Ramón J. Cárcano, acquired Pettoruti's Dancers--the first of his paintings to receive official sanction in Argentina--[152] the local newspaper La Voz del Interior viewed the purchase as an act of snobbism, and under the headline "Mil pesos de futurismo" announced that "The Government had bought a thousand pesos of Futurism."[153] Nonetheless, in spite of the continuing scorn of the press, by 1926, Pettoruti had managed to acquire a handful of faithful patrons, Oliverio Girondo among them. In October 1926, when he exhibited sixty-nine works at Amigos del Arte, the exhibition sold out. Manuel Güiraldes alone bought twenty-two of his watercolors.[154]

Harlequins and Musicians

In 1926 Pettoruti painted his first harlequins. Young Harlequin, a small square oil on wood, represents

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the head of a boy wearing a mask.[155] This subject was of course already well-known to Pettoruti who had seen Juan Gris', Severini's and Picasso's versions of harlequins and Pierrots in Paris. However, the theme may have come to his attention at this time through Norah Borges and also probably through Marcelle Auclair's article on Picasso's drawings in Martín Fierro. Guillermo de Torre had made a gift to Norah Borges of Maurice Raynal's monograph, Picasso, published in 1922. Norah had been particularly struck by a figurative Pierrot of 1918 which was illustrated in this book and which she showed to her friends.[156] But also Marcelle Auclair had discussed harlequins and Pierrots in particular in her article on Picasso published in the December 1926 issue of Martín Fierro. The article was accompanied by illustrations of performers and a harlequin (Fig. 117). She explained that Picasso's "classical tendency" was also applied to these performers with the addition of a costume and a few simple lines. She wrote that he gave them a moral tone of extreme delicacy, for instance a thin and languid Pierrot would convey a "tone of melancholia which anyone could feel in a particular moment at dusk in an inhospitable alley."[157] Auclair interpreted each of these figures as the expression of a momentary mood. However according to Osvaldo Nessi, Pettoruti probably saw harlequins as symbols of freedom:

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> The harlequin . . . represents the ingenuous optimism of the artist who, from the point of view of his own world--which is harmony and song--projects as an eternal minstrel, [which is] the opposite pole to the principle of reality, as prevailing as it is alienating in the industrial society.

Nessi even suggested that Pettoruti found in this subject the strength to pursue a difficult career in a world that was increasingly repressive.[158]

In 1927 Pettoruti painted My Harlequin and in 1928, Harlequin (Figs. 118 & 119), two very similar figures constructed of translucent overlapping planes. Both play accordions and wear masks and both paintings are dominated by axes dividing a light from a dark half. In the first, the axis is continuous, in the second, broken. While they bring to mind Picasso's two versions of the Three Musicians of 1921, as do others of Pettoruti's paintings of this time, his emphasis on light and shadow and his build-up of the flat planes into three-dimensional space continue the direction begun in The Thinker and Portrait of the Painter Xul Solar. But he brought this form to maturity after his return to Buenos Aires when he began using the strong axial arrangement in still-life and figure compositions. The Harlequins permitted Pettoruti to continue using the human figure, and the masks gave them sufficient anonymity so as not to detract from the painting as a whole. Their character was always lyrical, never mechanical, and they are invariably musicians shown singing. Their identity as humans and not puppets or

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manikins, is asserted by their open mouths, painted as dark and light halves in a manner similar to the Cubists' bottle openings.

In 1927, Pettoruti also painted more popular themes with musicians, namely Song of the People and Quintet. In both paintings, he used types that were sufficiently universal so as to be representative of both Argentine minstrels and musicians in general. In Song of the People (Fig. 120), one recognizes the figure of The Guitarist of 1920 (Fig. 104) on the left, and similarly in Quintet, the figure on the left is derived from The Blind Flutist of 1920 (Fig. 103). In both Song of the People and Quintet (Fig. 121), one of the musicians plays an accordion, the principal instrument of the tango. Accordions were popular musical instruments in France, Italy and Russia as well, but they were not painted by Cubists as often as were flutes, mandolins, guitars and violins.[159] Pettoruti did not begin using accordions in his paintings until 1927, the same year Xul Solar took up "American" themes in his paintings. Appropriately, Song of the People was reproduced in the last issue of Martín Fierro on the same page as the homage to Ricardo Güiraldes following Güiraldes' death.[160]

In spite of the "Martínfierrista"'s Eurocentrism and apolitical stand, in 1926 and 1927, many of them came to focus more on local Argentine themes in their literature as well as in their art, while at the same

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time, disdaining folklorism. When Güiraldes published his Don Segundo Sombra, Leopoldo Marechal reviewed it for Martín Fierro. He warned against romanticizing the gaucho as had Leopoldo Lugones some years earlier, even though he acknowledged that Güiraldes' characters were "men of flesh and blood who meet their destiny with honesty.[161] Even more than the writers, Pettoruti sought to avoid explicit localisms. His musicians were symbols rather than specific characters and were inhabitants of a city, as indicated by the tall buildings visible in the background, not of some indigenous village. Although Pettoruti sought to find a form of expression suitable to his experience as an "American," he rejected the form adopted by the Mexican mural painters whose style he dismissed as derived from "a decadent Spanish painting, applied to historical, indigenous and revolutionary themes."[162]

The instruments played by the musicians in Quintet clearly identify the group as a tango quintet. The tango, as Argentina's most characteristic dance, was a frequent theme among "Martínfierrista" writers. Borges, among others, wrote poems about the "milonga," a local variation of the tango, and in early 1927, he published an article, "Origins of the Tango" in Martín Fierro[163] just before Pettoruti painted his first accordions. Seen superficially at least, the types in Quintet recall those in Figari's Cabaret (Fig. 122) although the styles are completely dissimilar, and unlike Figari, Pettoruti

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depicted his characters in a contemporary urban environment.

Pettoruti and Martín Fierro

Although the correspondences between the art of Pettoruti and the writings of the "Martínfierristas" are not as clear cut as they are with Figari's and Norah Borges' art, Pettoruti's painting nonetheless represented to many of them the equivalent of their own literary aspirations. Both Macedonio Fernandez's and Oliverio Girondo's literary non-conformism found a parallel in Pettoruti's paintings. Fernandez in literature fragmented texts by avoiding "page-by-page" continuity in order to break the reader's "bourgeois" reading habits.[164] Likewise, the fragmentation of Pettoruti's paintings made a literal and sequential reading of them difficult. Girondo's Twenty Poems to be Read on the Trolley were, like many of Pettoruti's earlier paintings, about cities, streets and places he had visited, especially those he had painted in Lombardy around the time Girondo had been there. More important, Pettoruti, like Girondo, did not break completely from the logic of recognizable subject matter and did not violate the nature of his subjects by giving them alien characteristics and textures any more than Girondo completely liberated words from the logical order within an intelligible sentence.

In the twenties the poets had destroyed rhyme but

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not syntax. Pettoruti broke with conventional space and illusionism but he respected the identity of his subjects. Yet by going beyond the mere repetition of illusory nature, he liberated painting from the limitations of Post-Impressionism, tempered by conscious reason,[165] as the writers had done by liberating poetry from turn-of-the-century modernism. But even more than a style, Pettoruti shared with Borges, Güiraldes, Marechal and especially Fernandez and Girondo, the combative tendencies that characterized Martín Fierro. Appropriately, the "Martínfierristas" dedicated an epitaph to Pettoruti:

> Here lies don Emilio
> Pettoruti, that joker
> Who betrayed Cubism,
> He died in the adjoining room
> After the exhibition.[166]

The only other Argentine representative of Cubism was the sculptor Pablo Curatella-Manes who maintained an association with the "Martínfierristas" from Paris.

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NOTES

[1]There is a considerable amount of literature on Pettoruti. The key sources for information here are his autobiography Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar, 1968), two monographs by Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), Pettoruti (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1980) the latter published posthumously, three works by Angel Osvaldo Nessi, El Atelier Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Dirección General de Cultura, 1962), Pettoruti, (La Plata-Buenos Aires: Instituto de Estudios Artísticos, 1962) with a formal analysis of some of Pettoruti's paintings, and Pettoruti from a series of short monographs published in 1980 by the Centro Editor de América Latina in Buenos Aires. In addition there are the volumes of press clippings which Pettoruti's sister Lía Pettoruti del Carril allowed me to xerox. When quoting from these clippings, the pages will not be indicated since, neither Pettoruti nor the family recorded page numbers. As of 1963 Osvaldo Nessi listed 257 newspaper articles on Pettoruti, 136 magazine articles, 76 periodical articles, 9 essays in bulletins, 29 essays in books, 11 monographs, 57 exhibition catalogues. Since then, there are many more. When quoting from Martín Fierro page numbers are given, and whenever else possible. The whereabouts of some of the works is not known since some are or have been in the collection of dealers, and have changed hands many times. While the family archives list what previous exhibitions they were in, they have not up-dated or recorded their present locations.

[2]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 55; Atalaya, "Salón de primavera", La Protesta (Suplemento semanal), Monday 20 October 1924.

[3]Augusto Gozalbo, "Pettoruti," La Acción, (Buenos Aires, 30 October 1924).

[4]Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar, 1968), p. 175.

[5]La Plata, sixty kilometers south east of Buenos Aires, was founded in 1882 by Dardo Rocha and by 1913 had a population of 10,000. See Córdova Ituburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1980), p. 18.

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[6]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 11. His father had established a successful business importing Italian wines and cooking oil and also had a tobacco factory.

[7]Ibid., pp. 15-17.

[8]Ibid., pp. 18-20.

[9]Ibid., p. 33.

[10]The other artists he met included Nicolás Lamanna, Miguel Angel Negri, José Luis Zorilla de San Martín and a singer Antonio Codegoni. He later met José León Pagano who was a painter and an art historian, Enrique Prins, Manuel Musto and Augusto Schiavoni. The Argentine painter Cesaréo Bernaldo de Quirós who specialized in scenes with gauchos, was living in Italy at the time in a "magnificent villa" in Ponte a Mensola on the way to Settignano from Florence, and Pettoruti visited him a number of times and sketched in his garden. See Un pintor, pp. 28-30 and 60-67.

[11]Ibid., p. 27.

[12]Ibid., p. 33. Pettoruti had read Ruskin on board ship but does not identify the book. Juan Bay believes it was The Stones of Venice. See Juan Bay, Emilio Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Edición Galería Bonino, 1951), p. 12.

[13]Ibid., p. 34. The September 15, 1913 issue Lacerba contained an article by Papini entitled "Franchezza con gli imbecili."

[14]Ibid., pp. 43 & 67. These were the "Maestri Moderni" series of illustrated monographs edited by Ardengo Soffici for the Libreria della Voce published in 1913 and 1914. Marianne W. Martin gives the list of titles published by the Libreria della Voce (Martin, Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915, [New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978: 196]). Pettoruti mentioned all these volumes except for the one on Picasso. He repeatedly denied having seen illustrations of Cubist art until much later. He wrote that he did not learn to "construct from the Cubists whom I did not know . . . but from the primitives and especially the cuatrocentistas. They were my real masters" (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 63).

[15]Ibid., p. 45. "Era tal la muchedumbre y el griterio allí dentro que decidí volver al día siguiente . . . . Fué para mi un choque enorme; piensese que venía de La Plata, una ciudad donde reinaba el claro de luna, ... Salí de la exposición con un dolor de

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cabeza espantoso y un trastorno espiritual imposible de traducir con palabras; era algo así como si me hubiesen revuelto por dentro. Acababa de cumplir 21 años y mi formación artística era nula--afortunadamente, pienso ahora--, es cierto, yo amaba los clásicos, pero no tenía prejuicios; y en favor de los modernos me hablaba una lógica."

[16]Ibid., 47. Ballá was in Rome and Severini in Paris. Pettoruti met them later.

[17]Ibid., p. 48.

[18]Ibid., p. 79. He also met Achille Lega, Ottone Rosai and Tulio Barbari. See also p. 47.

[19]Ibid., pp. 35-36.

[20]Ibid., pp. 38 & 53.

[21]Ibid., p. 40.

[22]Ibid., pp. 63-66. Besides the Ravenna mosaics he mentioned Giotto's fresco cycle in the Scrovegni chapel and also Verrocchio's Il Colleone and Donatello's Gattamelata.

[23]Ibid., p. 66. Spring was exhibited in the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires in 1914 and again in 1928 in the Exposición de Artes Industriales where it was awarded a gold medal. See also p. 209 in Un Pintor and Ralph Coudanne, "Lo que nunca se contó sobre 'el pintor más grande de América'," Mundo Argentino,(No. 2466, 4 June 1958, pp. 31-37), p. 34. Apparently already in 1918 Girondo bought work from Pettoruti. In a letter from Pettoruti in Milan to Girondo dated 5 November 1918, he thanks Girondo for his interest in his work and lists prices which Girondo had requested. Pettoruti listed six unfinished mosaics. A copy of this letter was obtained from the Librería El Colonial in Buenos Aires, November 1980.

[24] Pettoruti related how he had sought a particular shade of blue for the girl's clothing in Spring. He had sent a group of local boys out in search of the desired materials in the refuse in the outskirts of Florence for which he paid each one lira and carfare as had been his custom. After a vain search for that color, Pettoruti finally saw the color he wanted on a vase displayed in a shop window. When the shop keeper began wrapping it with great care, Pettoruti asked him to break it first. When the man did not understand the strange request, Pettoruti snatched it from him and smashed it

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against the showcase and left with the pieces much to the astonishment of the shop keeper and patrons (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 64-65).

[25]Ibid., p. 54. He admitted this after having disclaimed that his work of 1914 had anything to do with the "Futurist idea," see p. 51.

[26]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1980), p. 55. These were acquired by a Lausanne collector, Alberto Sartoris, Lutry, Switzerland.

[27]A tempera version of this work entitled Harmony was exhibited in 1914 in the Prima Esposizione Invernale Toscana in Florence at the Societá delle Belle Arti. Since Pettoruti often painted several versions of the same work, it is difficult to verify whether this tempera was the same painting he sent to the Section of Decorative Arts at the National Salon of 1916 in Buenos Aires about which he wrote:

> "Era la única sección en lá que podía esperar introducir un trabajo sin motivo visible--una tempera de grandes dimensiones 160 X 140 centímetros . . . , que representaba para mi aunque era totalmente abstracta las cuatro estaciones del año simbolizadas por coloraciones diferentes sobre ritmos de un dibujo unido. No quería dar a esa obra el titulo lógico afín de evitar que se buscara inutilmente el motivo, le dí el de Armonias ya empleado en otras ocasiones" (Un pintor: 106).

[28]Umbro Apollonio, ed. and intro., trans. by Robert Brain, R.W. Flint, J.C. Higgitt, Caroline Tisdall, Futurist Manifestos, (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), pp. 91-92. Carrá's "Plastic Planes as Spherical Expansions in Space" was published in Lacerba 15 March 1913.

[29]Ibid., pp. 92-94. Boccioni's "Plastic Dynamism 1913" appeared in Lacerba 15 December 1913. These ideas were most clearly reflected in Russolo's The Houses Continue in the Sky of 1913 with its funnel or vortex spiraling into the sky. See also Marianne W. Martin, Futurist Art and Theory, fig. 110.

[30]Illustrated in Martin, Fig. 195.

[31]Osvaldo Nessi, Pettoruti, (La Plata - Buenos Aires: Instituto de Estudios Artísticos, 1962), p. 1. See also Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 62. Monica Kupfer discusses this point in her unpublished paper "The Influence of the European Avant-Garde on Emilio Pettoruti's Still-Life

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Painting. Precursors to Cubism in Argentina," (Austin: University of Texas, 1984), p. 24, n. 45. The use of the golden section in France by some artists may date from the Section d'Or exhibition at La Boetie in 1912. Juan Gris and Jacques Villon were known to have used the golden section. Villon was included along with other Cubists in the Prima Esposizione Internazionale Bianco e Nero in Florence in 1914 in which Pettoruti also participated.

[32]Martin, pp. 191-192.

[33]Soffici's articles entitled "Cubismo e Oltre" were published in the January 15, February 1 and February 15 issues of Lacerba in 1913. In 1911 he had published an article "Picasso and Braque" in La Voce. See Ardengo Soffici, Ardengo Soffici. L'artista e lo scrittore nella cultura del 900, Poggio a Caiano, Villa Medicea, (Florence: Centro Di/edizioni, exhibition catalogue June 1 - 30, 1975), p. 18. The book was reprinted in 1914 as Cubismo e futurismo. See Martin, p. 192.

[34]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 82 & 266. This work was exhibited at the Gonnelli in 1916 and at Bragaglia's Casa d'Arte in Rome in 1922.

[35]See Martin, figs. 172 & 173. Martin suggests that Ballá's interest in light may have had its source in Previati's discussion and illustration of iridescent geometric color patterns seen when light traverses mica plates of pressed glass which had been heated and quickly chilled. This was recorded in Previati's I principii scentifici del divisionismo, (Martin, pp. 12 & 176). Interest in light may also have come from Delaunay's "prismatic window series" which were well-known throughout Germany in 1912 (Martin, p. 176). In 1917 Ballá made a sketch for Woodcutting which bears a remarkable resemblance to Pettoruti's Lights in the Landscape (see Apollonio, p. 137).

[36]See Martin, Figs. 89 7 111.

[37]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 93.

[38]Apollonio, pp. 123-124. Severini's "The Plastic Analogies of Dynamism--Futurist Manifesto" was written in September-October 1912.

[39]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 51. He does not mention what year he performed these experiments.

[40]Ibid., p. 66.

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[41]Pettoruti was the only Argentine artist at the time to include siphons, which were considered a form of "machine" in his painting. The machine esthetic was not evident in Argentine art. In literature it appeared briefly and died with Girondo's 1924 manifesto and could be found in a few poems by the "Martínfierristas," and in Alberto Prebisch's articles praising functionalism. When machines were incorporated into art they tended to be the fanciful ones of Surrealism and appear in some of Xul Solar's paintings of the twenties but especially the thirties.

[42]In May 22, 1915, Lacerba published its last issue declaring "Evviva la guerra!" and "abbiamo vinto." Copies of this issue were distributed in the streets when Italy entered the war on the side of France. In Soffici's collage of Lacerba he had also included the cover of his book Cubismo e oltre, (Soffici, p. 87) and Carrá painted a similar work Natura morta con sifone di selz sold to Diaghiliev and later in the Massine collection (Martin: 192).

[43]See Kupfer, p. 13. Pettoruti's statement that he "did not want to burn the museums" can be found in Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (1963), p. 62. Juan Gris' statement that "Mine is the method of old times, the method used by the old masters," was published in L'Esprit Nouveau in 1921, quoted in D.H. Kahnweiler, Juan Gris, His Life and Work, trans. by D. Cooper, (New York: Abrams, 1969), p. 193. Michael Brenson in a review of the Juan Gris retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in May 1984 observed that,

> "While Gris was very Parisian in his affection for the paraphernalia of cafe life--tables, chairs, glasses, bottles, siphons--he also brought to the subject matter and language of Cubism something very much his own. His approach to composition could be mathematical. His approach to still-life objects, including books and musical instruments, was consciously rooted in the traditions of still-life painting in France and Spain. Furthermore, while Picasso and Braque were comfortable with the Cubist tension between appearing and disappearing, Gris clung to the reality of things, protecting their texture and wholeness as best he could." [New York Times, 15 May 1984: 18].

[44]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 78.

[45]When Augusto Giacometti suggested to him that he paint with a palette knife, Pettoruti refused because he liked the frescoes of the quattrocentisti and found no "pasta" in their work (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 35).

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[46]Illustrated in the Museum of Modern Art exhibition catalogue Pablo Picasso, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1980), p. 206. This seems to be one of the first works in which Picasso divided the face into a double profile and full-face view. Picasso spent the months of January in Rome with Diaghiliev in 1917 and Pettoruti was there at the same time. The latter mentions meeting Diaghiliev but not Picasso (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 109).

[47]In Taormina, Palermo and Naples Pettoruti had made numerous sketches but lost the entire portfolio en route. See Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 72, 87-88, and 91-92.

[48]Among the people he met in Rome were Enrico Prampolini and his brother Vittorio Orazzi (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 96).

[49]Ibid., pp. 109-111.

[50]See De Chirico, exhibition catalogue, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982), p. 43.

[51]Nessi, Pettoruti, (1962), pp. 5-7. Nessi's study of Pettoruti's use of the golden section is analogous to John Camfield's study of Juan Gris' use of this harmonic proportion. See John Camfield's "Juan Gris and the Golden Section," Art Bulletin (March 1965), pp. 128-134. Pettoruti discusses this work in Un pintor, p. 105.

[52]Pettoruti claimed that he saw analytic Cubism for the first time in 1924 and had previously known it only through photographs. See Un pintor, p. 168.

[53]Carlo Carrá referred to these works in his introduction to Pettoruti's catalogue of the 1920 Milan exhibition at Famiglia Artistica as having been painted "a few years ago." These paintings were exhibited at Amigos Del Arte in Buenos Aires in 1925.

[54]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 100-101.

[55]Ibid., p. 102.

[56]It is significant that both Pettoruti's and Xul Solar's modifications in their names resulted in names meaning "light" or "sun." In an article "Palabras Xul" published in The Bulletin Board, (Buenos Aires August 1969), pp. 10-11, the writer noted that Xul was "lux" spelled backwards in Latin meaning light, and of course Solar or Sol is solar or sun. In light of the fact that

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both Marinetti and Ballá named their daughters Luce, it would seem logical that Pettoruti's signature in two parts was devised to correspond to this notion.

[57]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 103, and Xul Solar, "Pettoruti" Martín Fierro, (September-9 October 1924), pp. 1 & 7.

[58]Esposizione Emilio Pettoruti, (Florence: Galleria Gonelli, July 1916). Jorge Andelman archives, Buenos Aires. These works were classified as "Futurist" in the Italian press and found to be "rarefied" and not "vivifying" enough in a review in Il Nuovo Giornale, (Florence: 6 July 1016).

[59]Martin, p. 205.

[60]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 113, 116 and 124. "Pescicani" literally means sharks. See also Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (1963), p. 28. Pettoruti continued to design shop windows and sets for puppet shows after his return to Buenos Aires.

[61]The poor quality of this reproduction is due to the fact that its whereabouts is currently unknown and the illustration was made from a reproduction in Revista de Arquitectura, (December 1923). These works were all included in the Der Sturm exhibition in Berlin in 1923.

[62]See Martin, Fig. 123 as well as another work by Boccioni that is similar, Dynamism of a Woman in Apollonio, pl. III p. 36.

[63]"Conversando con un artista de vanguardia platense," El Argentino, (4 August, 1924) and interview with Lía Pettoruti del Carril, Buenos Aires, 1 November 1980. Xul Solar painted a small watercolor in 1921 representing Pettoruti waving to Maria Perenno.

[64]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 110. ". . . partí a la conquista de la transposición de la luz, que no sería su luz ni la fugitiva del día que penetra en la cavidad, sino la luz pictorica, la luz del cuadro."

[65]See The Museum of Modern Art exhibition catalogue, Picasso, p. 193.

[66]Carlo Carrá, "Paolo Uccello construttore," La Voce, (30 September 1916) and "Speaking of Giotto," La Voce, (31 March 1916). See The Museum of Modern Art exhibition catalog, De Chirico, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), p. 35. Carrá also wrote a book on Giotto published in 1920.

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[67]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 110.

[68]Exhibited at Bragaglia's Casa d'Arte in Rome in 1920 and at Witcomb in Buenos Aires in 1924.

[69]Interview with Lía Pettoruti del Carril, Buenos Aires, 1 November 1980.

[70]De Chirico, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), pl. 46, p. 165.

[71]See Chapter VI on Xul Solar.

[72]See De Chirico, exhibition catalogue, p. 44. This work was included in the June 1918 Mostra d'Arte Independente pro Croce Rossa at the Galleria dell'Epoca in Rome from May to June in 1918. The exhibition had included work by Carrá, Prampolini and Soffici.

[73]Gino Severini, "The Plastic Analogies of Dynamism - Futurist Manifesto 1913," in Apollonio, pp. 120 -121.

[74]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 121.

[75]This work now known as La Pensierosa, is in the collection of Natalia Kohen, Buenos Aires. The title translates more accurately as The Thoughtful One, but The Thinker is the more commonly used. In the Der Sturm catalogue of 1923 it was listed as Dame mit Lila Kleid. It was reproduced in Martín Fierro, (September-9 October 1924) as Pierette.

[76]Ardengo Soffici, "Principles of a Futurist Aesthetic," published as "Principii di una estetica futurista: rapporto fra arte e natura, l'arte e il sentimento," La Voce, (31 March 1916), pp. 140-141, quoted in De Chirico, p. 38.

[77]See James Thrall Soby, Juan Gris, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1958), illustration p. 86, Harlequin with a Guitar 1917.

[78]See De Chirico, p. 161, pl. 41 for this work.

[79]Nessi, Pettoruti, (1962), pp. 5-7.

[80]He wrote that Carrá exhibited two "pseudo-Metaphysical" canvases, and Russolo's work was "hard" and "without color," Un pintor, p. 131. See also p. 125.

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[81]These exhibitions included the 8º Salone Degli Aquarrelisti Lombardi, and Milan Vecchia e Nuova in Milan, (Un pintor: 127), La Esposizione de Arte in Brescia and the Esposizione Lombarda d'Arte Decorative in Milan in which he exhibited watercolor cartoons of mosaics and stained glass projects, fabric designs, dolls, puppets as well as small abstract paintings. The variety of media in which Pettoruti worked was listed in a review of the exhibition in Il Secolo, (20 May 1919).

[82]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 132. See also Lawrence Alloway, The Venice Biennale 1895-1968, (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, Ltd., 1968), pp. 94 and 106 for information on "Fascist Futurism" and the patterns of Italian participation in the Venice Biennales.

[83]Alloway, Venice Biennale, p. 106.

[84]Carlo Carrá, introduction, Emilio Pettoruti, (Milan: Famiglia Artistica, April 1921), and I.I.I. Rassegna Settinanale Illustrata della Produzione Italiana e dei Traffici del Meditterraneo d dall'Oriente, Milan, Prima Settimanale (V/18, May 1921). Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives. One reviewer wrote about this exhibition: "I did not ask him in what country he saw everything so, and with what telescope, "La Perseveranza di Domenica, (17 April 1921).

[85]Anton Bragaglia, exhibition catalogue, Pettoruti, Rome, Casa d'Arte, 1922. Pettoruti had apparently studied printing techniques and the exhibition included etchings and wood engravings along with drawings, temperas and oils. He had studied printing with Celestino Celestini but Pettoruti does not specify where, see Un pintor, p. 131.

[86]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 147. Klee began teaching at the Bauhaus in Weimar that year and maintained a place in Munich until he found a house in Weimar where he could move his family in the fall of 1921. See Diaries of Paul Klee 1889-1918, ed. and intro. by Félix Klee, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 416.

[87]The Impressionist exhibition may have been Die Neue Malerei which traveled to several cities in Germany between 1919 and 1921. See John Rewald's bibliography in A History of Impressionism, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961) and Post-Impressionism, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1962).

[88]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 148. Horacio Butler also mentions this in La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1966), p. 39.

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[89]Ibid., pp. 150 -151.

[90]Ibid., p. 155. Pettoruti's exhibition included Maria Perenno, Self-Portrait, Woman in the Cafe, San Giminiano, Woman with the Green Hat, The Thinker as Lady with the Lilac Dress, Portrait of the Painter Xul Sol (ar), The Tunnel, The Park, (See exhibition catalogue, Emilio Pettoruti / Buenos Aires, Robert Storm-Peterson / Kopenhagen, (Berlin: Der Sturm, May 1923). The work he sold to Nell Walden, not identified, was subsequently ordered burned along with other works in the Walden collection, by Hitler, probably in, or at the same time as, the Exhibition of Degenerate Art in 1937.

[91]Alberto M. Candioti, Pettoruti, (Berlin - Buenos Aires: Editorial Internacional Berlin - Buenos Aires, 1923), p. 10.

[92]"Exposición Pettoruti," La Razón, (25 April 1923) and "Pettoruti y el desconcertante futurismo," La Razón, (9 December 1923), Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives.

[93]Candioti, Pettoruti, p.10. Candioti italiziced or capitalized important names or passages of his essay.

[94]Julio de la Paz, "Argentinos en Berlín - El pintor Emilio Pettoruti," Atlántida, (Buenos Aires, 8 February 1923). Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives.

[95]Candioti, p. 11. According to the author the original plan was for other representatives of the vanguard movement, especially Germans, to accompany Pettoruti and Xul Solar to Buenos Aires and other Latin American centers: "Se disponen tambien a ir, otros representantes del movimiento de vanguardia Europea, principalmente Alemán."

[96]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 145-146. Ironically Mariátegui had opposed modern art in Peru finding it irrelevant to his country's social concerns.

[97]Ibid., p. 126. Girondo was also a collector of Pettoruti's work. See note 23 for a letter from Pettoruti to Girondo dated Milan 1918, thanking him for his interest in his work.

[98]Ibid., pp. 173-174.

[99]Ramón Gómez Cornet, "Pettoruti," Acción de Arte, (Buenos Aires, October 1921), quoted in Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (1963), p. 106. Gómez Cornet had just returned to Buenos Aires from Spain where he had held the post of

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Argentine chancellor. When he exhibited for the first time at the Salón Chandler in Buenos Aires in 1921, his own works had not been well received. They were a discrete blend of Expressionism, Fauvism and Cubism, but these tendencies appeared more in his vocabulary of subjects and patterns such as checkered patterns on a costume, than as a style. His work remained rather traditional through the twenties.

[100]Pettoruti exhibited in La Mostra del Paisaggio Italiano in Dardona and in the Prima Esposizione della Cittá di Roma. See "El pintor argentino Emilio Pettoruti," El Argentino, (La Plata, 17 September 1921), Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives.

[101]This was quoted as having been said by Xul Solar in the article "El pintor argentino Emilio Pettoruti," in El Argentino, see note 100.

[102]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 160-161. The Argentine painter Horacio Butler who was in Paris in 1922 records a similar experience in his autobiography, La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1966), p. 39.

[103]See Pablo Picasso exhibition catalogue, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1980), illustrations pp. 246-249.

[104]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 160-161.

[105]Ibid., pp. 163-164.

[106]Linda Dalrymple Henderson, The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 308.

[107]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 165. Marinetti's Sorbonne lecture was published in L'Impero in Rome, 20 May 1924, Lía Pettoruti del Carril archives.

[108]Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 169. It is difficult to confirm which paintings and in which New York gallery, but the Rosenberg stable in the twenties included Léger, Braque, Vlaminck, Derain, Gris, Picasso, M. Laurencin, Henri Laurens. See Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler with Francis Crémieux, My Galleries and Painters, trans. from French by Helen Weaver, intro. by John Russell, (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), pp. 68 and 73, Douglas Cooper, The Cubist Epoch, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971), p. 265 and the Museum of Modern Art exhibition catalogue, Art of the Twenties, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1979), p. 17. The latter lists an

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exhibition at the New Gallery on Madison Avenue in 1923 of French paintings that included Cézanne, Matisse and Derain. Milton Brown wrote that in the twenties in the United States avant-garde art continued to be mocked and criticized by the press and by American artists as "queer," "perverse," "feeble-minded," "insane" and "rubbish" (Milton Brown, American Painting, From the Armory Show to the Depression, paperback ed., [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970: 82]).

[109]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 174. In March, Pettoruti participated in the Exposicion d'Art Américain Latin at the Musée Galliera which also included Curatella-Manes, Figari and Xul Solar.

[110]Ibid., p. 172.

[111]Ibid., p. 175.

[112]Ibid., pp. 176-178. Emilio Centurión was a Neo-Romantic, Jorge Larco worked in the style of his friend the Spanish Julio Romero de Torres, Ernesto de la Cárcova painted social themes in a Spanish modernist style, Miguel Carlos Victorica painted in a loose coloristic style, Bernaldo de Quirós painted gauchos in a spanish modernist style and Fray Guillermo Butler was a pointillist who specialized in landscapes.

[113]Ibid., p. 184. These were early works, Las Amigas, A Street in Tremosine and Portrait. According to Pettoruti only two of them were exhibited because the third was not released from customs in time for inclusion. There is no indication of which was not in the exhibition. The catalogue listed all three. XIV Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes, (Buenos Aires: Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1924).

[114]Ibid., p. 178. This incident has not been clarified and the two artists' families' versions are at odds with one another. Xul Solar's widow and surviving friends claim that Pettoruti deceived Xul by eliminating him at the last minute from the exhibition plans presumably to insure his own position as the first to introduce vanguard art in Argentina (interview with Micaela de Schulz Solari, 12, November 1980). Pettoruti's sister, Lía Pettoruti del Carril on the other hand, states that his dealings were all in the open and above reproach, that the criticism was unfair and untrue, (Interview with Lía Pettoruti del Carril, 1 November 1980). Xul Solar did not paint much for almost a year from 1924 to 1925 although no mention is made of the incident by Xul Solar himself. The two artists continued to see each other almost daily (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 109), and there

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seemed to have been no cooling of their friendship at that time. Xul published an article on Pettoruti in the September-October issue of Martín Fierro although it is impossible to verify whether he wrote this article many months ahead of time.

[115]Candioti, "Pintores de Vanguardia. Emilio Petto" La Época, (Buenos Aires, 16 October 1923), and Un pintor, p. 196.

[116]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 186.

[117]Atalaya recorded this statement in 1931 in Alfar, (Montevideo, VII, 1931) quoted in Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (1963), pp. 81-82. In a 1924 article, Atalaya wrote that the noise at the exhibition opening was "deafening" and gives a similar account. See Atalaya, "Exposición Pettoruti," La Protesta (Suplemento Semanal), (Buenos Aires, Monday 3 November 1924). The press almost unanimously announced the opening of an exhibition of "Futurist" art.

[118]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 187. Besides the published accounts of the opening by others such as Córdova Iturburu's and Atalaya's, an interview with Lyres Giraldes who had been an employee and photographer at the Witcomb and was present at the opening, confirmed this story, (Interview with Lyres Giraldes, Buenos Aires, 15 October 1980). Giraldes also has one of the most complete collections of exhibition catalogs and documentation of the Witcomb Gallery exhibitions of the twenties in his apartment.

[119]Ibid., p. 202. Vandalism by irate visitors had a precedent in Italy when a Boccioni painting was damaged in similar circumstances. See Marianne W. Martin, Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915, p. 92.

[120]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 192.

[121]Sometimes Pettoruti retitled his paintings and drawings just to make them more understandable to the public or in order to discourage a literal interpretation of the subject. Thus Lights in a Landscape seemed less baffling with the title Landscape at Great Velocity.

[122]"Exposición Pettoruti," La Razón, (Buenos Aires: Monday 20 October 1924).

[123]"Emilio Pettoruti," El Pueblo, (Buenos Aires: 2 November 1924).

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[124]"En el Salón Witcomb se ha inaugurado una exposición de 'arte' cubista," La Unión, (Buenos Aires: 15 October 1924). The writer added as a subtitle: "All the failures of the annual Salon can become with impunity, Futurist in the manner of Emilio Pettoruti." ("Todos los fracasados del Salón Anual pueden ser con impunidad, futuristas a la manera de Emilio Pettoruti.").

[125]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 189. Pettoruti claimed that in the end the man bought a small work.

[126]"Contra la neurastenia," Crítica, (Buenos Aires: Thursday 23 October 1924).

[127]Martin, pp. 91-92, n. 1. Martin noted that "Laughter is an unexcelled critical tool and a weapon many more times effective than verbal attack." The Futurists had been praised by G. A. Borghese as "gli allegri poeti di Milano" in La Vita e il libro, Turin 1911. (Martin: 92, n. 1).

[128]Giacomo Ballá, "Fu Ballá - Ballá Futurista," Sala d'Arte Angelelli, Rome, December 1915, quoted in Apollonio, p. 206.

[129]Atalaya, "Emilio Pettoruti. - (Los Amigos del Arte)," La Protesta, (Buenos Aires, Monday 19 October 1925). In a review in Martín Fierro, Alberto Prebisch mentioned Solitary Oak, Tranquil Day and Street in Tremosine among the works exhibited (Alberto Prebisch, "Exposición Emilio Pettoruti," Martín Fierro, [14 November 1925: 3]).

[130]Xul Solar, "Pettoruti," Martín Fierro, (September-9 October 1924), p. 7. Reprinted in Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), p. 141. Marcelle Auclair had also compared the schematization of Picasso's drawings to Egyptian hieroglyphics ("Los dibujos de Pablo Picasso," Martín Fierro, [12 December 1926: 7]).

[131]"Pettoruti," La Acción, (Buenos Aires: 30 October 1924).

[132]José M. Lozano Mouján, "La exposición Pettoruti," Atlántida, (Buenos Aires: Thursday 23 October 1924). Lozano Mouján mentioned the names of some of the artists hostile to Pettoruti in a later review in Atlántida. They included Fernando Fader, Cesáreo Bernaldo de Quirós, Pedro Zonza Briano, Antonio Alice, Américo Panozzi, Benito Quinquela Martín, Gramajo Gutierrez, Luis Cordiviola, Jorge Bermudez most of whom favored social or traditional themes as the quintessence of a "national"

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art. See Lozano Mouján, "Temas del momento," Atlántida, (Buenos Aires: 6 November 1924). Another reviewer saw this split as revealing a "new generation" which still lacks a clear personal ideology and noted that the groups or circles frequently come together by chance and not by virtue of profound sentiments or collective objectives ("Vida leteraria," El Telégrafo, [Buenos Aires: 21 October 1924]).

[133]"La más estupenda demostración de arte del siglo," Atlántida, El Gran Rotativo, (Buenos Aires: 4 December 1924), p. 1. A long subtitle states that, "El primer Salón Naciónal Ultrafuturista de lo de Frans Van Riel es monstruosamente genial. Los pinceles estupendos de nuestros mejores maestros pictóricos se han dado cita para constituir un conjunto maravilloso de líneas, de colores y de formas." An article in the leftist periodical Los Pensadores, identified some of the artists as Centurión, de la Cárcova, Fioravanti, Larco ("El Salón de los Ultrafuturistas," Los Pensadores, [Buenos Aires: November 1924]).

[134]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 198.

[135]Atalaya, Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), p. 120. Originally published in La Protesta.

[136]Oscar Collazos, ed., Los vanguardismos en la América Latina, (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1970), p. 50.

[137]Juan José de Soiza Reilly, "Más allá del futurismo no hay nada . . . ," El Hogar, (Buenos Aires: 28 November 1924).

[138]"En los salones de "La Prensa" se inauguró ayer la exposición Pettoruti," La Prensa, (Buenos Aires 20 October 1924). See also "Esta tarde se inauguró el Salón Pettoruti," La Epoca, (Buenos Aires, 19 October 1924).

[139]"En la Exposición Petoruti [sic] el sábado será expresado un juicio adverso a la tendencia futurista," La Epoca, (Buenos Aires: 3 November 1924). Pettoruti's lecture was announced in July. See "un pintor hablará sobre futurismo en la Facultad de Derecho," El Argentino, (La Plata: 29 July 1924); see also Un pintor, pp. 193-194.

[140]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 206 & 209.

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[141]He contributed to La Crítica, La Prensa, Revista Oral, El Argentino, Signo, Boliche de Arte, as well as out of town journals, Clarín in Córdoba, and Índice in Bahía Blanca. See Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (1963), p. 84, and Un pintor, p. 197.

[142]This painting was acquired by the Museo Municipal Sivori, Buenos Aires in 1952 and was stolen in May 1960.

[143]Angel O. Nessi, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 4. There is no indication of when Pettoruti formulated his theory on the goblet's symbolism, since this information was written some years later. See also Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 222.

[144]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 266. Soffici had published his theories on lights and shadows in La Voce, XIII / 34, (24 August, 1911), pp. 636-637, quoted in Martin, p. 105, n. 2. In 1925 Pettoruti used a door instead of a window in The House of the Poet through which the "personnage" of the sun entered an interior space reminiscent of some of De Chirico's and Carrá's metaphysical interiors.

[145]Henderson, p. 308.

[146]Herschel B. Chipp, Theories of Modern Art, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 106.

[147]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 52. See also Rafael Squirru, "The Art of Emilio Pettoruti," Americas, (Washington: April 1972), pp. 25-30.

[148]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 265-266.

[149]See illustration in Pablo Picasso, exhibition catalogue, p. 149.

[150]See illustration in Martin, Fig. 25.

[151]Previati's book Principii scientifici del divisionismo, see Martin, pp. 12 and 65.

[152]The exhibition was reviewed in the Córdoba paper La Voz del Interior in an article entitled "Futurismo o snobismo," (Córdoba, Monday 23 August 1926. In June 1926 Futurism had received much publicity when Marinetti lectured in Córdoba among other cities. See "'Martín Fierro' y Marinetti," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 5. Dancers is now in the Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes in Córdoba. In buenos Aires, the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes did not acquire a work of

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Pettoruti's until 1935 when the Comisión Nacional reluctantly purchased Young Harlequin of 1926 under pressure and after considerable red tape (Pettoruti, Un pintor; 242-243). The painting was since de-accessioned and as of 1980, was in the collection of Jorge Andelman, Buenos Aires.

[153]"El gobierno ha comprado mil pesos de futurismo," La Voz del Interior, (Córdoba, Saturday 4 September 1926). Several other Córdoba papers published this information including El País in an article entitled "El gobierno compró 'Los Bailarines'," (4 September 1926) and Los Principios in an article entitled "El gobierno adquiere un cuadro de Pettoruti," (Saturday 4 September 1926).

[154]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 215. According to press reviews, a small watercolor Trees and Mountains was robbed (La Razón, Thursday 7 October 1926). A similar incident was reported in Córdoba when it was believed that a small painting had been stolen from the Galeria Fasce exhibition there; but on further investigation, they claimed that it had not, and believed it to be a publicity stunt ("Un robo simulado," La Tribuna, Córdoba, Wednesday 25 August 1926). It is difficult to confirm any of this since the Córdoba journalists were often mocking of Pettoruti's "Futurist" art. The robbery at Amigos del Arte in Buenos Aires however, was confirmed in several dailies.

[155]See note 152. Young Harlequin was acquired by the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in 1935.

[156]Interview with Norah Borges, Buenos Aires 26 October 1980. Guillermo de Torre traveled to Buenos Aires in 1927 and probably brought this book to Norah at the time. Pettoruti's first Harlequin compositions date from 1927. Young Harlequin was just a head.

[157]Marcelle Auclair, "los dibujos de Picasso," Martín Fierro, (12 December 1926), p. 7.

[158]Angel O. Nessi, Pettoruti (1980), p. 4.

[159]Léger painted Accordéon in 1926, and the Polish Cubist Henri Hayden is known to have incorporated an accordion in a painting of musicians. Léger's use of this instrument may have been in the context of his "machine esthetic" in contrast to the more humanoid shapes of string instruments.

[160]Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), p. 3.

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[161]Leopoldo Marechal, "El gaucho y la nueva literatura rioplatense," Martín Fierro, (5 October 1926), p. 8, quoted in Simon Maurice Berggrun, "The Journal Martín Fierro, A Critical Index," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1968), p. 225.

[162]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 203.

[163]Jorge Luis Borges, "Ascendencias del tango," Martín Fierro, (20 January 1927), p. 9.

[164]Naomi Lindstrom, Macedonio Fernandez, (Lincoln: Society of Spanish and Spanish-American Studies, 1981), pp. 40 & 65, n. 15.

[165]Córdova Ituburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1980), p. 93.

[166]L(eopoldo) M(arechal) and E(var) M(endez), Martín Fierro, (18 July 1925), p. 12. "Aquí yace don Emilio / Pettoruti, aquel burlón / Que hizo al cubismo traición./ Murió en la sala de auxilio / Después de la exposición."

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CHAPTER VII

PABLO CURATELLA-MANES: AN EXPATRIATE "VANGUARDISTA"

Curatella-Manes (1891-1962)[1] was one of the key figures championed by Martín Fierro and was acknowledged as the only other artist besides Pettoruti to have introduced Cubism in Argentina. Although he lived in Paris during the Martín Fierro years, according to Córdova Iturburu, he was "closely linked with the movement,"[2] not only as a sculptor whose work the journal defended, but also through his wife, the French painter and critic Germaine Derbecq who was a contributor to the journal. Martín Fierro was, in Córdova Iturburu's words, the only publication in the country to pay any attention to the "magnificently new work which this great artist of ours . . . was doing in Europe."[3]

When Curatella-Manes had his first exhibition of Cubist sculpture at the Witcomb in 1924--barely a month after Pettoruti's controversial exhibition in the same gallery--Martín Fierro gave him a double-page spread in its October-November issue.[4] But he had since 1912, also exhibited regularly in the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires and continued to do so until 1925.[5] Unlike Pettoruti who returned to Buenos Aires to confront a hostile public, Curatella-Manes wanted to be accepted, not rejected, by

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the art establishment, and rather than face the "general scorn" shown for his work, he remained in Paris until 1947 in the dual capacity of artist and diplomat. He did not return to live in Argentina until 1950.

Background

His early life and work showed parallels with Pettoruti's. Like the latter, he was from La Plata, worked in Florence and eventually adopted Cubist-related forms of expression. Both he and Pettoruti were concerned with form as much as with subject-matter. Unlike Figari, Xul Solar and Norah Borges for whom literary sources formed an integral part of the work, Curatella-Manes wished to express himself, "not with sentences, but with what constitutes my work."[6] However as an individual, he did not share Pettoruti's taste for polemic nor his talent for self-promotion. Possibly due to feelings of insecurity as an artist, he sought the guidance and advice of others for almost fifteen years, first in La Plata and Buenos Aires, then in Florence and Paris. In Europe he chose to study with the more traditional artists such as Aristide Maillol, Antoine Bourdelle, Maurice Denis and Paul Sérusier rather than with the Cubists until the twenties, when he joined André Lhote. Many of the earlier artists were already well-known in Argentina[7] since the 1910 Centennial exhibition. After 1920, the Cubist influence became increasingly apparent in his work,

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especially that of Alexander Archipenko, Henri Laurens and Jacques Lipchitz.

Before embarking for Europe in 1911, Curatella-Manes already had considerable artistic training behind him. He was barely fifteen when in 1905 he began working in the studio of the sculptor, Arturo Dresco in the old Bon Marché in Buenos Aires where he learned to draw from plaster models of antique sculpture. Dresco soon felt he had "nothing much to teach" him, and Curatella-Manes left to begin working at the Academy of Fine Arts under another academic sculptor, Lucio Corréa Morales who like Dresco, had studied in Florence (with Lucchesi), and in Argentina, was kept busy with official public monuments commemorating historical and traditional Argentine themes. But Curatella-Manes resisted the traditional theories taught at the academy--one of the few rebellious acts of his career--and was expelled. He continued however, to work in Corréa Morales' studio for a while assisting him in the completion of details for monumental commissions.[8]

In 1910 he sculpted a medal with an effigy of the Argentine politician and judge, Victorino de la Plaza who was to become president of Argentina from 1914 to 1916, immediately preceding Irigoyen. Curatella-Manes had it cast in gold at his family's expense and presented it to de la Plaza much to the latter's delight. Whatever the motivation for such a gift, he obtained a government grant to continue his studies as a result of it. On the advice

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of Arturo Dresco who had been appointed Argentine Vice-Consul in Florence in 1911, Curatella-Manes joined him there the same year even though he claimed to have gone "more by deference and curiosity than because of a particular need." In Florence he joined Dresco and his circle of Argentine artists, meeting regularly at the cafe on the Piazza San Gallo (today the Piazza della Libertá). When Pettoruti first met Curatella-Manes in Florence, he described him as "young, slight and vivacious, provided with an abundant head of black hair."[9]

The works done by Curatella-Manes at this time include The Family and Old Florentine of 1912, both cast in bronze (Figs. 123 & 124). It is evident that in these early works, he sought to combine the monumentality of the Renaissance with the plasticity of Rodin. The Family represents a worker bending over a baby in the mother's arms. Themes of workers and the lower classes were frequent in Argentina in the late nineteenth century especially in painting, as they had been in France. Curatella-Manes made other versions of the family theme with and without the man.[10]

When he first went to Florence, like Pettoruti, he had not heard of Cubism and Futurism. He wanted to see the great painters and sculptors of the Renaissance. He was impressed with the "balance capable of controlling all excesses" in the work of Piero della Francesca, and especially with the sculpture of Michelangelo. When he

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saw Michelangelo's unfinished slaves in the Accademia, he was very much moved by their "rebellion" and "torture," and by the artist's "architectonic preoccupation with bodies expressed with savage dynamism." Before the Medici tomb he experienced a sense of frustration, feeling that "after that there is nothing else for me to do but to abandon what I am doing and dedicate myself to something else . . . to create something completely different, since it is impossible to repeat what cannot be surpassed."[11]

In November 1913, Curatella-Manes saw the first futurist exhibition at the Galleria Gonnelli, read Boccioni's manifesto of Futurist sculpture, and decided at that time to "create with life and forget dead art." However, in spite of Svanascini's contention that after seeing Futurist art, Curatella-Manes learned to use "undulating planes,"[12] there is little indication that the full impact of this art affected his work until the twenties. Throughout the teens, he adhered to a static classicism. He considered that the breaking up and overlapping of Futurist forms in movement were no more "analytic than constructive," just a more expanded form of naturalism which he felt was already implicit in the work of Michelangelo.[13]

For a while in 1913 Curatella-Manes joined Pettoruti in his quest for new experiences feeling that he was "stifling in Italian museums." After an abortive project in ornamental composition with Augusto Giacometti

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at the Accademia Lungo il Mugnone and a short-lived period when he shared the cost of a model with Pettoruti and the sculptor Lamanna, in May he traveled with them to the "principal" Renaissance and medieval centers.[14] He also went to Rome and Milan on his own and traveled to other countries including England, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland and France. None of his biographers give the specific dates of these trips, but Raynal mentions them as occurring early, possibly in the first three years of his stay in Europe. In Dresden and Berlin, he saw the Impressionists and in London, "the Greeks,"[15] probably the Elgin marbles in the British Museum.

In 1914, just a few months before the outbreak of the war, he left Florence for Paris. According to Jorge Romero Brest, he began studying with Maillol and Bourdelle at that time.[16] But he seems not to have produced many works between 1913 and 1917. An undated plaster study of the figure of a woman (Fig. 125) appears to be a transitional work without the fluidity of his later female nudes and torsos. The idealized Botticellian proportions of this figure and Leonardesque face indicate its Italian Renaissance sources regardless of whether Curatella-Manes saw these in Florence or in the Louvre. But in Paris he was "surprised" to find other forms of art, very removed from the classical canons. He saw a whole range of art forms from prehistoric art through the "Egyptians, Cretans, Helenics, Hittites, Chaldeans, Etruscans and

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Italians" but also the "prestigious and heroic synthesis of African and pre-Columbian art." Raynal noted that what he saw in Paris was "more useful, closer to his own concerns of the moment" especially "primitive art in all its aspects."[17] However none of this art seems to have affected his work until after 1917.

He did not spend more than a few months in Paris on this occasion. With the outbreak of the war, he went back to Argentina where he remained until 1917. On his return to Europe that year he first went to Paris and studied sculpture with Maillol, and painting with Maurice Denis and Sérusier at the Académie Ranson. Shortly after, he traveled to Barcelona and Madrid where he joined the Argentine painters Alfredo Guttero, José Antonio Meredíz, Fray Guillermo Butler and Gavazzo Buchardo in organizing, and participating in, an exhibition of Argentine painting and sculpture. There is no information as to what he exhibited but Guillermo Butler was a Symbolist and Guttero exhibited a St. George and the Dragon and other work which was "noticeably symbolist" with accessory figures of "gothic" inspiration.[18] In 1917 Curatella-Manes was sculpting classical heads.

That year, he carved Boy from Flanders, Isis in marble, and Seated Woman in wood. Boy from Flanders (Fig. 126) shows a formality absent in his earlier work, a new symmetry "in the oval of the head." Svanascini described Isis (Fig. 127) as a "synthesis" with a "hieratic

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symmetry" which seeks "in a more precise manner a synthetic scheme of the head." He saw in it "a spirit of perfection" and a "cold ordering of values" particularly in the blank expression of the eyes and carefully chiseled mouth.[19] He attributed these characteristics to Curatella-Manes' association at the time with Bourdelle, Sérusier and Maurice Denis. Unquestionably Maillol's modern interpretation of the classical style also contributed to the formality of Isis. However, more likely this head's symmetry and frontality reflects a knowledge of Raymond Duchamp-Villon, particularly the latter's Head of Baudelaire of 1911.[20] The perfect oval of the head of Isis also suggests an acquaintance with Brancusi's Mlle. Pogany of 1913 and possibly of his Sleeping Muse of 1910. During the teens, Brancusi had sought classical perfection and a gradual simplification in his work,[21] and had used the oval in several works. These tendencies in modern sculpture could not have escaped Curatella-Manes' attention.

The Third Paris Period

In 1918 Curatella-Manes had gone back to Argentina for another two-year stay. In 1920 he returned to Paris, this time to settle for the following twenty-seven years. There he was associated with the Argentine community of artists which came to be known as the "grupo de Paris" as well as with European artists working in Paris at the

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time. He first moved into Modigliani's former studio in Montparnasse (Modigliani died in 1920). The following six years were to be his most prolific. Between 1920 and 1929, he participated regularly in the Paris Salons and he resumed work with Bourdelle until 1922.[22] But the latter in a repetition of Curatella-Manes' experience with Desco told him that "you have nothing more to learn from me, . . . unless you want to make nothing but Bourdelles."[23]

Although Curatella-Manes was still working with Bourdelle in 1920, after his return to Paris his work changed noticeably. A small terracotta figure of a woman entitled The Thinker (Fig. 128) exemplified some of the "architectonic schematization" preached by Bourdelle, but it also reflected an acquaintance with Picasso's analytic Cubist work as well as of Archipenko, Laurens and Lipchitz. According to Svanascini, The Thinker in particular represented a liberation for Curatella-Manes.[24] A comparison of this work with a female torso done the previous year (Fig. 129) confirms the rapidity with which the change took place from the naturalistic modeling of the latter to the block-like geometric composition of the former. In spite of its apparent massiveness it is relatively small. Most of Curatella-Manes' figures of this period were no more than sixteen-and-a-half inches tall. The Thinker was reproduced in Martín Fierro in 1924 as Seated Woman (Fig 154).[25]

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Svanascini noted the similarity of the pose of this piece with that of the figure of Lorenzo in Michelangelo's Medici tomb in Florence, but stylistically Duchamp-Villon's sculptured figures of 1910 come more readily to mind as does the work of Lipchitz. The block-like simplification of the pose and new angularity indicate a growing interest in Cubism. This is especially evident when compared to Lipchitz's Seated Bather of 1916 (Fig. 130). The similarity between the pose of the Curatella-Manes and Lipchitz figures seems hardly coincidental in the figures' contrapposto and especially in the way in which one foot in each figure rests on a support. Svanascini interpreted the undulating hair in The Thinker as a "dynamic" element taken from Futurism.[26] However, such characteristics were components of Léger's contemporary work. Curatella-Manes was to come into personal contact with Léger in the following months and was most probably already acquainted with his work at the time.

The same year he sculpted Three Bathers, a plaster relief (Fig. 131) in which Atalaya saw "the purest classicism, understood with supreme eurythmy" when it was shown in 1926 in Buenos Aires.[27] This piece manifests the composite influence of analytic Cubism--particularly that of Duchamp-Villon--and Bourdelle whose 1912 reliefs for the Théâtre des Champs Elysées (Fig. 156) had very much impressed Curatella-Manes when he saw them because of

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their "space and surface organized with clarity."[28] In Three Bathers as well as in other reliefs of the following year, Curatella-Manes adopted Bourdelle's sculptured frame to enclose the figure composition, allowing some of the contents to overlap the frame. But Three Bathers seems conceived as painting as much as it does as sculpture, and evokes in its angularity, the Demoiselles d'Avignon of Picasso. At the time Curatella-Manes no longer worked with Maurice Denis and Sérusier. Although according to Pettoruti's account, he did not attend André Lhote's classes until 1923, he was evidently already quite familiar with Lhote's work and theories[29] as well as with the work of most of the Cubist sculptors.

The Cubist Period

When Curatella-Manes sculpted the plaster figure Woman with a Thick Coat (Figs. 132 & 133), he had met the young French painter and critic Germaine Derbecq whom he married in 1922. This angular and massive work, in spite of its relatively small scale, showed a figure in a casual pose whose upper torso was set in sharp counterpoise with the lower portion of the figure, a characteristic of The Thinker as well. Although in his work of this time, he rejected "traditional art, sentimentality for images of past times and the disordered taste for accidental effects and old fashioned imitation," a statement that seems to paraphrase some of Boccioni's words in the Technical

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Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture, in Woman with a Thick Coat, Curatella-Manes made some concessions. The delicately chiseled features of the face contrasting with the angular simplifications of the massive coat, were said to be those of Germaine.[30]

This piece marks a transition between The Thinker and The Guitarist of 1921, the latter, Curatella-Manes' first outright Cubist work. That year, he had met Maurice Raynal and Juan Gris. Through them, he became associated with the circle of Léonce Rosenberg's gallery L'Effort Moderne and met Léger, Gleizes, Lipchitz, Lhote,[31] Le Corbusier and probably Archipenko and Zadkine. in 1919 Raynal had published as pamphlets two statements originally made in 1912 entitled "Quelques intentions du cubisme," and in 1920, Rosenberg published his pamphlet "Cubisme et tradition" in the Bulletin de L'Effort Moderne, supporting the classical trend in Cubism in which such qualities as "organization," "classification," and "science" were considered essential to "a classical age."[32] Curatella-Manes was probably familiar with these even before meeting the authors.

At the time, Curatella-Manes' classicism was apparently modified by his acquaintance with Lipchitz's near contemporary sculpture. The Guitarist, a bronze (Fig. 134), exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants in 1924, suggests that Curatella-Manes shared with Lipchitz an interest in Egyptian art and Greek proportions.[33] In

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Lipchitz's work, this aspect was evident in Seated Man with Guitar of 1918 (Fig. 135) with which Curatella-Manes's The Guitarist bears a striking resemblance.

The Guitarist was to be the first of several seated musicians completed between 1921 and 1922, just a year after Pettoruti had taken up the subject of musicians in Italy. This series included a bronze Accordionist (Fig. 136) and bronze as well as a plaster version of The Man with the Double-Bass (Fig. 137) both of 1922. All three pieces show varying degrees of simplification ranging from the relatively naturalistic The Man with the Double-Bass to the simple juxtaposition of convex and concave surfaces of The Guitarist. In the latter, Curatella-Manes organized the figure into contrapuntal angular relationships as though to convey the rhythm of the music. Svanascini wrote that by that time he began to "synthesize the human body and to value rhythms." Curatella-Manes said of his work of this period that "I am not seeking the dramatic, nor the psychological, much less the historical. My esthetic pleasure is limited to ordering the formal elements with marked rhythmic equilibrium, to the point of synthetic simplification,"[34] a characteristic also evident in Lipchitz's Seated Man with Guitar (Fig. 135).

Santa Teresita, Bather also known as La Mulata, and two reliefs, The Guitar and Creole Theme are also dated 1921. Although several works of this period

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parallel those of Lipchitz, Santa Teresita's pyramidal mass (Fig. 138) does not correspond to any of Lipchitz's work of that time. In 1929 the critic Paul Fierens noted this work's "unemphasized baroqueness" and said that this "very beautiful" piece was a maquette for a commission for a Buenos Aires chapel.[35] In this piece, Curatella-Manes appears to have integrated Cubist form with the simplified massing of Rodin's statue of Balzac. The bronze Bather (Fig. 139) variously dated 1921 and 1922, is closely related to Curatella-Manes' Reclining Nymph of 1922 to 1923 (Fig. 140) in the undulating treatment of the hair, towel and in the latter, the water along with the geometric simplification of the limbs. The rippling effect in both these works suggest the movement of water, but also their rather mechanical treatment of hair, towel and water bring Léger to mind and also evoke Brancusi's Endless Column in the accordion-like patterns present in both works. The original version of Brancusi's piece, a seven-foot high wooden structure was in Edward Steichen's garden in the outskirts of Paris[36] and could be seen. However, some of these elements may also have been derived from Bourdelle's Tragedy relief at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées (Fig. 156).

The Guitar and Creole Theme (Figs. 141 & 142) show similarities with Lipchitz's stone relief Still-Life with Musical Instruments of 1918 (Fig. 143) and, to a lesser extent, with his bronze-cast reliefs of 1922. Lipchitz

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had made relief sculpture primarily because at that time he was undergoing economic difficulties and needed to be sparing with materials. In order to resolve the problem of lighting and location, Lipchitz decided to place his reliefs on high pedestals and made them project from the background without a frame in order to make of them "total sculpture." An example of this is his Figure with Guitar of 1922 (Fig. 144).[37] Conversely, Curatella-Manes' reliefs retained their identities as reliefs to be set against a wall. The fact that he had placed The Guitar on a low pedestal did not alter its nature as relief rather than as sculpture in the round. The dynamic composition in this work is based on a diagonal grid like the one used by Gris in his 1911 and 1912 still-lifes, set within a polygonal frame whose base doubles as a tilted table. In this work, Curatella-Manes emphasized strong contrasts of light and shadow as had Lipchitz in Still-Life with Musical Instruments. Light played an important role in his work at this time. He stated that "the plastic subject-matter must be far more important than the anecdote it contains . . . by this I do not mean to say that art must belittle itself so as to become a mere consideration of geometrical problems; over all is the miracle of light." Lipchitz had also expressed an interest in light. He wrote that "the sculptor must use light to achieve his effects . . . whereas the painter is using a substitute, the color spectrum, the sculptor is

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using actual light and shadow, which can be more difficult to control."[38] But while Lipchitz was thinking in terms of sculpture, Curatella-Manes' statement does not apply specifically to sculpture. Light for him was not necessarily only a substitute for color but rather a special ingredient that affected all forms of art.

Creole Theme, a plaster relief known also in a terracotta version, may have been done a little before The Guitar. Its subject is clearly Argentinian. The dancing figure of a woman holding a gourd for drinking mate, is accompanied by a guitarist. The rural character of the scene is emphasized by the horse visible in the background and a mortar and pestle for grinding grain. This work is framed only on the top and bottom while the objects in the composition act to contain it on the sides. The detailed features of the faces, unusual even in Curatella-Manes few creole subjects, may have been done at about the same time as Woman with a Thick Coat, the only other work of this year to have such features. Svanascini compared Creole Theme and similar reliefs to Bourdelle's Théâtre des Champs Elysées reliefs (Fig. 156). However the absence of a full frame links it more to Lipchitz's bronze relief with pedestal, Figure with Guitar (Fig. 144).[39]

In the following years, Curatella-Manes divided his time between small massive figures and experiments with open forms and aerial sculpture. In the first category are The Cuirassier, a plaster of 1923 and the

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very similar bronze Dragon of 1924 (Figs. 145 & 146). Although horses were frequent subjects in Futurist and Expressionist art, and Duchamp-Villon had sculpted a Cubist Horse in 1914, medieval themes such as is implied in Dragon (St. George) and The Cuirassier were unusual among French artists at the time, but not among Argentinians. Alfredo Guttero with whom Curatella-Manes had exhibited in Madrid in 1917, had painted St. George and the Dragon[40] and continued to depict medieval and Renaissance subjects throughout the twenties as well as contemporary themes. In the second category, The Man with a Lasso of 1923 (Fig. 147) shows a loosening up of figural representation not evident in Lipchitz's open sculpture until 1925 as for instance in Man Leaning on Elbows. Lipchitz had referred to his own open work of this period as the "transparents."[41]

Aerial Sculpture

When Pettoruti arrived in Paris early in 1924, he found Curatella-Manes and his wife living in a studio with an "entrance through a big portal and a long corridor" where he had moved "the previous year."[42] By then his work already showed a marked liberation from the contained solidity of his earlier pieces. In 1923 he had executed a series of works which defied the laws of gravity: The Acrobats, The Fall of Icarus and Spatial Construction. Except for The Acrobats, Cubist form was no longer

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apparent. Instead, he incorporated elements of Futurist dynamism with organic shapes in an increasingly dematerialized expression. Some of these characteristics were already apparent in The Man with a Lasso, a theme which Svanascini saw as a means to "represent the flight of the rope . . . the thickness of a tree--around the figure,"[43] hence movement.

Both Raynal and Svanascini considered the 1923 bronze The Acrobats (Fig. 148) to be a "first state" after "other preparatory essays in the evolution of his aerial sculpture."[44] This piece was also intended to be seen from all sides as the viewer walks around it in contrast to the single viewing side characteristic of Curatella-Manes' earlier Cubist work. This factor undoubtedly contributes to its dynamic appearance. The piece was described in the journal Montparnasse in 1930 as representing a "powerful athlete" supporting a performer with one hand and in the other, holding a spinning pole, a "tour de force" which "flows through space." Raynal wrote that at this time Curatella-Manes had surrendered to the "plastic dream of a kind of conquest of the air, an ascension into light in order to rise to an exaltation of the image of life itself." He saw The Acrobats in particular as representing a "break with the works shown in the exhibitions of Buenos Aires, Florence, Rome, Venice and the Salon d'Automne" in Paris prior to that time.[45] Svanascini compared this piece to Rodin's representations

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of jugglers, particularly those of 1909, and Teriade praised it for its "curious aerial equilibrium." As was the case for other works, The Acrobats was executed in three different sizes ranging from sixteen-and-a-half inches to ten-and-a-half feet tall (Fig. 149).[46] The version known in Paris was the smallest (Fig. 148), corresponding to the relatively small scale of Curatella-Manes' other work of this period. This piece marks a transition from the massive play of concave and convex surfaces of The Guitarist and The Accordeonist, to the new-found weightlessness of The Fall of Icarus and Spatial Construction.

Curatella-Mane claimed that the greatest influence on him at this time came from watching Juan Gris in his studio cutting a figure out of a sheet of zinc and bending it into "a subject with the plastic qualities of forms in motion which he had imagined." According to Svanascini, Gris was working on the figure of a boxer. These were the metal cut-out figures Gris began in 1922 as designs for the Diaghiliev ballets. As a result of that experience, Curatella-Manes stated that "I came to see form in terms of profiles."[47] Lipchitz had experimented with similar ideas somewhat earlier as can be seen in Detachable Figure (Pierrot) of 1915 (Fig. 150), a work composed of flat elements.[48] For Curatella-Manes, this experience led him to think of his sculpture not as a frontal image with one principle viewing side, but as a form to be walked around,

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as is the case with The Acrobats, The Fall of Icarus and Spatial Construction. Another source for his aerial sculpture may have been Brancusi's forms in space suggesting flight, such as Bird in Space of 1919.

Spatial Construction and The Fall of Icarus (Figs. 151 & 152) are so similar that one may have been intended as a study for the other. Seen together, they appear as two views of the same work. Spatial Construction, seen reversed, is almost identical to The Fall of Icarus. The theme of the falling Icarus was used by the Symbolists. In Argentina the academic sculptor Hernán Gullén Ayerza had erected a monument in Buenos Aires commemorating the death of an Argentine aviator, Jorge Newbery in a plane crash in 1914, with a sculptural composition entitled The Fall of Icarus (Fig. 153). Similarly Curatella-Manes originally conceived of his Fall of Icarus as a monument for the same tomb. But the project was never carried out and the work remained in maquette form. The plaster version of it shows the falling figure reduced to a series of interwoven curving bands swirling downwards and "cutting through the air" in a spiraling motion.[49]

Spatial Construction, a bronze, stands on a high pedestal of the same material. The high pedestal used the same year by Lipchitz in some of his reliefs,[50] likewise functioned as an extension of the work. Earlier, Brancusi had also used the pedestal as an integral part of the work, for instance in his wood piece, Prodigal Son of 1915

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as well as in other later works.[51] The height of the pedestal in these particular works of Curatella-Manes' gives them the appearance of monuments and, as is the case with Brancusi's birds in space of 1912 and 1919, focus on vertical ascent.

An additional element however in these works is the strong new relationship between interior and exterior surfaces. If Futurist theories had ever affected his work, it was in these pieces. Boccioni, in his 1912 manifesto wrote:

> There can be no renewal in art unless its whole essence is brought up to date. This essence lies in the vision and the conception of lines and masses which form the internal arabesque . . . .
>
> We must take the object which we wish to create and begin with its central core. In this way we shall uncover new laws and new forms which link it invisibly but mathematically to an EXTERNAL PLASTIC INFINITY and to an INTERNAL PLASTIC INFINITY. This new art will then be a translation, in plaster, bronze, glass, wood or any other material.[52]

Ballá's bronze-cast open sculpture of Boccioni's Fist--Lines of Force of 1915 was certainly known to Curatella-Manes. A drawing of it was also reproduced later on the cover of an issue of Marinetti's post-war journal Il Futurismo. Rivista Sintetica.[53]

Curatella-Manes' new interest in aerial forms can also be attributed to Delaunay then living in Paris. Delaunay's concern with verticality and flight had of course become an integral component of Ultraism and by extension, of some "Martínfierrista" poetry. Besides

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Delaunay's aerial views of the Eiffel Tower, in the twenties he had again taken up the theme of sports begun in 1912 and 1913, in a series of dynamic paintings and drawings.[54] It is likely however that Curatella-Manes' new interpenetrations also had more immediate sources. At the time of the Constructive exhibition in Berlin in 1922, El Lissitsky who was there for the exhibition, edited a Constructivist magazine of the arts, Vestich, Object, Gegenstand in three languages including French, to which writers from other European countries had contributed. Both Léger and Le Corbusier were among the contributors and the magazine was known in Paris. The same year, a congress of Constructivists was held in Düsseldorf which received wide publicity. Alexandra Exter and Antoine Pevsner both moved to Paris in 1923 and were doing dynamic open sculpture at the time. Exter who had lived in Paris before, was a friend of Léger's.[55]

Unlike the Russian Constructivists, Curatella-Manes continued to work in the more traditional materials such as bronze, plaster and terracotta used by Rodin. Although he did not completely abandon direct carving in stone, he much preferred more yielding media like terracotta and plaster because

> In plaster I find the adventure of plenitude of form. I talk to plaster, I beat it, it appears completely living to me; almost hypnotized, I observe its bubbles, it is docile to my fingers which caress and transform it. Conversely, with stone or marble, I must submit myself and respect the grain until I feel it living.[56]

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Curatella-Manes proceeded by making "the first studies for a work in plastiline and small pieces of tin, the size of a hand, and later he fashioned them directly in plaster." Like Pettoruti, throughout his life he destroyed many of his works, but particularly the initial plastiline studies and pen and ink sketches.[57] Consequently, there is no trace of the process of making and developing of an idea for Curatella-Manes' work, just the perfected finished product.

The Buenos Aires Art Critics

It was these finished pieces, of his Cubist period, that the Argentine public saw at the Witcomb in October 1924. Although they had already seen a small number of individual pieces in previous Salons, it was the first time they saw Curatella-Manes' Cubist production as a whole. Whether or not this exhibition, coming just a few days after Pettoruti's notorious opening, was planned before or after the latter had made arrangements for his, it caught a public still in the throws of high-pitched emotions over Pettoruti's exhibition. Curatella-Manes had returned briefly to Argentina in 1924. According to Jorge Lopez Anaya, he brought to Florida Street the "revolution already announced by Pettoruti: Cubism."[58] But this visit and his presence in Buenos Aires are not recorded either in Martín Fierro nor in Pettoruti's autobiography. It is possible that he accompanied his sculpture to Buenos

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Aires and left before the opening of his exhibition. At any rate, the exhibition at the Witcomb was arranged through the intermediary of his brother Horacio, who was a painter and a photographer, and at the time, directed the photographic department of that gallery.[59] The works in the exhibition were those of 1917 to 1922, several of which were reproduced in Martín Fierro (Fig. 154). Most of the pieces shown, deviated little from reality except for their massive angularity and some of them qualified as "proto-Cubist" to use Lipchitz's term for his early work, rather than as fully developed Cubist works.[60] The works included Isis, Three Bathers, a wood carving entitled Seated Woman of 1917, the latter a relief of a female whose massive curves are cut off by a thick frame, and The Thinker identified in Martín Fierro as Seated Woman.[61] Spatial Construction and The Fall of Icarus are nowhere mentioned and were apparently not shown in Buenos Aires during the twenties.

In spite of the relatively tame character of the exhibition, it invited the "indifference of the public" and the "indignation of the critics" in what Alberto Prebisch described as a "network of absurd prejudices." Besides being accused of "deformations" and of a "disrespectful violation of the rules" by a public nurtured on "that watered-down 'good taste'," objections to Curatella-Manes' work ranged from its "lack of interior life," to accusations of being "deprived of human

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warmth."[62]

In his article Prebisch reinforced his own position as a staunch supporter of the artist by quoting André Lhote who had written about Curatella-Manes in positive terms in an article later reprinted in El Hogar (Buenos Aires): "Each one of these statues . . . is conceived under the geometric rhythm typical of architectonic creations."[63] Using the same Purist language as Lhote, Prebisch praised the "architectonic and constructive interpretation" of Curatella-Manes' human forms in contrast to the kind of "pictorial impression that is an unequivocal symptom of the decadence of the esthetic sense" in the work of so many of his contemporaries. Curatella-Manes had the ability to make of "visible nature . . . a simple pretext, modified and surpassed . . . to arrive at a system of pure forms, of an intrinsic and intense life." In a characteristic expression of the "Martínfierristas'" polemical spirit, Prebisch stated that the work needed "the consacration of general scorn in order to affirm its real value."[64]

This scorn was expressed again in 1925 when Curatella-Manes exhibited a piece made originally for the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs, at the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires. He had been commissioned by the French government to do a marble relief for the gardens of the Exposition Internationale which had taken place in July 1925 at the Grand Palais.

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Not only was Le Corbusier's Pavillon de L'Ésprit Nouveau with its sculpture by Lipchitz and Léger's painting Balustre included, so were the Russian constructivists Stenberg, Stepanova, Tatlin, Melnikov and Rodchenko; the latter two had contributed to the design and planning of the Russian Pavilion.[65] The fact that Curatella-Manes contributed to the exhibition as a French, rather than as an Argentine artist, may have been sparked by the international orientation of Léonce Rosenberg's circle, and Ozenfant's and Léger's rising objections to national and alphabetical classifications in the Salon des Indépendents.[66] Furthermore, such a compliment was returned when Bourdelle's monument to General Carlos de Alvear was unveiled in Buenos Aires the following year.

Curatella-Manes' contribution to the Exposition was not a dynamic aerial piece but a stylized shallow relief in the Purist tradition entitled La Douce France (Fig. 155) which paid homage to medieval France with its metaphorical figures of Guinevere and Lancelot. The figure of Guinevere symbolizing France, hovers protectively over the kneeling Lancelot. This work strongly recalls Bourdelle's 1912 relief Tragedy at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées (Fig. 156) even more than is the case with other works by Curatella-Manes, although it is closer in its static mechanical undulating shapes to Léger than to Bourdelle's flowing arabesques.

A plaster model one third the size of the original

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of La Douce France was to be Curatella-Manes' last contribution in 1925 to the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires for the next eight years. His participation in the 1925 Salon seems paradoxical considering that the same year, he was one of the signers of the announcement for the Salón de Arte Moderno published in Martín Fierro, which emphasized that the organizers accepted only artists who had been rejected by the Salón Nacional and not its "left-overs."[67]

The presence of this piece in the Salón Nacional was greeted with customary disrespect and criticism. Prebish noted that in France, Curatella-Manes had been awarded a silver medal for it and "the more advanced French critics had already informed us in frankly laudatory terms of the artistic value of this work by our compatriot, . . . [but] our critics, who reserve their greatest praise for mediocrities . . . disavowed the real merits of this bas-relief."[68] The plaster version, of the work was reproduced in Martín Fierro under the title Lancelot du Lac et la Reine Ginevre.[69]

Atalaya accused the Salon's jury of relegating the relief to a spot at the end of a dark corridor "to punish Curatella-Manes and make him repent" but he added, they hung it "in spite of themselves, at an advantageous height." This "penitent isolation" he wrote, turned out to be "to his advantage." As usual, Atalaya used the occasion for an attack on the institution and the public:

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"Many have laughed before Curatella-Manes' low relief," but who knows, "had they laughed less and thought a little more, whether they would have realized the extent of their own shortcomings." He wrote that the only reason the Salon did not reject "Lancelote y la Reina Genoveva" as he spelled the title, was because it had been exhibited in the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs and had been reproduced in the French journal L'Amour de l'Art in Paris.[70] Prebisch saw its "decorative" qualities as synonymous with art itself: "Would anyone dare refer to medieval sculpture in this manner? All great art has been in its turn decorative, for the single fact of being art."[71]

The Mid-Twenties: Dynamic and Free-Form Sculpture

In the mid twenties, Curatella-Manes produced some of his most dynamic aerial pieces--the descendants of Spatial Construction and The Fall of Icarus. In 1925 he sculpted The Dance (Fig. 157), and in 1926, Rugby (Fig. 158) and The Saint. In all three works, but particularly The Dance and Rugby, he explored surrounding space and movement. Although Archipenko had made some open form sculpture before the First World War, this type of organic open sculpture was not taken up by Lipchitz until the mid twenties. Lipchitz's Acrobat on a Ball of 1926 (Fig. 159) and Acrobat on a Horse of 1927 are the most like Curatella-Manes' works of this period. Lipchitz explained

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the change in his work and adoption of free open forms as related to the liberation brought on by Surrealism although he himself was not a Surrealist.[72] There is no specific explanation for why Curatella-Manes took up these forms at this time, but it may have been for similar reasons. Like Lipchitz and Archipenko, Curatella-Manes' subjects were performers or figures engaged in animated activity.

The Dance, a favorite theme in the twenties, expressed the "exaltation of rhythm" which Svanascini related to the movements of all the great dancers from "the unpredictable jump of Nijinsky to (Serge) Lifar, from the suggestions of Pavlova to the freedom of Isadora Duncan." Severini of course had painted dance pictures in 1912 and continued to use this subject considerably later.[73] Curatella-Manes' works of the mid twenties were by far the most abstract he had done up to then. Although one can detect suggestions of human figures in The Dance, its interpenetrating bands function like a line drawing, defining in the air the dynamic swirling movements of the dancers within a self-contained structure. These works represented for Curatella-Manes, as Lipchitz's did for him, a liberation from the confines of Cubism.

In Rugby Curatella-Manes developed the complexity of dynamism even further and conveyed the struggle and bodily encounter of the players with little or no suggestion of recognizable anatomical parts. Svanascini

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wrote of both The Dance and Rugby that "one should note that this organized chaos refers to a struggle that at no time conveys aggressiveness nor torture, writhing or sordidness, although it might bring to mind a certain unconditioned dramatic action." He considered the theme of sports in Curatella-Manes' work as an anticipation of what young Parisian artists would use as a "source of renewal" some time later. However, as noted earlier, Delaunay had depicted sporting events since 1912 such as The Cardiff Team (1912-1913) and returned to this subject later, notably in the twenties with a series of paintings and drawings of football players and runners.[74] Nonetheless, as a piece of sculpture, Curatella-Manes' Rugby was among some of his most original work of the twenties.

Svanascini and Brughetti both commented on the incorporation of "light" in Curatella-Manes' work of this period, particularly in Rugby. Svanascini described his impression when he saw this piece in front of the window of Curatella-Manes' studio "with the sun's rays reflecting off its unending curves . . . , I concluded that regardless of whether it was created intuitively or rationally, it was to justify the concretion of light." He saw in it "shimmering accents" which activated "the space between the plaster bands." Similarly Brughetti noted this piece's audacious formal solutions beneath "the marvel of light."[75] Curatella-Manes' interest in effects

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of light, which he began exploring in his Cubist work, paralleled that of Pettoruti in painting, and the use of plaster bands could conceivably be seen as a parallel to Xul Solar's color bands to define his subjects during his Munich period.

The Saint, a figure in plaster (Fig. 160), although different in subject, belongs to the open form work of 1926, and likewise implies movement. In the forties, it generated considerable poetic and exotic musing. The critic Pierre Guéguen saw it as a "tropical expressionism" and compared it to "a cactus with long thorny filaments."[76] Unlike the solidly massive Santa Teresita (Fig. 138), The Saint appears to rise weightlessly along a vertical axis from her earthly confines although the sculpture's open bands are contained within a general conical shape like that of Santa Teresita. There is no discussion of the specific meaning of his piece, but its rising form recalls Michelangelo's Rondanini Pietá in Milan, and at the same time it suggests the weightless state or ecstasy appropriate for a St. Theresa.

Curatella-Manes' work was conspicuously absent from the 1926 Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires. He was not included in the exhibition at Amigos del Arte during Marinetti's visit either. Marcel Frederic, noting the absence of Curatella-Manes work in the 1926 Salon wrote that the Salon entries were of a more traditional form.

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Even the "youngest" and the most "restless" of the participating artists remained faithful to "intentions nowhere near the concerns of the vanguard." At most there was a light degree of stylization with no major changes. The Salon prize went to Alfredo Bigatti for his marble sculpture Purity of a classical nude woman. Prebisch, in a review in the July 1926 issue of Martín Fierro, also bemoaned the absence of Curatella-Manes' work in the Amigos del Arte exhibition. However, four of his sculptures were included in the inaugural group exhibition at La Peña in June where Marinetti could see them. According to comtemporary critical accounts, the entries were of his Cubist period only[77] and did not include any of the aerial pieces.

Although by 1926, these works were familiar to the Buenos Aires public, critics still felt compelled to justify every sculptural deviation from ideal proportions in Curatella-Manes' work in esoteric terms. Pedro Blake explained that in spite of their "disproportionate appearance," these deviations had a "superior occult purpose" which "the uneducated eye rejected without understanding,"[78] in a statement recalling some of Xul Solar's wording in his 1924 article on Pettoruti for Martín Fierro.

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Artist and Diplomat

Due to depleted funds, in 1926 Curatella-Manes was obliged to accept a diplomatic post as Chancellor of the Argentine Embassy in Paris, a post he was to hold until 1947 when he went to Norway. At first he found it difficult to attend to his demanding diplomatic duties and continue his sculpture.[79] He produced little work between 1926 and 1928. But after the first two years he managed to find a balance between the two functions. In 1928 he produced Creole Idyll, a plaster composition (Fig. 161), and in 1929, The Three Graces (Fig. 162), a bronze which Brughetti believed to be an homage to Maillol and Despiau. Both of these works combine elements from Curatella-Manes' earlier solid figural style and the free-forms of his aerial sculpture. But they have none of the earlier Cubist angularity. Rather they are fluid and organic like some of Lipchitz's sculpture of the late twenties. In Creole Idyll, two figures one of which plays a guitar, are run together in a continuous play of curved facets. The normally convex shapes such as breasts and guitar are rendered as concave,[80] a device Curatella-Manes took from Cubism and which had been explored by Archipenko in his "concaves" for example in Standing Concave of 1925 (Fig. 163). The concavities serve to catch the light which animates the work. Although Curatella-Manes did very few creole themes, the 1928 work coincided with the other Argentinian artists' interest in local themes at this

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time. But it is difficult to confirm this point since Curatella-Manes was not in Buenos Aires at the time.[81]

The few works Curatella-Manes completed in the latter part of the decade were primarily on mythological or biblical themes. Between 1928 and 1930 he sculpted pieces composed of loose generalized organic forms such as The Three Graces and Annunciation as well as more angular figures such as Maternity and Pomona both of 1930. By the thirties, he synthesized the two approaches in an almost completely abstract expression. In Annunciation (Fig. 164), a high relief in plaster, the figure's identities are discernible only by their expressive poses and were written about by critics in the language of Surrealism. The angel leans towards a shrinking virgin in what Svanascini described as an "atmosphere of allegory, of ingenuous mystery, which emanate from the curious figures blended with the magic of the encounter."[82] Themes of human or animal encounters were also part of Lipchitz's work of the early thirties. Some of these were on themes of the old testament such as The Return of the Prodigal Son, David and Goliath, others expressed violent emotions such as The Embrace and The Stragulation. But characteristically, Curatella-Manes' encounters had none of the implied violence of Lipchitz's sculpture. Rather Curatella-Manes' Annunciation recalls such gothic representations as those on the Reims Cathedral as well as Rodin's small figure improvisations in plaster, terracotta

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and bronze of the eighteen eighties[83] which these 1930 pieces most resemble. During this period, his work combined Rodin's "Impressionist" treatment of matter with the open organic forms of Surrealism. His figures are simplified to a bare minimum with no visible features.

Maternity and Pomona both of 1930 (Figs. 165 & 166), represent a short-lived return to his Cubist style. But as Svanascini noted, in these figures he "loses the severity of the so-called Cubist epoch and seeks to pursue in a softer manner, the play of facets." Maternity representing an expectant mother carrying a child on her shoulder, has elements of his 1921 Bather (Fig. 139) on which it seems to be based. But in these later works, there are concessions to the yielding character of flesh. Pomona representing the goddess of fruit, similarly shows a plasticity absent in his Cubist work. At the same time, both subjects are related to those of Gleizes and Le Fauconnier, particularly the latter's painting Abondance of 1911-12. In these works, Curatella-Manes utilizes elements of his earlier Cubist work as a means to "return to la materia" which he apparently missed in the dynamic open pieces.[84] Although these were the last figures to be made in an angular formal style, he continued to use the female nude as a basis for a series of abstract torsos in the forties as well as the thirties. The human figures in general continued to serve Curatella-Manes as a source for loosely modeled abstract pieces in the thirties.

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Although Martín Fierro was no longer in operation after November 1927, Curatella-Manes continued to be in contact with writers and artists in Buenos Aires. In 1929 he participated in the Nuevo Salón exhibition in La Plata and Rosario organized by his friend Alfredo Guttero and in 1930, he did illustrations for Buenos Aires publications. In 1932 he took part in an exhibition commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of his natal city of La Plata.[85] But in the thirties and forties, his contact with Argentina was mainly in his role as a diplomat, and most of his artistic activities and exhibitions took place abroad. Yet Jorge Romero Brest noted that his reputation in Europe, where he spent so many years, never reached the stature of Lipchitz's, Archipenko's or Zadkine's. Nor did his work find its way into major European collections. Yet it was noticed by French critics who wrote about it enthusiastically, especially Maurice Raynal who became a close friend of the family. In 1948, Raynal published the first monograph to be written on Curatella-Manes, twenty-eight years after the publication of his book on Lipchitz.[86]

As a diplomat, Curatella-Manes had, according to the critic Léon Degand, inspired "a solid and sincere friendship" between France and Argentina in cultural relations.[87] He served in various diplomatic posts until 1958 when he retired from service and for the first time could devote himself entirely to his sculpture.[88] Yet in

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his last years, he was embittered by what he felt was a lack of recognition in his own country. When he did receive the sought after recognition of his countrymen, it did not come as an unmixed blessing. His seemingly privileged position as a diplomat had alienated many of his fellow sculptors who resented him for not helping them financially when they were abroad.[89] Nonetheless, Argentinians came to acknowledge him along with Pettoruti, as the only influence by an artist of an earlier generation besides the latter, on the rise of abstraction in the sixties. He did in the long run, achieve some degree of hard-earned "national glory" although at the cost of a bitter struggle.[90]

In the end, no one can deny that in the realm of sculpture, Curatella-Manes made one of the most important contributions to the renewal in the art of his country. The measure of this contribution was first recognized by the "Martínfierristas" who could proudly claim him as their own discovery.[91]

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NOTES

[1]There are three main biographies on Curatella-Manes: Maurice Raynal's, Pablo Curatella-Manes, (Oslo: Merkin Boktrykkeri Nyt, A.S., 1948) published in Oslo where Curatella-Manes was serving in 1948 as Argentine Consul; Osvaldo Svanascini's Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1961), published just after the artist's death and a year after Svanascini's monograph on Xul Solar; and Jorge Romero Brest's Curatella-Manes, (Buenos Aire: Editorial Buenos Aires, 1967). There are also numerous articles and catalogues essays published in Buenos Aires and Paris. Ones of these is Julio Payró's essay "Escultura moderna; Curatella-Manes y Sibellino" in Ars, (XIII, No. 61, 1953). Although Svanascini and Raynal offer some discussion of specific works, the information is far from complete, and in some cases, lacks chronological accuracy or specific data. Svanascini pointed out the problem of dating works by Curatella-Manes since he did not always sign or date his work and he could not always remember when he had first executed it. In some cases a work exists in several media such as plaster and bronze; in others, only in one of the other of these materials. Often the dates attributed to to works are those of their first showing in exhibitions. Svanascini has attempted to correct some of these dating errors and his dates are the most reliable. These problems of documentation have been compounded in recent years by the fact that since the death of Curatella-Manes' widow Germaine Derbecq in the mid seventies, the archives have been neglected and some of Curatella-Manes' work has been recast. In some cases the artist made a given work in two or three different scales ranging from sixteen-and-a-half inches to ten-and-a-half feet tall. Most of the known works are of relatively small scale. In the sixties, many key works went to the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes where they still are. Others are in gallery and private collections in Buenos Aires. Information was obtained from the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, the Vermeer Gallery, the collector George Helft, and prior to her death, Germaine Derbecq de Curatella-Manes in Buenos Aires in 1973.

[2]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aire: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), p. 56. See also Eduardo González Lanuza, Los Martínfierristas, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1961), p. 94 and Oliverio Girondo, El periódico Martín Fierro, (Buenos Aires: la dirección de Martín Fierro. Don Francisco A. Colombo, 1949), p. 31. González Lanuza specifically lists Figari, Xul Solar, Norah Borges, Curatella-Manes and Pettoruti as "Martínfierristas." Girondo lists the same

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artists but he also included Julio Castellanos, Marie Laurencin and Vlaminck using the term "Martínfierrista" more loosely. The artists he included either wrote for, or were written about in, Martín Fierro. The original list of members published in Martín Fierro in November 1924, did not include the names of either Curatella-Manes or Norah Borges, probably because neither artist was actively involved with the journal until about a year later, Curatella-Manes, by correspondence and through the editorial contributions by his wife, Germaine Derbecq (El director [Evar Mendez], "Quien es 'Martín Fierro'," Martín Fierro, [20 October-November 1924:9]). See also Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), 165-166.

[3]Córdova Iturburu, Revolución Martínfierrista, p.24.

[4]Alberto Prebisch, "Pablo Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, (October-20 November 1924), pp. 6-7. Curatella-Manes had apparently returned to Buenos Aires in 1924, but there is no indication that he was present for the exhibition. His presence in Buenos Aires is not documented either in Martín Fierro nor in Pettoruti's autobiography. Jorge Lopez Anaya stated that "Pablo Curatella-Manes, . . . in 1924 returned from Europe bringing to Florida Street, the revolution already announced by Pettoruti: Cubism" (Jorge Lopez Anaya, Argentina en el arte. Los comienzos de la escultura, [Buenos Aires: Series "Argentina en el Arte," Vol. I, No. 6, Viscontea Editora, S.A., 1966:96]).

[5]He participated in the Salons of 1912, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1920, 1923, 1924 and 1925. See José Léon Pagano, Historia del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: Edición de l'Amateur, 1944), p. 451; Osvaldo Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, p. 37; and the catalogues of the Salón Nacional numbers II, IV, V, VIII, X, XIII, XIV and XV. Through 1920, his entries were traditional, under the influence of the Florentines and Bourdelle and Maillol. After 1921 Cubist characteristics were evident showing stylistic links with several Paris-based sculptors but primarily Lipchitz, Laurens and Archipenko as in Woman with the Thick Coat and The Thinker shown in 1923. The marble head described as being shown in the Salon of 1920 was probably Isis of 1917 (Svanascini, Curatella-Manes: 30). Curatella-Manes did not exhibit anymore in the Salón Nacional between 1925 and 1933. In 1933, he was awarded second prize for his small terracotta relief Creole Theme of 1921 (José Léon Pagano, La Nación, [25 September 1933], quoted in Raynal, Pablo Curatella-Manes: 52).

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[6]Svanascini, p. 76.

[7]Romero Brest, Curatella-Manes, p. 12. Sculpture by Bourdelle and Despiau, drawings by Rodin and paintings by Maurice Denis were exhibited in Buenos Aires galleries regularly during the teens (Francisco A. Palomar, Primeros salones de arte en Buenos Aires, [Buenos Aires: Imprenta del Atlántico, sculptors as well including Sesostris Vitullo and Alfredo Bigatti. Prebisch wrote that "the art of Bourdelle was better understood here in its essence" than that of others (Alberto Prebisch, "Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes," Martín Fierro, [5 November 1926: 7]).

[8]For Dresco's background see Pagano, p. 429-430. See also Vicente Gesualdo, Ed., Enciclopedia del arte en América, 5 vols., (Buenos Aires: Bibliográfica Omeba, 1968), n.p. III, for biographical information on Corréa Morales. One of Corréa Morales' most famous monuments in Buenos Aires is La Cautiva (The Captive) of 1905 representing an Indian woman protectively shielding her two frightened children. See also Jorge Lopez Anaya, Argentina en el arte, Los comienzos de la escultura, p.81. Most of these sculptors of public monuments were strongly influenced by Rodin. See also Svanascini, p. 18 and Romero and Brest, p. 24.

[9]Romero Brest, p. 24; Svanascini, p. 21; Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1968), pp. 27-28 and 34-35. The sculptors he met included Lamanna, Donis, Zorilla de San Martín, Miguel Angel Negri, González Roberts, Amadeo.

[10]Svanascini, p. 25. Old Florentine was exhibited in the salon of 1912 in Buenos Aires. See also Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 28. Pettoruti refers to a group with the same title which he described as "life-size," and according to him, in progress at the time he saw it in 1913. He recounted how when Curatella-Manes showed it to Dresco, the latter advised him to eliminate the worker and leave the mother and child. When years later, he stumbled on this piece in La Plata, it had been altered according to Dresco's advice with the figure of the worker eliminated and the work retitled Woman with Child in her Arms. Since the 1912 group was documented and reproduced in Svanascini's photographic archives with three figures and not two, Pettoruti must have seen another version of the same theme. In Svanascini's archives, this group is dated 1912 but he mentions such a group, possibly another version, dated 1911.

[11]Svanascini, p. 22.

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[12]Raynal, p. 19; Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 35; Svanascini, p. 26. Raynal mistakenly dated the Futurist exhibition in Florence as having occurred in 1911, an error perpetuated in Svanascini.

[13]Raynal, p. 19.

[14]Ibid., 17; Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 42 & 60. See chapter VI on Pettoruti for details of this trip to Bologna, Padua, Venice, Verona, Vicenza, Siena, San Giminiano, Pisa, Ravenna. Curatella-Manes shared Pettoruti's enthusiasm for the Ravenna mosaics but there is no indication that he made any.

[15]Svanascini, pp. 26 & 28; Raynal, p. 9; Romero Brest, p. 24. Curatella-Manes seems to have traveled to the same places as Xul Solar probably at the same time, but there is no indication that they met at that time. If hey did, it would have been through Maurice Denis.

[16]Romero Brest situates this trip in 1913 (Romero Brest: 24) but Pettoruti's dating is much more reliable. Curatella-Manes' departure for Paris took place right after their trip through Italy in May 1914 (Pettoruti: 72). According to Pettoruti, Curatella-Manes studied with Bourdelle until 1922 and according to Romero Brest, he began studying with Maillol and Bourdelle in 1914. It appears that he worked with the latter on later occasions over a period of several years.

[17]Raynal, p. 21.

[18]Julio Payró, Alfredo Guttero, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Poseidón, 1943), p. 20. During his return trip to Argentina during the war, Curatella-Manes was active in his native town of La Plata where he founded the Salón de Otoño de La Plata in 1916 (Romero Brest: 24).

[19]Svanascini, p. 30. Isis was mistakenly identified as cast in bronze when it was reproduced in Martín Fierro (October-20 November 1924: 3).

[20]See Albert E. Elsen, Origins of Modern Sculpture: Pioneers and Premises, (New York: George Braziller, 1974), p. 46, Fig. 61.

[21]Elsen, p. 48.

[22]Romero Brest, p. 25. Romero Brest noted that Modigliani's old studio was subsequently converted into a movie house. During those years, Curatella-Manes participated in the Salons d'Automne, des Indépendants and des Tuileries.

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[23]Raynal, p. 28. Just when this occurred with Bourdelle is not confirmed in any source. One must assume that it was during the last months Curatella-Manes worked with him. See also Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 159 for a discussion of Curatella-Manes and Bourdelle.

[24]Svanascini, p. 37. Curatella-Manes had used the same title for an earlier head of a woman exhibited in the Salón Nacional in Buenos Aires in 1914. The Thinker, known in Spanish as La Pensativa, was reproduced in Martín Fierro as Seated Woman (Mujer Sentada) in the November 1924 issue (Prebisch, "Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, [October-20 November 1924:7]). The Spanish title of this work is very similar to Pettoruti's La Pensierosa, the latter known also as The Lady with the Lilac Dress and Pierrette. Their meaning in Spanish is the same. These titles were apparently given later to both the Pettoruti painting and the Curatella-Manes sculpture since both appeared originally with different titles.

[25]Prebisch, "Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, p. 7.

[26]Svanascini, pp. 36-38. Although Svanascini mentioned the fact that Curatella-Manes had met Laurens, Lipchitz and Gris at this time, he does not link their influence specifically with The Thinker (Svanascini:36).

[27]Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), "Artistas argentinos," La Protesta, (July 1926), quoted in Atalaya, Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), p. 225. This was a review of the exhibition at La Peña. This work was identified as a terracotta when it was reproduced in Martín Fierro, (October-20 November 1924: 1). Either there are two versions of it which is not uncommon in Curatella-Manes' work, or it is misidentified. This version is in plaster.

[28]Svanascini, p. 31. In 1957, Curatella-Manes made similar reliefs as those of Bourdelle at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées for the Téatro San Martín on Corrientes Street in Buenos Aires, finished in 1960 (Romero Brest: 29).

[29]Romero Brest, p. 25; Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 157-158.

[30]Raynal, p. 29. Svanascini refers to Woman with a Thick Coat, as "sentimentally linked with his wife" (Svanascini: 76). See Umbro Apollonio, ed., Futurist Manifestos, (New York: George Braziller, 1974), p. 51 for Boccioni's Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture.

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[31]Svanascini, p. 36; Raynal, p. 28. Raynal became a close friend of Curatella-Manes' and his family. When his first son Jorge was born in 1942, Mrs. Raynal became his godmother.

[32]Christopher Green, Léger and the Avant-Garde, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 194.

[33]Svanascini notes the connection between The Guitarist and the work of Lipchitz and Brancusi although he sees in Curatella-Manes' work an "incidental tie with sentiment" due to a lingering use of anecdote (Svanascini: 41, 45). See also Jacques Lipchitz with H.H. Arnason, My Life in Sculpture, (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), pp. 11, 45 & 51. Lipchitz mentioned several times his interest in Egyptian and Greek art.

[34]Svanascini, pp. 32 and 76.

[35]Paul Fierens, Journal des Débats, (Paris 10 May 1929), quoted in Raynal, p. 51. Fierens does not specify which chapel he is referring to nor to whether Curatella-Manes ever carried out the project. Svanascini referred to Bather as La Mulata (Svanascini: 46, 47).

[36]See Harold Osborne, ed., The Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century Art, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 75.

[37]Lipchitz, p. 73.

[38]Ibid., p. 53. Curatella-Manes' statement on light is undated. But there are several references to the importance of light in his work of the twenties including by Raynal and Svanascini. Curatella-Manes' statement was quoted in Romero Brest, p. 13. Raynal stated that the Acrobats was the first work in which light played an important role (Raynal: 38).

[39]Creole Theme, entitled Motivo criollo in Spanish, is discussed in Svanascini, p. 46. For the comparison to Bourdelle's reliefs at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, see Svanascini, p. 36.

[40]Payró Guttero, p. 20.

[41]Lipchitz, p. 80. Svanascini mentioned Duchamp-Villon's Cubist Horse of 1914 in relation to Curatella-Manes' work but does not make any specific comparison. See Svanascini, p. 41.

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[42]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 159. Curatella-Manes' biographers give his address at this period as Rue St. Gilles (Svanascini: 35), but the catalogue of the Exposition d'Art Américain Latin of March 1924 at the Museé Galliera in which he was included, lists his address as Boulevard Beaumarchais 74, see catalogue, p. 14.

[43]Svanascini, p. 52.

[44]Raynal p. 37; Svanascini, pp. 50-51. See also Osvaldo Svanascini, "Pablo Curatella-Manes," Arte argentino contemporáneo, ed. Gabriel Levinas, (Madrid: Unigraf, S.A., 1979F), p. 26.

[45]Raynal, p. 37. This work was written about by Geo Charles in Montparnasse in January 1930 and by Teriade in L'Intransigeant, (16 June 1930). Teriade's piece was published on the occasion of the First International Exhibition of Modern Sculpture at Bernheim Jeune which he had organized and in which Curatella-Manes participated, quoted in Raynal, p. 37.

[46]Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, p. 50. Teriade's comments were from 'Intransigeant, (16 June 1930). Teriade's piece was published on the occasion of the First International Exhibition of Modern Sculpture at Bernheim Jeune which he had organized and in which Curatella-Manes participated, quoted in Raynal,p. 37.

[47]Raynal, p. 29; Romero Brest, p. 29; Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, p. 36. Neither Svanascini, nor Romero Brest or Raynal give a specific date for when Curatella-Manes witnessed this event. They cite it in the same context as the listing of artists he met in Paris in 1921. Svanascini suggests that this experience was also the source for some of Curatella-Manes' earlier Cubist work, but this seems not to be the case. Lipchitz mentions Gris' metal cut-out figures for the Diaghiliev projects as occurring in 1922 (Lipchitz: 69). See also James Thrall Soby, Juan Gris, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1958), pp. 100-101, 109.

[48]Lipchitz, p. 29.

[49]See Pagano, Historia del arte argentino, p. 453 for a discussion of Hernán Gullén Ayerza's monument. In 1947, the French critic Pierre Guéguen described Curatella-Manes' Icarus as a "flore tourmentée, serpentine et crochue. Ses formes humaines sont une anatomie indienne vue par le sorcier de la tribu. Il ya a la un bel art, original et savoureux" (Art Présent, No.1 [Paris 1947] quoted in Raynal: 53). This review, written on the

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occasion of Curatella-Manes' participation in the exhibition "La Sculpture en France Depuis Rodin" at Maison de la Pensée Française, provides a demonstration of the misleading statements Europeans frequently wrote about Latin American art in the forties. Argentina and Uruguay have temperate climates, have minimal nomadic Indian populations but no great ancient cultures, and are no more exotic or tropical than New York or Washington.

[50]Lipchitz, p. 73.

[51]Brancusi used the pedestal as an integral part of the work in several pieces in 1915 and 1918. See Elsen pp. 38 & 39 and p. 40, figs. 49 for Prodigal Son, 1915 and 50 for Chimera, 1918.

[52]Apollonio, p. 52.

[53]There was no visible date on this issue of Il Futurismo-Rivista Sintetica. Marinetti had scribbled a note to Pettoruti in Paris in 1924 on the cover of this issue. It is probable that Curatella-Manes had seen the sculpture, or one like it originally in Italy.

[54]See Michel Hoog, Robert Delaunay, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1976), pp. 47, 52 & 63 for illustrations.

[55]For a discussion of the Constructivist exhibition in Berlin and the connections with French artists see Osborne, Oxford Companion, p. 431 and Green, Léger and the Avant-Garde, pp. 290-291.

[56]Svanascini, "Pablo Curatella-Manes," p. 27.

[57]Idem, Curatella-Manes, pp. 75-76; Romero Brest, pp. 26-27.

[58]Lopez Anaya, p. 96. See also note 4 above.

[59]Interview with Lyres Giraldes, Buenos Aires 20 October 1980. Giraldes had been a member of the Witcomb staff as a young photographer and knew Horacio Curatella-Manes. He did not mention Curatella-Manes as being present at the opening of his exhibition.

[60]Prebisch, "Pablo Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, (October-20 November 1924), pp. 6-7. See Lipchitz, pp. 16-17 for a discussion of his proto-Cubist work.

[61]Prebisch, Martín Fierro, pp. 6-7.

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[62]Ibid..

[63]Lhote's statement was quoted in Prebisch's article on Curatella-Manes for Martín Fierro, see above, and was reprinted in El Hogar, (Buenos Aires, 15 January 1926), see Raynal, p. 50.

[64]Prebisch, "Curatella-Manes," Martín Fierro, pp. 6-7.

[65]Green, p. 291. See also The Avant-Garde in Russia: Selections from the George Costakis Collection, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1981), pp. 218 and 317.

[66]Léger published two letters, the first dated 22 November 1923 in L'Intransigeant, the second dated 30 November 1923 in Paris Journal stating that he felt the contributions of foreigners "is excellent for French art . . . ." (Green, Léger and the Avant-Garde: 290, n. 16).

[67]See Martín Fierro, (5 August 1925), p. 2 for reproduction of this work. For the "Salón de arte moderno" add, see Martín Fierro, (17 May 1925), p. 4.

[68]Alberto Prebisch, "El XV Salón Nacional. Los nuevos artistas," Martín Fierro, (17 October 1925), pp.1 4-5. See also Svanascini, p. 55.

[69]Martín Fierro, (5 August 1925), p. 2.

[70]Atalaya, "Salón de Primavera," La Protesta, (5 October 1925), quoted in Atalaya, Críticas, p. 171. Also reprinted in Raynal, p. 50.

[71]Prebisch, "El XV Salón Nacional," Martín Fierro, (17 October 1925), pp. 4-5.

[72]See Elsen, p. 99, fig.120 for an example of Archipenko, Walking Woman of 1912. For a discussion of Lipchitz's work of this period, see Lipchitz, pp. 93-94.

[73]Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, p. 56.

[74]Ibid., p. 57. For Delaunay's work on the subject of sports, see Hoog for example p. 52, Figs. 47 and 52, and also Osborne, Oxford Companion, p. 151.

[75]Svanascini, pp. 57-58; Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Pormaca, 1965), p. 188. Neither writer gives

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the date of his statements. But they were made some time after the work was completed.

[76]Pierre Guéguen, Art Présent, (Paris No.1, 1947), quoted in Raynal, p. 53. See also Raynal, Art, (Paris April 1946) quoted in Raynal, p. 52 for his own statement on this piece. He wrote of The Saint that "le mur blanc que sa fraicheur défend, comme le 'vide papier' de Mallarmé, consentira a vivre et accordera sa simplicité sous les caresses mesurées d'ombres légeres et transparentas."

[77]Marcel Frederic, El año artístico argentino 1926, (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial la Facultad, 1927), pp. 275-276; Alberto Prebisch, "Marinetti en los 'Amigos del arte'," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 1. According to the various reviews, the works shown in La Peña were Woman with the Thick Coat, The Thinker, Creole Theme and The Three Bathers. Atalaya, in his review of this exhibition, compared Curatella-Manes' figures to the Attic figures from Tanagra, noting that the "harmony of his profiles" squematized as they were and their "architectonic grace" did not require a large scale to be monumental (Atalaya, Críticas; 223-225). Pedro Blake mentioned a work entitled Woman Posing to which Atalaya had referred as a "nude," probably The Thinker. The other artists in the La Peña exhibition included the painters Guillermo Butler, Valentín Thibón de Libián, the latter a brother-in-law of Curatella-Manes', Juan Tapia, Adolfo Travascio, Xul Solar, and the sculptor Agustín Riganelli (Pedro Blake, "Exposición de pintura y escultura en 'La Peña'," Martín Fierro, [8 July 1926; 7, 11]).

[78]Pedro Blake, "Exposición de pintura y escultura en 'La Peña'," Martín Fierro (8 July 1926), pp. 7, 11.

[79]Romero Brest, p. 12. The French critic Léon Degand later described Curatella-Manes as "that charming, refined and cultivated man" who was able to inspire "a solid and sincere friendship" between France and Argentina in cultural relations (Léon Degand, Art, [Paris, 28 November 1947], quoted in Raynal: 53).

[80]Romero Brest, p. 12; Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, p. 59; Brughetti, p. 188.

[81]The only other works on Creole themes done by Curatella-Manes in the twenties were Creole Theme of 1921, Man with a Lasso of 1923 because of its ranch subject matter and Gaucho and his Horse of 1930.

[82]Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, pp. 59-60.

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[83]See Lipchitz, pp. 117-118 for illustrations. For Rodin, see Albert E. Elsen, Rodin, 2nd printing, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1967), pp. 140, 142, 143, 182-185.

[84]Svanascini, Curatella-Manes, pp. 60 and 65.

[85]The other sculptors who exhibited with him in the La Plata and Rosario exhibitions were José Fioravanti, Luis Falcini and Alfredo Bigatti, all of them conservative. For information about these exhibitions organized by Alfredo Guttero see Ignacio Pirovano, "Alfredo Guttero. El protagonista de la unidad de la vanguardia argentina," Arte argentino contemporaneo, (Madrid: Unigraf, S.A., 1979), p. 21. The fiftieth anniversary exhibition was known as the Salón de Arte del Cinquentenario de La Plata, 1932 (interview with Jorge Lopez Anaya, [La Plata, 3 December 1980]). In 1930, Curatella-Manes illustrated with color drawings a Quechua drama in Spanish translation entitled Ollantay (the name is taken from the Inca fortification Ollantaytambo in Peru), published in Argentina in 1930 (Pagano: 454).

[86]Romero Brest, p. 12. Romero Brest maintains that it is due to a lack of self-confidence that many Latin American artists have not gained international fame. See also Raynal, pp. 50 and 53 for statements about Curatella-Manes' work by André Lhote and Léon Degand. See also Fernand Hazan, Dictionnaire de la sculpture moderne, (Paris: Fernand Hazan, 1960), p. 187 for the entry on Curatella-Manes. Raynal's monograph on Lipchitz, Lipchitz, was originally published in Paris in 1920 (Lipchitz: 238).

[87]Degand, Art, (Paris, 28 November 1947), quoted in Raynal, p. 53.

[88]Even after his retirement, he continued to accept assignments to organize exhibitions in Buenos Aires, Brussels and Paris. In 1953, he organized the traveling Exposición de Arte Contemporaneo Argentino that went to Chile, Peru and Ecuador; in 1955, the Primera Exposición de Pintura, Escultura, Arquitectura y Urbanismo de Nuestro Tiempo, a two-part exhibition at the Galería Müller in Buenos Aires; in 1957, the second exhibition of the series took place, and the same year, Curatella-Manes was chosen to oversee the organization of the Argentine Pavilion exhibition at the Universal and International Exposition in Brussels of 1958; in the fifties, he also participated in the Venice and Sao Paulo Biennials, and in 1961, he was appointed General Commissioner of the Paris Biennial (Romero Brest: 29-30). In 1947, he began proceedings to donate his European oeuvre to the Museo

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Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires. But due to some absurd bureaucracy, arrangements for this gift were not finalized until a short time before his death, and to compound the problems, the works were held up at customs for eight months when they arrived from Europe and were not cleared until after his death (Svanascini: 61; Romero Brest: 30). Not until 1964 did the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes hold a major retrospective of his work at the insistence of his widow (Brughetti: 188). Some of this information is based on an interview conducted with Germaine Derbecq de Curatella-Manes in Buenos Aires in August 1973 prior to her death.

[89]Apparently, the resentment of others even led them to spread untrue rumors about him. One of these was the claim that the sculptor Sesostris Vitullo who was in Paris from 1925 on, had also studied with Bourdelle and joined a fraternity of stone masons where he specialized in stone carving, was responsible for translating Curatella-Manes' plastiline models into stone presumably because he could not do it himself. If this were ever the case, it would more likely have been because Curatella-Manes did not have the space to do it at certain times of his life, since he did not always have a studio of his own. But it is obviously untrue that he lacked the ability since he carved in stone before 1920, but later preferred plaster and the more yielding media (Interview with Lopez Anaya, [La Plata, 31 October 1980]).

[90]Romero Brest, pp. 12 and 16. See also Romero Brest, Arte en la Argentina, (Buenos Aires: Paidos, 1969), p.29.

[91]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, p. 56; Idem, Revolución Martínfierrista, p. 24. See also Oliverio Girondo, El periódico Martínfierro, p. 31 and Eduardo González Lanuza, Los Martínfierristas, p. 94.

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CHAPTER VIII

XUL SOLAR AS PAINTER AND THEORIST[1]

Xul Solar's emergence in the Argentine vanguard in 1924 was less spectacular than that of Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes. Although he too introduced a new and original form of painting the likes of which had never been seen before in Argentina, when he exhibited sixty-five small watercolors and temperas in a group exhibition at the Witcomb in 1924, just a few days after Pettoruti's exhibition, they were barely noticed. Unlike Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes whose work received considerable attention from the "Martínfierristas," Xul Solar's did not receive so much as a mention until 1926. Atalaya was the only critic at the time to single out his work as "the most curious and unusual contribution" to an otherwise "mediocre" exhibition.[2]

But if he failed to establish his reputation as a painter in the twenties, he was highly respected as a colleague by the "Martínfierristas." Atalaya considered him to be "a writer of a unique idiomatic purity," and wrote that "of the Martínfierrista group, it is not Borges, nor most of the others, who is the writer of the most pure accent and solid linguistic and universal culture, but Xul Solar. He is the genius of the house."[3]

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Xul was highly regarded by the writers of Martín Fierro for his oral, editorial and linguistic abilities, but more than anything else, he was acknowledged as the silent protagonist of some of the best-known Argentine literature to come out, not only in the twenties but later as well.[4] He became a close friend of many of the writers, but his closest ties were with Borges who considered him as one of a few men of genius he had known personally. He described Xul as a "man versed in all disciplines, curious of all mysteries, host of hells and heavens."[5] Xul and Borges first met soon after they had both returned from Europe in 1924 within one month of each other. Their friendship developed into a fruitful exchange which was to last well into the forties.

Xul Solar (1887-1963) was an astrologer, philosopher and inventor of games and two languages as well as a painter and writer. He described himself as a "catrolico," a compound word that incorporates Cabalist, astrologer, liberal and cooperator.[6] Because of his excursions into esoteric and mystical systems of thought, some of which stemmed originally from an interest in Theosophy, and subsequently from his personal distillation of composite religions along with numerology, the Cabala and astrology, he created a mystique that has survived to this day. Gilbert Chase called him "a spiritual voyager in the world of the imagination," and Leopoldo Marechal was to make Xul Solar one of the principal characters in a

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novel.[7] He was known as an "amiable eccentric" who was "always beating the ring of conversation with surprising and unexpected turns."[8] His vast esoteric knowledge, often disguised beneath an engaging wit and sense of humor, made him one of the most desirable guests at gatherings.[9]

Yet by the thirties, Xul Solar sank into relative obscurity. According to the painter Luis Felipe Noé, until the sixties, Xul was "excluded from the official elite of painting because he was considered strange."[10] He did not exhibit in any of the National Salons. After 1932, he did not exhibit at all again until 1940, and in the forties, only twice more. He did not have an individual exhibition until 1949. He was barely mentioned in books on Argentine art until Osvaldo Svanascini published the first monograph on him in 1962.[11] Only former "Martínfierristas" and the press of the twenties cited him as a vanguard painter and colleague.[12] Even today, he is better known for his later inventions than for his early painting. One of the reasons why his early life and formation have remained an enigma and have been neglected by most art historians, is because of the difficulty in reconstructing the circumstances of that period. Nonetheless, Xul Solar's later interests have their source in his early experiences in Europe, and some of the circumstances of these early years can be determined on the basis of later accounts.

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From 1914 on, Xul Solar's painting manifested links first with Symbolism, then Italian Futurism, and finally German Expressionism combined with Russian Constructivism. As was often the case with other artists, Xul solar chose to return to the countries where his parents had come from, in his case Italy and Germany. The impact of his experience, especially in post-war Germany, was crucial to the development of the synthetic style he came to be known for from the twenties on. The link with Kandinsky's and Klee's color and composition is especially evident in his work. Nonetheless, Xul Solar developed a personal style that cannot be confused with the art of any other artist. As was his intention, he fused all the "rainbow" of styles[13] culled from his early experiences. Although few people understood the cryptic messages he intended his paintings to convey, each of these small works is a compendium of his beliefs and theories, most often representing some process of mystical initiation, purification, or transformation.

Background

Oscar Alejandro Schulz Solari was born on December 14, 1887 in San Fernando on the Rio de la Plata just north of Buenos Aires, very near where he was to die seventy-six years later. He was the only son of Emilio Schulz Riga, a German from Latvia who worked for the National Penitentiary as a mechanical engineer, and Agustina

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Solari, an Italian from the Genovese suburb of Zoagli. According to his widow Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari, Xul's interest in drawing, and curiosity about the world around him was already apparent when he was seven. She tells of how he would go to the railroad station and await the arrival of the train in order to draw it as it looked head-on from the tracks. Like Figari, he also learnt music and played the violin, the piano and the organ. He learnt several languages on his own. His father spoke German and Russian. According to Svanascini, Xul mastered eight.[14]

After the family moved to Buenos Aires and Xul had completed his secondary schooling, he taught briefly in an elementary school and studied architecture. But soon he abandoned his university courses, preferring to continue studying on his own. At the age of twenty he held a municipal government post. In order to alleviate its stultifying routine, he spent hours in the public libraries reading the Talmud, the Bible, oriental religions and the western Christian mystics, particularly Rudolph Steiner.[15]

In 1911 at the age of twenty-four, Xul Solar abandoned his job and signed up as a kitchen hand on a cargo ship bound for Hong Kong. On board ship, he spent his leisure hours reading hermetic philosophy and astrology books. But he cut short his trip and disembarked "in some Mediterranean port." Neither his biographers nor his widow seem to know which port it was

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but it could have been Genoa where his mother was from. Six months after his arrival in Europe, his mother and aunt, who were devoted to him, moved to Italy and bought a house in Zoagli, a suburb of Genoa where Xul Solar could stay on visits. During his first years in Europe, he traveled widely, particularly throughout Italy. According to several accounts, he went "from Montparnasse to Berlin, from Italy to London," and to "almost every Italian center." Some sources claim that he also visited Spain and Monaco.[16] His German-Italian background and his acquaintance with several languages facilitated his wanderings.

With very little money, he traveled on foot, hitched rides, worked as a dishwasher and stayed in homes for derelicts. In London, he stayed at the Salvation Army and in Italy he lived in monasteries in exchange for translating manuscripts. During those years he went to "libraries, exhibitions, literary groups, museums, theaters," attended "philosophical and religious reunions" and "astrological societies," and often went hungry in order to buy books.[17] He probably met the English occultist Aleister Crowley for the first time in London. Although Crowley is often dismissed as a "cultist" and a "black magician" by followers of the Theosophic and Anthroposophic ideas of Madame Blavatsky and Rudolph Steiner, Xul Solar claimed that Crowley had taught him to meditate, a practice he kept up for the rest of his

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life.[18] Xul may also have first discovered the Symbolist painters through Crowley.[19] Crowley probably drew his attention to the works of Beardsley, William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts movement. Xul most probably also saw William Blake's prints and illuminated books in London's British Museum. Borges later compared him to Blake.[20]

At the outbreak of the war Xul was living in Paris[21] where he remained until 1916. According to some accounts, he frequented the Café de la Rotonde wearing a beret and a big poncho with blue and white stripes (the colors of the Argentine and Uruguayan flags) which made him look like "a great living flag." He also visited studios and spoke about "the most advanced theories of the epoch."[22] Some of these studios were probably those of Argentine artists then living in Paris. During the pre-war years, a substantial Argentine colony of writers and artists had traveled to, and lived in Paris. Güiraldes had been there in 1911 on his way back from the far east and Leopoldo Lugones lived there as correspondent for La Nación from 1913 until the outbreak of the war. Both Güiraldes and Lugones were interested in Theosophy and the latter was a Free Mason.[23] The Argentine painter Guillermo Butler, who was also a Dominican friar, lived in Paris from 1911 to 1915 and was a member of Maurice Denis' "Association des Artistes Chrétiens." The painter Alfredo Guttero and Curatella-Manes were also associated with the

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circle of Maurice Denis.[24] Xul's early work indicates that his associations in Paris before the war were with Symbolist writers and artists rather than with the Cubist group.

Early Work

As a painter, Xul Solar was self-taught.[25] The first known works by him dated 1914 were done in Paris and reveal a familiarity with the work of Hodler, Knopff, Previati and particularly Toorop. García Romero dismissed Xul's work of 1914 to 1917 because of its "pre-Raphaelite and Symbolist tendency" and considers the period of 1917 to 1930 as his "first." Yet the earlier work contains clues to the meaning of many of his later paintings even though the style had changed. Although Xul did some paintings in oil, he was best known for his small scale watercolors, a medium which allowed for greater translucence.

His early works were linear and, besides Symbolism, were derived from the undulating patterns of Art Nouveau, which was readily accessible to him through industrial design and art journals.[26] Although the iconography of his paintings has been repeatedly referred to as "mysterious" and "undecipherable," much of it can be interpreted according to Theosophical theories, and later, astrology. In Burial of 1914 (Fig. 167), two hooded figures carry a deceased body in a procession along a high

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spiral path leading to a cave. Flames surround the path and rise from the heads of the mourners, from the deceased body and from the distant cave, and a "soul" emerges from the dead body. Although Xul Solar's exact source for such processional scenes is not known, he may have seen illustrations of processions based on classical literature by the eighteenth and early nineteenth century sculptor John Flaxman, which were widely circulated in Europe.[27] Stylistically this and other works of this period have much in common with Toorop's O Grave Where is Thy Victory in which slim curved wingless floating angels, resembling the central figure in Xul's painting, are shown disentangling the soul of the deceased from the twisted branches in which the demons have enmeshed it. But while Toorop's scene is about redemption,[28] Xul Solar's is less about Christian morality than it is about metamorphosis and transformation from one level of consciousness to another. Xul believed in reincarnation and attached little importance to "physical death."[29]

According to Theosophical interpretations, fire, which also appears in Art Nouveau designs, acts as vehicle of transformation. The triangles on the mourners' and the angels' robes, as well as the fire, refer to their ascension into a higher spiritual realm. In Theosophy angels are associated with fire and purification and Xul painted them several times in that context. Both Madame Blavatsky and Rudolph Steiner had written about

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supernatural beings. Madame Blavatsky believed that man, before his fall, had "lived among the gods in the airy spiritual world where everything is true and pure." Xul believed that there are "strange winged beings that inhabit the stratosphere," who "live on ideas," and "sow them throughout the whole universe." Like Rudolph Steiner, he believed he was in contact with a spiritual and dual world whose beings, angels and demons, affect us. For Xul good and evil co-existed, and a world beyond this one was populated by angels, demons and fantastic beings and not by pre-determined gods.[30] Rudolph Steiner had also written about caves as the dwelling places of the "ancestors" of the present race in the German journal Lucifer Gnosis.[31] Caves appear in several of Xul's paintings in one form or another. In Burial they perform a distinctly alchemical function. The cave is where the body will be transmuted and purified in its cycle of spiritual development.

In 1915 Xul Solar painted another version of Burial with similar symbols. But the central figure has threatening black wings, and skulls adorn the black robes of the mourners and the angel instead of triangles. The more somber symbolism in this painting may have been due to the war. The same year, Xul painted Cuatro Anjos (Fig. 168). The spelling of "anjos" is a constraction of "angeles" or angels. The bold decorative patterns of the angels' wings and sashed belts and the clouds, recall some

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of Toorop's drawings and colored lithographs.[32] In this work a purification ceremony is underway indicated by the angels carrying the incense burner and whip. According to the Theosophical interpretation, incense alludes to "certain orders of angels and spirits of nature" which "work through the intermediary of perfumes." Accordingly the whip indicates self-mortification as part of the ceremony. The shapes of the earrings and flaming hands of the larger angels are symbols of their superior rank in the angelic hierarchy. The circular shape signifies eternity and "divine perfection;" a circle with a dot is also the astrological symbol of the sun.[33] One should not dismiss the possible influence of Aleister Crowley's theories on Xul's subject matter at this time. Crowley advised students of meditation to "let the preliminary purifications, banishings and invocations be duly accomplished, and, lastly, let the incense be kindled" as an aid to meditation.[34]

The Italian Period

After Xul's move to Florence in 1916, the linearity of his early work gave way to a more modeled style, and by 1917, his painting manifested the influence of both Italian Renaissance subject matter and Futurism. Part of the stylistic change may have been due to his association with Pettoruti, whom he had met in Florence the day he arrived. When Pettoruti saw his work soon

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after, he was enchanted by Xul's personal and "impenetrable" imagery but at the same time wished that his painting were "closer to nature, closer to life."[35] In Italy Xul readapted elements from his Paris burial themes to Renaissance subjects. In 1917 he painted one of several versions of an Annunciation (Fig. 169). Although it was a Symbolist theme which Maurice Denis had also painted, Xul Solar adapted aspects of Futurist simultaneity to his painting. The head of the virgin, which has both a halo and a flame, merges with that of the angel whose presence is implied by the wing. The flames of "enlightenment" and the figure of the infant Jesus cradled within a luminous lunar crescent is similar to the representation of the deceased in Burial. But here, the deceased re-emerges and penetrates the virgin's womb. The lily-shaped entrance to the womb substitutes for that of the cave in Burial. In Annunciation, the "cave" is clearly identifiable as a pear-shaped womb. The scene takes place on a mound, possibly Golgotha. Instead of the dove of the holy spirit, seven birds rise from the cradled figure. In Theosophy, the number seven represents the sacred number of the stages of evolution, but it also refers to the number of the Virgin's joys and sorrows. The whole scene is set within another larger grotto illuminated by the group within it. The grotto which repeats the shape of the womb may have been derived from Leonardo's grottos in his depictions of the virgin and

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child. Xul Solar incorporated the whole cycle of life in this painting. Death and resurrection fuse into a single scene in which the annunciation anticipates all the other episodes in the life of Christ. The annunciation and the resurrection are one.

By 1916 Xul was fully aware of the expressive properties of certain colors and the difference between transparent and opaque color as well as of which papers to use in each case.[36] His experience with manuscripts may have contributed to his awareness. In Annunciation he utilized the grain of the paper to render the rough texture of the grotto rocks. The naturalistic shading which he began using in 1917, probably had its source in the landscapes Pettoruti was painting at that time.

In 1918 the influence of Futurism and Cubism can be seen in Wounded Sun (Fig. 170) painted in Milan. Xul's adoption of collage and colored paper onto which the small watercolor is glued, the dynamic projections extending over the background paper and running through the composition, and the theme of a "wounded" or vulnerable sun, indicate that he had assimilated Cubist and Futurist ideas. These characteristics correspond to Pettoruti's use of these same elements after 1915. In this work a small archer standing on an altar-like pedestal shoots his arrow at a personified sun. The archer is the symbol of Sagittarius, Xul's astrological sign. The subject brings to mind Ballá's Mercury Passes in Front of the Sun Through

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a Telescope (Fig. 63). Ballá's painting apparently alluded to a solar eclipse.[37] Xul Solar's probably does too, but his subject also has Pre-Columbian sources. Pre-Columbian art, particularly textiles and codexes, was accessible in museums in most of the big capitals, such as the British Museum in London, the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, Munich and Stuttgart. Although Oliverio Girondo's visit to Milan after the war may have brought new world themes to the attention of the the artists, Xul Solar was the only one to use them.

There are two possible interpretations of Wounded Sun. The first is based on the custom in ancient Peru and in other Indian cultures, during a solar eclipse, of shooting burning arrows at the sun to rekindle its expiring light. The second interpretation also of pre-Columbian origin is that of the creation of the sun in which the supreme diety of a Peruvian tribe "gives light to huge black birds and orders them to distribute it around the world."[38] As is the case with others of Xul's works, the main theme is transformation and this work probably combined both interpretations. The rain-giving cloud promises relief to barren trees and the theme of death and resurrection is also implicit.

The written title of the painting both in English and French, corresponded at this time to Xul's emerging preoccupation with Esperanto as a global language.[39]

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Interest in a universal language was wide-spread during the war. This notion was to be the basis for Xul Solar's later elaboration of panlengua, a universal language of his invention, and neocriollo, a composite of Castilian and Portuguese, intended specifically for Latin America. His signature in Wounded Sun indicates that he had shortened his name by 1918 but had not yet adopted the "X" spelling. The latter appears for the first time in 1920 on the catalogue of an exhibition of his work at the Galleria Arte in Milan where he is listed as Alessandro Xul Solari (Fig. 171). By 1921 he had adopted Xul Solar but signed only with his first name. "Xul" comes from the Latin word for light, "lux" spelled backwards.[40] The idea for integrating his signature with the work seems to have been derived from medieval manuscripts and Art Nouveau. He had signed Cuatro Anjos in 1915 with an elaborate monogram in which one large "S" served for both names like the capital letter in a medieval manuscript illumination.

Xul painted numerous landscapes in Italy usually showing a path or bridge linking two shores. In 1919 he painted Troncos (Fig. 172) in which the landscape is transformed into a dynamic space for cosmic metamorphosis. Two anthropomorphic tree trunks composed of cone-shaped elements march energetically from right to left in an integrated space that fuses ground and sky. The cylindrical trunks recall Léger's The Card Game of 1917 with its disembodied animated mechanical arms.[41] But

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neither Léger's implied machine esthetic nor the velocity of modern life of the Futurists is evident in this work. Rather it refers to the Theosophical theory of evolution from one "root race" to another through a series of cataclyms and rebirths. According to Theosophy as well as to Rosicrucian belief, life on this planet has undergone transformation from an original hermaphroditic stage in the "third race" to the fourth, that of Atlantis in which the human race first appeared, and would reach a perfected stage sometime in the future by the seventh. Each "race" is associated with a planet. The vegetable kingdom emerged during the "lunar" period and the animal, during the "solar" one.[42] In Troncos the trees are shown walking away from the moon in the direction of the sun. Their animated humanoid movement implies the coming of the human race. Snakes are symbols of both wisdom and potential fall. The Theosophists saw the "Great Serpent" as an emblem of "astral light."[43] In Troncos, the snakes which belong to the animal kingdom, as does the bird, anticipate the coming of Adam and the expulsion from Paradise. This is suggested by the gait of the walking trees which is reminiscent of an expulsion scene like those of Masaccio in the Brancacci Chapel in Florence or Michelangelo on the Sistine ceiling in Rome.

Xul incorporated some abstract elements which were derived from Futurist theories. In Depero's words he evidently wanted to "find abstract equivalents for all the

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forms and elements of the universe." He set them in motion as Depero had advocated in a statement, and utilized straight and curved lines and angles in an expressive way also recalling Carrá's words in his 1913 manifesto "Plastic Planes as Spherical Expansions in Space."[44] Xul also used much higher keyed colors than in his earlier paintings and in complementary relationships. For instance the yellow orange background complements the blue of the sky, and on the ground the brownish red compliments the green of the earth. The bird is the same blue as the sky in the upper regions. Its color and crest identify it as the quetzal, the blue green bird of the ancient Mexicans.[45] The Theosophical interpretation of Troncos is confirmed in the title of a painting of the same period, Androdentro, which is a linguistic play of word roots meaning "man-tree." In 1920 Xul Solar shared an exhibition with the sculptor Arturo Martini at the Galleria Arte in Milan where he exhibited seventy watercolors, oils and temperas. Most of the works Xul had painted up to then appear in the catalogue including Androdentro, however, Troncos does not. Since it is unlikely that he would not have included it, it is possible that Androdentro is the same work with another title.

The titles and subjects of the works exhibited indicate the range and diversity of Xul's interests. Besides angels, annunciations and a Saint Francis, the

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list included Solar Pegasus, Funeral March, Talisman, Antique Tower, Rotating Sun, Long Road, Undersea, Venetian Farewells and To Luxemburg. The double exhibition catalogue included two essays. Carrá wrote the one on Martini and Pettoruti, on Xul Solar. Pettoruti's essay confirmed Xul's change of style since his arrival in Italy. He wrote that Xul sought "symbols and impulsive allusions and contradictions of lines that interpenetrate and reappear," and referred to Xul's love of "great primitive civilizations" evident in the paintings. But he objected to the "excessive roughness" in Xul's work,[46] not taking into consideration the fact that Xul had used this method to evoke popular prints and primitive art. Another change manifested itself in his work of this time. He had apparently begun using images inspired by his visions derived from meditation. He started recording these in a diary in Paris in 1924.[47] Pettoruti described "fantastic visions" which "come close to intellectual delirium, in this free creation of his artistic world," and perceived in Xul's work "a tone of meditation and studiousness."[48]

During the war years, following Pettoruti's move to Milan, Xul had returned to Zoagli. But finding economic conditions no better there than Pettoruti's, he joined the latter again in Milan and shared with him some of the commercial designing projects and other odd jobs to help meet their immediate needs.[49] By the war's end, things had improved for both artists. In the summer of

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1920 Xul had invited Pettoruti to spend the month of August in Zoagli. At that time he had developed an interest in "Hinduism, Sinology, . . . acupuncture and other Asiatic medical sciences." Pettoruti also gives an account of a tea ceremony conducted by Xul "according to Chinese custom." Xul had suspended strips of colored paper painted with black Chinese characters from the living room ceiling and claimed to be able to read them.[50]

Xul's interest in Chinese culture at that time suggests that he had renewed his contact with Aleister Crowley who laid great stress on Chinese philosophy. According to the artist's widow, Pettoruti also met Crowley. Given the chronology of all three, 1920 was the only time they were all in the same place, when Crowley had gone to Italy.[51] Although Theosophy already incorporated most eastern and western esoteric systems, Xul studied Hinduism, the Cabala and the Chinese book of Changes separately for the purpose of devising a system of his own which he believed to be more flexible than Theosophy. At the time, this flexibility manifested itself in his paintings as well, particularly in the manner in which he alternately adapted ancient, medieval and contemporary modes to his art evident in the composite stages. His stay in Italy was an experimental one.

His watercolor The Greeting of Maria Perenno (to Pettoruti) of 1921 (Fig. 173) was one of the last works to show Italian characteristics. Although this small

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watercolor is not a portrait but a landscape with trees and cliffs separated by a body of water, the inclusion of a specific person, Maria Perenno waving to Pettoruti shown standing on high cliffs across the water, is uncharacteristic and may have been intended as an homage either to her or to Pettoruti. The treatment of the angular cliffs, defined by vertical lines extending upwards into the sky and downwards into the water, are of Futurist derivation. They also reflect contemporary notions of verticality. While Xul's painting differs entirely from Pettoruti's version of Maria Perenno, the modeling and unstable tilt of the trees recalls Pettoruti's painting Outskirts of Milan (Fig. 100). The greater degree of naturalism in Xul's Maria Perenno also reflected the post-war tendencies in Italy towards a return to figuration. Rugged cliffs also appear in de Chirico's Roman Rocks of the same year.[52] Although Xul's painting represents a greeting rather than a farewell, it must be seen in the context of the farewells and departures of the Metaphysical as well as the Futurist painters. Xul took up the subject of farewells on several other occasions in the following two years. His work underwent a noticeable change in Munich after 1921. But his contact with Futurism established a basis for a more integrated composition and marked the final break with his earlier Symbolist period.

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In Munich

In 1921 Xul took advantage of the post-war depreciation of the German mark and left for Munich where he remained until 1924. At that time Munich was the center of considerable political turmoil and cultural activity. A communist uprising had taken place in 1919. At the same time, a rising propaganda campaign promoted the cause of the worker in pro-nationalist socialist party posters in which the swastika appeared within images of the shining sun above workers defeating their shakles. Posters with a strong architectural focus along constructivist lines and with bold typography also reached Munich soon after the 1922 Russian exhibition in Berlin.[53] Aspects of German Expressionism survived in German theater of the period. Munich was the center of experimental film, and of important theater and opera events and premieres. Pantomime theater with its fantastic masks could be seen and its cafes and night clubs were always packed.[54]

At the time, there was a revival of interest in the decorative arts. Xul attended a "school of decorative arts" in 1921, possibly the Kunstgewerbeschule. Whether or not he ever actually made pottery or furniture at that time is undocumented, but he did paint numerous watercolor and tempera designs for them. Two watercolors, Decoras and Potes were probably of this period.[55] Some of the symbols such as swastikas that appear on the pots in Potes

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(Fig. 174) indicate that his work belongs to his Munich period rather than to the Italian one as García Romero's date of 1920 proposes. Although swastikas were later used as political symbols in Germany, Xul probably used them for their Sanskrit meaning as symbols of salvation.[56]

Decoras (Fig. 175) shows irregular and fantastic shapes like those of the pots. A pyramidal zoomorphic throne, with a solid heavy body and back, is depicted surmounted wing-like shapes. The throne or chair is completely non-functional. On the other hand Xul's work emphasized the "ritual character of daily objects in the sense given to these by primitive cultures of agrarian empires such as the Summarian, Egyptian, etc."[57] He deliberately emphasized the crudeness evidenced in his earlier paintings as a mark of the individual in opposition to machine-made industrial products, an aspect of his work which he applied again later to chess pawns and other sculptured forms.

In Munich, Xul's art underwent a radical change. García Romero, who believed Xul's original plan had been to go to Tibet to become a monk, wrote that in Munich, Xul developed his painting in a "religious sense" making it the "apostolate of his personal religious philosophy, perhaps as a palliative for his frustrated vocation as a monk."[58] There Xul acquired many new books, particularly on Kandinsky, and more than likely was aware of the

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latter's book Concerning the Spiritual in Art of 1912. He shared with Kandinsky an interest in the theories of Rudolph Steiner and a concern for what Peter Selz described as the "problem of the spirit by way of inner enlightenment."[59] He felt very much at home in Germany, not only because of the current German intellectual ideas with which he identified, but also because of what he perceived as the Germans' respect for their elders. He saw this characteristic as similar to the respect of the Chinese for their ancestors. Xul's interest in ancestor worship can be traced to Rudolph Steiner who had written about the "memory" of the people of Atlantis in which the "antiquity" of their wisdom inspired a confidence their immediate personal experience, no matter how rich, could not.[60] Xul's respect for the wisdom of age and antiquity, found its way into many of his paintings of the Munich period and established the basis for all his future art.

After 1921, color also took on added importance. He sought to liberate it from naturalistic descriptiveness and for a while in 1922, he even took up abstraction. But like Pettoruti, he considered his abstract works as studies and not as finished paintings. Color theories had been accessible to him from many sources, from Seurat to the Expressionists. His interest in color at this time probably had some of its most immediate sources in Futurist theories on cinema. Bruno Corra in a 1912 manifesto "Abstract Cinema-Chromatic Music" explained the

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uses of color in a movie entitled The Rainbow in which its seven colors are the dominant theme and the rainbow appears "in different forms and with ever-increasing intensity until it finally explodes with dazzling violence."[61] In 1923 when Hitler led the abortive "beer-cellar putsch" in an attempt to take over Munich, Xul witnessed a bombing and was apparently "enchanted by the colors of the bomb"[62] without concern for politics.

In Germany he had the additional impetus of the work of Kandinsky and Klee, both of whom sought musical and other correspondences with color and shapes. Kandinsky had attributed to each color a complex gamut of correspondences, with sounds but also with emotions and spiritual realms, and had developed a graphic analysis indicating the active, passive, dynamic and immovable properties of color. He also associated colors with a range of states between birth and death.[63] But Kandinsky's theories led him to abstraction while Xul could never use plastic means for their own sake alone. More in line with Klee, he never lost his desire to retain visible subject matter. He always considered himself a "realistic painter" in the sense that "what he painted was not an arbitrary combination of forms and lines, it was what he had seen in his visions."[64]

Whether or not Xul met Klee, he knew of his work and could see it at the Goltz Gallery as Pettoruti had in 1921. When Klee began teaching at the Bauhaus that year,

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he had to find a way "to make explicit what had been largely unconscious" and turned to the discipline of music as a model for a system of visual correspondences for the organization of the picture design.[65] Xul's use of color in 1921 however also suggests an acquaintance with Delaunay's windows and the "Simultaneous Contrasts" focusing on color, the sun and moon which he could have seen in Paris or Germany.

His own interest in music also led him to have more direct connections with Munich's musical community. He befriended the music critic Johannes Stimsen who was a contributor to Berlin musical publications.[66] Xul's interest in music, particularly contemporary forms, was evident already in 1917. In Italy he had spoken to Pettoruti about "the quarter tone." Schönberg's dodecaphonic technique and Stravinsky's earlier twelve-tone system were of particular interest to him, since they correlated with the "twelve-base math" system Xul developed to correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac. His interest in astrology dated at least to 1911 and probably provided the original basis for a duodecimal system which was also based partially on the "Summerian numerical system."[67]

Xul's interpretations and use of color and musical correspondences however were more concrete than those of either Kandinsky or Klee, and were more literally based on the system of the Theosophists. Rudolph Steiner believed

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that "music is the only art form whose archetypical origin is in the spiritual rather than in the physical world, as is the case with architecture, sculpture, or painting." In 1922 and 1923 Steiner had lectured in Dornach and Stuttgart on man's "experience of the world of tones" which had undergone changes in the course of evolution,"[68] although it is difficult to document whether Xul attended any of them. Madame Blavatsky wrote that "letters, as vocal sounds, cannot fail to correspond with musical notes and therefore with numbers and colors" and other cosmic forces from oriental religions:

> Every letter in the alphabet, whether divided into three, four, or seven septenaries, . . . has its own colour or shade of colour.
>
> The colour and number, of not only the planets but also the zodiacal constellations corresponding to every letter of the alphabet, are necessary to make any special syllable, and even letter operative.

She had assigned a specific facet of the oriental cosmic system to each color of the spectrum and in turn each color corresponded to a musical note; for instance violet was si, indigo, la, red, do and each of these also corresponded to an element such as ether, steam or vapour, water, ice, etc.[69] Xul, who later rebuilt a piano keyboard with the notes painted in the colors of the spectrum and in different shapes so a "blind" person could play,[70] adopted a system analogous to Blavatsky's, by assigning colors to notes, but modifying the system so that infra-red or ultraviolet, for instance, corresponded

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to fa, not green.[71]

Xul's Munich experience was a determining factor in his desire to create a wholistic expression by blending everything in existence from printing, language, architecture, music, painting, theater, to religion and mathematics with the object of creating one single culture "for all men without distinction of creeds and races."[72] This tendency translated itself into his paintings as a new synthesis of elements into which numbers and letters came to be integrated with overlapping transparent flat planes of brighter color. Dieties and other beings came to populate his paintings within spaces that had become increasingly abstract. During those years he turned out the richest production of his life.

Maturity and Synthesis

Xul's watercolors The Four of 1921 and Mask with Visor of 1923 (Figs. 176 & 177) bear some stylistic similarity with Klee's watercolors of 1915 on, for instance Villa R of 1919 (Fig. 178). The loosely painted overlapping planes of color in Xul's paintings also recall Delaunay's windows. In The Four, dematerialized faces each identified by a numeral, can be read alternately as volume or space. A shining sun above, so unlike the suns of Xul's Italian paintings, appears to have its source in the German election posters for the National Assembly (Fig. 179). In his new work it is integrated with the

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faces whose features are represented by flat bands, triangles and rectangles stacked like building blocks.

Xul's introduction of numbers and letters into his work is easy to explain in the context of Cubism, Futurism and, after 1922, Constructivism, besides the contemporary typography of posters. Larionov used numbers and letters on faces. However Xul attributed specific and complex numerological meanings to numbers. According to the Theosophical interpretation, the four faces and numerals refer to the four elements and the four "regents" who govern the cosmic forces as well as to the four cardinal points. The sum of Xul's numbers is as important as their individual meaning. The sum of the four digits is ten. Students of Madame Blavatsky explained that their product was the "decad or perfect number . . . contained in the four." It is also the number of "unity" and of the "Father."[73] The four faces are those of evolved beings who have benefited from the purification of the sun's rays. A 1922 painting with a long cryptic title, Moral Support I Give; I Will not Tire, I Escape and Conceal Myself for Now, also dominated by a shining sun, confirms the importance Xul attached to the beneficent aspects of the sun's rays. But also its original title, Apoyo moral doi; no me cansaré, fuyo i me oculto por agora, a composite of Spanish, Portuguese and phonetic spellings, indicate that at that time he had already evolved the basis for his Pan-American language, neocriollo.[74] Faces

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reappear in Mask with Visor of 1923 as a diaphanous arrangement of floating squares, lines, bands and dots with light, luminous colors strategically placed near the eyes and forehead. Faces appear and disappear, a mouth is perceived alternately as serious or smiling, and the faces can be read frontally or as slightly turned. Lines have been replaced by color which Xul used symbolically. Each color corresponded to a particular stage of spiritual evolution.[75]

Goddesses and Androgynes

By 1922 Xul developed a system of bands, arrows, letters, numbers and robot-like figures to represent dieties. These elements appear in Juzgue (Fig. 180) whose title refers to both judge and judgment. Unquestionably the Russian Constructivist exhibition in Berlin had some bearing on Xul's painting of 1922, as it did on the work of other artists at the time. The profusion of intercrossing bands also bears something in common with Kandinsky's contemporary work such as Blue Segment No. 235 of 1921 (Fig. 181) as well as with some of the disjointed figures, objects, symbols and letters in Tchelitchew's contemporary The Green Man (Fig. 182). The latter was living in Berlin at the time.[76]

But characteristically, the subject of Xul's painting, in spite of its mechanical aspects, was not contemporary. It represents a judgment presided over by a

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diety identified by the letters GEO seated high above a scaffolding with some steps. An official to the right, PEZ, points to a central kneeling figure, MAN, who is being judged. Assorted arrows, numbers and letters with the words PAZ, LUNA and EGO combine to fuse visual, numerological and linguistic meanings. The "judge" is the "great earth mother" or Isis indicated by a lunar crescent above her head and the words GEO and LUNA. Here the figure and supporting scaffolding are intercepted by a snake (knowledge). The theme of Isis was of course written about by Madame Blavatsky in Isis Unveiled of 1877, but also by Aleister Crowley who devised a series of gestures in diagrammatic illustrations to symbolize the life and death cycle of Osiris. In Juzgue, an arrow shoots down pointing to both EGO and to the man to be judged. Madame Blavatsky wrote:

> At reincarnation, the higher Ego shoots out a ray, the lower ego.
> . . . . . .
> As to the question of responsibility, it may be understood by an example. If you take the form of Jack the Ripper, you must suffer for its misdeeds, for the law will punish the murderer and hold him responsible. You are the sacrificial victim. In the same way the higher Ego is the Christos, the sacrificial victim for the lower manas. [Madame Blavatsky explains that the manas refer to human consciousness, the substance that differentiates the human species from the animal. The higher manas are the abstract counterpart of the inferior and concrete.] The Ego takes the responsibility of everybody it informs.[77]

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The subject then is the "karmic" judgment of the kneeling man in order to determine what his next incarnation is to be. That Xul was interested in the theory of karmic debt--usually a byproduct of metempsychosis--is evidenced by his painting Angel of the Karma of 1923 (Fig. 183) in which an angel determines the "soul" to impart on the being about to be born in a parturition scene.

Isis as the great earth goddess appears again in The Bark of Isis of 1922 (Fig. 184). The goddess, identified by the lunar crescent and her name spelled out, levitates in a boat on the Nile. She holds her son Horus whose halo framing both their faces like a madonna and child, establishes him also as the Sun-God. The crocodile, which substitutes for the serpent here, represents the god Apepi as indicated by the letters. In ancient Egypt, Apepi was considered a spiritual manifestation of great evil which needed to be overcome, in opposition to Isis who was the symbol of good. According to Crowley's system of gestures, the crossed arms of the figure on the right signifies "Osiris has risen."[78] Consequently, the painting represents simultaneously the cycle of life, death and resurrection of Osiris, and the bark symbolized the journey through all the stages.

In 1923 Xul transferred the theme of the great earth goddess from Isis to the ancient Mexican goddess Tlazolteotl, alternately known as Nana Watsin (Fig. 185).

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In this work, words are not just additions to the image, they are integrated so the picture can be both literally "read" and looked at. In Pre-Columbian mythology, Nana Watsin manifested herself in four potentially evil or good aspects, corresponding to the four ages of man. Here she is shown in her third positive aspect as the purifier with the power to pardon men's sins. The yellow glow emanating from her hands confirms that "she cleansed and washed away all these evils with the cleansing green and yellow waters in her hands."[79] The theme of purification which Xul had painted in 1915 is indicated here in several different ways, including the inscription "Renovación por fogo santo" written in Neo-Creole.

The goddess sits on the altar inside a chalice or cauldron, "the sacred cup of knowledge" in which transformation takes place through purification. She is being worshiped by a "servant" identified by the words "A Xolotl Can" which means "the place of servitude" in Nahuatl, the ancient Mexican language. The word "leña" on the altar refers to the firewood needed for the purification. In Pre-Columbian lore, the rekindling of fire also signified a new age or rebirth.[80] The other words, "Germina," "ora i adora(da)," written phonetically, form poetic alliterations as well as plays on words meaning "germinates," "prays" and "adore(s)" and together they can be read as "germinadora" or "germinator" referring to the fertility of the goddess. "Pasión and

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"s'exalta" indicate that the ceremony also incorporated the idea of sexual exaltation as well as religious fervor symbolized by the pink blush exuded by the figures and the arrows radiating from the goddess. Sexual symbolism appeared in Xul's paintings in Germany, but he abandoned it after he returned to Argentina. The dual sexual and spiritual exaltation was a theme characteristic of art before the war and was especially evident in the work of Kandinsky and other Blaue Reiter artists.[81] Xul however, was ambiguous about this subject, feeling on the one hand, that sexual exaltation belong to a "fallen" world, but on the other, finding the practice of chastity hypocritical.[82] Xul's signature is implicit in Nana Watsin as it was in Juzgue, in the form of Xs scattered through the painting, and in the name Xolotl. In Juzgue, an X also appears next to the head of Isis.

In Retrato Renea of 1923 (Fig. 186) the great goddess appears as a disjointed figure whose tubular limbs recall those in George Grosz's Republican Automatons of 1920 (Fig. 187). Grosz was in Berlin at the time. The title means literally "reborn portrait" and represents the "rebirth" of a woman, "renea dama," through purification and possibly anatomical modification. However here Xul used Cabalistic symbols such as hands in the shape of menorahs and flames rising from the "fingers." Flaming hands which Xul had painted in Burial in 1914 can be found in Art Nouveau designs.[83] The spelling of the words

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"pirof" and "venuf" derives from the Cabalistic system of deliberately disguising the alphabet through substitution on letters by assigning alphabetical equivalents. Accordingly, the rearrangement of the alphabet into two rows would make the "f" correspond to "s."[84] In this manner Xul assigned the goddess and purification imagery identified by the words "venus" and "piros" to an occult Hebrew context.

The disassembling of the anatomy anticipates Xul's later theories for redesigning the human figure to make it more functional. He had proposed female types with several large breasts that could be wrapped around their bodies when not in use, an idea he had apparently derived from prehistoric Venus figurines.[85] While in Retrato Renea, a rearrangement of anatomical parts is proposed, it is of a spiritual nature.

Duality

In several works of 1923, Xul dealt with the theme of duality through separation and reunification. In Idyll (Fig. 188), duality is represented by a sexual encounter of two transparent beings with legs interlocked. The scene is observed from above by a small figure, or diety, wearing a crucifix. This unusual image of the couple in a room backed with curtains separating dark from light halves, may have some autobiographical meaning. In Munich he lived in a pension run by a widow and had struck up a

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romance with the widow's daughter whom Pettoruti described as "a very beautiful girl."[86]

In Couple of 1923 (Fig. 189), the pair has evolved to an androgynous state confirmed by the accompanying number "2-B" which are symbols of unification of the dual male/female principles. This work illustrates the Theosophical theory about a third androgynous "root race" becoming separated into male and female in the fourth, to be reunited in a perfect state in the seventh. The double face represents the binary state in the evolutionary path. The numeral 6 in the painting, according to esoteric interpretation, stands for equilibrium and unification of spirit with matter and through inversion, the 6 becomes a 9, the symbol of evolution.[87] In the puppet-like head composed of a clearly identifiable male and female side, Xul utilized the Cubist device of representing faces legible as both frontal and profile views.

In 1923 Xul began incorporating flying bands of color as a substitute for hair. This occurs in Couple and in a number of other works of the same year, and may have derived from some of Kandinsky's contemporary work. Kandinsky had used such bands as pictorial notations in 1922 in a series of color lithographs, woodcuts and drypoints published as a book, Kleine Welten in Berlin.[88] These notations are also evident in Blue Segment of 1921 (Fig. 181). According to García Romero, the ribbon-like bands in Xul's work signify that the angels, or other

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spiritual beings who wear them, are representatives of the "good." They were derived from the images Xul saw in visions. He described multicolored bands as replacing wings and "birds like painted eggs, not with wings, but with many bands."[89] Couple then shows a simultaneous image of separation and unification of beings already in an evolved stage of spiritual development. Ribbons also appear in Cintas of 1924 (Fig. 190) in which a face is composed entirely of spectrum colored bands amid floating Xs, arrows, a "C" and a "3" as trinitarian symbols. By 1924 his paintings were all based on visions which he began recording that year. The colored luminous space in which the bands occur corresponds to some of the stratified color regions Xul claimed to see in his visions.[90]

Diverse symbols, transpositions, letters and numbers appear in Jefa and Jefa Honra of 1923. The face of an androgynous diety appears in both paintings. In Jefa (Fig. 191) it is the high priestess in a dual male/female role indicated by the hair, whiskers and bands. The head is composed of lines, an arrow, and small walking figures which substitute for the features. The neck is in the shape of an X or hour glass, and at the bottom two disconnected breasts, one of which is shaped like a baby bottle, point upwards. Xul facetiously signed his name on the latter. The representation of disconnected breasts here and in Retrato Renea was Cubist

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in origin. The presence of wiskers on the faces of Jefa and Jefa Honra derives from the Egyptian cat cult. The cat and bird were consecrated to Isis.[91] A bird and a lunar crescent to the right in Jefa confirm her identity. But also a speech scroll here, commonly represented in pre-Colombian codices, indicates that the diety doubles as the Mexican mother goddess. The speech scroll must also be seen as an alternative to the Futurist "noise" projections of letters and words as in Carrá's Interventionist Demonstration of 1914 and Marinetti's "Parole in libertá." Jefa Honra (Fig. 192) has both the attributes of Isis and those of Christ, the latter indicated by the Latin cross on the forehead,[92] the crown and the letters JHS for Jesus Hominum Salvator (Jesus Savior of Men). The arrows emanating from the hypnotic eyes are the attributes of an influential ruler.

Messengers and Visions

In 1923 Xul took up the theme of messengers and levitating figures. The Greek word for "messenger" is "angelos," or angel. Message (Fig. 193) is a watercolor glued onto colored paper and depicts a wingless angel or messenger moving towards a structure with a window. Unlike the angels of 1914 and 1915, this being is not undergoing purification but rather delivering the "sacred" message to a destination within an enclosure that substitutes for the cave in earlier works. A small

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landscape below not only conveys physical height but, as indicated by the steps, an intermediary realm in the stages of spiritual development. The steps used in this manner may derive from Peruvian textile designs of Mixtec codices where steps and step frets were used to indicate a location or to divide one scene from another in a sequence.[93] According to Rudolph Steiner's interpretation, messengers were the leaders of a previous "race" of the Atlantean period who possessed wisdom not attained in earthly education. These beings instructed mankind in the sciences, in the arts and in making tools.[94] In The Three (Fig. 194) the messenger is Christ or Horus in the double trilogy of mother, father and son. The pyramid is the place where the hermetic message was held. The angular features of these figures make a reference to the style of Egyptian art as was the case in Juzgue.

The introduction of levitating figures in Xul Solar's work of 1923 correspond to his personal experience in obtaining visions through meditation. According to García Romero, Xul "practiced transcendental meditation in order to identify his individual soul with the Universal spirit and cultivated an extraordinary power which he shared with the Christian mystics Manuel Swedenborg and Rudolph Steiner." Xul was in the habit of meditating daily at twelve thirty noon, and in the last years of his life, at dusk.[95] In 1924 in Paris he began recording the

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visions obtained through meditation in a group of fifty entries later to be baptized San Signos by Borges.[96]

Although considerable mystery surrounds this aspect of Xul's life, and some people supposed that he practiced necromancy and other forms of magic,[97] his system for entering meditation may have derived largely from Crowley. Crowley believed that "within the human body is another body of approximately the same size and shape, but made of subtler and less illusory material" which he called the "astral double." In order to perceive the "the phantoms of the astral plane" he advocated developing "the body of light until it is just as real to you as your other body" and to "teach it to travel to any desired symbol." Crowley also advocated the use of "special invocations as will cause to appear the particular places he may wish to visit."[98] Xul's visions were invariably about floating into some mysterious realm above clouds and into multilayered worlds of color in the midst of processions of angels, different atmospheric densities, skies from where he saw "the great temple" below, whose glow and color he described in great detail. He hovered above cities and encountered temples or grottos and beings in different stages of evolution, the four elements, Dantesque souls and images of ascent and descent, different substances, temperatures and elements.[99] Different densities and elements occur in Rosicrucian theories. According to these, the seven

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"worlds" or layers rising from the physical to the highest level of "purity" and the "divine," corresponded to solids, liquids and gases of varying densities. Blavatsky and Steiner advanced analogous theories. Steiner believed that the human body in its present earth period "had become subject to a process of densification" and described the changes brought about through temperature changes.[100]

García Romero offered a psychological analysis of Xul's visions proposing the possibility of a stream-of-consciousness process which led to the images he was able to paint and record in writing. But at the same time, he never wished to abolish the "order of logic, morality and taste" by exploring "secondary states" as did the Surrealists, because the unconscious liberation of Surrealism was not directed towards "transcendence to a higher place."[101] It is certainly possible that psychology comes into play, however the images obtained and Xul's explanations of them, more often reflected Steiner's but also Crowley's theories. For instance, Xul claimed that some of his visions revealed previous incarnations.[102] Steiner believed that although the man of today was superior in logical reasoning, he thought in concepts instead of in images while the Atlantean thought in images. When an an image appeared in his soul he remembered a great many similar images which he had already experienced" because of a superior "cosmic

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memory."[103] Crowley directly claimed that he had visions of his previous incarnations. Although Xul disguised the intensity of his beliefs beneath a layer of humor, the "reincarnations" to which he alluded often went back several millenia.[104]

Although Xul did not take up the Tarot until 1927--in the forties he redesigned the Tarot deck to correspond to astrology--elements of it are apparent in some of his work in 1923. In Qero Hipnotismo and Jefe de Sierpes whose spellings have contractions of "quiero" (I want) and "serpientes" (serpents), he painted the beings as flat transparent bodies whose internal organs are visible to the viewer. Both paintings reflect the subject of the nineteenth card of the Tarot which shows the sun as purifier with small transparent figures below. In occult symbolism, the sun--unlike the material sun of the Futurists--is the "sun of initiation" about which Madame Blavatsky had written, and is Cabalistic in origin. The sun's meaning in the Tarot deck is related to purification ceremonies, as the senses become transparent for the understanding of supreme truths."[105]

In Qero Hipnotismo (Fig. 195) a paper-like figure reveals heart, ribs and intestines. A similar being appears in Jefe de Sierpes (Fig. 196) whose teeth are also visible through the face. The internal organs in this figure double as a landscape and blend with the dematerialized surrounding golden haze produced by the

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sun's rays. In Man of the Serpents of 1923 (Fig. 197), the transparency of a figure in a similar configuration has become more mechanical. The limbs are tubular and disconnected as they were in Retrato Renea (Fig. 186), and the eyes are semi-gear wheels very much like those in Grosz's Republican Automatons (Fig. 187). Xul's interest in creating what he called in panlengua a "panbeldokie" or total esthetic doctrine, accessible to all, was not limited to symbols of the spirit, but also incorporated those of industry. He later told Borges that "if we live in an epoch of advertisements, signals and signs in profusion, why not then bring this characteristic to painting?" In later works he also came to incorporate "blue-prints, photomontage, circuitry diagrams, advertising layouts, and fashion catalogues" into his paintings.[106]

In Septuplets of 1924 (Fig. 198) Xul incorporated the mystical number seven with astrology and theater masks. The scattering of planets throughout this painting indicates an awareness of Kandinsky's contemporary work such as Composition of 1923 (Fig. 199) with its assorted floating bands, intercrossed lines, circles, disks, triangles and grids. In Xul's work this type of composition always had a very specific meaning. The seven planets, identified by their symbols or corresponding letters, are represented here as transparent masks. Whether Xul painted this work in Munich or Paris is

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difficult to determine. He returned to Paris in 1924.[107] Theater themes appeared in other works of this period. In Septuplets, the mask-like faces might have derived from the pantomime theater in Munich in which actors wore masks.[108]

Theater Themes and Stratified Paintings

The more concrete and modeled style of some of Xul's 1924 paintings lead to the conclusion that they were done in Paris. In March of that year, he had participated in the exhibition at the Musée Galliera,[109] organized by the Maison de l'Amerique Latine, and probably went there at that time. Scenery of 1924 (Fig. 200) incorporates several meanings ranging from that of a mundane stage, to a spiritual realm. The type of space in this work reflects Léger's near contemporary landscapes. Xul might also have known of Léger's sets for Blaise Cendrars' Ballet Nègre, la création du monde which was produced in Paris in 1923.[110] In Paris Xul would also have associated with Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes both of whom were there at the time. The latter was studying with André Lhote and would have provided a link with Léonce Rosenberg's circle.

The Brancusian appearance of the double head in the foreground of Scenery reminiscent of Brancusi's The Kiss, and the accordion-shaped columns and lamp-posts resembling his Endless Column, indicate that more than likely, Xul painted it in Paris. The two foregound heads,

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joined by an "X" for the kiss and Xul's signature--Xs occur in various other ways throughout the painting--also recall his earlier couples with merging heads as well as Brancusi's sculpture. Other elements in this work represent a new way of expressing older themes. A stage-like floor decorated with intercrossed bands of color, leads the eye to a central pavilion supported by columns. Beneath, stands the small figure of the actress, primadonna, or Diva. Curved intercrossed bands appear on an upright panel representing the backdrop. The man-made contents of the picture are reinforced by a Futurist concession to human ingenuity in the representation of a moon whose light is dimmed by the electric street lights.

A new form of stratification makes its appearance in A Couple and Colonial House of 1924. Both paintings are known by their French titles, Un couple and Maison coloniale. Although these paintings show a link with Léger's near contemporary treatment of figures interlocked within the landscape as in Les Pêcheurs and L'Homme au chien[112] both of 1921, the association of Xul's 1924 works with Klee is far greater. Klee had used horizontal color bands and stratifications in several works. Color bands are evident in Moon Game (1922) and stratifications, in Cosmic Flora (1923) (Figs. 201 & 202). Other similarities between Xul's and Klee's work of this period such as the Xs cannot escape notice. In both A Couple and Colonial House, the images appear interlocked within densely packed

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and shaded bands which read from the bottom up. Unlike Couple of 1923 (Fig. 189), A Couple (Fig. 203) shows two separate figures, a dressed man and a woman with heavy pendant breasts who gaze at each other. The types reflect the proportions of African sculpture and Picasso's analytic Cubist works. The woman in Xul's painting is African but the man is European. This painting suggests a physical rather than a spiritual world. But esoterically, time is implied if one reads The Couple as a spiritual development from the "earth-bound" lower bands containing the two figures' legs, to the highly placid blue band in which their heads are located. The female is also symbolized by a half moon. An apple near by her head identifies the couple as Adam and Eve. The painting represents all the stages leading towards redemption. The rhythmic arrangement of lines, bands and disks analogous to Klee's graphic use of musical scores,[113] also suggests that Xul had intended something similar.

In Colonial House of 1924 (Fig. 204), which incorporates the decorative accordion-like architectural elements of Scenery and the dense horizontal stratifications of A Couple, Xul had likewise integrated what appears to be a musical score of complex baroque timing. The Baroque association would correspond to the colonial period of Latin America. But also one should not dismiss the Theosophical interpretation, that of a "colony" in a new age, suggesting a place colonized by

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beings who survived the previous age. In Colonial House Xul had disguised some of the images within the bands so that they alternately emerge and disappear. Some of the figures within the painting are difficult to detect at a first glance. The complicated architecture combines the pointed arch of a Gothic cathedral with the animated curved forms of Baroque architecture, along with turrets, small chapels like those found in Mexican colonial churches, and pagoda-like roofs. A "light" visible inside a portal identifies the space as a place of enlightenment analogous to the earlier grottos. Although references to light in Xul's work had their own intrinsic meaning, their frequent occurrence indicates a preoccupation he shared with Pettoruti, Curatella-Manes and Figari.

The image in Colonial House also corresponds to those described in Xul's visions, written in Neo-Creole with contractions and compound words. The earliest known of these to be published dated 11 December 1925, 12 1/2 h., described a flight into a "rose-colored crepuscular region" from where Xul saw "multitudes of denuded roofs" which run, roll, slide or reemerge from "gray cloud levels of various heights," in all directions, inter-crossing and separating. He also described a "great red temple," which rises like many grottos, with "stalagmites, columns, obelisks, towers and appendices some as high as two-hundred meters."[114] The colors he described in the visions--carmines, red ochers, rose, yellow, light

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greenish yellow, blues, and violets--are the spectrum colors he used in his watercolors in glazes and multiple transparencies.

Travel Imagery and the Great Temple of America

The inclusion of architectural elements decorated with multiple bands of color occur in other works of 1923 and 1924. Edificio (Bau) of 1923, whose title in both Spanish and German reflected his awareness of Bauhaus experiments,[115] represents a pyramidal structure very much like the Maya temple at the Guatemalan site of Tikal. According to García Romero, it is an example of Xul's "religious architecture," and he compared it to a Summerian ziggurat. However, he explains, the color is not used as it was on ziggurats, but rather in a manner evoking the colors of the flags of the American countries:

> This edifice then comes to be the Great Temple of America, with the respective guardian spirits of each country, represented by the heads located in the upper section of the six layers which forms the stepped pyramid.[116]

Xul, like Pettoruti, seems to have considered returning to his country at least two years before he actually did. In 1922, he painted Añoro Patria (I Miss My Land) (Fig. 205), representing a boat with men rowing, birds, a crocodile, a flag and tall standards. Although this painting is clearly related to the Bark of Isis (Fig. 184), here the mystical voyage of Isis is replaced by the theme of a transatlantic voyage home. A similar scene

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occurs in The Farewell of 1923 in which a figure on the shore waves to sailors departing on a schooner under a shining sun. A crocodile appears in both paintings as it did in the Bark of Isis, but in Añoro Patria, it may allude less to the potential for good and evil than to the fauna of the new world.

When Xul Solar met Pettoruti in Hamburg for the crossing, in July 1924, he had come from Munich where he was apparently living again following his return from Paris. He had left some of his belongings there[117] as Pettoruti had done in Paris, with the intention of returning within a short time. But when he went back to Argentina, it was for good.

The Return and a First Showing

In Buenos Aires Xul first stayed in a centrally located hotel on the Avenida de Mayo. Shortly after, he moved first to Cabildo Avenue in the northside not far from where Borges was living at the time, and later to Laprida Street nearer the center where he was to live for the rest of his life.[118] He had brought back numerous watercolors which he had planned to exhibit with Pettoruti. In August 1924, La Razón announced that they would exhibit together.[119] The extent of Xul's disappointment after Pettoruti arranged for his own exhibition without including him, is difficult to determine except through the word of others. At any rate

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he abandoned painting for several months. His next works are dated 1925.[120]

He apparently made no further attempt to arrange for an individual exhibition of his work. Instead he showed sixty-five watercolors and temperas in a group in the Primer Salón Libre at the Witcomb a few days after Pettoruti's opening in October. The other artists in the group were described by Atalaya as "well intentioned, spirited youths" who attempted to break with the mundane world of the Salón Nacional to create a group where all "modalities" were acceptable. But their work was "bad, mediocre and terrible" compared to Xul's which he found captivating for their "imaginative verve" with which his paintings were "illuminated." Atalaya wrote:

> The most curious and unusual contribution was the work of Xul Solar. . . . One would have to go back to Lautréamont to find anything similar that accords rhythmically with the spirit of Xul. We would have to go back to the currents of sacred rivers of past ancient civilizations that existed in Asia, to find something as complicated and of such a child-like ingenuousness as this painting. We would have to remember our dreams, the freakish nightmares produced by hashish and opium, in order to decipher the enigma of these pictures, or better still, remember our golden childhood, when with spontaneous ingenuity, we drew scrawls which enchanted and delighted our elders.

He found Xul's art to be the strange art "of children's dreams" and wrote that Xul was reacting to "our excess of culture" by returning "to the origins of the rudimentary arts of the savages of primitive races."[121]

If Atalaya was able to respond, and bring some

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understanding to Xul's paintings in 1924, others were not. According to Atalaya, "malicious scorn" was shown by "those who pretend to be painters."[122] With the exception of Pettoruti who apparently wrote about Xul's exhibition,[123] other writers completely ignored him including those of Martín Fierro. One of the problems confronting critics was undoubtedly that of how to classify his work. It was neither Cubist nor Futurist, nor could it be described with the terminology of figurative art. Only much later did critics attempt to fit his work into the Expressionist or Surrealist contexts.[124] At most, people accepted his creative freedom and poetic world, but Xul's inventive capacity presented a challenge people "were not in condition to take on nor understand" since they could not understand European art either. They merely dismissed him affectionately as a strange person, and considered him as a "literary intruder into the world of painting."[125] Some years later Xul elaborated his own theories about an art style. He wanted to create a "rainbow" of schools, since "all the 'schools' are legitimate although partial, like each of the spectrum colors." He deliberately rejected the standard vocabulary of art criticism[126] as inadequate.

His distaste for commercialization, which he felt, robbed one of one's freedom, led him to discourage potential buyers of his art. Borges and Girondo both acquired some of his paintings either as gifts or for very

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little money. But the works were small and Girondo lost some. Xul's preference for watercolor over oil was due in part to the fact that he associated oil with the materialism of fifteenth-century Flemish painters whose "bourgeois" interests led them to "represent the diverse material substances of objects."[127] He was not painting a material world. Since he never earned a living through his art, in order to survive, besides editorial work, he resumed doing translations as he had done in Italian monasteries, and probably began at that time to erect horoscopes. Both Ulyses Petit de Murat and Pettoruti mention his involvement with astrology with some degree of skeptical humor. A fellow "Martínfierrista," Francisco Luis Bernardez, recalled taking long walks with Xul during which he would point his "knowledgeable long finger" up at the stars and would name them and "immediately enumerate their attributes, properties, power . . . Xul Solar pointed them out with religious care, with no sign of the usual frivolity."[128] For Xul astrology also represented one of the most universal systems of writing and communication between people. He sought a system of painting which could be constantly modified and enriched by astrology, something like the chinese and japanese artists did with calligraphy. He later painted portrait horoscopes.

When Xul took up painting again in 1925, he introduced diagrammatic and match-stick figures like some

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of Klee's. He began a series in which he also adapted the rainbow style of his 1924 "stage" scenes to the theme of dance. That year he painted Ronda and two versions of San Danza in which the dances take place in abstract, non material space. The stage, present in his earlier work is completely abolished. Instead, he returned to the dimensionless space of his German period. In Ronda (Fig. 206), seven figures resembling paper cut-out figures, with bands, spheres, arrows, flags, a lunar crescent, surrounded by swastikas and six-pointed stars, move in a round or rather spiral dance. Although Xul had stopped using letters and numbers in much of his work after 1924, the numbers were implicit in the subject itself, such as the seven figures in Ronda. Years later he again incorporated letters and numbers in a series called "grafías" in which he integrated different alphabets with images. In Ronda a cauldron-like vessel, the "sacred cup of knowledge" like the one that appeared in Nana Watsin, informs the viewer of the spiritual nature of the dance. The figures dance in an ever ascending circle which Theosophically represents the immortal aspect of humans and the cyclic chain, the seven planets, the seven "rounds" or cycles through which the seven figures progressively ascend.[129]

Similar symbols appear in the two versions of San Danza (Figs. 207 & 208), or sacred dance. Xul's introduction here of "match stick" figures may have

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correspond to the adoption by the editors of Marín Fierro in 1925 of stylized decorative borders of Pre-Columbian motifs, as for instance rows of llamas from Peruvian textiles (Figs. 209 & 210) of human figures taken from Peruvian Mochica pottery (Fig. 211). In the first version of San Danza, two puppet-like musicians accompany the dance of two couples surrounded with some of the customary symbols. In the second, two foreground figures, one of which holds a spear, stand like guardians while three others dance. The appendages, the radiating star-shaped headdresses and the lunar crescent of the dancing figures, suggest a species from a more primitive culture to which Xul also adapted his style.

Amigos del Arte and Marinetti in 1926

In 1926 when Xul exhibited in the semi-Futurist exhibition at Amigos del Arte and in the newly opened La Peña on the occasion of Marinetti's visit, he was mentioned for the first time as a painter in the pages of Martín Fierro. He had been one of the signers in 1925 of the announcement for the abortive Salón de Arte Moderno, which may have helped to bring his art to the attention of his colleagues. Norah Borges, like Xul, had not been recognized as a painter either by the "Martínfierristas"--although she had been as an illustrator--until the 1926 exhibition at Amigos del Arte.

The challenge Xul's paintings presented to the

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critics was apparent in comments by some of the Martín Fierro writers. Although Pedro Blake had praised Xul's work in the July issue, writing that the "extravagance" of his fantasies, which "disguises obscure metaphysical harmonies, constitutes the most innocent language by this great spirit who lives beneath the realm of the stars with the clear smile of 'the beyond' in his eyes," Alberto Prebisch was more cautious. In his review of the Amigos del Arte exhibition in the same issue, Prebisch referred fleetingly to Xul Solar's "mysterious and symbolic" art, as he had to "the poetic intention and the gently sentimental drawings" of Norah Borges. In view of the very diverse examples in the exhibition, he felt obliged to "consider with skepticism the principles that pretend to situate uncompromisingly the limits and precise sources of artistic emotion." He found the absence of a common style disturbing. The eclecticism of an exhibition which included Pettoruti, Borges, Xul and himself with Vautier and Piero Illari, led him to realize that the artists demonstrated "that the modern accent can manifest itself under contradictory appearances, in works which reveal the most opposed temperament."[130] In spite of Xul Solar's close ties with the Martín Fierro writers, the 1926 mentions were to be the last and only references to him as an artist. Not until 1949 did Jorge Luis Borges pay tribute to his art by writing the catalogue introduction for his first individual exhibition at the Galería

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Samos.[131]

While many of the works Xul exhibited at Amigos del Arte in 1926 were the customary themes which he had painted earlier such as Angel and Scenery reproduced in the July issue of Martín Fierro (Fig. 212), others seemed to have been deliberately selected--or even painted--with some degree of humor, especially for Marinetti's benefit. Although the stick figures in Barbaros and Milicia, both of 1926, follow the pattern set in 1925 in the two versions of San Danza, both these paintings are unusually militant. The walking and running warriors in Milicia (Fig. 213) seem derived from a composite of ancient cultures including north coast Peruvian, whose pottery designs of Mochica or Chimu warriors (Fig. 211) represent them as wearing crescents on their helmets as symbols of a moon cult.[132] The more chaotic arrangement of the stick figures in Barbaros (Fig. 214) and their primitive arrows, shields, feathers and costumes indicate an earlier culture unschooled in more modern military strategies. Xul chose to represent them in the diagrammatic bird's-eye views characteristic of ancient Egyptian low relief battle scenes.

Friendship with Borges

Although Xul Solar had known Borges since 1924, their friendship blossomed especially after 1926 through Xul's association with Borges' sister Norah Borges in the

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Amigos del Arte Exhibition. Borges and Xul began meeting on a regular basis and Xul visited the Borgeses frequently. Years later Norah recalled that "he ate very little in order to prepare for the next world and to have better visions."[133] Borges would walk for many blocks to visit Xul, who lived on Cabildo Avenue, at the time, and Xul in turn accompanied Borges home at night. They were "real peripatetic lovers of instructive walks" and they formulated many of their ideas in this manner. The nature of their conversations was recorded in two lines from a poem Borges wrote with his cousin Guillermo: "With Xul, on the street called Mexico / We did reform the lexicon."[134]

As a result of their meetings, they shared a growing interests not only in linguistics, but also in the cultural modifications a language undergoes in different locations. In 1928, Borges published El idioma de los argentinos, one of three books of his to be illustrated with vignettes by Xul.[135] The book offers an argument and a demonstration of the differences between Spanish as spoken in the mother country and in Argentina, the latter modified by its own frame of reference and by local usage. The subject of the book reflected Xul's own interest in creating a flexible linguistic system open to further spontaneous invention. Xul drew four floating images representing masks surmounted by flags and sometimes small figures from whose mouths issue arrows or long tongues.

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One of these (Fig. 215) shows a dragon-like creature composed of three adjoining masks so that it looks backwards and forwards simultaneously. Such tongue-like appendages appear on hybrid creatures in designs from ancient south coast Peruvian pottery (Fig. 216) and textiles. More than at any other time, Xul and Borges who were both universalists, expressed an interest in their own culture as distinct from other cultures.

The Search for a New World Language

Xul's growing sense of cultural identity manifested itself in a "constant obsession" with Latin American unity, and led him to design a Latin American flag consisting of the spectrum colors, not like a conventional banner, but as separate streamer-like bands.[136] The subject of Hispano-Americanism and cultural independence among intellectuals in Buenos Aires received some of its impetus in 1925 when a group of writers from the periodicals Nosotros and Martín Fierro created an organization called the "Fundación de la Unión Latinoamericana" and published a statement of a political order in Proa declaring their wish for cultural and economic independence not only from Spain, but also from the "capitalist" nations.[137]

Xul's hopes for Latin American unity however, were of a loftier order, involving "a better civilization for better people . . . a civilization of heaven in a better

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race."[138] In 1927 he painted several watercolors on this theme. One of these, Otro Drago (Another Dragon) (Fig. 217), is clearly related to his vignettes for Borges' book and was probably done at the same time. Esoterically the dragon, like the serpent, symbolizes wisdom, immortality and rebirth, and in the Middle Ages, it was an alchemical symbol. Xul represented a double dragon, the lower representing the water from which emerge boats, fish and sailors signaling with flags. The upper dragon is the sky with stars, a sun, a lunar crescent, flags of the different American countries, not all Latin American, and a head resembling a hydroplane wing with a forked tongue. The dragon resembles the paper dragons used by the Chinese to celebrate the arrival of the new year.[139]

According to Madame Blavatsky, the double image symbolizes the "dragon of wisdom" and was another name for the Chinese counterpart of a trinitarian group involving a "son identical with his father." Xul represented this configuration as the reuniting of heaven and nature in the two dragons or the "father and son."[140] But as was often the case, Xul injected a note of humor in some of the details, namely the keys to propel the boats. It is hard to confirm whether Xul had intended the dragon's mouth to resemble a hydroplane wing or not. In all probability, he had. Just the previous year, the historical cross-Atlantic flight of two Spanish flyers in a hydroplane, the Plus Ultra, bridging the way for the first time "between

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the mother country, Spain and her favorite daughter the Argentine Republic," had been much publicized.[141] Otro Drago anticipated some of his double-realm paintings of the thirties in which flying hybrids of humans and cities float above ground. In Vuel Villa of 1936 for instance (Fig. 218), one recognizes the earth and sky realms and some of the elements of Otro Drago in an overtly humorous context. Xul's preoccupation with American unity found expression in Manifesto of 1927 (Fig. 219) in which flags of the Latin and other American nations grow out of the heads of stick-figures each with an arm ending in an arrow. In Southern Cross and Round Dance, a watercolor mixed with pen and ink and colored crayon (Fig. 220), Xul incorporated dancing figures similar to those of San Danza, wearing various star-shaped headdresses, into a starry realm above a serpent. The serpent in this work stretched out beneath the dancers, is the sky serpent of the ancient Peruvian cultures, indicating the lofty nature of the dance and Xul's synthesis of European with pre-Columbian mysticism. Theosophically, the new world is where the last two of the seven "root" races are to occur in a final perfected stage.[142] The southern cross, visible only in the southern hemisphere, and the figures exude a phosphorescent glow like that described in his visions. In 1925 he had written about "returning" from a vision like an endless "cloud of fire." Likewise Rudolph Steiner wrote of the "densification" of the human body in

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its earthly state as "gas-like" because of its composite of water with the sun's heat which he said, had been described in "mystery science" as "fire mist."[143]

Carpa Fiesta (Tent Celebration) of 1927 (Fig. 221), a fanciful structure with odd-shaped doors, windows, multicolored turrets, chimney stacks, antennae, tall posts and flags surrounded by a moat, is an example of his "religious architecture." But here it is a temporary structure for a transitory state whose cloud-like surroundings separating it from a distant starry sky, suggest a vision. Xul had described a vision in which he saw "a very high temple, with columns and many floors."[144] The altar-like entrance to this, and other such "religious" buildings painted by Xul, anticipated the "various wooden altars with doors, painted with pure colors, representing the different planes of consciousness," which Xul constructed in the forties.[145]

In 1929 Xul exhibited in a two-man show for the first time at Amigos del Arte. By the late twenties, Xul's work could be acknowledged in the context of Surrealism. The other exhibiting artist, Antonio Berni, was a Surrealist at the time. Of the sixty-two watercolors Xul exhibited, several were on the subject of cities, a theme he had first taken up in 1924. The cities he depicted were usually places where good and evil co-existed.[146] The Dantesque character of his cities was to become a feature in some of Leopoldo Marechal's

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writings.[147] Xul also participated in the Nuevo Salón exhibitions organized by Guttero. A work included in the 1929 exhibition at Amigos del Arte identified only as "Watercolor" (Fig. 222), shows an intricately detailed urban night scene filled with complex and unstable scaffoldings, ladders, masks, flags, planets, strange aerial mechanisms and points of view, and small figures either hanging from the scaffolding or standing on one another's shoulders. The hanging men were probably derived from the "hanged man" in the Tarot deck. Xul had taken up the Tarot in 1927 as a result of his interest in the Cabala.[148]

The theories Xul reflected in his paintings remained constant throughout his life although his style of presenting them underwent modification. One of the last works to manifest the characteristics of his European sources was Palacio en Bria of 1932 (Fig. 223). The treatment of space and planes in this work is rather similar to those in Pettoruti's paintings of the same year. Both artists reflected their urban environment at that time. After that, Xul's work developed from intellectual rather than visual sources. At the time, he had no parallel among painters in his city themes. Rather he shared the urban theme with the writers. However Xul's cities and spaces were not wholly of a material order. "Bria" is a Cabalistic word meaning the world of creation of angelic choirs. Xul explained "Bria" in a glossary of

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Neo-Creole terms published in Azul in 1931 as meaning "the world of souls" which he called "mundo almi."[149] The scene represents a labyrinthine space whose inhabitants correspond to those of his visions. In the foreground is the skull on the hill of Golgotha. Golgotha means "skull" in Hebrew. Its presence is eschatological as is the Latin cross which appears twice, upright and inverted amid the constellations.

Xul as Writer and Literary Protagonist

For Xul, writing and painting were part of the same process. But it was not until the fifties that he succeeded in creating a means to fuse the two in his "grafías," a series of paintings combining images and global alphabets. In the twenties, he contributed to several journals but most of his writings were for Martín Fierro. The other "Martínfierristas" came to rely on his advice and linguistic abilities. But his published production was not extensive. The totality of his writings still remain unknown to the public since the major portion of it is contained in his unpublished visions.

Among the articles he wrote for Martín Fierro besides the one on Pettoruti, he contributed a cryptic farewell letter to Marechal when the latter left the staff of Martín Fierro to go to Europe in early 1927, an article on Christian Morgenstern, and he was preparing one on

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Novalis when the magazine folded. Many of his contributions were partially written in Neo-Creole interspersed with enough Spanish to maintain intelligility.

All of his writings carefully disguised his theories beneath a layer of humor. His letter to Marechal explained by means of a convoluted story and plays on words, why he could not be present personally to embrace him before his departure, but nonetheless he "psychoembraced" him and hoped they would "frecuenreunir por los suenipaises por los taqupaíses de fantasía." These compound words meaning that he hoped they would be "frequently reunited in the countries of dreams and of fantasy which they pass in rapid succession,"[150] characterized his conversations with the poets as well as his own writings.

In his article interpreting aspects of Morgenstern's book Stufen (Stages) for the March 1927 issue of Martín Fierro, he disguised some of his own Theosophical notions. Morgenstern who died in 1914, like Xul, was a linguist, a poet, a painter and a follower of Rudolph Steiner whose lectures he had attended.[151] The subject gave Xul the opportunity to air some of his own views in a satire of "bourgeois" people who were, according to Morgenstern, unaware of their own divinity. What the average couple does upon entering heaven, Xul wrote, is to request post cards with views. He concluded

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that "for many people there is but one cure--catastrophe,"[152] which corresponds to the Theosophical theory of cataclysmic endings and beginnings. Xul's interest in the eighteenth-century romantic poet Novalis was shared by Borges, who had cited Novalis on linguistic points in El idioma de los argentinos. Xul's article on Novalis was announced for February 1928 in the last issue of Martín Fierro but neither the issue nor Xul's article were published. Evidently Xul and Borges had discussed Novalis since they had written about him at the same time. However while Borges' interest in Novalis was primarily for linguistic reasons, Xul's was because he shared with Novalis the notion that dream was of primary importance "because it revealed the most profound stratum of existence."[153]

Xul Solar's influence on the Martín Fierro writers was especially evident in the work of Borges, Macedonio Fernandez and Leopoldo Marechal. However, outside of their shared lexical interests, the full impact of Xul's complicity was less evident in the writings of Borges until the forties, when it manifested itself in Borges' Ficciones. It was especially evident in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," a story about a fictitious planet discovered by chance in an encyclopedia entry.[154]

Svanascini compared Xul's plays on words, modifications of language, syllabic tricks and lettrism modified or assimilated in onomatopoeias, to these devices

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in the work of Huidobro, James Joyce, Henri Michaux and Girondo.[155] Xul's taste for neologisms and compound words was not uncommon in the twenties and was shared by Leopoldo Lugones.[156] However, the writer who was most directly indebted to Xul was Macedonio Fernandez who referred to him as an "exquisite star-spangler of heavens and languages."[157] Fernandez described the system he used in writing a novel as having been processed through Xul by presenting him with many disconnected words which are to form a sentence, then passing the sentence "immediately through the linguistic workshop of the singular artist Xul Solar, who will subsequently make a word of it." Fernandez said that going to visit Xul was like frequenting a "workshop called 'Languages Repaired Here.'"[158] Fernandez also credited Xul with having helped him write the "least understood book in the world," Papeles de recienvenido of 1929, since Xul had invented a "language of noncommunication, his unintelligible neocriollo." He wrote that "once the world gets hold of Xul Solar's language, anyone will be able to write unintelligible books."[159]

However, this unintelligibility in the work of Fernandez was carefully devised to "provoke the reader's active participation in the act of novelistic creation"[160] just as Xul's riddles were designed to engage the viewer in the interpretation. Significantly Leopoldo Marechal,

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who later made Xul one of the principal characters in a novel, had him say in the story that human intelligence was not capable of absolute nonsense because absolute nonsense belonged to the angelic order.[161] While there appears to be considerable humor in Marechal's and Fernandez's statements, as there frequently was in Xul's, in the latter's scheme, "unintelligibility" also shared with esoteric writing and the mystics a message in disguised form which would be accessible to "whoever was ready to understand it." It was in these occult terms that Xul explained Pettoruti's paintings,[162] and created his own painted messages. But in spite of the seemingly impenetrable nature of some of his paintings, he did want to be understood by his audience. Although Xul's mysticism was the exact opposite of Figari's positivistic view, both of them had sought a viable solution to the problem of expressing their culture. But more than any of the others, Xul also sought to fuse on a universal level the ancient with modern industrial culture in his art.

If his wish to create an art that would communicate something to all people was not fully realized, he sought other means with which to engage the spectator. In 1924 he had taken up chess which led some twenty years later, to his invention of pan juego (Pan Game), a game Svanascini described as a composite of chess, checkers and Japanese Shogi. The purpose of the game was to invited the active participation of the

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opponent who could play the game according to his profession or astrological sign, and as one picked up the pawns, "it could make you think ahead to a far-off time when language could be felt or thought so perfectly no words would be needed."[163]

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NOTES

[1]Until the publication of Osvaldo Svanascini's monograph Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas) in 1962, the artist was practically unknown having slipped into obscurity in the thirties. Since Svanascini's monograph, numerous other short monographs have been published. These include Aldo Pellegrini's Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Viscontea Editora, 1966), Jorge Lopez Anaya's Xul Solar, [the author was erroneously listed as J.M. Taverna Irigoyen], (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America Latina, 1980), and Svanscini's "Alejandro Xul Solar," in Arte argentino contemporáneo, ed. Gabriel Levinas, (Madrid: Unigraf, S.A., 1979). By far the most detailed monograph on Solar is Jorge O. García Romero's thesis for the degree of Licenciado in art, "Alejandro Xul Solar," (La Plata, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 1972) which was based on Svanascini's original monograph and on interviews with the artists' widow Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari. In 1963, a first major retrospective of the work of Xul Solar at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires brought his work to the attention of the public. Since then, another one took place in 1968 at the same museum and in 1977, a major retrospective was held in Paris at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. In addition to the catalogues with substantial essays by Pellegrini and Jorge Luis Borges, there have been a great number of newspaper and periodical articles. In 1975, a whole issue of the Sunday supplement of La Opinión Cultural in Buenos Aires was devoted to Xul Solar with articles by friends as well as artists of a younger generation who regarded him as a precursor of their own art. Of particular interest is an interview by Vicente Zito Lema with Xul Solar's widow in La Opinión Cultural. Jorge Luis Borges in particular, for a long time Xul's close friend has written and lectured on Xul. Because of the artist's many interests outside of painting, several writers from other disciplines have studied his production from diverse points of view. Naomi Lindstrom has written about Solar's linguistic contributions and translated into English some of his writings from Neo-Creole, a language he invented composed of Portuguese, Spanish and contractions and compound words. See for instance, Naomi Lindstrom's "Xul Solar's Synthesis," Americas, (Washington, June/July 1979), pp. 21-24 and "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review, (New York, Center for Inter-American Relations, 1980), pp. 117-121. Solar is mentioned in books by former "Martínfierristas" and is a major character in a novel by Leopoldo Marechal, Adan Buenosayres, first published in 1948 (see 5th ed., Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1973). Yet much remains unknown about Xul Solar. Because

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of the enigmatic and occult nature of his own writings, these materials have not been made public except for a limited number of works. The main portion of his writing is contained in a series of 50 visions based on what he experienced during meditation, of which only two have been published so far. Because of the absence of archival material for his early life, some of the data is missing. However with the assistance of interviews and available material, it has been possible to reconstruct some of the circumstances of Xul Solar's early life. Pettoruti's autobiography, Un pintor ante el espejo, is helpful in filling some of the information of Solar's stay in Italy.

[2]Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), La Protesta, (October [?], 1924, quoted in Atalaya), Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), pp. 83-84. The other artists who were included were Burgoa Videla, Guillermo Butler, Carlos Ripamonte, Gavazzo Buchardo, Pablo Molinari, Ayllón Pascual, Adolfo de Ferrari, Elena Bertrand, Andrés Siciliano, Augusto Marteau, Raúl Mazza, Carnacini, all of whom were conservative.

[3]Ibid., p. 267.

[4]Naomi Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review, (New York, Center for Inter-American Relations, 1980), p. 117.

[5]Jorge Luis Borges, catalogue introduction, Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Galeria Samos, July 1949), n.p..

[6]Xul Solar, "Autómatas en la historia chica," Mirador, No. 2, (Buenos Aries: June 1957), quoted in Jorge Lopez Anaya, Xul Solar, series Pintores Argentinos del Siglo XX, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 1. Xul Solar called himself the "world champion of a game nobody knows yet, I am the creator of a musical technique which permits the study of piano . . . in one third the time it takes today. I am the director of a theater that does not function yet. I am the creator of a universal language: panlengua, with a numerical and astrological base which will contribute to better understanding between people. I am the creator of twelve pictorial techniques, some of a Surrealist nature and others which bring to the painting the sensorial and emotional world which produces to the ear a musical sound. I am the creator of a language for Latin America: neocriollo with words, syllables, roots of the two dominant languages, Castillian and Portuguese. See Gregory Sherwood, Mundo Argentino, No. 8, (Buenos Aires, 1 August 1951).

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[7]Gilbert Chase, Contemporary Art in Latin America, (New York: The Free Press, 1970), p. 133; Leopoldo Marechal, Adan Buenosayres, see 5th ed., (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana. 1973).

[8]Ulyses Petit de Murat, Noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), p. 154.

[9]Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), p. 256; Osvaldo Svanascini, Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinos, 1962), p. 49.

[10]Luis Felipe Noé, "Cuatro devociones," La Opinión Cultural, (Buenos Aires, Sunday 15 June 1975),p. 3.

[11]Osvaldo Svanascini, Xul Solar, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962).

[12]See for instance Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962; Oliverio Girondo, El periódico Martín Fierro 1924-1949, (Buenos Aires: La dirección de Martín Fierro, printed at Don Francisco A. Colombo, Hortiguera 552, 1949); Eduardo González Lanuza, Los Martínfierristas, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1961). Besides press reviews of the twenties, all the later accounts of the "Martínfierristas" cited Xul Solar as a vanguard painter.

[13]A discussion of Xul Solar's esthetic theories can be found in a statement entitled "Explica," published in the catalogue for his exhibition of September 1953 at the Van Riel Gallery in Buenos Aires. See also Jorge Luis Borges, "Discurso," Xul Solar: Exposición Homenaje, catalogue introduction, (La PLata: Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes, 1968) and Naomi Lindstrom, "Xul Solar's Synthesis," Americas, (Washington, June/July 1979), p. 22.

[14]Interview with Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980; Svanascini, (1962), p. 8. Svanascini wrote that Xul Solar spoke German, English, French, Italian, Portuguese and probably Russian. He was also known to have some knowledge of Sanskrit.

[15]Jorge O. García Romero, "Alejandro Xul Solar," (unpublished thesis for the degree of Licenciado in Art, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 1972), pp. 4-6. García Romero claims that Solar had read Aleister Crowley at that time also.

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[16]Ibid., pp. 6-8. García Romero speculates that Xul cut short his trip because of sudden ill health. Solar's father sent his mother a monthly allowance to Zoagli. He died in 1925, within a year of Xul Solar's return to Buenos Aires. See also Svanascini, p. 33. Svanascini and García Romero believed Xul Solar had originally hoped to go to Tibet to become a Lamaist monk. See also Lopez Anaya, Xul Solar, p. 2; Luis Pazos, "Sesenta años después lo reconocen en Paris," Somos, (Buenos Aires, 6 June 1977), p. 38; and I. Sorrentino, La Patria degli Italiani, (Thursday 17 June 1926), archives of Lía Pettoruti del Carril.

[17]Svanascini, p. 33; Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 16 October 1926; Thelia Conrad de Behar, "Solar - Creative Visionary," Buenos Aires Herald, Thursday 1 June 1978), p. 9.

[18]Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 16 October 1980. Aleister Crowley had been invited in 1912 to become the English head of the Order of the Templi Orientis founded by the German Theodor Reuss and to which Steiner had originally belonged. See Zaniah, Diccionario Esotérico, 3rd cor. and exp. ed., (Buenos Aires: Editorial Kier, S.A.), p. 338. Xul Solar could have met Crowley several times before the war in England and Germany. In 1914 Crowley went to the United States for the duration of the war. In 1920 he founded the Abbey of Thelema in Cefalu, Sicily but was evicted from Italy by Mussolini in 1923. In 1929 he was expelled from France. See Aleister Crowley, The Magical Diaries of Aleister Crowley, ed. Stephen Skinner, (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1979), pp. 12-13. After the war Crowley became addicted to heroin but later broke the habit. Crowley had visited India and China and like Madame Blavatsky and George Gurdjieff in whom Xul Solar was also interested, had sought a synthesis of eastern with western religious doctrines. But Crowley placed emphasis on Sinology, numerology and astrology, the latter of which Madame Blavatsky rejected. She made a distinction between what she called "Astrology" and "Astrolatry" which "later found itself prostituted in the public thoroughfares." (Blavatsky, The Esoteric Writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, previously published as Volume V of The Secret Doctrine, ed. H. Leslie-Smith, [Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980: 274].

[19]Crowley wrote that "Magick is the link between Spirit and Matter . . . . I saw Magick as a [Felicien] Rops." He admired Rops' "lusty" representations of women. See Crowley's Magick, reprint of the original 1929 edition, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1976), p. 27.

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[20]Jorge Luis Borges, catalogue introduction, Xul Solar, Samos, (Buenos Aires, July 1949). Borges compared him to Blake, because "Xul Solar renews. . . the mystical painting of those who do not see with physical eyes in the sacred ambit of Blake, of Swedenborg, of Yoguis and the bards." Also see Peter Selz, ed., Art Nouveau. Art and Design at the Turn of the Century, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959), pp. 13, 148-149.

[21]He had tried to enlist as a male nurse at the front but the French authorities discouraged foreigners from such services. See Svanascini, (1962), p. 34 and Juan Jacobo Bajarlía, "El hombre que leía las estrellas," Clarín, (Buenos Aires, Thursday, 5 June 1975). Page numbers are given when available.

[22]Francisco Luis Bernardez, "Xul Solar," Clarín, (30 January 1969), p. 49. According to Mrs. Schulz Solari, some of the information in this article is inaccurate. Bernardez who had been a close friend of Xul's claimed that he had known Modigliani, Picasso and Apollinaire personally, but she denied it. Although he knew their work and had books on many artists, he apparently did not meet them. It is difficult also to verify just when Bernardez's description of Xul in Paris applied, whether it was before the First World War, or when Xul returned there in the twenties. See also García Romero, p. 10. It is more than likely that before the war Xul would have become aware of many artists' interest in the Fourth Dimension and non-Euclidean geometry. See Linda Dalrymple Henderson's The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art. These concepts were widely read and discussed and stories about the Fourth Dimension were also popularized in articles.

[23]See Ricardo Güiraldes, Obras Completas, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1962), p. 49; "Lugones," Capitulo, No. 43, series La Historia de la literatura argentina, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 27; Theodore Wayne Jensen, "The Pythagorean Narrative of Darío, Nervo and Lugones," PhD dissertation, (State University of New York, Buffalo, 1976), pp. 64 & 102. As a Free Mason, Lugones rose to the thirty third degree. As a follower of Theosophy, he rose to the position of Secretary of the Argentine branch "luz" of the Theosophic Society in 1900. He was acquainted with Helena Blavatsky and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, the founder of the American Theosophical Society.

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[24]Graciela Taquini, Guillermo Butler, series Pintores argentinos del siglo XX, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 2; Emilio Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar/Hachette, 1968), p. 100.

[25]García Romero, pp. 51-56.

[26]See for example Gabriele Sterner, trans. Frederick G. Peters & Diana S. Peters, Art Nouveau, (Woodbury: Barron's, 1982), pp. 40-41.

[27]See Gardner's Art Through the Ages, vol II, pb. 7th ed., rev. Horst de la Croix and Richard G. Tansey, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1980), p. 715.

[28]See Robert Goldwater, Symbolism, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979), p. 251.

[29]Jorge Luis Borges, "Hommage a Xul Solar," exhibition catalogue, (Paris: Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1977), n. p.

[30]Zaniah, Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 200-201; Peter Selz, ed., Art Nouveau, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1959), p. 118, see Candlestick of c. 1900 by Olbrich; Helena Blavatsky, The Esoteric Writings of Blavatsky, (Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), pp. 81 & 372, and The Secret Doctrine, Vols. I & II, a facsimile of the original ed. of 1888, (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Co., 1925), I-127, I-276 & I-4, [note there are two reprint editions of this work, the second was published in 1977 and will be cited as a separate work]; Vicente Zito Lema, "La cuidadora de ese mensaje," La Opinión Cultural, supplement, (Sunday 15 June 1975), p. 2; García Romero, pp. 21-22.

[31]Rudolph Steiner wrote that caves were the first dwelling places of the Lemurians as ancestors of the present race. See his Cosmic Memory, (Englewood: Rudolph Steiner Publications, Inc., 1959), p. 74.

[32]See Goldwater, Symbolism, figs. 61 & 62, pp. 62-63.

[33]Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 240-242; Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine, (1925), I-4.

[34]Aleister Crowley, Magick, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1976), p. 387.

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[35]Emilio Pettoruti, "Alessandro Xul Solari," exhibition catalogue, Mostra personale dello scultore Arturo Martini e del pittore Alessandro Xul Solari, (Milan: Galleria Arte, 1920).

[36]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 101.

[37]Marianne W. Martin, Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915, (New York: Hacker Books, 1979), p. 200.

[38]Sir James George Frazer, The New Golden Bough, ed. & notes by Dr. Theodor H. Gaster, 2nd printing, (Great Meadows, New Jersey: S. G. Phillips, Inc., 1959), p. 48; Hartley Burr Alexander, The Mythology of All Races, XI on Latin America, ed. Louis Herbert Grey, (Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1920), p. 199. I am grateful to Constance Cortez, a student in the Dept. of Art at the University of Texas in Austin, for having brought the latter to my attention.

[39]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 114.

[40]"Palabras Xul," The Bulletin Board, XXXIV / 5, published by the American Women's Club, (Buenos Aires, August 1969), pp. 10-11.

[41]See Christopher Green, Léger and the Avant-Garde, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), see pl. 5, p. 138.

[42]Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 381-382 & 475.

[43]Ibid., p. 412. According to this entry Jesus saw the snake as a symbol of wisdom. The snake symbolizes renewal because of its periodic shedding of its skin and is a metaphor for death and resurrection.

[44]See Depero's "The Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe" of 1915 in Apollonio, p. 197, and Carrá's statement, p. 91.

[45]Svanascini, (1962), p. 39; Diccionario Esotérico, p. 382. According to this source for the Theosophical "root" races, the last two are to occur in the new world. Svanascini compared the colors in Troncos to those of Franz Marc.

[46]Pettoruti, "Alessandro Xul Solari," (Milan: Galleria Arte, 1920).

[47]Ibid.; Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980.

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[48]Pettoruti, "Alessandro Xul Solari," Galleria Arte.

[49]Idem., Un pintor, p. 115. Pettoruti gives a detailed account of their economic problems and recalled that for a time they lived on bread and polenta supplied by a local restaurant.

[50]Ibid., pp. 134-135.

[51]Crowley, Magical Diaries, p. 13. At that time Crowley was on his way to Cefalu, Sicily to establish his Abbey of Thelema (the name was inspired by Rabelais). Mrs. Schulz Solari claimed that when Crowley met Pettoruti, he found his association with Xul to be a strange and unlikely one because they had so little in common (Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980).

[52]See De Chirico, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), pl. 79, p. 189.

[53]Munich Stadtmuseum, Die Zwanziger Jahre in München, exhibition catalogue, (Munich: Stadtmuseum, 1979), pp. xiii, 182-187 & 498.

[54]Art of the Twenties, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1979), p. 10; Die Zwanziger Jahre, p. 498; Pettoruti gives an account of cafe life in Munich (Un pintor: 138).

[55]García Romero places this in 1922, ("Alejandro Xul Solar:" 49), but Pettoruti's account is the more accurate here. He situates it in 1921 (Un pintor: 138). Neither identifies the school. There may have been several schools of decorative arts. However the one mentioned in Die Zwanziger Jahre is the Kunstgewerbeschule, p. 149. The poor quality of the reproductions is due to the fact that the only available source was from xerox copies in García Romero.

[56]Diccionario Esotérico, p. 438.

[57]García Romero, p. 49.

[58]Ibid., p. 10.

[59]Peter Selz, German Expressionist Painting, 3rd ed., 1st pb. ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 229. See also Rose-Carol Washton Long, Kandinsky: The Development of an Abstract Style, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1980)

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[60]Rudolph Steiner, Cosmic Memory, (Englewood: Rudolph Steiner Publications, Inc., 1959), p. 44. This and other essays by Rudolph Steiner were published originally in the review Lucifer Gnosis in 1904 under the title "Our Atlantean Ancestors," see Steiner, Cosmic Memory, p. 21 for this information. At his death, Xul Solar owned the complete writings of Rudolph Steiner. Although he may have attended some of Steiner's lectures, he never met him personally according to Mrs. Schulz Solari (Interview, Buenos Aires, 16 October 1980).

[61]Bruno Corra, "Abstract Cinema - Chromatic Music 1912," in Apollonio, p. 69; García Romero, pp. 66 & 83.

[62]Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 16 October 1980.

[63]Wassily Kandinsky, Concerning the Spiritual in Art, reprinted from the 1912 edition, (New York: George Wittenborn, Inc., 1972), pp. 30, 46, 58 & 62.

[64]Jorge Luis Borges, "Jorge Luis Borges reivindica al profeta 'que no merecemos.' Huesped de infiernos y de cielos," La Opinión Cultural, (Buenos Aires, 15 June 1975), p. 5; see also Paul Klee, The Diaries of Paul Klee, ed. and Intro. by Felix Klee, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 410; García Romero, p. 83.

[65]Some writers claimed that he had met Klee. This is difficult to confirm. But Klee is the artist Xul has been most often compared with. For Klee's interest and work in the polyphonic aspects of music, see Andrew Kagan, "Paul Klee's 'Ad Parnassum'. Arts (September 1977), pp. 90-104. Klee's interest in eighteenth century music was in part attributed to the influence of Delaunay who was also interested in incorporating musical equivalents into painting. Klee saw his work at the Munich Blaue Reiter exhibition in 1911 and met Delaunay the following year in Paris. See pp. 91 and 94 especially in Kagan's article. There is no doubt that Xul's use of color was also influenced by Delaunay.

[66]Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 16 October 1980; Stimsen may have written for the Berlin publication Der Ambruch. This possibility was suggested by Dr. Gerard Béhague of the Music Department, University of Texas, Austin.

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[67]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 114; Willett, Art & Politics, p. 68 discusses Schönberg; Adolfo de Obieta, "Otras aproximaciones," La Opinión Cultural, (Sunday 15 June 1975), p. 6.

[68]Rudolph Steiner, The Inner Nature of Music and the Experience of Tone, (Spring Valley, N.Y.: The Anthroposophic Press, 1983), p. vii. This book records lectures Steiner gave in several German cities from 1906 to 1923.

[69]Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, pp. 379, 384 & 419.

[70]In the forties, Xul rebuilt the piano keyboard to conform to the duodecimal system and to astrology, and to "facilitate" learning to play by eliminating the black half-tone notes and replacing them with three rows each of six notes of whole notes. The middle row was tuned to accomodate intermediary tones which produced a twelve-tone keyboard. He curved the notes so they could be recognized by touch and played by a "blind" person, and painted each with a corresponding spectrum color. See Svanascini, Xul Solar, (1962), p. 35; this information was also given by Mrs. Schulz Solari, 16 October 1980. Appropriately Kandinsky had written that "much theory and practice have been devoted to this question [correspondences between music and color]. People have thought to paint in counterpoint. Also unmusical children have been successfully helped to play the piano by quoting a parallel in color . . . ." See Concerning the Spiritual in Art, p. 45, n. 2.

[71]See Svanascini, (1962), p. 35.

[72]García Romero, p. 24.

[73]Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 420; Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 404 & 465.

[74]See García Romero, fig. 33, p. 67.

[75]Madame Blavatsky attributed specific colors to different beings at given stages of evolution. see Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 421.

[76]Harold Osborne, ed., The Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century Art, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 539.

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[77]Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 463. See Diccionario Esotérico, for a concise definition of "Manas," p. 291. See Crowley, Magick, p. VIII for Isis and Osiris illustrations.

[78]Crowley, Magick, p. VIII; Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 476; Lewis Spence, An Encyclopaedia of Occultism, reprint of the 1920 ed., (New York: University Books, 1960), p. 28.

[79]C. A. Burland, The Gods of Mexico, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1967), pp. 134-135. Nana Watsin or Tlazolteotl offered "perverseness" and "debauched living" as gifts in her adverse aspects but she also "enflamed" and inspired the "servants" who confessed their sins to her and she forgave them. She had the power to remove corruption upon confession. This was especially important to the Aztecs who were exceedingly puritanical. See also Diccionario Esotérico, p. 513, and for the cauldron symbolism see J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), p. 38.

[80]Ibid., p. 131; Francis Kartunnen, An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), p. 24.

[81]See for instance Rose-Carol Washton Long's article "Kandinsky's Vision of Utopia as a Garden of Love," Art Journal, (Spring 1983), pp. 50-60.

[82]García Romero, p. 12.

[83]An example can be found in Peter Selz, Art Nouveau, ill. p. 18.

[84]Lewis Spence, An Encyclopaedia of Occultism, p. 241. According to this system, the alphabet is divided into two rows. The "A" would correspond to "N" and "F" would then correspond to "S" making of the words "Venus" and "Piros." This was also noted by Constance Cortez of the University of Texas, Austin.

[85]Naomi Lindstrom, "Xul Solar's Synthesis," Americas, (Washington: June / July 1979), p. 23. Xul later wrote an article about these theories, "Algo semitécnico sobre mejoras anatómicas y entes nuevos," Lyra (Buenos Aires, 1957, see Lindstrom, "Xul Solar's Synthesis," p. 23: Xul called these redesigned females "polynursoids."

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[86]Pettoruti, Un pintor, p. 139; Interview with Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980. According to the latter, Xul had a curtain in his room in Munich which concealed a desk. Curtains appear in Idyll.

[87]Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 161, 408. According to Theosophy, the original "Monad" became separated into the two sexes and through further evolution is to be reunited as the perfected being. The third "root race" was supposed to be androgynous and became separated in the fourth, as male/female. According to Juan Jacobo Bajarlía, "Xul Solar sought to obtain . . . the first Adam, who before the fall, united both sexes" (Bajarlía, "El hombre que leía las estrellas," Clarín, [Buenos Aires, Thursday 5 July 1975: 12]).

[88]See Kandinsky at the Guggenheim Museum, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim, 1972), ill. nos. I-XII.

[89]This vision was published in Revista Imán in Paris in 1931 and was reprinted as "Poema", in the Buenos Aires literary review Xul, Signo Viejo y Nuevo, Revista de Poesia, No. 1, (Buenos Aires, October 1980), pp. 21-22. Although Xul always dated his visions with precise dates and times, this one was published with no date. The only other vision to have been published, likewise is under another title, "Apuntes de neocriollo." In 1975 they were reprinted as "Visión" and "San Signo." Mrs. Schulz Solari gave an explanation as to why only two of fifty of Xul's visions were published: "I don't think this is the moment for all of the fifty visions to be known in their totality. Now it would make no sense; people must prepare themselves spiritually for a vision; on the contrary they would reject them, they would try to disqualify them. The work of Xul is more for the future than for our present." See Vicente Zito Lema, "La cuidadora de ese mensaje," La Opinión Cultural, (15 June 1975), p. 3.

[90]Xul Solar, "Apuntes de neocriollo," published for the first time in Azul, dated 11 December 1925, 12 1 / 2 h., (Buenos Aires, August 1931), p. 201.

[91]Diccionário Esotérico, p. 246.

[92]Madame Blavatsky interpreted the Latin cross as signifying the "ineffable name," explained by St. John as the "signet of the living God," the "Father's name written on their [the initiates] foreheads." from Isis Unveiled, quoted in Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 137.

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[93]For instance in the Mixtec Codex Zouche Nuttall in the British Museum. For example see George Kubler, The Art and Architecture of Ancient America, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), pl. 54A.

[94]Steiner, Cosmic Memory, p. 60.

[95]Garcia Romero, p. 21.

[96]Vicente Zito Lema, "La cuidadora de ese mensaje," La Opinión Cultural, p. 2.

[97]García Romero, pp. 21-22.

[98]Crowley, Magick, pp. 143-146 & 387.

[99]Xul Solar, "Apuntes de neocriollo," Azul, p. 204.

[100]Steiner, Cosmic Memory, pp. 131-132; Diccionario Esotérico, p. 318.

[101]García Romero, p. 86.

[102]Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963), pp. 27-28.

[103]Steiner, originally published in Lucifer Gnossis, in Cosmic Memory, pp. 42-43.

[104]According to Córdova Iturburu, during Xul Solar's exhibition at Galleria Arte in Milan in 1920, when a woman asked him what his pictures represented, he told her they were landscapes of China and when she asked him whether, and when he had been there, he replied, "five thousand years ago." See Córdova Iturburu, Pettoruti, pp. 27-28.

[105]Diccionario Esotérico, p. 429. See also Blavatsky, Esoteric Writings, p. 194.

[106]Borges, "Discurso," Xul Solar: Exposición Homenaje, see also Lindstrom, "Xul Solar's Synthesis, "America, p. 22 and Solar, "Explica," Xul Solar, catalogue introduction, 1953 in which Xul Solar explained his theories of painting. The "Panbeldokie" as he called his total esthetic doctrine was to represent the "rainbow" of schools since "all the 'schools' are legitimate although partial, like each of the spectrum colors." He spoke of "tipiescuelas" or "tipischools," and the procedures used

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to realize a work of art which determine its "technicharacter." Naomi Lindstrom, writing about Xul's statement, noted that "his deliberate rejection of the vocabulary of art criticism underlies his determination to make a fresh conceptual start" (Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review: 119).

[107]Interview, Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980.

[108]See Die Zwanzige Jahre, p. 498.

[109]Exposicion d'Art Américain Latin, (Paris: Musée Galliera, March 1924). The catalogue lists Xul's address at the time at San Pietro at Rovetto-Zoagli, Genoa, indicating that during his travels, that was the address he considered permanent.

[110]Christopher Green, Léger and the Avant-Garde, p. 240; see also ill. of Léger's L'Homme au Chien and Les Pecheurs of 1921, p. 253.

[111]Oxford Companion, p. 75. Brancusi had carved his original Endless Column, a seven-meter high wooden structure, for the garden of Edward Steichen in the outskirts of Paris where Xul may have seen it. Between 1923 and 1926, Brancusi befriended several artists from other Latin American countries, particularly the Brazilian painters Tarsila do Amaral and Anita Malfatti. The latter was also included in the exhibition of Latin American art at the Musée Galliera

[112]See Green, Léger, figs. 167 and 168, p. 253.

[113]See for instance Kagan, "Paul Klee's 'Ad Parnassum'," Arts, p. 93.

[114]Xul Solar, "Apuntes de neocriollo," Azul, p. 202. The translations are mine. As he disengages himself from a lower realm, he rises and enters a rose-colored crepuscular region. He uses the word "subientro" to mean "risenter" or to rise, and enter. In Neo-Creole he writes that he sees "multitúes rufas desnúas corran o ruedan o glisan o d'rivan por nubiplanos gris, varialtos, p doqier, qe se cruzan epi, so i trans."

[115]Interview, Mrs. Schulz Solari, 12 November 1980. Xul owned books on the Bauhaus.

[116]García Romero, p. 28. The latter explains that this work was "un ejemplo de la arquitectura religiosa de Xul Solar. En este templo semejante a un zigurat sumerio, el color no está empleado en bandas como fuera aplicada en

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el zigurat, sino antes el simbolismo del color obedece, en la decoración, a los colores de las banderas de los paises américanos. Este edificio vendría a ser el Gran Templo de América, con los respectivos espíritus guardianos de cada país, representados por las cabezas ubicadas en la parte superior de los seis pisos que forman la piramide escalonada." It was not possible to obtain a photograph of this work but it is illustrated in García Romero, p. 28.

[117]Interview, Mrs. Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980.

[118]He first shared his Laprida Street apartment with his mother and after his marriage in 1946, with his wife. He also had a week-end retreat in El Tigre at the delta of the Rio de la Plata near San Fernando.

[119]"Dos pintores argentinos, Pettoruti - Xul Solar. Proxima exposición de sus trabajos en Buenos Aires," written in July in Paris for La Razón, (Buenos Aires, Sunday, 7 August 1924); Interview, Mrs. Schulz Solari, 12 November 1980.

[120]García Romero, p. 14 and Mrs. Schulz Solari, 12 November 1980. Pettoruti explained that initially it was agreed that Xul and he would exhibit together, but that Xul could not make up his mind, and kept putting it off, and for him, time was pressing: "En principio, era cosa convenida con Xul que expondríamos juntos; pero él no se decidía, estiraba continuamente los plazos y a mí el tiempo me apremiaba" (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 178). García Romero wrote that because of Xul's more retiring nature, he could not have withstood the scandal that occurred around Pettoruti's exhibition. Furthermore, his own work was less "vanguard" than it was a puzzle whose religious message, Xul hoped viewers would attempt to decipher.

[121]Atalaya, La Protesta, October (?), 1924, quoted in Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1934), pp. 83-84.

[122]Ibid..

[123]Svanascini cites and quotes from an article by Pettoruti on Xul Solar of 1924, but does not give the source or date of publication. See Svanascini, Xul Solar, p. 41.

[124]Later Córdova Iturburu referred to Xul's style as "poetic Expressionism" in his La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciónes Culturales Argentinas, 1962), p. 27. Romualdo Brughetti classified

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him as "Expressionist and Surrealist" in Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Formaca, S.A., 1965), p. 104. García Romero called him an "intimist" not in the sense of Vuillard and Bonnard but because of Xul's sources in Chinese painting and medieval miniatures and illuminations, p. 64.

[125]Luis Felipe Noé, "Cuatro devociones," La Opinión Cultural, (Buenos Aires, 15 June 1975), p. 3.

[126]Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review, p. 119.

[127]García Romero, p. 64. Mrs. Schulz Solari said that when he sold any it was for one hundred pesos. Borges who liked Xul's paintings offered to buy one as soon as he got paid as a journalist. Xul ended by selling his work for half the price and gave Borges another one as a gift. See Vicente Zito Lema, "La cuidadora de ese mensaje," Opinión Cultural, p. 2, and Alberto M. Perrone, "Xul Solar, el mago," La Nación, (Buenos Aires, 17 September 1978), p. 14. Xul's distaste for the commercialization of art manifested itself already in Milan when a potential collector whom Pettoruti introduced to Xul, wanted to purchase two watercolors from his 1920 exhibition in Milan. According to Pettoruti, Xul discouraged the buyer by depreciating the value of his work and as a result, the collector backed down and not a single work was sold (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 136).

[128]Francisco Luis Bernardez, "Xul Solar," Clarín, p. 49. Ulyses Petit de Murat wrote that Xul claimed to grow several centimeters taller whenever conjunctions of Venus and Mars occurred (Petit de Murat, La noche de mi ciudad: 46); and Pettoruti mentioned a horoscope Xul erected for him according to a "new system, so mixed up that he could not read it after" (Un pintor: 209). Leopoldo Marechal's character the "astrologer Schulz" in his novel Adán Buenosayres was based on Xul and the story occurs during the twenties with several Martín Fierro characters recreated under fictitious names.

[129]Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 391 & 513.

[130]Alberto Prebisch, "Marinetti en los Amigos del Arte," and Pedro Blake, "Exposiciones de pintura y escultura en 'La Peña'," both in Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), respectively pp. 3 & 7.

[131]Borges, Xul Solar, Galería Samos, catalogue introduction, (Buenos Aires, 1949).

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[132]See G.H. Bushnell, Peru, 3rd ed., Ancient Peoples and Places, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p. 79. Martín Fierro frequently reproduced Mochica pottery and other pre-Colombian art.

[133]Interview with Norah Borges, Buenos Aires, 4 November 1980. Norah recalled Xul's visits to their house in 1925. Xul and Norah apparently carried on "curious conversations." According to Ulyses Petit de Murat, Xul once suggested to her that "he might have presented himself to her at some previous time in some other form, perhaps that of a fastidious little old lady" (Petit de Murat, La noche de mi ciudad: 153). Also see Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), p. 216.

[134]Alberto M. Perrone, "Xul Solar, el Mago," La Nación, (17 September 1978), p. 14; the poem was "Itinerario de un vago porteño," signed J.L. and G.J. B(orges), Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 12: "Con Xul en la calle México / lo reformamos al léxico."

[135]See Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges, p. 216. The other books were El Tamaño de mi esperanza of 1928 and later Un modelo para la muerte published under the pseudonym B. Suarez Lynch.

[136]Ricardo Mosquera Eastman, "Otras aproximaciones," La Opinión Cultural, (Buenos Aires, Sunday 15 June 1975), p. 6.

[137]"Fundación de la Unión Latinoamericana," Proa, (May 1925), pp. 65-66. The group declared that it has no official connection with Latin American governments and that it wished complete political freedom from foreign powers which constituted a danger for the freedom of the peoples of Latin America. They rebelled against "Pan-Americanism" which they saw as antithetical to the interests of Latin America. The authors called for "a progressive political, economic and moral interpenetration in harmony with the new ideals of humanity."

[138]Vicente Zito Lema, "La cuidadora de ese mensaje," Opinión Cultural, p. 2. See also Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine, a facsimile of the original edition of 1888, (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1977) vol I, p. 472.

[139]According to the Chinese Book of Changes, the I Ching, the dragon is a symbol of "the creative" masculine principle and appears in various stages of development (The I Ching, trans. by Cary F. Baynes, foreword C.G. Jung, 3rd ed. 13th printing, [Princeton: Princeton

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University Press, 1976: 3-10]). Xul's interest in the I Ching is confirmed in a 1923 painting, The Development of the I Ching; see also Diccionario Esotérico, pp. 161-162.

[140]Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine (1977), vol I, p. 472.

[141]This event was covered in all the major dailies and is commemorated by a plaque on the outside wall of the Isaac Fernandez Blanco Museum in Buenos Aires. In the twenties this building was the residence of the arquitect Carlos M. Noél who was host to the flyers at his home.

[142]Diccionario Esotérico, p. 382.

[143]Xul Solar, "Apuntes de neocriollo," Azul, pp. 201-205; Steiner, Cosmic Memory, p. 132.

[144]Ibid.; Svanascini, Xul Solar, p. 36.

[145]Svanascini, Xul Solar, p. 36.

[146]These included Ciudá Nochi, Ciudá Pampi and San Ciudá (Nocturnal City, Pampa City and Holy City). The spelling of cuidad as ciudá in Neo-Creole reflects the popular Argentine pronunciation of ciudad by dropping the last consonant. Güiraldes spelled it that way in his novel Don Segundo Sombra in order to recreate the lingo of the gauchos. Other works of Xul Solar's to be exhibited included Creole House, Barbarians, Couple, Testa Cintas I and II, three versions of Scenery, Kioski, Puerto Periazul (Port surrounded by Blue), Tlaloc (the ancient Mexican rain god), Man-Angel, several versions of Decoras, Vasos, Ome i su Sombra (Man and his Shadow), Palacio Rojo, Plurangel (Multiple Angel), and Qetzalcoatl (the name of the Mexican Feathered Serpent, spelled phonetically).

[147]It occurs in the latter part of Leopoldo Marechal's novel Adán Buenosayres, in which he and the astrologer Schulz take a nocturnal excursion into "Cacodelfia" the evil part of the city as opposed to "Calidelfia," the good.

[148]Nuevo Salón, exhibition catalogue, (Buenos Aires and Rosario, 1929); García Romero, p. 227.

[149]Xul Solar, "Glosa," following "Apuntes de neocriollo," Azul, p. 205; Diccionário Esotérico, pp. 78 & 212.

[150]Xul Solar, "Despedida de Marechal," Martín Fierro, (20 January 1927), p. 3.

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[151]Xul Solar, "Algunos piensos cortos de Christian Morgenstern," Martín Fierro, (28 May 1927), p. 9; Erich Hofacker, Christian Morgenstern, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978), p. 78. The complete title of the book Xul was referring to was Stufen, eine Entwicklung in Aphorismen und Tagebuch-Notizen. Morgenstern's writings were published in Munich and Berlin before and after World War I.

[152]Ibid., Xul wrote that "No estamos al fin del cristismo sin a su principio. . . . El mundo es esfera que se desarrolla eterna. . . . El yo es el vertice de un cono cuya base es el todo."

[153]Jorge Luis Borges, El idioma de los argentinos, (Buenos Aires: M. Gleizer, ed., 1928), pp. 66-67; Peter Selz, German Expressionist Painting, p. 19.

[154]Jorge Luis Borges, in "Tlön Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," first published in 1941, reprinted in Ficciones, (Madrid; Alianza Editorial, 8th pb ed., 1980), pp. 13-36. Borges mentions Xul on p. 21. The fictitious planet had curious architecture, playing cards, mythological terrors and the sound of dialects. Borges writes about its emperors and its oceans, its minerals, its birds and its fishes, its algebra and its fire, its theological and metaphysical arguments. It was not a planet invented by a single creator, it was the work of a secret society of astronomers, biologists, engineers, metaphysicians, all under the supervision of an unknown genius. Their language was composed of monosyllabic suffixes, or prefixes with the force of adverbs. Tlön also had a duodecimal system so that its century was one hundred-forty-four years instead of one hundred.

[155]Svanascini, Xul Solar, pp. 13-14.

[156]In April 1924, the poet Pedro de Embeita published in Martín Fierro a "Salutación a Lugones" written in "Biscayan-Castilian" as a satiric reference to Lugones' taste for neologisms in which he included a "vocabulary" of Biscayan words that was very similar to Xul Solar's "Glosa" (glossary) of Neo-Creole words in Azul.

[157]Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review, p. 117.

[158]Macedonio Fernandez, Museo de la novela de la eterna, quoted in Lindstrom, Review, p. 117; see also Lindstrom, Macedonio Fernandez, (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska, Society of Spanish and Spanish American Studies, 1981), p. 46.

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[159]Macedonio Fernandez, Papeles de recienvenido, first published in 1929, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 2nd ed, 1967), p. 70.

[160]Lindstrom, Macedonio Fernandez, p. 59.

[61]Leopoldo Marechal, Adán Buenosayres, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudaméricana, 1973), p. 303.

[162]Xul Solar, "Pettoruti," Martín Fierro, (September - 9 October 1924), pp. 1 & 7.

[163]Svanascini, Xul Solar, pp. 16-46. According to Svanascini who had played the game with Xul, it was composed of a board of thirteen squares with the thirteenth square as a repeat of the first to correspond to his duodecimal system, and roughly carved and painted pawns corresponding each to musical notes, professions, astrological signs, religions, 10 minutes of time and 2 1/2 degrees of arc. One pawn symbolized chance and could be used at will by either player. The game could be played by stacking the pawns as well as by moving them on the board. Naomi Lindstrom translated some of Svanascini's descriptions of Xul's game and explained that Xul envisaged Pan Game, as it was called, as a means to supplement or even replace natural language since it did not limit communication through unrecognizable written words but its pawns were painted in colors with symbols which were universally recognizable. The pieces "were finely crafted but without the utilitarian perfection of ordinary games." (Lindstrom, "Xul Solar: Star-Spangler of Languages," Review: 120).

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CHAPTER IX

NORAH BORGES, A POET'S ILLUSTRATOR

When Norah Borges (b. 1901)[1] returned to Argentina from Spain in 1924, she was already known as an illustrator for Spanish Ultraist journals and for her contributions in Buenos Aires between 1921 and 1923, to Prisma and the first Proa (1922-1923). Her connection with the "Martínfierristas" was primarily as an illustrator. Shortly after her return, she began contributing drawings and prints to Martín Fierro as well as to the second Proa (1924-1926), and illustrated books of poetry for several writers including her brother and Norah Lange.[2] It was however, not until 1926 that she was acknowledged as a painter. When she first exhibited paintings and drawings in a group at the Salón Florida in 1925, her work was barely noticed by critics. But by 1926, when she participated in the semi-Futurist exhibition during Marinetti's visit and exhibited seventy drawings at Amigos del Arte later the same year, Alberto Prebisch referred to her as one of the "well-known artists of the vanguard of our country."[3] Nonetheless, although she is mentioned in most books on Argentine art, to-date Ramón Gomez de la Serna's monograph on Norah Borges remains the only study in existence of any substance.[4]

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Prebisch described the themes she exhibited at Amigos del Arte as "angels, children, adolescents with languid eyes . . . impregnated with grace and tenderness."[5] Angels as well as comets were used as subjects by both Xul Solar and Norah Borges, but in her work they were of a poetic rather than of a mystical order. Her works were small and intimate in scale, and as difficult for critics to classify as Xul's were. Her style neither fitted the Cubist nor the Futurist labels, although Cubism had been the source. The ingenuous and oneiric appearance of much of her work led some critics, particularly in the sixties, to classify her as a "Superrealist" the term used in Spain and Argentina.

Among these was Laura de San Martín, Córdova Iturburu and Ernesto Rodríguez.[6] However the Surrealist poet Aldo Pellegrini who, following his return from Paris in 1926, launched the first Surrealist literary magazine Qué in Argentina in 1928, challenged this classification. He found nothing Surrealist in the "seraphic ingenuousness" of Norah Borges' work. Her world of angels was the very opposite of Surrealism he said.[7] The most outstanding characteristic in her work was its childlike candor which was as difficult for the public to understand as was Pettoruti's Cubism. Jorge Luis Borges explained in an interview that although "she studied perspective drawing . . . people who know little or nothing about painting think of her paintings as being just scrawls done

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by a child." People were fooled "by Norah's lack of visible skills and her apparent naïveté.[8]

Predictably, the work shown at Amigos del Arte in 1926 invited mixed reviews from critics. On the one hand, the French critic Marcel Frederic appreciated the "ingenuous expressive means in the emotive quality" of her work and the variety of her subjects,[9] but on the other, it was subjected to ridicule. When Martín Fierro had reproduced her color drawing, Girls at Sunset (Fig. 242) on the front page of its December 1926 issue, an editorial entitled "El infantilismo de vanguardia" appeared in the Boedo journal Claridad denouncing it as "a calamity" and accusing Martín Fierro of making a "stupid joke" of the periodical: "La Borjes [sic]" it said, "is in the infancy of drawing, as Pedro Figari is in its senility. For this reason, such an affinity of spirit relates them."[10]

If her work was not unanimously acclaimed by journalists and critics, it received extravagant praise from poets on both sides of the Atlantic and eulogies from the "Martínfierristas" in poetic metaphors. They wrote poems to and about her as well as exalted essays about her paintings, drawings and woodcuts. In Seville in 1920, the young poets of the literary periodical Grecia "dedicated poems and homages" to her;[11] and in Buenos Aires, Francisco Luis Bernardez and the Mexican poet, Alfonso Reyes dedicated poems to her, the latter on the occasion of her marriage to Guillermo de Torre in 1928.[12]

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In 1924, Alfredo Brandán-Caraffa wrote an essay on her for Proa in which he equated her work with her person, her "soul," and music. Her whole being, he wrote, is reflected

> In her prints, her drawings, her paintings and in her tapestries. At times she seems like a personnage escaped from her own imagination. . . . she imposes on us her gentle illogic in which time struggles in vain the situate itself. . . .

The essay ended with an expansive musical analogy:

> Norah Borges, compare this name and this print, and if you love music, you will say with me: Norah Borges. It is a perfect rhythm; the name, the person, the work.[13]

In 1926 Alberto Prebisch wrote of her work that "drawing and poem harmonize in a common origin . . . the hand transfers to paper an expressive graphism, a drawing that is a poem at the same time." Without being either literary or decorative, "Norah has created a whole world of unmistakable images: the world of her personal lyric vocabulary."[14]

Guillermo de Torre, betraying his mounting romantic interest in Norah, had described her in even more extravagant metaphors. In his book Literaturas europeas de vanguardia of 1925, he wrote that "the fibers of her marvelous sensitivity are chisels that mark the diagram of her sensitive and intellectual undulations."[15] Even Norah's brother--somewhat more discretely--had included her in one of his poems, "The Day's Run" from his book Moon Across the Way of 1925, probably written on one of

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their transatlantic crossings in the early twenties. The poem ends with "On deck, quietly, I share the evening with my sister, as if it were a piece of bread."[16] Gomez de la Serna described Norah affectionately as "the disturbing girl with the same pale skin as her brother's" and Victoria Ocampo called her "ravishingly beautiful."[17]

The fact that Norah Borges was a young woman not only influenced the poets but also the critical writing about her which over the years, deprived her art of the benefit of objective analysis. Both Atalaya and Alberto Prebisch alluded to her work as "poetic, eminently feminine," or "delicately feminine."[18] Unlike Norah's bolder colleague, Raquel Forner who had herself been subjected to references to her femininity "in spite" of the apparent "masculinity of her painting,"[19] Norah had led a sheltered life within the confines of an old upper-class family. Even difficult political circumstances which were later to affect her life, did not disrupt the tranquil shell in which she had immersed herself.[20]

The Background

Norah Borges was born into a Victorian household--an old family established in Argentina since the conquest--some of whose ancestors were illustrious. She later described their home in Buenos Aires as a "very united and patriarchal" family who kept themselves tightly indoors. Gomez de la Serna recalled that she had told him

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of reunions with some of her girl friends who in the privacy of their homes, confided their secrets to one another and dedicated themselves to "playing chess." They moved "like a slow dance over the checkered pavement of the estancias." There were rooms with "sofas that devoured people, cages with stuffed birds, card tables with their jackets and false pockets" used by card-sharpers in a game of Spanish origin popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[21]

The Borgeses' home was like a family museum. It included an enormous library with "unlimited English books--their paternal grandmother was English--swords, uniforms, daguerrotypes and photographs recording their family history." Norah and "Georgie" as everyone called her brother, had an English governess and grew up bilingual. Later, Norah was to depict many times, the house of her birth on Tucuman Street close to downtown Buenos Aires, with its windmills in the garden. As a child, she was very close to "Georgie" with whom she shared games, and a taste for the imaginary. Rodríguez Monegal described the type of scenes from books which brother and sister reenacted:

> He was a prince and she the queen, his mother; standing on a staircase, they leaned over to hear the acclamations of a imaginary multitude; or they traveled to the moon in a missile built by folding a red silk Chinese screen, embroidered with golden birds and flowers, into which they tumbled after sliding down the banister of the staircase. Sometimes, they traveled dangerously on the flat roofs, searching for

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> a room where they'd never been, a mysterious place that ought perforce to exist.[22]

Norah and her brother remained close until he began to visit the Buenos Aires slums, in search of themes instead of the lovely suburbs of his earlier walks; her growing involvement with Guillermo de Torre whom she met in Madrid in 1920 further separated them. Borges was never particularly fond of de Torre.

Norah took up painting and drawing at a young age, but it was not until the family settled in Europe during and after the first world war that she turned to art as a profession. Her father had taken the family to Europe in 1914 so he could consult a specialist in Geneva about his failing eyesight, an affliction later to affect the younger Borges.[23] They went at a time when the rate of exchange was very favorable, not anticipating a war. During those years, the family traveled to Spain, England, France, particularly Paris and Geneva. When the war broke out, they were caught in Geneva where Norah and her brother attended school. There Norah also studied drawing at the Ecole des Beaux Arts with the Ukranian sculptor Maurice Sarkissoff under whose tutelage she focused on drawing heads. After three years, Sarkissoff advised her to abandon the "bad influence of the academies" and to paint by herself.[24] In the summer of 1918, her brother learned German after he had come into contact with German Expressionist writers in Switzerland as war exiles, and

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Norah learned French.[25] Whether or not she saw German Expressionist art during this time is difficult to document.

After the war, the family first moved to Lugano near the Italian border, and in 1919, traveled to Barcelona and Mallorca. In the latter place, they lived in a castle in the mountain village of Valldemosa and Norah studied with the Swedish painter, Sven Westman who was a great admirer of the style of Leonardo and through whom she absorbed Leonardo's "soft amber tones" and "modulations" according to Gomez de la Serna.[26]

Spain and Ultraism

Late in 1919, the family moved to Seville. While Borges discovered the Spanish oral literary life and its cafe gatherings, Norah looked up the Cordovan Symbolist painter, Julio Romero de Torres with whom she later studied at the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid. Romero de Torres was already well-known in Buenos Aires where his work had been included in the 1910 Centenary exhibition.[27] In the twenties, he was to live there for two years and enjoy considerable popularity as a painter.[28] His subjects were mainly women which he depicted as saints, temptresses and repentant sinners, in a style that quoted the Renaissance and Mannerist masters.

In Spain, Norah Borges began sending her woodcuts to Seville and later, Madrid journals through her brother.

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She illustrated for Tableros, Reflector, Alfar, Ultra and especially Grecia, the latter both in Seville and Madrid.[29] At the time, these journals formed a major rallying point for vanguard poets and painters just as Martín Fierro, was to in Buenos Aires. The Ultraist group was primarily a literary one and the number of artists affiliated with it was relatively small and included mainly those who contributed illustrations to the journals. Robert and Sonia Delaunay who had gone to Spain during the war, were active members of the group. They were friends of the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro who was considered a precursor of the movement.[30] Among the other artists were the Spaniards Francisco Borés and Vazquez Díaz whose works were later reproduced in Martín Fierro, two Polish painters Marjan Paszkiewickz and Wladyslaw Jahl, and the Uruguayan painter Rafael Barradas, besides Norah Borges. Both Jaime Brihuega and Gloria Videla also cite Juan Gris as an Ultraist because of his illustrations for Alfar.[31]

Of the Ultraist artists, Norah Borges and Rafael Barradas were the most active as illustrators. But there is no indication that Norah participated in any Ultraist exhibitions until 1925, after she had returned to Buenos Aires. In 1921, the Ultraists initiated in Madrid a "scandalous public event" in the Salón Parisiana which included poetry readings, musical performances and an art exhibition. The Delaunays did the decoration of the

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Salón, and works by Vazquez Díaz, Jahn and Paszkiewickz, the latter of whom "gave his habitual lecture on modern painting," were included in the exhibition. But Norah is not mentioned in this context. Nor was she later the same year when a second such event took place in which Barradas exhibited paintings. This second event was announced with posters by Jahl and launched with fire works.[32] Consistent with Ultraist objectives, the purpose of these events was to "disorient the public"[33] and attract attention. But although Norah Borges was not directly involved, she may have attended these events and certainly seen the exhibitions. The first exhibition in Spain in which her name appears was the Exposición de la Sociedad de Artistas Ibéricos of May 1925 in Madrid, which also included Barradas and Borés as well as a great number of new artists who had not belonged to the Ultraist group such as Dalí.[34]

As an illustrator, however, her name comes up much earlier. The first dated works by Norah appeared in 1920 and she is known to have published some in 1919 in Seville.[35] According to Brandán-Caraffa, Norah had originated the graphic style that became characteristic of the Spanish Ultraists and had established the mode that was taken up by other artists who illustrated for Ultraist journals.[36] Whether or not this is true, Norah's work of 1920 manifested two distinct styles, the one based on a vertical/horizontal grid as in her woodcut Terraces (Fig.

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224), published in 1920 in the September 15 issue of Grecia along with her brother's poem "Insomnia;" the other, marked by the angularity and distortions of Cubism and possibly German Expressionism, evident in the woodcuts The Angel of the Violoncello and The Woman with a Mantilla (Figs. 225 & 226).

The work of Delaunay, Laurencin, Léger, Gris, Gleizes, Lhote, Rivera and other Cubists was shown in Barcelona and Madrid after the war which furnished the basis for the Ultraists artists.[37] The verticality of the composition and grid in Terraces suggests Delaunay's windows of 1912, one of which had been reproduced on the cover of the September 1 issue of Grecia the same year (Fig. 6).[38] It also evokes textile patterns. Although the date of Norah's first textile designs is not documented, there is evidence that she had done some in Europe before 1924.[39]

The upright, diagrammatic style of Terraces is also related to the contemporary and slightly earlier work of Barradas and of another Uruguayan painter, Joaquín Torres-García both of whom had lived in Barcelona, and Barradas, in Madrid from 1918 on. Torres-García who was not officially associated with Ultraism, and Barradas had met in Barcelona in 1917 and evidently influenced each other. This is apparent in a comparison between Barradas' Un Tranvía and Torres-García's Drawing (Figs. 227 & 228) both dated 1917. Barradas had initiated a style he

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baptized "Vibrationism" which, like the English "Vorticism," was an off-shoot of Italian Futurism.[40] Shortly before Norah Borges' arrival in Madrid, he held an "Exposición Vibracionista" there. The type of crowded images in Un Tranvía and Drawing with their stacking of figures, clocks, trolley cars or trains, architectural elements, letters, store-fronts in vertical planar arrangements were the evident source for Oliverio Girondo's poster-like drawing of Ramón Gomez de la Serna's brain published in Martín Fierro in 1925 (Fig. 17).[41]

In Spain, this imagery which derived from Futurist literature and reflected the interest of poets as well as artists in notions of simultaneity, remained diagrammatic and descriptive, and formally indebted to Cubism rather than to Futurism. While none of Norah Borges' works represent busy urban street scenes, in spite of their link with the Uruguayan artists' style, Terraces shows the quieter life of an Andalusian town with its interwoven images of narrow streets, steps, stucco walls with a single narrow entrance to a house and a well. A woman carries a large earthern jar, another fetches water from the well, and a third holds a fan. The figures are partially concealed within the composition as Xul Solar's were in Colonial House of 1924. Terraces combines the Ultraist focus on verticality with elements traceable to some of the epic Cubists especially Albert Gleizes, Roger de la Fresnaye and Diego Rivera, for instance the latter's

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Woman at the Well and Gleizes' Landscape at Toul both of 1913.[42]

The Angel of the Violoncello and The Woman with a Mantilla both published in Grecia in 1920,[43] and an illustration for the cover of Ultra of 1921,[44] exemplify the dynamic angular style characteristic of much of Norah Borges' work from 1920 to 1923. Like Xul Solar, she was a lover of music and often attended concerts.[45] But also Pettoruti, Figari and Curatella-Manes had all taken up musical themes in the early twenties. Jorge Luis Borges described the subjects of these works as "angels, but angels who are musicians."[46] In The Angel of the Violoncello, Norah created a visual metaphor for an animated musical rhythm through a build-up of sharp angles. The subject in The Woman with a Mantilla (Fig. 226) is related to Terraces, although angular in style. A mother and child are shown against an Andalusian landscape with a bridge and the Guadalquivir river which flows through Seville and Córdova visible in the background. This type of landscape appears in many of Romero de Torres' paintings. At the time Norah was probably already studying with him at the Academia de San Fernando.[47]

Norah's illustrations for the cover of Ultra (Fig. 229) shows a figure of St. Sebastian pierced with arrows, with archers and a Roman acqueduct visible in the background on the right, and a modern scene with transatlantic ships and a shining sun visible on the left.

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Norah may have intended these incongruously juxtoposed background scenes to be in reverse order but had not accounted for the inversion of printing. This is borne out by the fact that some of her prints show her initials reversed.[48] The elongated figure of the saint, which betrays Norah's admiration for El Greco,[49] divides the image into two distinct halves, bridging past and present in two apparently unrelated images. The ships illustrate an Ultraist metaphor used by Guillermo de Torre in a statement published in Grecia in 1920.[50] The sun and stars were frequent images in Ultraist poetry[51] and occur in different forms in many of Norah's works. Although the sun and comets in Ultraist art can be traced in part to Delaunay's suns, moons and disks, the style in Norah's work is closer to that of the German Expressionists. For instance stars appear in a woodcut by Lyonel Feininger illustrating the first Bauhaus proclamation of 1919 in which rays emanating from the stars frame a cathedral (Fig. 230).[52] The spelling and logo of Ultra as V--L / TRA refers to "vertical."[53]

Although Norah never set foot in the cafes Pombo and Colonial where her brother went, she attended the tertulias (conversation gatherings) in private homes as she was to do later in Buenos Aires, and went frequently to the Prado.[54] Her main contact with avant-garde art at the time, was through Guillermo de Torre. De Torre, who had been a student of law before turning to poetry, was in

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regular communication with the Spanish and French vanguard. According to Norah, "he knew them all."[55] He had brought to her attention the work of Picasso, Marie Laurencin and Irene Lagut, all of whom he knew personally. In Spain, Norah struck up a friendship with Lagut whose work was later reproduced in Martín Fierro. Through de Torre, Norah became aware of poets such as the late Apollinaire and Blaise Cendrars (the latter lectured in Madrid in 1924). In 1928 in Buenos Aires, de Torre presented Norah with a bound volume of the complete set of L'Esprit Nouveau as a wedding gift.[56]

Norah was drawn to the work of Laurencin, Lagut and Picasso,[57] particularly the latter's Pierrots and harlequins. But although she could have met Picasso through de Torre or Irene Lagut either in Spain or France, Norah never wanted to because he was not "cultivated" and "refined" like the poets she knew.[58] However Picasso's work was frequently reproduced in Spanish journals. One of his Pierrots was reproduced in Reflector's only issue of December 1920 along with Lipchitz's sculpture, The Accordion Player, and a pencil drawing of a melancholic Pierrot of 1919 (Fig. 231) was published in Maurice Raynal's 1922 monograph on Picasso. In 1927 Guillermo de Torre gave a copy of Raynal's book to Norah[59] although she was certainly already familiar with it.

Unquestionably Norah's association with Guillermo de Torre contributed to directing her art towards

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illustration in the early twenties. Gomez de la Serna described their relationship as a "long engagement, with conversations filled with hope and expectation, she with the portfoglio of her drawings, he with the portfoglio of his manuscripts." According to Gomez de la Serna, their association which they carried on largely by transatlantic correspondence, was an "idyll that seemed like something out of a dream." After Norah's return to Buenos Aires in 1924, de Torre kept her image alive in Spain by writing about her for Ultraist periodicals.[60]

First Return to Buenos Aires (1921-1923)

In Buenos Aires, Norah sent her illustrations to the Ultraist journals her brother helped to found in 1921 and 1922. Her woodcut Garden (Fig. 232) was published on the cover of Proa in December 1922. The emphatic vertical lines of the palm trees in this work recall the typography in Guillermo de Torre's manifesto Vertical (Figs. 4 & 5) of 1920 which she and Barradas had illustrated. It also indicates her acquaintance with Léger's work of 1920 and 1921 which she could have known through de Torre and L'Esprit Nouveau as well as through her trips to Paris.[61] Except for Garden, most of her works of 1921 to 1923 are in the same angular style as The Angel of the Violoncello.

In 1923 her subjects came to include children and the local urban landscape of Buenos Aires. The latter was also the subject of her brother's poetry in Fervor de

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Buenos Aires, his first book of poems published in 1923 which she had illustrated. Some of her scenes of this period appear to float above the earth as can be seen in Children and Comets, and in one of two small untitled woodcuts. Children and Comets (Fig. 233) published in Proa,[62] shares compositional devices with the St. Sebastian on the cover of Ultra. The scene represents children standing on a globe in an extra-terrestrial space, flying kites that mingle with the comets. The balustrade of a Buenos Aires roof-top is visible in the distance. Her initials appear reversed in this print. She apparently prepared a woodcut as she would draw, without concern for the inversion of printing.

The two small untitled woodcuts, like Children and Comets, show the type of imagery prevalent in Ultraist poetry. One of these works represents a fancifully decorated balloon being borne aloft by a zephir or an angel (Fig. 234). The four elements, earth, water, fire and air are symbolized respectively by the earthbound balustrade, the sea, a shining sun and the zephir. The second small woodcut represents the double image of a youthful poet with the features of Guillermo de Torre (Fig. 235). The face is shown both in profile and frontally as a mirror-image. Themes such as flight and air borne objects, the sun, stars, and mirror-images all occur in Ultraist poetry.[63]

The streets, patios and one-storied houses of

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Buenos Aires were the subjects of several woodcuts of this period. They appear in Landscape of Buenos Aires (Fig. 236)[64] where they suggest a nostalgic world of the past rather than Buenos Aires as a big modern city. Similar imagery occurs in her brother's contemporary poem "Montevideo" published in Martín Fierro in September 1924, in which he had compared the Uruguayan capital with "the Buenos Aires we once had."[65] His poems in Fervor de Buenos Aires were filled with such imagery. One of Norah's illustrations for this book was a woodcut of the "one-storied, balconied, palm-treed town the poems describe in words."[66] Landscape of Buenos Aires is very similar. The latter scene also shows links with the work of Figari in its reference to a bygone time. To the left is a rider on horseback dressed in colonial costume. The bird's-eye view, sharp perspective diagonals and shining sun however, emphasize this work's unlikely blend of dynamic modernity with the provincial quality of suburban houses with their checkered patio floors.

In 1923, the Borgeses had returned to Europe prompted by the older Borges' worsening eye condition and by his wish to consult his doctor in Geneva. They traveled again to England, France, Mallorca, Spain and Portugal. By the time Norah was back in Buenos Aires after mid 1924, she had a thorough acquaintance with Italian and French fourteenth and fifteenth century art, the major museum collections and churches in the countries

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she visited, as well as of the French modern masters.[67]

Second Return to Buenos Aires, 1924

In 1924, life in Buenos Aires for many writers and artists had become charged with a new energy since the emergence of Martín Fierro. As was the case in Spain, Norah did not go to the cafes or the editorial offices, but she did frequent Norah Lange's and Oliverio Girondo's spirited gatherings. The Borgeses also hosted reunions at their two-story house on Avenida Quintana in downtown Buenos Aires where they had moved some time after their return in 1924. The house's small garden "with a fountain and a nymph" was the subject of one of Norah's woodcuts. Besides Xul Solar and Pettoruti, Figari and Güiraldes were among the regular guests,[68] and many poets attended. In 1925 Norah and her brother met Victoria Ocampo and formed a close friendship with Silvina Ocampo, Victoria's younger sister who was also a painter. In 1926, Silvina had exhibited at Amigos del Arte with Norah. Silvina was a great admirer of Borges' poetry and in 1927, made some color drawings inspired by a reading of Moon Across the Way (Fig. 237) which were reproduced in Martín Fierro.[69] Conversely, in Moon Across the Way which Norah illustrated, Borges had "emulated" Figari's paintings of moons according to Romualdo Brughetti.[70]

When Norah exhibited with Pettoruti and Xul Solar at Amigos del Arte in June 1926, three of her paintings

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were reproduced in Martín Fierro.[71] One of these was an undated work entitled Landscape of Portugal (Fig. 238) probably painted during her second visit to Europe in about 1924. Seen in proximity with Pettoruti's Pierette, Norah's work like Pettoruti's, betrays its debt to Cubism. But after her return to Argentina, she gradually abandoned the compact build-up of Cubist planes in favor of a more fluid design dependent on the decorative potential of line.

In the following years, she also devoted much of her time to drawing. Her works of this period reflected both the youth of her subjects and her own vision of an eternally young world. A drawing of the head of a boy with delicate features, large dark eyes and a disproportionately large head--one of several such heads she was to draw over the years--appeared in the January 1925 issue of Proa along with Guillermo de Torres's article "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo."[72] Norah's original source for the heads was her training in Switzerland with Maurice Sarkissoff. These heads, drawn with a precise incisive line, allowed her to express her perception of a poet's mind. The same year she published a portrait drawing of a very youthful looking Raúl González Tuñón, one of the "Martínfierrista" poets (Fig. 239) shown in profile. She favored profile views in which clean linear definitions emphasize the features. In 1927 she was to draw a similar profile portrait of Guillermo de Torre in

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pencil (Fig. 240), which remains in the artist's collection.

Many of her drawings also represented young girls living an idyllic life of dream, a reflection of her own girlhood. A drawing representing a group of girls was reproduced in Proa in March 1925. One of the girls holds flowers, another, a fan and both wear pendants with pictures of their fiancés. A segment of a painting visible in the background shows a portrait of an identical young lady dressed in nineteenth century costume,[73] recalling some of Figari's scenes of salon gatherings such as Salón de Rosas of 1924 (Fig. 50). Norah's drawing The Three Sisters dated 1921, reproduced in the November 1925 issue of Martín Fierro (Fig. 241), betrays its earlier date with such Cubist characteristics as the bird's-eye point of view, curtains with tassels and the tilted angle of a table with a dish of pears. A comparison of this work with Girls at Sunset (Fig. 242) reproduced in Martín Fierro in 1926, reveals the change in her work to a simplified literal figuration.

In 1925 she illustrated theater reviews. A series of drawings representing the scenery and costumes for Rimsky Korsakoff's ballet Le Coq D'Or (Fig. 243) which was having its debut in Buenos Aires at the time, appeared in the August 1925 issue of Martín Fierro.[74] Norah represented the actors in the stage scene, as squematized stick figures like those Xul Solar began using in the San

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Danza paintings of the same year (Figs. 207 & 208). Although she did not design stage sets as Pettoruti and Xul Solar had in Italy and later and Pettoruti would do again in Buenos Aires, her illustrations for stories and ballet productions exemplified her interest in the magical world of the imagination.

The New World and a Child's Eye

Some critics found in the child-like qualities of Norah's work something specifically "American." The Peruvian critic, Magda Portal, writing in 1928, said that Norah's return to Buenos Aires, a city "in which European imports were intermingled with gauchismo" influenced the artist to change, and that her subjects completely bypassed "all the morbid decadence of the twentieth century."[75] Like Portal, Gomez de la Serna saw in Norah's work a refreshing change from the "decadent Paris" depicted by Seurat. "As in the beginning of Creation" he wrote, Norah "has that Argentine talent, whereby the southern damsel believes the world is per force a place where a joyous nature reigns," and she had brought that "luminosity like a mirage" to her painting.[76] Her colors are those of an "American sifting, . . . with that mixture of water and light that comes through the landscape." He interpreted Norah's rejection of black, the "attribute of Spanish painting," as a rejection of death.[77] She painted the "adolescence" of her country, "one must talk not of

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primitivism but of pristinism" he wrote.[78] Whether or not these were Norah's intentions, some of the characteristics Gomez de la Serna described in her work can be compared to those of Figari. Gomez de la Serna wrote of "arabesque lines and delicate color values," and shadowless scenes that defied temporality.[79] He saw these qualities as an "oasis in the midst of paintings of storms and winter, always a little sad even when they (her paintings) were about flowers."[80]

More than a new world innocence, Norah sought to represent a direct and unadulterated world seen through a child's eye. When Martín Fierro published a review of "The Young Visiters [sic]," a story written by Daisy Ashford, a nine-year old English girl in February 1927, Norah illustrated it with three watercolors (Fig. 244). The book had been brought to public attention in France by Jean Cocteau as a noteworthy example of "dreamed reality," and had first been presented to the London public in 1922 by Sr. James M. Barrie, the author of Peter Pan. Ashford's story narrates the events in the lives of youthful protagonists leading up to a wedding of a young couple. Unquestionably this story had some personal meaning for Norah at the time. The story was narrated as seen through the eyes of the child-author who presented these events and people as "reality," interpreted from conversations she overheard but did not quite understand.[81] In the accompanying watercolors

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representing a magician, young lovers on a picnic, and their wedding, Norah recreated the "grown-up" scenes as she imagined them through the author's eyes.

A Synoptic Picture

During Marín Fierro's last year, Norah Borges turned increasingly to painting. She set down her esthetic theories on color, shape, value and subject-matter in an unsigned diagrammatic statement, "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura," published in Martín Fierro in March 1927 (Fig. 245). The statement to which Atalaya referred as a manifesto,[82] was presented in poetic form, bordered by reproductions of works by Norah's favorite artists. "Painting" she wrote, "was invented to give joy to the painter and to the viewers."[83] She perceived the function of painting in the following terms:

> The only thing that can give us joy is the representation of a perfect world, in which everything is well ordered, of clear contours, of clean colors, of well-defined forms and meticulous details to the point of exaltation--one should select to paint only what gives us real happiness--one should not paint everything one sees, one should run away from photography.[84]

She advocated using only colors that give pleasure to the eyes, "rose and lemon, . . . rose and veronese green . . . rose and salmon." One should "paint only the conventional color of each thing . . . paint the rose, rose." She condemned the use of "earth colors, pure black, dark browns and grays which cannot give joy." As sources of inspiration she cited "circus decorations, streamers,

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toys, small chalices" adding that "children and decorators of carriages have a lot of taste for colors."

Some of her statements betrayed her close association with Xul Solar who was illustrating her brother's El idioma de los argentinos at that time. She wrote that one should paint the "mystic" color of each thing, which "is the color that things would also have in the sky."[85] Xul Solar's painting Otro Drago of 1927 (Fig. 217) comes immediately to mind. Among Norah's examples illustrating her theory, she cited Xul Solar's contemporary painting Port depicting the double earth and sky realm visible in several of his works of this time. Others of her examples included El Greco's Resurrection in the Prado, Marie Laurencin's The Two Angels in the Renard collection, Indian and Persian miniatures in the British Museum, Maria Goncha Rova's [sic] Russian decorations, Pedro Figari's Candombes, Silvina Ocampo's and Irene Lagut's ballerinas.[86]

Irene Lagut had made a statement on the purpose of painting, similar to Norah's published in Martín Fierro in 1927 along with three of her works (Fig. 246). She was quoted as saying that living in the country, far from people, "a little closer to the sky," she dreamed "of giving joy and a little happiness to all who look at my paintings." In the winter months "we should paint landscapes with snow and in spring, flowers, birds and children."[87] In January of the same year, an article on

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Marie Laurencin by Marcelle Auclair (Fig. 247) was published in Martín Fierro in which the latter noted that "the principle of her [Laurencin's] art is only to please the viewer."[88]

In her synoptic statement, Norah went on to advise using only "well defined and full forms" and rejecting blurred ones such as "cobwebs, gases and clouds." The shapes to use included apples, guitars, women, singers, houses, the cylinder, cube, pyramid, sphere and cone. She saw such positive shapes in Masolino's and Orcagna's frescoes,[89] Douanier Rousseau's Night, Picasso's Bather, in works by Fra Filippo Lippi, Laurencin, Manet, Goya, and in the fourteenth century frescoes of the Tour de la Garderobe in the Papal Palace in Avignon. "The world of pictures" she wrote "must be another small world--happy people, with resplendent clothing--with the faces and sky freshly painted and summer as the perennial season."[90]

In another similar statement made in 1931 in La Nación, she added to her list of favorites, popular art such as toys of painted cardboard, polychromed plaster nativities, antiques, photographs of 1880, old fashioned figures of 1860, baroque altars in Portugal, herbariums, butterfly collections, the white houses of Le Corbusier, the little painted carriages or trucks used by bakers, and cardboard terrestrial globes.[91] Some of these things can be found in her paintings of the late twenties. Norah's choices reflected the tastes of other "Martínfierristas."

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The eclectic character of her selection brings to mind Xul Solar's synthetic universalism, Figari's scenes of past times, and even Martín Fierro's reconciliation of traditional things such as old photograph albums with its taste for modernity. The disregard for chronological distinction in Norah's examples, characterized the art of Figari and Xul Solar perhaps even more than her own. Although some of her paintings expressed a sense of timelessness and included biblical themes and saints, many of her subjects of the twenties belonged to a contemporary, if idealized, world.

Norah and Guillermo de Torre

In November 1927, Norah's painting Pablo y Virginia representing a couple with identical youthful heart-shaped faces (Fig. 248), was reproduced on the front page of Martín Fierro's last issue. Everything in it is in bloom. The young man holds a dove, and the young pregnant woman, a straw hat casually hanging from her neck by a ribbon, holds a flower. In the background is a screen of foliage with a bird and butterflies.[92] The theme had literary sources as much of her work did. But the idyllic scene must also have had autobiographical meaning. In 1927 Guillermo de Torre returned to Buenos Aires and the following year, they were married.

The marriage did not noticeably change Norah. In the following years, the couple alternatively lived in

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Buenos Aires, Madrid and Paris. But according to Gomez de la Serna, wherever she was, Norah continued to enclose herself "in her ideal little hotel with its pitchers instead of battlements" where she "opens and closes the rose curtain on days in which it matters little whether there are revolutions or wars," and continues "to serve tea in the afternoon in crystal cups."[93] She made her studio in a corner of Guillermo's library which, she said, inspired her artistic production. Conversely, the metaphors in Guillermo's writing were like "those comets and angels that float in Norah's skies, and the colors which illuminated his words were the new colors of her paintings."[94]

Guillermo de Torre became Norah's only male model. In 1929 she painted one of many portraits she would do of him (Fig. 249). He appears as the eternally youthful poet. Gomez de la Serna described him in this work as a combination of "angel and adolescent discobolus."[95] He is shown seated reading at his table in their library, surrounded by the familiar things, a curtain, bookshelves surmounted by a terrestrial globe and a butterfly displayed in a box. The frame of a large sofa forms an extravagant arabesque that leads the eye to the animated curved based of the globe. On the table is Guillermo's pipe, fountain pen and a box of cigarettes. The pipe and pen as identifying marks of the writer appear also in Diego Rivera's Cubist portrait of Ramón Gomez de la Serna

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of 1915.[96]

The tightly stacked Cubist composition in Landscape of Portugal is no longer to be seen in this work. Instead this painting is composed of a flat, balanced design based on a rhythmic play of curves. The clarity of the design and clean colors follow the dictates of Norah's synoptic statement. Far from being the work of a naïve artist, this painting is the fully developed product of a well-trained hand. De Torre appears again in The Herbarium of 1928, exhibited the following year in the Nuevo Salón at Amigos del Arte. Norah included herself in this painting. The couple with characteristic heart-shaped faces, is shown seeking information on the leaf she holds, in an herbarium. In the background is a stuffed bird and a butterfly collection.[97]

Saints and Poets

Some of the quiet meditative quality of The Herbarium appears in Santa Rosa de Lima (Fig. 250) which was also exhibited in the Nuevo Salón in 1929. St. Rose was a seventeenth century Peruvian nun and the first canonized saint in the new world. The air of dream and suspense permeating this painting, contrasts with the sense of hope and expectation which Norah's earlier works exuded particularly those representing children. The composition in Santa Rosa is divided into two zones, the foreground with the figure of a young girl (St. Rose) with

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a bowl of flowers, in front of a curtain, and the background with a patio lined by an arcade adorned with balustrades and urns, a window with a wrought iron grill and a closed garden visible in the distance. The latter is part of the saint's traditional iconography. A small figure of a young woman carrying a bowl of fruit is visible in the patio.

The allusion in this work to life inside and outside the convent, and the juxtaposition of foreground with background scenes, was typical of Julio Romero de Torres' paintings of women. It occurs in an undated large-scale polyptic, Poem of Córdoba, representing women in multiple aspects--a seductress, repentant nun and women in different states of earthly and spiritual awareness. Romero de Torres had set each figure against a distant church, arcaded plaza, enclosed garden or castle, alluding to different historical epochs.[98] The division into two distinct foreground and background zones also occurs in Romero de Torres' painting of the young woman, in On the Way to the Wedding (Fig. 251), showing an Andalusian landscape in the distance. But Romero de Torres' subjects were adult women and not the "adolescent children" of Norah's paintings. Gomez de la Serna noted that rather than the appearance of expectant sensual fulfillment evident in Romero de Torres' women, Norah's expressed "an exaltation of adolescence, of dream and melancholy." They were "completely pure beings."[99]

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By 1930, Norah's work was characterized by a complex personal iconography a little like that in de Chirico's paintings of the twenties. In October 1930, she exhibited a painting entitled Landscape (Fig. 252) in the Salón de Pintores y Escultores Modernos at Amigos del Arte. It has a melancholic quality and is an allegory of the arts. In it Guillermo de Torre appears seated in a trance-like state on the truncated drum of a fluted column holding a butterfly net. He contemplates a marble bust in his likeness within the arched niche of a wall, a device used by de Chirico in 1924 in a self-portrait.[100] Behind de Torre is an unfinished painting of dancing figures on an easel, implying the presence of the painter. The fluted column, gentle rolling hills and erupting volcano in the landscape symbolize past and present Mediterranean cultures. This work makes a reference to poetry (the book lying at de Torre's feet), architecture, sculpture, painting, and dance. Norah used very little shading in her paintings. The slight suggestion of it in this work may have derived from Picasso's drawing, Pierrot of 1919, reproduced in Maurice Raynal's monograph, which Guillermo de Torre had given her in 1927.[101]

After she exhibited once more in the Salón de Pintores Modernos in 1931, her work was not to be seen again in Buenos Aires until 1937.[102] After her marriage she had moved to Spain where she and Guillermo spent much of their time until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

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Although they had traveled to Buenos Aires on several occasions during those years, Norah was practically forgotten in her country until she returned there in 1936. When she did return she found a more sober Argentina than the one she had left in the late twenties. Ultraism was long dead and left no followers there in art.

Although in the thirties, Surrealist elements became evident in some of Norah's paintings as they had in Xul Solar's, her art was never the outcome of an unconscious process leading to uninhibited personal associations any more than it was for Xul Solar. Rather it continued to be based on a clearly formulated set of rules. Guillermo de Torre in his Proa article "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo," had denounced the uninhibited expressions in literature advocated by Breton as incompatible with true poetry,[103] and Norah's art was consistent with those ideas. In the thirties and forties, fragments of architecture, balustrades, urns and checkered patio floors remained the subjects of her work, but sometimes in disconnected juxtapositions. Children, angels and eternally youthful individuals also continued to populate her paintings. These subjects provided for her a refuge from, and an alternative to, the violent and threatening aspects of European Surrealism. Her youthful ingenuous subjects permitted her to evade more personal references to her private self. Her paintings could be autobiographical, but like Xul Solar's, they were never

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self-revealing. In the following years, she continued to live in the serene world of her imagination in spite of the political changes that swept Argentina in the thirties and forties.[104] In Buenos Aires Martín Fierro had served Norah Borges as an outlet for her illustrations as Ultraist journals had earlier in Spain. A few months after Martín Fierro published its last issue, she left for Spain.

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NOTES

[1]Ramón Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, S.A., 1945). There is another short monograph by Idelfonso Pereda Valdés, El arte de Norah Borges, published in Argentina in 1922; she is mentioned in José León Pagano's three-volume Arte de los argentinos of 1939 and Historia del arte argentino, (Buenos Aires: Edición de l'Amateur, 1944). Most of the general books on Argentine art published in the sixties devote a paragraph to her and acknowledge her as a member of the vanguard of the twenties. Romualdo Brughetti discusses her together with Xul Solar in Historia del arte en la Argentina, (México, D.F.: Editorial Pormaca, S.A., 1965), pp. 103-104. There are several short articles besides. The Peruvian writer Magda Portal published an article "Norah Borges" in the review Forma, (No. 7, 1928), pp. 9-10, and the Chilean writer Gabriela Mistral wrote an article on her, "Norah Borges," in the Mexican journal Romance, (no. 12, 15 July 1940), which is a poetic equivalent of Norah's painting rather than a critical analysis. For biographical information, the best sources are those on Jorge Luis Borges such as Emir Rodríguez Monegal's Jorge Luis Borges, a Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978) in which she is mentioned several times. There are of course the numerous essays written in the twenties by the poets, such as Brandán-Caraffa's "Norah Borges" in Proa, second epoch, (August 1924), p. 10 and in 1928 Ulyses Petit de Murat discussed Norah in an article "Tres pintores de vanguardia: Norah Borges, Xul Solar, Pettorutti [sic]" in La Palabra, (Mendoza, 23 February 1928) and Guillermo de Torre wrote about her in several articles particularly in Spain and included her in his book Literaturas europeas de vanguardia of 1925. Her paintings are little seen in general collections although her illustrations for books and magazines are readily available. Some information was gathered from interviews with the artist in Buenos Aires in October and November 1980 and from archival material she made available.

[2]She illustrated works by Sergio Piñero, Ricardo Molinari, Ricardo Güiraldes and books of poems. Among these were two of her brother's, Fervor de Buenos Aires of 1923 and Luna de enfrente of 1925, and one of Norah Lange's, Calle de la tarde of 1925. See Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, p. 37.

[3]Alberto Prebisch, "Los dibujos de Norah Borges," Martín Fierro, (12 December 1926), p. 1.

[4]Ramón Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, S.A. 1945).

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[5]Prebisch, "Los dibujos de Norah Borges", Martín Fierro, p. 1.

[6]María Laura de San Martín, Pintura argentina contemporánea, (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Mandrágora, 1961), p. 62; Córdova Iturburu, "Panorama general, 1810-1960," in 150 años de arte argentino, exhibition catalogue, (Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1960), n.p. and Ernesto B. Rodriguez, "Del superrealismo a la abstracción," in 150 años de arte argentino. The latter stated that Norah "tiene el superrealismo propio de una dulce y natural poesia, que no produce estupor--como el de un Dalí--sino encantamiento." The term "superrealismo" first appeared in Madrid in the title of an article "El superrealsimo" by F. Vela in the December 1924 issue of Revista de Occidente, pp. 428 & 434.

[7]Aldo Pellegrini, Panorama de la pintura argentina contemporánea, (Buenos Aires: Paidos, 1967), p. 161. Pellegrini's role in the Argentine Surrealist movement is discussed in Stefán Baciu, "Points of Departure Towards a History of Latin-American Surrealism," Cahiers Dada, (Paris: Cahiers de l'association internationale pour l'étude de DADA et du Surréalisme, no. 2, 1968), pp. 133-153, 140. Guillermo de Torre challenged the Surrealism of Breton and Freudianism in poetry in an article, "Neodadaísmo y superrealísmo," published in Proa, (Buenos Aires, January 1925), pp. 54-60.

[8]Richard Burgin, Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1969), p. 99, quoted in Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges, a Literary Biography, p. 36.

[9]M. Frederic, Año artístico argentino 1926, (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1927), p. 328.

[10]"El infantilismo de vanguardia," Claridad, (Buenos Aires, no. 6, December 1926), n.p., quoted in Adolfo Prieto, ed., Antología de Boedo y Florida, (Córdoba: Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 1964), p. 24.

[11]Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, p. 8.

[12]Francisco Luis Bernardez wrote a poem in which he associated Norah Borges' name with Buenos Aires and the southern cross, and an article entitled "The Girl Who Knew How to Draw the World," which Gomez de la Serna claims was published in Proa in 1925 (Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges: 39), but it does not appear in any of its issues for that year. It was however, published in Bernardez's book Cielo de tierra, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1937).

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Alfonso Reyes' poem to Norah was entitled "Norah jugando a las estrellas." In it he exorts Norah to "Swing sleepwalker, swing while your dream continues to rock / caught in the thread of a star." (Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges: 15).

[13]Alfredo Brandán-Caraffa, "Norah Borges," Proa, second epoch, (August 1924), p. 10.

[14]Alberto Prebisch, "Los dibujos de Norah Borges," Martín Fierro (12 December 1926), p. 1.

[15]Guillermo de Torre, Literaturas europeas de vanguardia, 1925, p. 55, quoted in Rodríguez Monegal, p. 218.

[16]Borges' poem "Singladura" (The Day's Run) was quoted from Rodríguez Monegal, p. 219.

[17]Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, p. 10; Victoria Ocampo, "Visión de Jorge Luis Borges," L'Herne, (Paris, 1964) pp. 21-22, quoted in Rodríguez Monegal, p. 233.

[18]Alfredo Chiabra Acosta (Atalaya), Críticas del arte argentino 1920-1932, (Buenos Aires: Gleizer, ed., 1943), pp. 315-316 and Prebisch, "Marinetti en los Amigos del Arte," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 3. Katherine Dreier who visited Argentina in 1918 and 1919 relates her experience as woman. She wrote that should a woman "wish to talk to a man impersonally" about intellectual subjects, it was

> "Too foreign to the average Argentine to appear even plausible. I ran across this same attitude in Argentine artists, even those who had studied in Paris. It seems hardly credible when I state that no Argentine painter felt he could avail himself of the opportunity which knocked at his door through the hand of a woman. It is only among the socialists that I noticed the same friendly comradship between men and women, which exists in the United States or Europe. However with the public it was different, except the anarchists. But the painters belonged to the conservatives!"

See Katherine S. Dreier, Five Months in the Argentine, (New York: Frederic Fairchild Sherman, 1920), p. 99.

[19]Atalaya, Críticas, p. 316.

[20]Some of the apparent quality of innocence and sheltered tranquility Norah exuded was misleading. Some of her experiences under the Perón dictatorship in the forties belie this reputation. In 1947, she was falsely accused of political disturbance and was arrested along

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with some of her friends. She spent a month in a jail for prostititutes and during that time managed to smuggle a letter to her family in which she wrote that prison was a lovely place and that everybody was so kind. She found being there so restful and said there was a beautiful patio (Burgin: 118-119, quoted in Rodríguez Monegal: 401). Some of Norah's remarks may have been meant to set her family's minds at ease. By that time she had been married nineteen years and had two children.

[21]Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 3-6. One of their ancestors was Jerónimo Luís de Córdoba on their father's side, who was the founder of the Argentine city of Córdoba which Rodríguez Monegal compared to Boston in the United States. See also Gomez de la Serna for an account of her girlhood. He wrote:

> "Norah . . . nos confiaba sus tertulias con unas amigas que en la soledad cruzaban las piernas en T y enseñaban el torneado de la confidencia dedicandose a jugar al ajedrez, moviendose como un lento cotillón sobre el adrezado pavimiento de las estancias . . . , los sofas que se comen a la gente, las jaulas de los pájaros artificiales, las mesas del tresillo, mesas con chaleco y bolsillos de mesa en el chaleco."

See Gomez de la Serna, Norah Borges, p. 11.

[22]Alicia Jurado, Genio y figura de Jorge Luís Borges, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria, 1964), p. 29, quoted in Rodríguez Monegal, p. 29. See also pp. 6-7, 16, 28 for Norah's early life.

[23]Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 108-109, 258. Norah's father was a retired lawyer.

[24]Sources for this information can be found in Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 108-109 and Gomez de la Serna, p. 6. An interview with Norah Borges in Buenos Aires on 26 October 1980, provided some of this information.

[25]Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 108-109.

[26]Gomez de la Serna, p. 6. See also Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 108-109.

[27]Ibid.; Rodríguez Monegal, p. 157. See also Miguel Salcedo Hierro, El Museo Julio Romero de Torres, (León: Editorial Everest, 1973), p. 11.

[28]Salcedo Hierro, Romero de Torres, p. 13.

[29]Tableros published four issues beginning in November 1921; Reflector came out once in 1920, Alfar published through the twenties; Ultra ran from January

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1921 to February 1922 as a by-monthly, and Grecia, which was founded by the Ultraist writer Isaac del Vando Villar in October 1918 first in Seville, and by late 1920, in Madrid. See Jaime Brihuega, Manifestos, proclamas, panfletos y textos doctrinales, (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1979), p. 41.

[30]According to accounts by Guillermo de Torre, many artists and writers met in Vicente Huidobro's house in Madrid during the war when they had gone to Spain as war exiles. The Delaunays and several other future Ultraist artists met there (Gloria Videla, El Ultraísmo, [Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1971: 29]).

[31]Brihuega, p. 43 and Videla, p. 62. For further discussion of the artists and their activities see Brihuega, p. 38 and Videla, pp. 117-118.

[32]Brihuega, p. 42 and Videla p. 87.

[33]Videla, p. 70.

[34]Brihuega, p. 49. Brihuega's source of information for this exhibition was a catalogue for a fifty-year commemorative exhibition, "Primera Exposición de Artístas Ibéricos," which took place at Club Urbis in June 1975, cited in a footnote p. 49, n. 60. Norah's participation in the original exhibition however, is not listed in Gomez de la Serna's index of her group exhibitions. See Gomez de la Serna, p. 35. But his list is incomplete. Norah Borges was living in Buenos Aires in 1925. She may have traveled to Spain for the purpose of the exhibition, or participated through the intermediary of Guillermo de Torre. Gomez de la Serna mentioned a trip to Portugal to board the ship home on "one of her returns to America" indicating that she made many crossings, although specific dates are not given (Gomez de la Serna: 14).

[35]Although Brihuega lists Norah Borges among the "vanguardistas" of Madrid in 1915 (Brihuega: 33), there is no indication of her presence in that city until 1920. She was in Geneva in 1915.

[36]Brandán-Caraffa, "Norah Borges," Proa, p. 10.

[37]These artists exhibited at the Dalmau Gallery in Barcelona in 1920 in one of a series of exhibitions entitled "Nou Ambient" (New Ambience), see Brihuega, p. 41 and Gomez de la Serna, p. 9.

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[38]Grecia, (1 September 1920). Delaunay's Window was accompanied by two lines from Apollinaire's poem "Windows" which had been inspired originally by Delaunay's work. Window and star imagery appeared in much Ultraist poetry. A poem by Angel Candiz for example, published in Grecia, ends with the lines "Me dejaron una ventana abierta. / Era noche. / Todas las estrellas / Se habían condensado en mi ventana." (Grecia, / [29 February 1920: 9]). The issue of Grecia was in the collection of Norah Borges at the time of an interview in Buenos Aires on 26 October 1980.

[39]Brandán-Caraffa refers to textiles as well as to drawings, paintings and prints (Brandán-Caraffa, "Norah Borges," Proa, p. 10.

[40]See Antonio de Ignacios, Rafael Barradas, (Montevideo: Privately published, Imprenta Letras, S.A., La Paz 1829, 1953), pp. 70, 81 and Joaquín Torres-García, exhibition catalogue, intro. Donald Goodall, essay and chronology by Barbara Duncan, (Austin: Archer M. Huntington Gallery, University of Texas at Austin, 1974), p. 18. See also Brihuega, p. 37.

[41]Oliverio Girondo, "Instantaneo del cerebro de Ramón," Martín Fierro, (18 July 1925), p. 8.

[42]For reproductions of these works see Ramón Favela, Diego Rivera. The Cubist Years, (Phoenix: The Phoenix Art Museum, 1984), p. 65, cat. no. 18, and Douglas Cooper, The Cubist Epoch, (New York: Phaidon, 1971), p. 73, p. 64.

[43]Grecia, (Seville, 29 February 1920), p. 8 and (Madrid, 1 June 1920), p. 14.

[44]The work for Ultra is not dated and the issue was not identified by Norah Borges. This by-weekly published twenty-four issues between January 1921 and February 1922. Norah Borges returned to Buenos Aires in March 1921. Consequently it is likely that it was published on the cover of a January, February or March issue in 1921.

[45]Brandán-Caraffa refers to her love of music in "Norah Borges," Proa, p. 10.

[46]Burgin, p. 99, quoted in Rodriguez Monegal, p. 36.

[47]Romero de Torres began teaching at the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid in 1916 and apparently taught there until 1922 (Salcedo Hierro:13).

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[48]See for instance her Children and Comets, Fig. 233 in which her initials are reversed.

[49]Norah Borges cites El Greco's Resurrection at the Prado in particular as one of the works she admires in her statement "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura," Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 3.

[50]Guillermo de Torre, "Manifesto Vertical," Grecia, supplement, no. 50, (1 November 1920), quoted in Videla, p. 66 and pl. 2.

[51]Stars for instance are mentioned in Angel Candiz's poem published in Grecia (29 February 1920), p. 9. See also Videla, pp. 124 & 150 for poetry on these themes.

[52]See Peter Selz, German Expressionist Painting, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 314-315.

[53]See illustration Fig. 229 for the logo of Ultra.

[54]Interview, Buenos Aires, 26 October 1980.

[55]Ibid.

[56]L'Esprit Nouveau was published by Léonce Rosenberg's Gallerie de L'Effort Moderne and originally edited by Ozenfant, Jeanneret (Corbusier), and Paul Dermée. Brihuega mentions Cendrars in Madrid in 1924, see Brihuega, p. 47.

[57]She mentioned these artists in her "Cuadro sinóptico," Martín Fierro, p. 3. She also traveled to Paris frequently and could see their work in galleries in Paris (Gomez de la Serna: 7).

[58]Interview, Buenos Aires, 26 October 1980.

[59]Ibid., See pl. XXI in Maurice Raynal, Picasso, (Paris: Gres, 1922), and Fig. 231. Norah's interest in the work of Picasso was seconded by Guillermo de Torre who later also wrote a monograph on Picasso, see Guillermo de Torre, Picasso, (Madrid: Adlan, 1936).

[60]Guillermo de Torre included her for instance in his articles "El renacimiento xilográfico. Tres grabadores ultraístas (Wladyslaw Jahl, Norah Borges, Rafael Barradas)," Cosmópolis, (XI, no. 41, 1922), p. 333. See also Gomez de la Serna, pp. 13-14.

[61]Gomez de la Serna, p. 7.

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[62]The issue of Proa in which Children and Comets was published, was not given. The original woodcut as well as the two small untitled ones, is in the collection of the artist.

[63]Jorge Luis Borges for instance used sun and mirror imagery: "The sun with its spurs, rips up mirrors" quoted in Videla, p. 112. He also wrote about sun and water with references to an aggressive sun, icy ponds and mirrors (Videla: 112). For further examples on the use of these themes see Videla, pp. 111, 116, 124 and 150.

[64]This work, dated 1923 was said to have been published in Ultra (interview), but this cannot be the case since the periodical published its last number in February 1922. It may have been published either in Buenos Aires, or in Spain in Alfar in 1923 or 1924. Guillermo de Torre was a regular contributor to Alfar during those months (Videla: 234). The original print is in the collection of the artist.

[65]Jorge Luis Borges, "Montevideo," Martín Fierro, (August 6 September 1924), p. 6.

[66]A copy of the original illustrated edition of Fervor de Buenos Aires was not available during my interview in Buenos Aires in 1980. This information is in Rodríguez Monegal, p. 175.

[67]Rodríguez Monegal, p. 179. A clue to the many artworks Norah Borges knew can be found in her detailed list of favorites in "Un cuadro sinóptico," Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 3.

[68]Rodríguez Monegal, pp. 183, 218. Rodríguez Monegal mentions this woodcut as an illustration in Alicia Jurado's Genio y figura de Jorge Luís Borges, p. 89, but the original illustrated edition of this work was unavailable. Norah Borges mentioned the reunions at her family's house and recalled that Güiraldes took his guitar to these reunions and sometimes left it there (Interview, Buenos Aires, 26 October 1980).

[69]Martín Fierro, (10 June-10 July 1927), p. 9. See also Rodriguez Monegal, p. 270.

[70]Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, p. 77.

[71]Prebisch, "Marinetti en los 'Amigos del Arte'," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 3.

[72]Proa, (January 1925), p. 50.

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[73]Proa, (March 1925), p. 8.

[74]"Estreno de 'Le Coq d'Or'," Martín Fierro, (9 August 1925), p. 1.

[75]Magda Portal, "Norah Borges," Forma, p. 10.

[76]Gomez de la Serna, p. 22.

[77]Ibid..

[78]Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[79]Ibid., p. 23.

[80]Ibid..

[81]"'The Young Visiters [sic]' de Daisy Ashford, entre nosotros," Martín Fierro, (26 February 1927), p. 5. Cocteau pronounced the novel "a masterpiece of the genre" in his introduction to the book: "En Daisy Ashford" he wrote, "los gestos de los personajes hacen pensar en las virgenes de Giotto . . . . La literatura debe acojer con respeto este petalo de rosa artificial que tiene olor de rosa." An editorial in the same issue announced that Victoria Ocampo was planning to translate the book into Spanish.

[82]Unsigned, "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura," Martín Fierro, (28 March 1927), p. 3. Atalaya's comment appears in Críticas del arte argentino, p. 266. His reference to Norah's statement as a manifesto is significant in light of the fact that Xul Solar painted Manifesto the same year, although the latter's meaning was of a more social order.

[83]Ibid..

[84]Ibid..

[85]Ibid.. The Borgeses and Xul Solar were especially close in 1926 and 1927. See chapter VIII on Xul Solar.

[86]Ibid..

[87]"Irene Lagut," Martín Fierro, (15 July-15 August 1927), p. 3.

[88]Marcelle Auclair, "Marie Laurencin," Martín Fierro, (20 January 1927), p. 7.

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[89]She referred specifically to Masolino's fresco depicting the story of Herodes in the Castiglio D'Olona Baptistery and to Orcagna's fresco Paradise in Santa Maria Novella in Florence ("Un cuadro sinóptico," Martín Fierro: 3).

[90]Norah Borges cited Fra Filippo Lippi's fresco The Dancing Salomé in the Prato cathedral, Sven Westman's Landscape of Valldemosa, (Mallorca), Marie Laurencin's Child with a Violin of 1920 in the Paul Rosenberg collection, Manet's Railroad, Douanier Rousseau's Portrait of a Boy in the Freyhold collection, and Goya's Puppet as examples of the proper use of analogous values. She cites the collection for some of the works but not for others.

[91]La Nación, 1931, quoted in Gomez de la Serna, p. 25.

[92]Martín Fierro, (31 August-15 November 1927), p. 1.

[93]Gomez de la Serna, pp. 17-18.

[94]Ibid..

[95]Ibid..

[96]See Favela, Diego Rivera, p. 95, cat. no. 32.

[97]See catalogue, Nuevo Salón Año Primero, Amigos del Arte, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones 'Alfa,' 1929). This work is reproduced in Gomez de la Serna, n.p..

[98]See Salcedo Hierro, Romero de Torres, pp. 20-21 for illustration.

[99]Gomez de la Serna, pp. 7 & 9.

[100]See catalogue, Salón de Pintores y Escultores Modernos, Amigos del Arte, (Buenos Aires, 1930). Other participants in this exhibition included Figari, Forner, Pettoruti, Xul Solar, Gomez Cornet, Silvina Ocampo, Alfredo Guttero, Basaldúa, Ballester Peña, Horacio Butler, Spilimbergo and Dominguez Neyra. For an illustration of de Chirico's Self-Portrait of 1924, see De Chirico, exhibition catalogue, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), pl. 87.

[101]See Raynal, Picasso, p. 31.

[102]See catalogue, Salón de Pintores Modernos, Amigos del Arte, (Buenos Aires, 1931). In 1937 Norah Borges exhibited in the II Salón de Artistas Decoradores

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in Buenos Aires (Gomez de la Serna: 35). In 1940 she exhibited again for the first time since 1937 in a two-person exhibition with Xul Solar at Amigos del Arte.

[103]Guillermo de Torre, "Neodadaísmo y superrealismo," Proa, (January 1925), pp. 54-60.

[104]See note 20 above for a description of her experience in jail under Perón (Rodríguez Monegal: 401). She was also affected by the Spanish Civil War which she and Guillermo fled and returned to Buenos Aires in 1936.

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CHAPTER X

THE DEMISE OF MARTÍN FIERRO AND THE END OF A DECADE

In July 1926 Martín Fierro inaugurated its new quarters on Tucuman Street. The event was celebrated with a banquet attended this time by many of the female members of the writers' families along with hired dancers and musicians. The journal had expanded its coverage. Social activities were at a peak as newer artists joined in the reunions at the Cafe Tortoni, La Peña and other meeting places. But by 1927, growing economic problems, divergent political opinions among writers, the departure of some Martín Fierro members and the death of others--particularly Ricardo Güiraldes and Juan Carlos Figari Castro in Paris--made the magazine increasingly difficult to run.[1] Nonetheless, when the November 1927 issue came out, there was no indication that it was to be their last. Quite the contrary. Its editors optimistically announced a double anniversary issue for February 1928 which was to be dedicated to the memory of "our beloved and illustrious late companion" Güiraldes.[2] But this issue was never published. Instead, the homage to Güiraldes came out in a new journal, Síntesis whose first number appeared in June 1927.

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Síntesis and the End of a Decade

Several events in 1927 cast a cloud over the "Martínfierristas." Besides the deaths of Güiraldes and Juan Carlos Figari Castro in Paris, two members of Girondo's family, the Uruguayan poet Horacio Quiroga and the young poet Lopez Merino, both members of the group also died, the latter by suicide. While the deaths were not in themselves responsible for the closing of Martín Fierro, they contributed to squelching much of the enthusiasm that had kept it going for three-and-a-half years. Ulyses Petit de Murat who had also lost two younger sisters at the time, recalled that at their nocturnal gatherings at the Tortoni, "our usual theme after midnight was death."[3]

But there were also political divergences. Most of the poets defended the populist former president Hipólito Irigoyen who came back to the presidency in 1928, while Evar Mendez favored Alvear. For the past several months, Mendez had managed under great economic difficulties to keep the magazine afloat, but with some of its key members gone, the task became impossible. With the change in 1928, from Marcelo T. Alvear's sophisticated and culture-conscious presidency back to Irigoyen for the following two years, Martín Fierro closed its doors. Some of the poets and artists realigned themselves with other journals. Borges, Guillermo de Torre, González Lanuza, Norah Lange and Girondo contributed to Síntesis,[4] a

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periodical which began publishing six months before Martín Fierro's last number. Síntesis took over some of the functions of the older journal until it too folded in October 1930. Síntesis came at the end of a "sometimes turbulent and colorful decade" while Martín Fierro had represented an extension of the post-war vanguard movements.[5]

Síntesis was considerably less polemical than Martín Fierro. It featured poetry, art reviews and articles on literature as did the older journal, but in addition it published philosophical essays, and aspired to present "universal thought" to its readers. It examined the ideas of Bergson, Kant, Keyserling, Spengler, Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset among others, and some Argentine thinkers. Its art review section, "Notas de Arte" written by Rafael B. Esteban, had none of the polemical spirit, bite and whimsy of Martín Fierro's. Rather it continued the journalistic tradition of reviewing usually with "words of praise and encouragement" and was especially sympathetic "to young promising artists."[6] The selective art critical style of Atalaya, Estárico and Prebisch were nowhere evident, even though the exhibitions it reviewed were of the same artists.

But the last two years of the decade were politically unsettled. Shortly after Irigoyen's re-election in 1928, his government began to disintegrate. Unlike his cultured and worldly predecessor, Irigoyen who

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was part Indian, was a recluse, supported radicals, defended the poor and disliked foreigners. Under his presidency, the socialists became increasingly polarized from the middle class, resulting in a weakening of both sides.[7] The 1929 New York stock market crash represented "for the whole world the end of a great epoch" and in 1930, a military coup toppled Irigoyen's government bringing a decade of liberal thinking and cultural freedom to an end: "The partying was over." The new president, General José F. Uriburu established an uncompromising system patterned on the fascist government of Mussolini. Alvear took refuge in Uruguay and many intellectuals left the country. The belief that only the army could save Argentina from the politicians and the radicals was, according to Hubert Herring, defended by Leopoldo Lugones who called for the "hour of the sword."[8]

Pettoruti described his experience as an artist in Argentina after 1930 when he had of necessity accepted a post as director of the then deteriorating Museo Nacional de la Plata which he renamed Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes de La Plata. As the prospects for his return to Paris dimmed, he reconciled himself to living in Argentina indefinitely. After the disintegration of the literary review groups and the 1930 military coup, the few people who had collected his work took refuge in other countries. A European from one of the big cities, he wrote, would not understand what it was like to remain in Buenos Aires and

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continue painting:

> Without museums where I could take refuge and be alone with great works or art; without artists of my tendency against whom to pit myself in order to find through confrontation, the impulse which leads further; without spirits accustomed to first-hand knowledge of the new expressive currents [in art to help] sharpen the blade of creative lucidity; without marchands or buyers, my life as an artist was very difficult and very lonely.[9]

Xul Solar was the only other artist of the original five, to remain in Argentina. Although he continued to paint, he exhibited little, turned increasingly to literature and occult interests and sustained himself through translations and editorial work.[10] Figari, Curatella-Manes and Norah Borges were all in Europe then.

Without the support of periodicals and critics, artists themselves took over the responsibility of establishing clubs and workshops.[11] In 1933 the Mexican David Alfaro Siqueiros on one of several trips through South America, attempted to establish a mural movement in Argentina as there was in Mexico, but was unable to do so in a country so radically different from his. The same year Lino Eneas Spilimbergo and a small group of artists founded the first Argentine Syndicate of the Arts in emulation of the earlier Syndicate of Revolutionary Painters Sculptors and Engravers in Mexico. However, not until the forties were Antonio Berni, Lino Spilimbergo, Juan Carlos Castagnino and two other artists able to establish a Workshop of Mural Art as a private outlet for a small number of murals for areas "accessible to the

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people."[12] But it never amounted to a mural movement.

Nonetheless art such as Berni's sharp focus scenes of workers and Spilimbergo's unsettling rural scenes and figure compositions dominated the thirties and forties. The original members of the vanguard of the twenties were practically forgotten during those years and were not to achieve their full measure of recognition again in Argentina until after 1960 when younger vanguard artists and critics recognized them as pioneers. In 1960 Petturuti, Xul Solar, Curatella-Manes and Norah Borges were all included in a large exhibition 150 años de arte argentino (150 Years of Argentine Art) at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes along with a new generation of abstract artists.[13]

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NOTES

[1]Inauguración de nuestro local, "Martín Fierro, (4 August 1926), p. 9; "'Martín Fierro'," (5 November 1926), p. 5. According to the latter article, Prebisch, Girondo and Piñero were leaving. See also Ulyses Petit de Murat, La Noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), p. 76. Murat mentioned the deaths of the Uruguayan poet Horacio Quiroga, two of Girondo's relatives and the young poet Lopez Merino who committed suicide in La Plata.

[2]Borges, Victoria Ocampo and several other "Martínfierristas" signed a salute to "nuestro querido e ilustre compañero extinto" ("'Martín Fierro' y Güiraldes," Martín Fierro, [31 August-15 November 1927: 2]).

[3]Petit de Murat, pp. 47 & 76.

[4]Hector René Lafleur, Sergio D. Provenzano, Fernando P. Alonso, Las revistas literarias argentinas 1893 - 1976, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1968), p. 107. Pettoruti and Xul Solar also wrote for other journals. After 1927 Pettoruti contributed to Indice, Estudiantina, Crítica, Critério, Crónica de Arte (Pettoruti, Un pintor ante el espejo, [Buenos Aires: Ediciones Solar, 1968: 227]), Norah Borges illustrated for Críterio and Número (Lafleur: 157-164). Leopoldo Marechal satirized Martín Fierro and its writers in his novel Adán Buenosayres, begun in Paris in 1930 and first published in Buenos Aires in 1948. The story begins with the description of a funeral in which the members of Martín Fierro disguised with pseudonyms, carry a coffin to its grave. The coffin is so light that instead of carrying a body it seems as if it were carrying a poem to its grave. They are burying "Adán Buenosayres" whose papers were left in the care of Marechal who writes the novel based on these "notes." The character of the title is Marechal himself, and Xul Solar appears as the astrologer Schulz. The burial is a pun on their "Satiric Parnassus" with its epitaphs: "Angels and demons fought for his soul" in a villa in Buenos Aires (Leopoldo Marechal, Adán Buenosayres, [Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1979]). The book is dedicated to "mis camaradas 'martínfierristas,' vivos y muertos, cada de los cuales bien pudo ser un héroe de esta limpia i entusiasmada historia." See also Marechal, Interpretaciónes y claves de 'Adán Buenosayres' with contributions by Leopoldo Marechal, Julio Cortazar, Adolfo Prieto, Graciela de Sola and Washington Benavidez, (Montevideo: Acali Editorial, 1977).

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[5]David Roger Dowdy, "A Study and Index of Síntesis: Revista Argentina de Artes, Ciencias y Letras (1927 - 1930)," (PhD Dissertation, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1976), p. 36.

[6]Ibid., pp. 123 & 150. The Argentine thinkers were Miguel Angel Virasoro and Coriolano Alberini who was also an editor of Síntesis, see Lafleur et al, p. 107; Dowdy claims that Bergson came to be widely read in Argentina after 1928. An article on Bergson by Léon Dujovne, a university professor, came out in Síntesis in which the author expressed admiration for Bergson for his "contribution to overcoming mechanism" and for his defense of "the peculiarities of the vital and the spiritual" (Dowdy: 124).

[7]Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America, 3rd ed., with the assistance of Helen Baldwin Herring, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), pp. 738-740. Herring stated that Irigoyen's "style of writing and speech was abstruse and confusedly colored by a strange mysticism."

[8]Horacio Butler, La pintura y mi tiempo, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudaméricana, 1966), p. 106; Emir Rodriguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), p. 195; Herring, p. 741.

[9]Pettoruti, Un pintor, pp. 218 & 221.

[10]Interview with Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari, Buenos Aires, 12 November 1980.

[11]Several artists including Pettoruti organized clubs as meeting places where lectures, exhibitions and social gatherings could take place. Ulyses Petit de Murat wrote that "peñas" continued to take place until 1935 as an "especie de bohemia particular" or "a kind of private bohemia." He mentions among several, the reunions of "Signo" in the basement of the Hotel Castelar in Buenos Aires which was co-founded by Pettoruti, Leonardo Estárico and other friends in the early thirties (Petit de Murat: 63). Pettoruti directed the association in its first year. Its activities included exhibitions, reunions, inexpensive dinners for its members, balls and Saturday lectures. It also published regular bulletins of its activities (Pettoruti, Un pintor: 239).

[12]Romualdo Brughetti, Historia del arte en la Argentina, (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Pormaca, 1965), p. 137; Michel Troche, G. Gassiot-Talabot, Berni, (Paris: Editions Georges Fall, 1971), pp. 13 & 15.

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[13] 150 años de arte argentino, exhibition catalogue, (Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1960).

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CHAPTER XI

THEMATIC ANALOGIES IN ART AND LITERATURE: THE ARGENTINE CONTEXT

The most common themes to be found in both literature and art among the "Martínfierristas" was moon, sun and light imagery. Besides Borges, many of the poets had written about the moon including Girondo, Galtier and Lugones the latter as a Symbolist. In painting, the use of moon imagery in Argentina was a characteristic of the earlier "Impressionists" such as Martín Malharro (Fig. 59) who also painted sun-drenched landscapes at high noon. Norah Borges had used the moon in some of her Ultraist work as well as other planets and comets; Xul Solar incorporated the moon into his system of planetary symbolism, and Figari depicted it as part of universal matter. As noted earlier, his moons were thought to have inspired some of Borges' poems in Moon Across the Way. One of these, "The Day's Run" describes a moment on the deck of a ship when Borges looked up to the sky and saw the moon "twisted around one of the masts,"[1] just as Figari's very palpable moons hovered on the edge of a patio or a tree.

In Figari's work, moon imagery represented an intgral part of natural phenomena and can also be seen in a Symbolist context.

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But for the "Martínfierrista" poets who so favored the notion of dynamic city life and the present, it seems contradictory and can only be justified as a symbol of liberation and escape from the mundane experiences of daily life. Carlos Mastronardi explained the frequent occurrence of moon imagery in poetry as equivalent to a liberation.[2] But it also symbolized the world of nocturnal escapades shared by the "Martínfierristas" rather than an object of reflective musing.

Religious themes were also shared by some artists and poets. The poetry of Lugones and Güiraldes sometimes reflected Theosophical beliefs. Lugones was thoroughly familiar with the writings of Madame Blavatsky and had met H.S. Olcott, the founder of the American Theosophical Society. As a mason of the thirty-third degree he was also influenced, just as Xul Solar was, by Swedenborg's "doctrine of correspondences" and by the latter's claim to being able to interpret visions and dreams in which he talked to angels. Lugones like Xul believed in reincarnation and had written a poem on "Metempsychosis."[3] González Lanuza and Francisco Luis Bernardez also wrote poems with profane or unsettling religious metaphors as had Girondo in his Twenty Poems. In "Apocalipsis" González Lanuza wrote, of "When / the jazz-band of angels / plays the fox-trot of the final judgment / and God arrives at a stretched-out gallop . . . , " injecting the poem with a contemporary touch. Bernardez, a close friend

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of Xul Solar's incorporated the symbolism of numbers and music in his nocturnal "Responsory in Bronze Major" in which the number twelve runs through the poem.[4] In painting, the most obvious example for religious imagery is Xul Solar although Curatella-Manes had also sculpted saints and Norah Borges, depicted religious figures such as Santa Rosa de Lima. While religious themes were not apparent in the work of Pettoruti, they were implied in some of his later work, particularly the goblet series, but also a certain religious (rather than mystical) feeling permeates his sunlit interiors.

Sun and light imagery was more often shared by poets and painters. Jacopo Fijman wrote in his poem "Noon:" "The sun / caused a bloody riot. / Flattened landscape. / Clashing light". Carlos Grünberg in "Sun Dial" used a watch as a metaphor for some lofty cosmic imagery: "The sun wounded the peak of the highest mountain" and "marks its flawless time, . . . / On the disproportionate sundial of the earth, / with its face of shadow, beneath the crystal of the sky."[5] In painting the sun was an important component of the work of Norah Borges whose exploding suns were primarily those of the Ultraists, and it was of course used by Xul Solar in a variety of ways. For Pettoruti it was implicit as sunlight and usually appeared in conjunction with shadows. When sunlight enveloped a still-life arrangement, it became the source of pristine splendor. Light as a main

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theme appears in a poem by Sixto Pondal Rios entitled "Morning" celebrating the "Glory of light! Glory of color! Glory of the sky!"[6]

Sun and moon themes in the work of the poets, as well as light and shadow, were of Ultraist origin, as for instance González Lanuza's poem "Shadows." In painting, Delaunay's suns and moons were of course well-known by the Ultraists. But the greatest influence on them and subsequently the "Martínfierrista" poets and artists, was Apollinaire whose poetry and writings were acknowledged sources. Apollinaire's comments on light are particularly revealing. In his Méditations esthétiques he wrote:

> The new art clothes its creations with a magnificence which surpasses anything else conceived by the artists of our time. Ardent in its search for beauty, it is noble and energetic, and the reality it brings us is marvelously clear. I love the art of today because above all else, I love the light; for man loves the light more than anything, it was he who invented fire.[7]

It was this poetic vision that characterized the light in Pettoruti's paintings and some of the "Martínfierristas'" poetry rather than the Futurists' iconoclastic view. Ultraist innovations among the Argentine poets were more a matter of imagery than form, and this imagery was tempered by the more suburban character of Buenos Aires whose bustling city life was restricted to its downtown area. While urban imagery was implicit in much of the art of the painters, it was of a cosmic or metaphysical rather than of a Futurist order.

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An Argentine Response to Surrealism and Futurism

Carlos Mastronardi wrote that "the common denominator" among the poets "was a magic version of the world." Lugones felt that the mission of the poet remained essentially a religious and messianic one. In 1923 he declared that "the destiny of the poet was not to reveal himself but to reveal."[8] This sense of poetic mission so clearly exemplified in the work of Xul Solar whose exalted visions did not contribute to making him any less enigmatic, seems to have acted as one of the deterrents to the adoption among the Argentine writers and artists, of Breton's stream-of-consciousness Surrealism.

Leopoldo Marechal and Francisco Luis Bernardez had been in Paris in 1926 where they came in contact with Surrealist poetry and met Louis Aragon and Paul Elouard. The latter became a contributor to Martín Fierro. Interestingly when Aldo Pellegrini founded the first Argentine Surrealist literary magazine Qué in 1928, none of the former "Martínfierristas" contributed to it, nor was Pellegrini ever mentioned in Martín Fierro although he had returned to Buenos Aires in 1926. One of the reasons may have been that the Surrealist position was the reverse of Ultraism.[9] When Argentine poetry approached Surrealism in any way, it was more in the context of fantasy, Neo-Romanticism and "magic." Santiago Ganduglia wrote about an obsessed train that "goes who knows where, to the dead land" and Brandán-Caraffa "expressed the tacit and

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hallucinating promises of the night" in a poem about "Enormous moons / which take possession of the world, / and shine until dawn like monstrous flowers."[10]

The position of the "Martínfierristas" regarding Surrealist automatism was reflected in articles by Herwarth Walden and Guillermo de Torre. In December 1926 Walden published a "letter from Germany" in Martín Fierro in which he stated that the only true artistic freedom "is the ability to harness one's instincts." No man could live without "ethics." To abandon oneself to instinct was to deny one's free will. To know how to harness fantasy in order to govern it was the only way to give an "ordered form" to one's ideas. Discipline "is the first condition of art."[11]

Guillermo de Torre in his article "Neodadaísmo y Superrealismo" of 1925, unequivocally opposed Breton's automatist, Freudian Surrealism because of its rejection of the process of intellectual reasoning. He saw Breton's Surrealism as a mere re-elaboration of Symbolism. In its most serious form, "Superrealism" implied "an absolute abandon on the part of the poet to an almost religious state of inspiration" which was not the same as the surrender to one's instincts. The act of severing all bonds with reality and normal thought, and to "break all contact with the mind of the reader, means that all the rare possibilities of intelligibility offered by this poetic modality, are eliminated." "True Superrealism" he

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wrote, is that of the artist who manages to transfigure real daily elements, "elevating them to a distinct plane and to an atmosphere of pure poetic reality." Aragon's Surrealism he felt, fluctuated between "metaphysics and obsenity." Using an Ultraist metaphor he wrote, "Superrealism" as proposed by Breton was dehumanizing and found its "most complete consacration in this renewed juvenile gesture of throwing the seeds into the air, in order to avoid fertilizing human and viable beings and works."[12]

It is significant that none of the Paris-based artists who must have met the Surrealist poets through Marechal and Bernardez in 1926,[13] ever took up Surrealism but chose less self-revealing forms of expression. Similarly Norah Borges and Xul Solar both of whom were well acquainted with Surrealism, never embraced it in its orthodox forms although Xul's work of the thirties took over some of its hybrid characteristics, and Norah peripherally brushed with it. De Torre's interpretation of "Superrealism" with its built-in word "super" from the Spanish "superar," to surpass or to go beyond, is an Ultraist one. His contention that the artist's function was to elevate real daily elements to a "distinct plane and to an atmosphere of pure poetic reality" is easily discernible in Pettoruti's subordination of still-life objects to a pictorial transcendence through light and color harmonies.

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Futurism as a notion was far more provocative to the "Martínfierristas" than Surrealism. Although what was thought to be its visual manifestation was rejected in Argentina, many of its theoretical principles were seen as a model for renewal. Neither Cubist nor Futurist art was known in Buenos Aires until Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes exhibited the former, but Futurism was known through literature long before. In 1920 the writer Bartolome Galindez published a "Futurist Manifesto" as a parody of Futurism and Ultraism in which he declared that "The automobile was useful for its velocity; but it would be nice if it had the shape of a swan, dragon, peacock, shark or dinosaur" and stated that "We will not kill the moon; first because it is an economical street light; second because it has the unlikelihood of a legend; third, it acts as a warning and fascinates us; fourth, because without being an 'artificial paradise,' it is a stimulant to the nerves."[14]

The Martínfierristas had been familiar with Marinetti's and other Futurists' writings for many years[15] as most of them had been to Europe either before or right after the war. Prebisch and Girondo for instance surely knew Ballá's "The Futurist Universe 1918" manifesto in which Ballá declared that "A typewriter is more architectural than all those building projects which win prizes at academies and competitions."[16] According to Córdova Iturburu, the Futurist influence in Argentina

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served to put "an end in the country to the domination of Modernismo in literature and to the reign, in the arts, of the worn-out fin-de-siècle concepts" and "contributed to placing us decisively in the terrain of the fascinating innovative experiences that were occurring, during those days, in countries that were more evolved than ours." Furthermore, Martín Fierro understood the need to find ways to "an expression in accordance with the times we were living."[17]

What Buenos Aires intellectuals liked best about Futurism was its call to action as exemplified by Candioti's and Güiraldes' catalogue essays for Pettoruti. But in spite of Martín Fierro's bombastic manifesto and statements, Futurism was more of a way of living and thinking than it was a real component of the literature. In art, it existed only in the most peripheral ways. The Futurist notion that the spectator must be placed "in the center of the picture" was taken quite literally by the "Martínfierristas" who believed in consulting "the barometer, the calendar, before going into the street to experience it with its [Martín Fierro's] nerves and with its mentality of today."[18] Their concept of Futurism was if anything, closer to the ideas Jules Romains had expounded in La vie unanime. Through his early friendship with Marinetti, Romains' "Unanimist" views had provided some of the original concepts taken up by the Futurists, including that of the fusion of the artist and, by

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extension the spectator, as the center of focus with his surroundings.[19] The "Martínfierristas" not only placed themselves in the center of the picture figuratively speaking, but also wanted to do so with the spectator in the sense of engaging the reader's or viewer's participation in the completion of a work as Macedonio Fernandez and Xul Solar had done. Without producing Futurist work themselves, their notion of literature and art as requiring the spectator's or reader's active participation had its sources in Futurism as well as in Romains' collectivist sentiments.

The editors of La Nación saw Futurism as "a salutary reaction against the antiquated patterns of the period before the war."[20] It is evident that the avant-garde art and literary movements in Argentina obeyed a chronology of their own, independent of that of Europe. While Europe's avant-garde emerged before the war, Argentina's was a post-war development.

Conclusion

The artists' sources and styles appear to have little in common. Yet as Argentinians, they shared in an experience that was apparent in the way they thought and felt if not in their actual work. Prior to their return, art in Argentina remained steeped in academicism, Post-Impressionism and Spanish Modernism. They were the ones responsible for changing this condition. In an evaluation

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of these artists' work of the twenties, two fundamental things must be considered:

1. How Europe looked to them when they first arrived there from Argentina, and

2. How they responded to the very different often hostile reception in Buenos Aires when they returned with their European experience.

When artists went to Europe before 1920, it was primarily to discover the masters of the past. Many discovered modern art not through the Cubists but through Maurice Denis, the Nabis and the Symbolists. Symbolism offered an alternative that could accommodate their interest in the great religious works of the past. Except for Pettoruti and later Curatella-Manes, they tended to side-step Cubism, either because they did not see it, or because they were not interested. In most cases, when artists did see Cubism, it was in its distilled post-war forms. Those who saw the Diaghiliev Ballet sets and costumes by Picasso and Braque were not seeing Cubist work but rather free interpretations of figurative designs. The forms taken up by Argentinians were in no way belated derivatives of the avant-garde art of before the war, but the completely timely modifications that existed in Europe at the time they went. Regardless of when the Argentine artists went to Europe, most of them were a product of the twenties and not of the pre-war period.

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The Spanish influence which was so strong in literature, was negligible in art with the exception of Norah Borges. The strongest influence came from Italy, France, and to a lesser extent, Germany. What artists sought from their sources were art forms that would be meaningful in some way in their country. But they were greatly disappointed when instead of creating a welcome model for greater esthetic freedom, their art continued to be misunderstood and scorned, even though the "Martínfierristas" capitalized on its shock value. Once Martín Fierro was gone, the artists were left to confront the reality of their environment where art continued to be regarded as the special province of a cultured but conservative upper class. It took great independence and courage for artists to maintain the momentum they had when they had first returned to their country. Pettoruti and Xul Solar were exceptional in their persistence in working along the lines they had established in Europe without succumbing to pressures to become more traditional. In order to survive while preserving their artistic integrity, some utilized their experience in commercial art. Pettoruti could tap a solid figurative style when required for a portrait or commercial design, and Xul Solar found diverse outlets outside of his art. After his return, his paintings evolved towards a more literary, descriptive style culminating in the fifties in a synthesis of image and script.

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If any common characteristics can be detected in the work of Argentine artists in the twenties, they can be found in the avoidance of extremes in subject matter. One does not find the violence or sordidness peculiar to some European wartime and post-war art or even in some contemporary Argentine literature. Violence and cruelty in visual expression was restricted to caricatures and was not apparent in the fine arts at that time. The artists of the Florida group in particular took their art seriously and did not wish to sacrifice it to mundane or debasing causes. They sought esthetic perfection and not what they perceived as the cruel and visceral aspects of some post-war German art which they viewed as marks of European decadence.

They also sought a solid technical mastery of their materials sometimes in the tradition of Renaissance art. Extreme distortion was avoided. Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes adopted the structural aspects of Cubism but not its distortions in spite of cries to the contrary by Argentine critics. They completely by-passed the mechanistic and political subjects of some of their European and Mexican contemporaries opting instead for a Neo-Romantic, poetic and mystical representation of the world. Even when the Boedo artists painted workers, they did not produce a revolutionary or politically charged art. This aspect did not appear until the thirties when Antonio Berni took up the cause of socialism in a sharp-

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focus realist style such as in Unemployed of 1935. Many artists shared a nostalgia for a distant classical past which had provided the measure of artistic refinement in Argentina since the nineteenth century. However, in the twenties, this classicism also corresponded to the classical direction of the French Purists. Another common denominator was the artists' shared interest in light. Norah Borges' and Figari's light was a diffused timeless light. Xul Solar' was expressed through color both in its literal sense and in the sense of mystical enlightenment. Pettoruti and Curatella-Manes had both sought ways to make of light the subject of their art.

In its initial stages, the "Martínfierrista" movement was primarily a literary one as were the French Symbolist and Italian Futurist movements. In the visual arts, it was to some extent the artificial creation of writers and galleries, and like its European counterparts, the literary movement eventually made the art movement possible. If Martín Fierro was often too eclectic to have a clearly defined character of its own and as Evar Mendez noted was "without its own life," it was nonetheless "vital and galvanizing."[21] It took the self-assured and enthusiastic courage of the writers to establish a setting for the art. That they did this in ways that reflected their youth, cannot be denied. But at the same time, the "Martínfierristas"' good humor and arrogant pride, set a precedent for writers and artists and gave them a sense of

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belonging and of their own strength and originality. In this sense the journal succeeded in what it most wanted to achieve: to create in Buenos Aires a cultural ambience that made it possible for new poetry and new art to gain ground and survive.

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NOTES

[1]From Moon Across the Way, quoted in Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges. A Literary Biography, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), p. 220.

[2]Carlos Mastronardi, "El movimiento de 'Martín Fierro'," Capitulo, series La Historia de la Literatura Argentina, No. 39, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, c. 1979), pp. 921-922.

[3]Theodore Wayne Jensen, "The Pythagorean Narrative of Darío, Nervo and Lugones," (PhD dissertation, State University of New York, Buffalo, 1976), pp. 102-104 & 108. Lugones--who was also an admirer of Einstein and had published a book on his theories, El tamaño del espacio (The Dimension of Space) in 1921--was named with Einstein as a member of the "Corporación intelectual" of the League of Nations. This was also mentioned by Evar Mendez in an article "Comentario sobre la designación de Lugones para la Corporación Intelectual de la Liga de las Naciónes," (Martín Fierro [25 July 1924: 1 & 2]).

[4]Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciónes Culturales Argentinas, 1926), pp. 58 & 44.

[5]Ibid., pp. 51 & 59.

[6]Ibid., p. 74.

[7]Guillaume Apollinaires, Les peintres cubistes (formerly Méditations esthétiques), chapter 7, quoted in Edward Fry, Cubism, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), trans. from French and German by Jonathan Griffin, repr. p. 118. Apollinaire had written about Delaunay's suns and moons, and Simultaneous Contrast series in Les Soirées de Paris, (15 November 1913), quoted in Apollinaire on Art, ed. by LeRoy C. Breunig, (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), pp. 336-337.

[8]Guillermo Ara, "Leopoldo Lugones," Capítulo, series La Historia de la Literatura Argentina, No. 43, (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1980), p. 35.

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[9]Stefan Baciu, "Points of Departure Towards a History of Latin American Surrealism," Cahiers Dada, Surréalisme, No. 2, (Paris: Cahiers de l'associacion internationale pour l'étude de Dada et du Surréalisme, 1968), p. 140; Oscar Collazos, Los vanguardismos en la América Latina, (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1970), p. 45.

[10]Córdova Iturburu, Revolución, p. 55. Ulyses Petit de Murat, Noche de mi ciudad, (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1979), p. 57.

[11]Herwarth Walden, "Carta de Alemaña," Martín Fierro, (12 December 1926), pp. 2 & 3.

[12]Guillermo de Torre, "Neodadaísmo y supperrealismo," Proa, (January 1925), pp. 54-60. An almost identical but longer version of this article was also published in Plural in Madrid the same year. See Jaime Brihuega, Manifiestos, proclamas, panfletos y textos doctrinales, (Madrid: Ediciónes Cátedra, 1979), pp. 276-281.

[13]Collazos, Vanguardismos, p. 54.

[14]Ibid., pp. 66-67.

[15]Gomez de la Serna translated Marinetti's 1909 manifesto in Spain in 1910. See Brihuega, p. 89.

[16]Umbro Apollonio, Futurist Manifestos, trans. by Robert Brain et al, (New York: Viking Press, 1973), p. 219.

[17]Córdova Iturburu, "Panorama general 1810 - 1960," in 150 años de arte argentino, exhibition catalogue, (Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1960), n.p.

[18]The Futurist statement was made in "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto" of 1910, see Apollonio, p. 28; "Manifiesto de 'Martín Fierro'," Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), p. 1.

[19]Marianne W. Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism and Apollinaire," Art Journal, XXVIII / 2, (Spring 1969), pp. 258-268. Martin explains that Romains' point of departure for his collectivist view was "his epochal experience in 1903 on the crowded rue d'Amsterdam when he suddenly became aware 'of a vast and elemental being, of which the streets, the carriages and pedestrians formed the body and of which he was the consciousness [conscience]'" (Martin: 260-61). Martin was quoting some of this passage from

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André Cuisenier, Jules Romains et l'unanimisme, Paris, 1935, I, 17 (as cited in Martin).

[20]"Vida literaria," La Nación, (Sunday 20 June 1926), reprinted in "Los vanguardistas de 'La Nación'," Martín Fierro, (8 July 1926), p. 2. La Nación's statement was: "El futurismo ha sido una saludable reacción contra los envejecidos moldes de la anteguerra."

[21]Evar Mendez, "Rol de 'Martín Fierro' en la renovación poética actual," Martín Fierro, (26 February 1927), p. 2.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX I

MANIFIESTO DE "MARTÍN FIERRO"[1]

Frente a la impermeabilidad hipopotámica del honorable público.

Frente a la funeraria solemnidad del historiador y del catedrático, que momifica todo cuanto toca.

Frente al recetario que inspira las elucubraciones de nuestros más "bellos" espíritus y a la afición al anacronismo y al mimetismo que demuestran.

Frente a la ridícula necesidad de fundamentar nuestro nacionalismo intelectual hinchando valores falsos que al primer pinchazo se desinflan como chanchitos.

Frente a la incapacidad de contemplar la vida sin escalar las estanterías de las bibliotecas.

Y, sobre todo, frente al pavoroso temor de equivocarse que paraliza el mismo ímpetu de la juventud, más anquilosada que cualquier burócrata jubilado:

MARTÍN FIERRO siente la necesidad imprescindible de definirse y de llamar a cuantos son capaces de percibir que nos hallamos en presencia de una NUEVA SENSIBILIDAD y de una NUEVA COMPRENSIÓN, que, al ponernos de acuerdo con nosotros mismos, nos descubre panoramas insospechados y nuevos medios y formas de expresión.

MARTÍN FIERRO acepta las consecuencias y las responsabilidades de localizarse, porque sabe que de ello depende su salud. Instruido de sus antecedentes, de su anatomía, del meridiano en que camina, consulta el barómetro, el calendario, antes de salir a la calle a vivirla con sus nervios y con su mentalidad de hoy.

MARTÍN FIERRO sabe que todo es nuevo bajo el sol si todo se mira con unas pupilas actuales y se expresa con un acento contemporáneo.

MARTÍN FIERRO se encuentra, por eso, más a gusto en un transatlántico moderno que en un palacio renacentista, y sostiene que un buen HISPANO-SUIZO es una obra de arte muchísmo más perfecta que una silla de manos de la época de Luis XV.

MARTÍN FIERRO ve una posibilidad arquitectónica en un baúl "innovation", una lección de síntesis en un marconigrama, una organización mental en una rotativa, sin que esto le impida poseer--como las mejores familias--un álbum de retratos que hojea, de vez en cuando, para descubrirse a través de un antepasado. . . o reirse de su cuello y de su corbata.

MARTÍN FIERRO cree en la importancia del aporte intelectual de América, previo tijeretazo a todo cordón

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umbilical. Acentuar y generalizar, a las demás manifestaciones intelectuales, el movimiento de independencia iniciado, en el idioma, por Rubén Darío, no significa, empero, que habremos de renunciar, ni mucho menos finjamos desconocer que todas las mañanas nos servimos de un dentífrico sueco, de unas toallas de Francia y de un jabón inglés.

MARTÍN FIERRO tiene fe en nuestra fonética, en nuestra visión, en nuestros modales, en nuestro oído, en nuestra capacidad digestiva y de asimilación.

MARTÍN FIERRO artista, se refriega los ojos a cada instante para arrancar las telarañas que tejen, de continuo, el hábito y la costumbre. ¡Entregar a cada nuevo amor una nueva virginidad, y que los excesos cada día sean distintos a los excesos de ayer y de mañana! Ésta es, para él, la verdadera santidad del creador!.... ¡Hay pocos santos!

MARTÍN FIERRO crítico, sabe que una locomotora no es comparable a una manzana y el hecho de que todo el mundo compare una locomotora con una manzana y algunos opten por la locomotora, otros por la manzana, rectifica para él la sospecha de que hay muchos más negros de lo que se cree. Negro el que exclama ¡colosal! y cree haberlo dicho todo. Negro el que necesita encandilarse con lo coruscante y no está satisfecho si no lo encandila lo coruscante. Negro el que tiene las manos achatadas como platillo de balanza y lo sopesa todo y todo lo juzga por el peso. ¡Hay tantos negros! . . .

MARTÍN FIERRO sólo aprecia a los negros y a los blancos que son realmente negros o blancos y no pretenden en lo más mínimo cambiar de color.

"¿Simpatiza usted con MARTÍN FIERRO?

"¡Colabore usted con MARTÍN FIERRO!

"¡Suscríbase usted a MARTÍN FIERRO!

Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), pp. 1 & 2.

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[1]The complete text of the manifesto can be found also in Córdova Iturburu, La Revolución Martínfierrista, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), pp. 15-17 and in Oscar Collazos, ed., Los vanguardismos en las América Latina, (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1970), pp. 203-204.

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APPENDIX II

MANIFESTO OF MARTÍN FIERRO[1]

Faced with the hippopotamic impermeability of the honorable public.

Faced with the funerary solemnity of the historian and the university professor, who mummify everything they touch.

Faced with the formula that inspires the lucubrations of our most "beautiful" spirits and the fondness they demonstrate for anacronysms and mimicry.

Faced with the ridiculous necessity of establishing our intellectual nationalism by puffing up false values that collapse at the first puncture like balloons.*

Faced with the incapability of contemplating life without climbing the shelves of libraries.

And, above all, faced with the fearful dread of making a mistake which paralyzes the very impetus of the young, who are more crippled than any retired burocrat:

MARTÍN FIERRO feels the inescapable necessity of making its position clear and of calling on all who are capable of perceiving that we are in the presence of a NEW SENSIBILITY and of a NEW COMPREHENSION* which we have agreed, have discovered for us unsuspected panoramas and new means and forms of expression.

MARTÍN FIERRO accepts the consequences and the responsibilities of committing itself, because it knows that its health depends on it. Aware of its past, of its anatomy, of the meridian in which it moves, it consults the barometer, the calendar, before going out into the street to experience it with its nerves and with its mentality of today.

MARTÍN FIERRO knows that "everything is new under the sun" provided everything is seen with today's eyes and expressed with a contemporary accent.

MARTÍN FIERRO finds itself, for this reason, more comfortable in a modern transatlantic than in a Renaissance palace, and maintains that a good HISPANO-SUIZO is a much more perfect work of art than a Louis XV sedan chair.*

MARTÍN FIERRO sees the architectonic possibility in an "innovation" trunk, a lesson in synthesis in a marconigram, a mental organization in a rotary engine, without preventing it from owning--as do the best families--an album of photographs it leafs through from time to time, to discover itself through some

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forebear. . . . or to laugh at his collar and tie.

MARTÍN FIERRO believes in the importance of the intellectual contribution of America before the snipping of any umbilical cord. To accentuate and generalize, on the other intellectual manifestations, the independence movement initiated in the language of Rubén Darío, does not however, signify that we must renounce, nor much less pretend to ignore the fact that each morning we use a Swedish toothpaste, towels from France and English soap.

MARTÍN FIERRO has faith in our phonetics, in our vision, in our customs, in our sense of hearing, in our digestive capacity and ability to assimilate.

MARTÍN FIERRO artist, rubs his eyes at every instant to get rid of the cobwebs which, constantly weave habits and customs. To assign to each new love a new virginity, and to insure that the excesses of each day be different from the excesses of yesterday or tomorrow! This is for him, the real sanctity of the creator! . . . There are very few saints!

MARTÍN FIERRO critic, knows that a locomotive is not comparable to an apple and the fact that everybody may compare a locomotive with an apple and some choose the locomotive, others the apple, confirms the suspicion that there are many more blacks (stupid people) than is thought.[2] Black is he who exclaims Colossal! and who thinks he has said everything. Black is he who needs to be dazzled by brilliance and is not satisfied if he is not dazzled by it. Black is he who holds out his hands like a scale and weighs and judges everything by its weight! There are so many blacks! . . .

MARTÍN FIERRO appreciates only blacks and whites who are really black and white and do not pretend in the least to change color.

Do you sympathize with MARTÍN FIERRO?
Will you collaborate with MARTÍN FIERRO!
Do you subscribe to MARTÍN FIERRO!

Martín Fierro, (15 May 1924), pp. 1 & 2.

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[1]The translation is mine except for passages marked by an asterisk. The latter portions appear in English translation in Phyllis Freeman, "The Car, Ship, and Plane in Manifestos: Vehicles of Nationalism," Colóquio, (#17, April 1976), pp. 48-51.

[2]Black here does not allude to race, but to the reverse of white. In the sense in which it was being used, it means "stupid," ostensibly the reverse of "wise," "intelligent" or "timely" although which of the two Martín Fierro supports, is not clear.

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I. General Sources for Latin American and Argentine Culture

II. Argentine and European Literature and Periodicals

- A. Collected Writings and Works on the Writers, Periodicals and Literary Movements
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IV. Individual Artists: Pedro Figari, Emilio Pettoruti, Pablo Curatella-Manes, Xul Solar and Norah Borges

- A. Writings by (when applicable)
- B. Monographs, Essays and Exhibition Catalogues
- C. Newspaper and Periodical Articles
- D. General Books, Catalogues and Articles (also includes sources used for an analysis of the artist's work)

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V. Archival Sources and Interviews

Note: In citing newspaper and periodical articles, when no author is given, articles are listed alphabetically by title. The city of publication is given only when outside of Buenos Aires. Page numbers of newspaper and periodical articles in the artists' archives were not always recorded. These will be given whenever available. Because some of the sources in the bibliography fit more than one classification, they are listed accordingly.

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Norah Borges

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Museo Gauchesco, Parque "Ricardo Güiraldes," San Antonio de Areco. Photographs, catalogues on Figari, books by Güiraldes, and some archival materials on the Güiraldes family.

Lía Pettoruti del Carril, sister of the artist, Buenos Aires. Complete set of clippings from newspaper and periodical articles on Pettoruti from 1911 on.

Galería Rubbers, directed by Natalio Povarché, Buenos Aires. Extensive collection of catalogues, out-of-print monographs and press clippings for Pettoruti and Xul Solar.

Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari, widow of the artist, Buenos Aires. Early catalogues and periodicals on Xul Solar.

Osvaldo Svanascini, art historian, Buenos Aires. Photographic archives for Curatella-Manes.

Galería Vermeer, directed by Enrique Scheinsohn, Buenos Aires. Catalogs on Xul Solar and Curatella-Manes and press clippings.

Uruguay

Luis Victor Anastasía, writer and art historian, Montevideo. Newspaper and periodical articles on Figari and other archival materials.

The late Dr. Jorge Faget Figari, architect and nephew of the artist, Montevideo. Letters, unpublished manuscripts by Figari and transcribed press reviews for the twenties.

Biblioteca del Museo Historico Nacional, formerly directed by Prof. Juan Pivel Devoto, Montevideo. Figari archives. Letters filed chronologically from the late nineteenth century through the twenties.

Museo Nacional de Artes Plásticas, directed by Angel Kalenberg, Montevideo. Figari catalogues and monographs.

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Personal interviews with Jorge Lopez Anaya and A. Osvaldo Nessi in La Plata; Norah Borges, the late Germaine Derbecq de Curatella-Manes (in 1973), Fernando de Elizalde, writer and son of Elena Sansinena de Elizalde, the first director of the Asociación Amigos del Arte, Raquel Forner, Lyres Giraldes, Comodoro Juan José Güiraldes, nephew of Ricardo Güiraldes, Carol and Ernesto Lowenstein, collectors of work by Xul Solar, Elvía Marechal, widow of the writer Leopoldo Marechal, Ulyses Petit de Murat, Alfredo Brandán-Caraffa, Lía Pettoruti del Carril, Micaela Cadenas de Schulz Solari, widow of Xul Solar in Buenos Aires; Luis Victor Anastasía, Dr. Jorge Faget Figari, Julio María Sanguinetti, lawyer, biographer of Figari and currently president of Uruguay, Angel Kalenberg in Montevideo. Except for Germaine de Curatella-Manes, all the interviews were conducted from October to December 1980.

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THE "MARTÍNFIERRISTAS" AND ARGENTINE ART OF THE TWENTIES

by

JACQUELINE BARNITZ

VOLUME II

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1986

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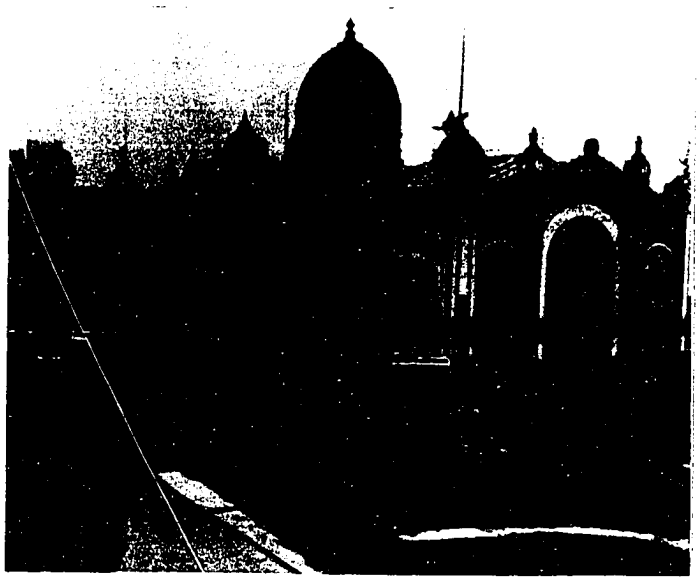

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2. Catalogue cover for the XIV Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, 1924

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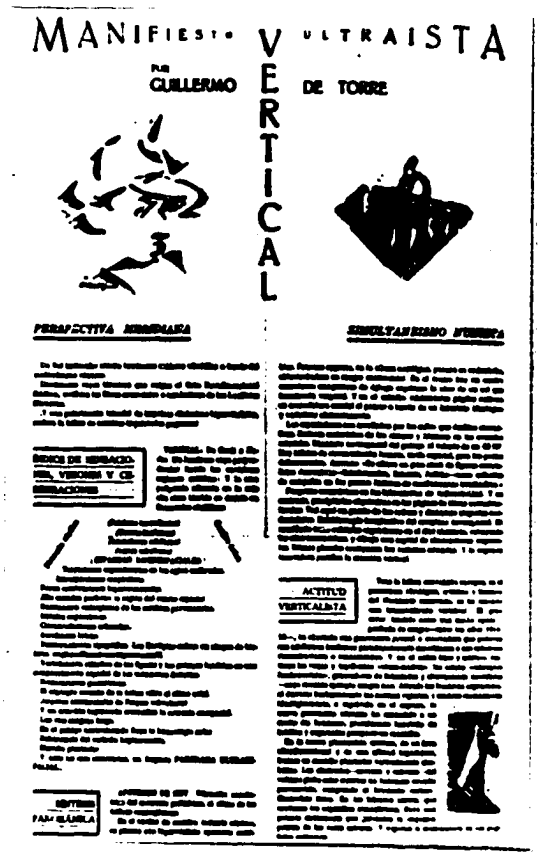

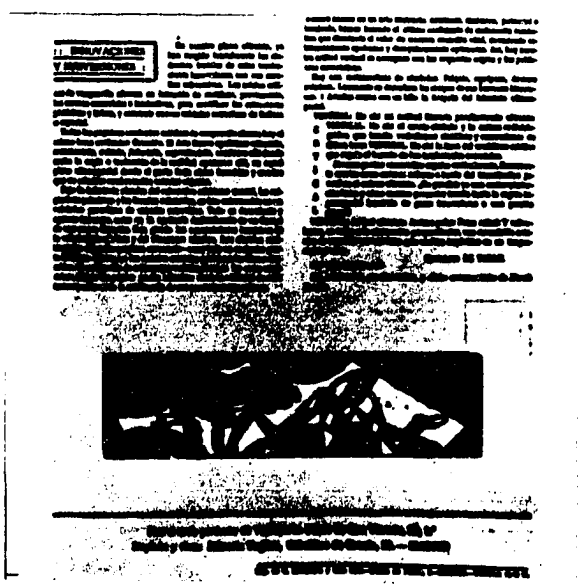

4. De Torre's Ultraist Vertical Manifesto, Madrid, 1920
5. Ultraist Vertical Manifesto with illustration by Norah Borges, 1920

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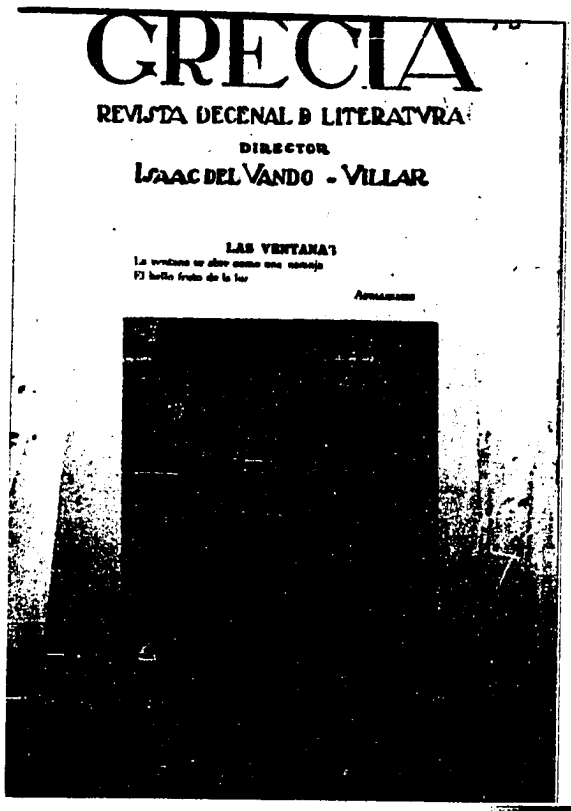
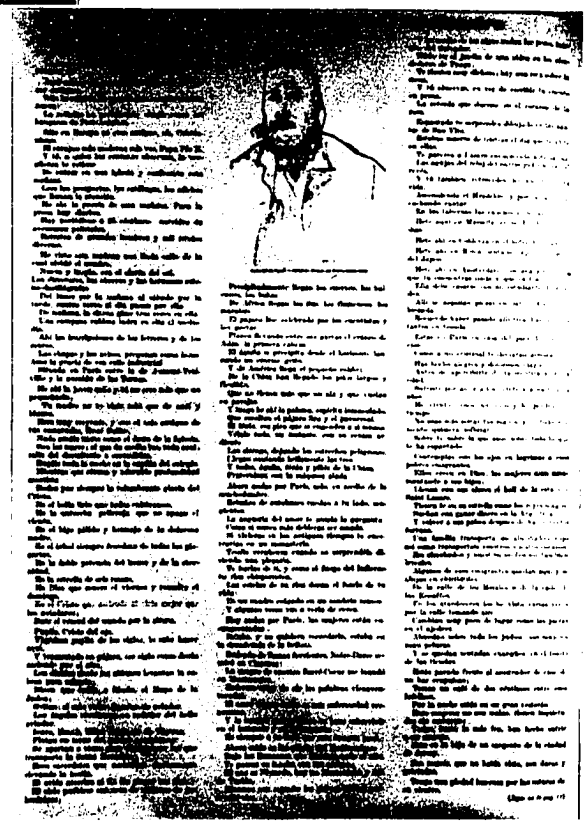


6. Cover of Grecia, with Window by Delaunay and poem by Apollinaire, 1920



7. Apollinaire's "Zone," Martín Fierro, 1926

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8. Delaunay, Stage sets for Le Petit Parigot, Martín Fierro, 1927

9. First issue of Martín Fierro, February 1924

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10. Works by Rivera and Orozco, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 1927

11. Illari, "Graphic and Chromatic Representation of States of Mind," Martín Fierro, 1924

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José Ellmeno: pésimo

Andaime entero: magnífico

MARTIN FIERRO

Un cuadro rechazado

Una comisión de viejos espantadizos ha rechazado esta obra de Raquel Forner, en el último certamen anual de artes plásticas. La han acusado de agresiva e iconoclasta; y uno se pregunta, con qué derecho juzgan esos señores la obra de una generación que tiene sensibilidad distinta y una verdad mejor, porque es más nueva.

La Comisión Nacional, formada en su mayoría por hombres definitivamente extinguidos para el arte, nos hace el efecto de esos ancianos imprudentes, que en los salones ni bailan ni dejan bailar.

Se rechaza obras porque al señor Cupertino del Campo "no le gustan" (sic); se visten con frases doctorales y se escandalizan, cuando por ejemplo, Raquel Forner, casi una niña, les ofende con su lujo de tener ojos nuevos e interpretar la verdad del mundo según la percibe y la siente.

Todo el mundo sabe ya de qué manera procede esta comisión: se rechaza o se admite los trabajos en sesiones misteriosas; nadie sabe por qué razón y por cuáles votos ha sido eliminada una obra del concurso. El discernimiento de los premios obedece a un riguroso escalafón; de modo que Grigoriev, si apareciera entre nosotros, necesitaría exponer durante cuatro años para conquistar una tercera medalla.

PRIMER SALON DE ESCRITORES

12. "Two concepts of sculpture," Martín Fierro, 1925
13. Marechal, "A rejected picture," Martín Fierro, 1925
14. Girondo, Ice-Cream Salesman, Primer Salón de Escritores, 1926

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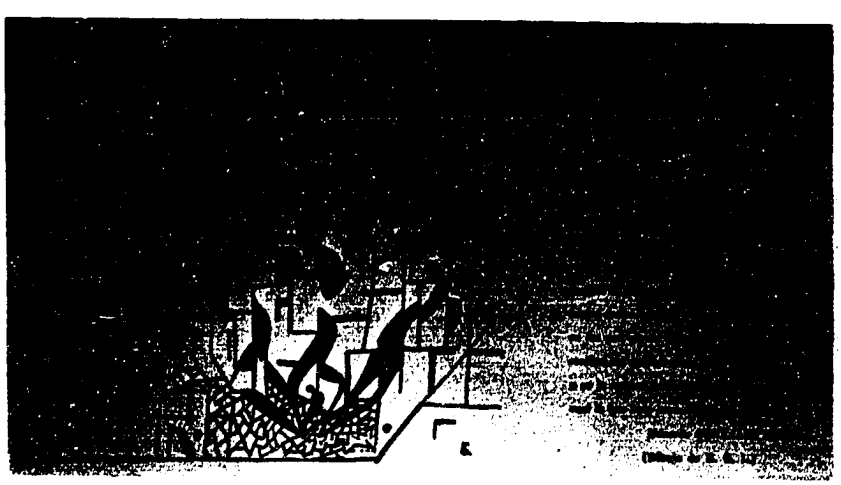

15. Borges, Compadrito de la Via de Oro, Primer Salón de Escritores, 1926

16. González Lanuza, "Sombras," Martín Fierro, 1925

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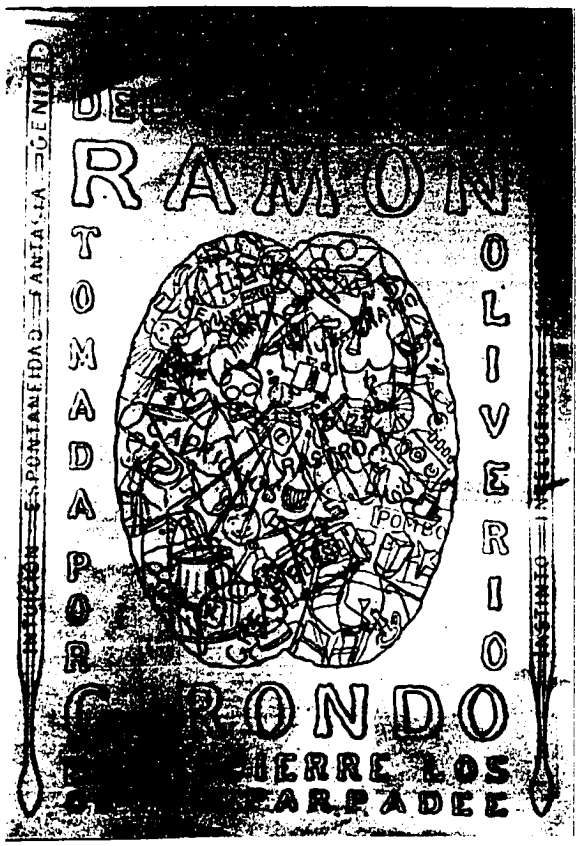

17. Girondo, "Instantanea del cerebro de Ramón," Martín Fierro, 1925

18. Bourdelle, Monument to Gen. Carlos de Alvear, Martín Fierro, 1927

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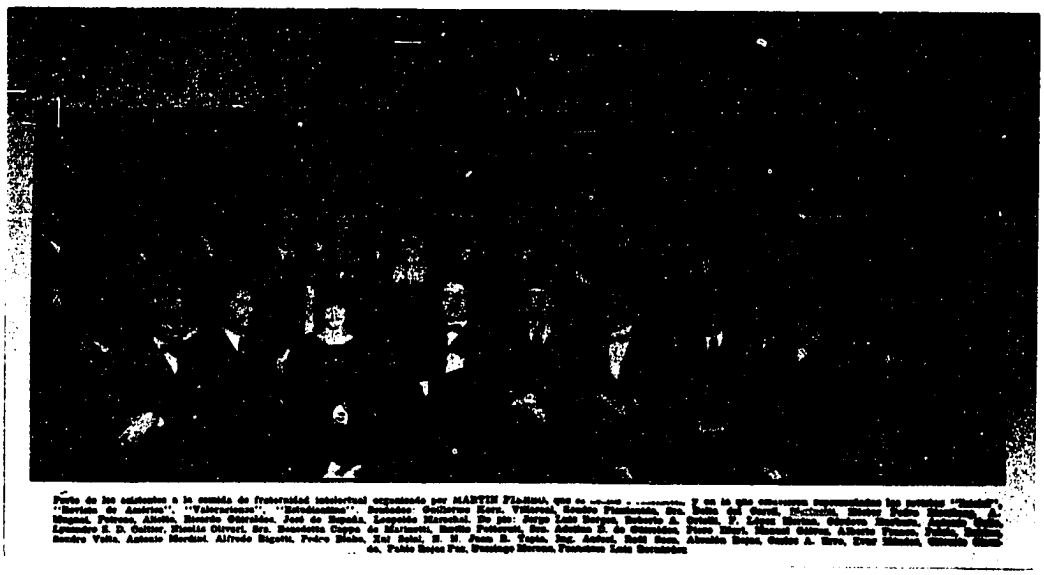

19. Marinetti, First Futurist Manifesto, reproduced in Martín Fierro, 1926

20. Banquet for Marinetti (seated in front), Martín Fierro, 1926

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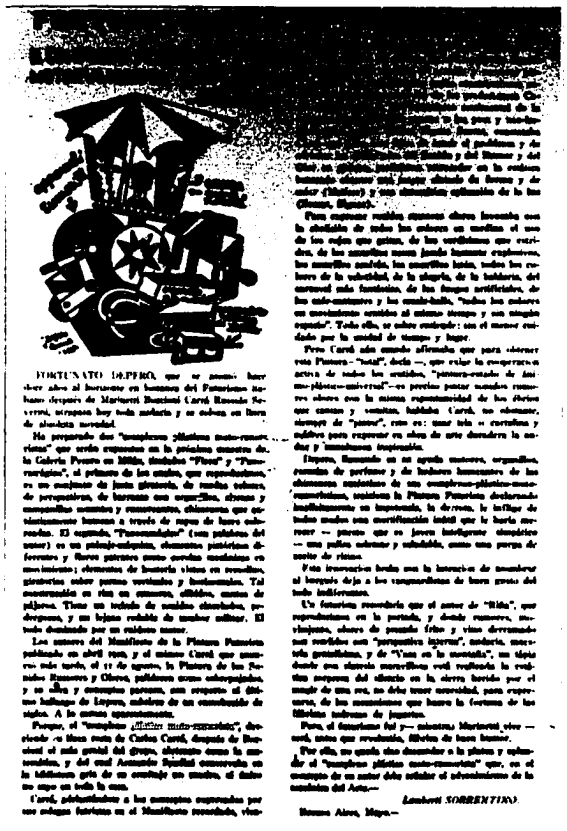

21. Depero, Motorhumorist Machine with Lamberti Sorrentino's article, Martín Fierro, 1927

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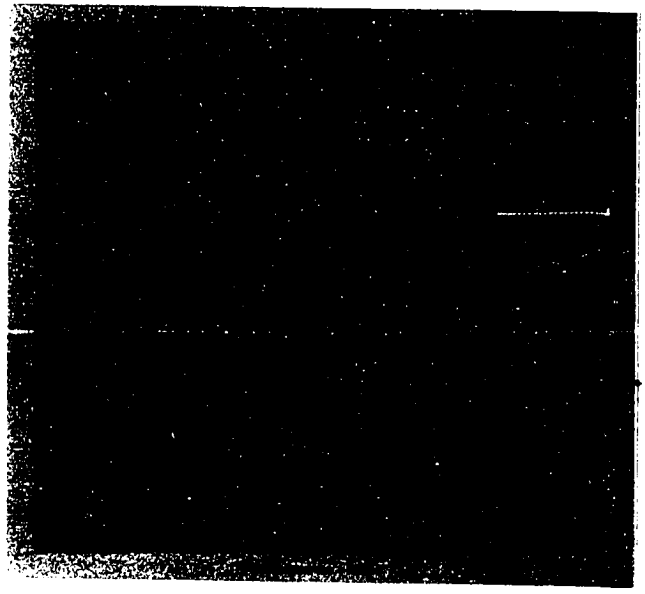

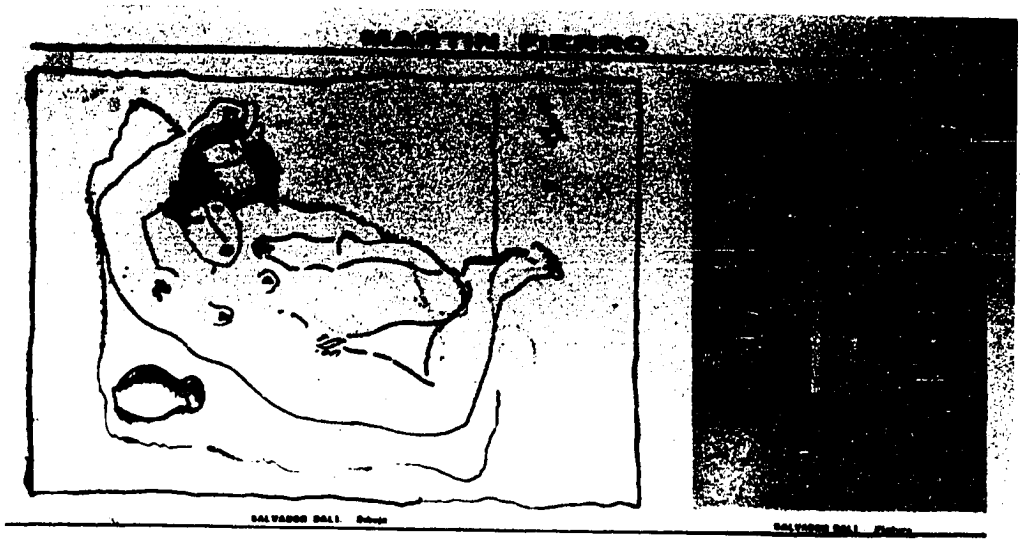

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26. Figari, Old Market, 1909

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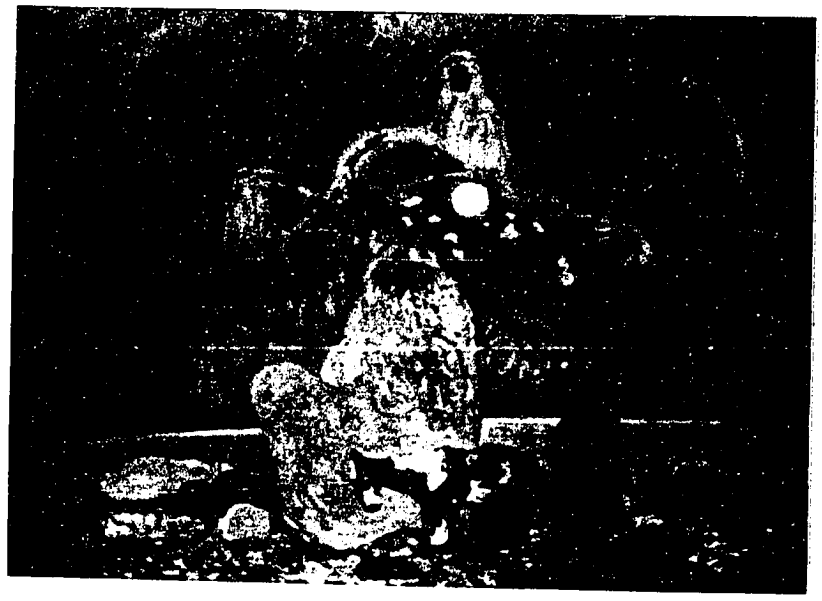

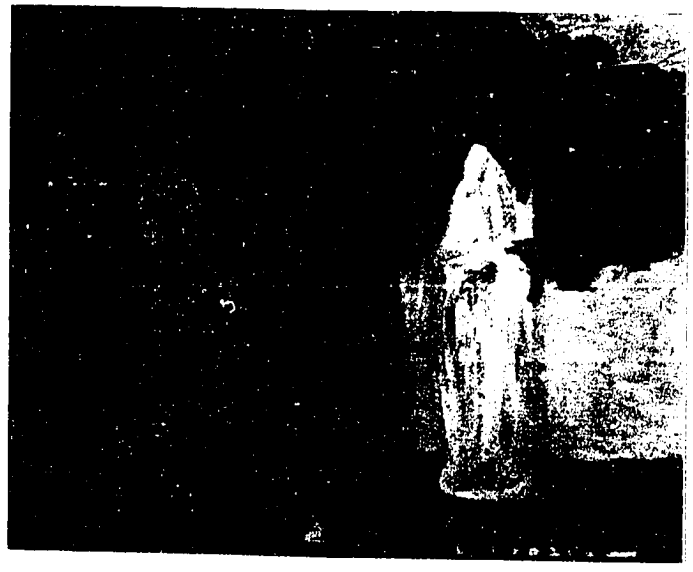

32. Figari, The Source, 1921

33. Figari, Against Gossip, c. 1922

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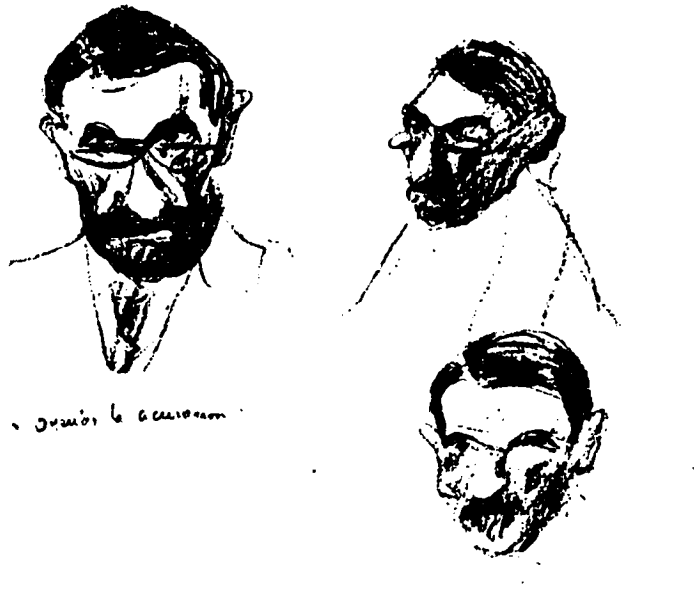

34. Figari, Self-Portraits, 1896

35. Figari, Pericón, c. 1922

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37. Figari, El Palito, c. 1922

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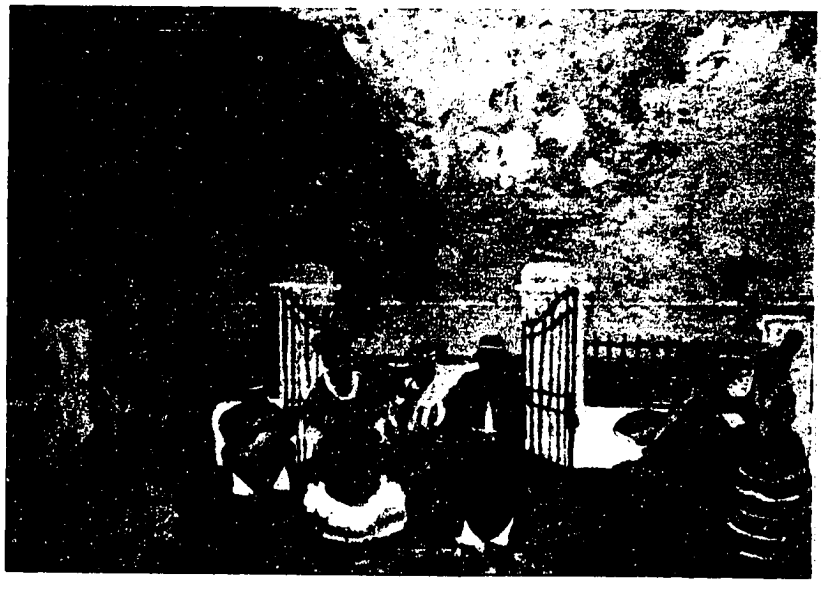

38. Figari, El Gato, 1923

39. Figari, At the Ranch, c. 1923

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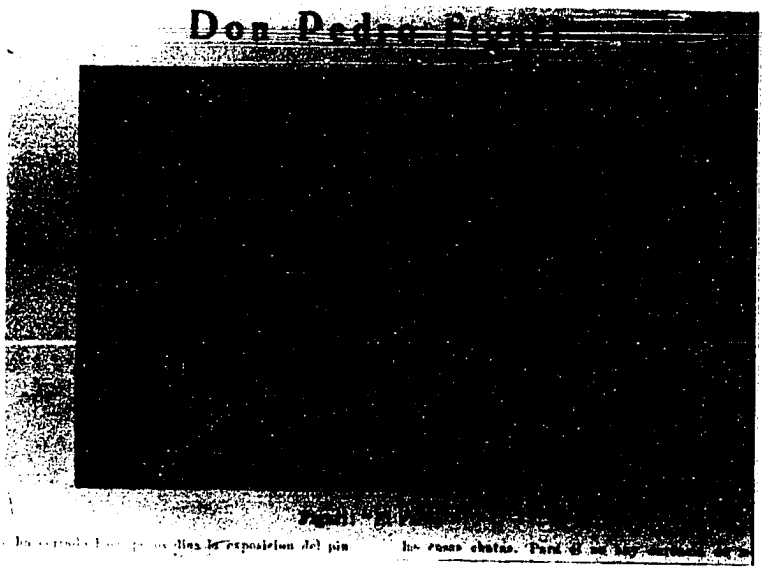

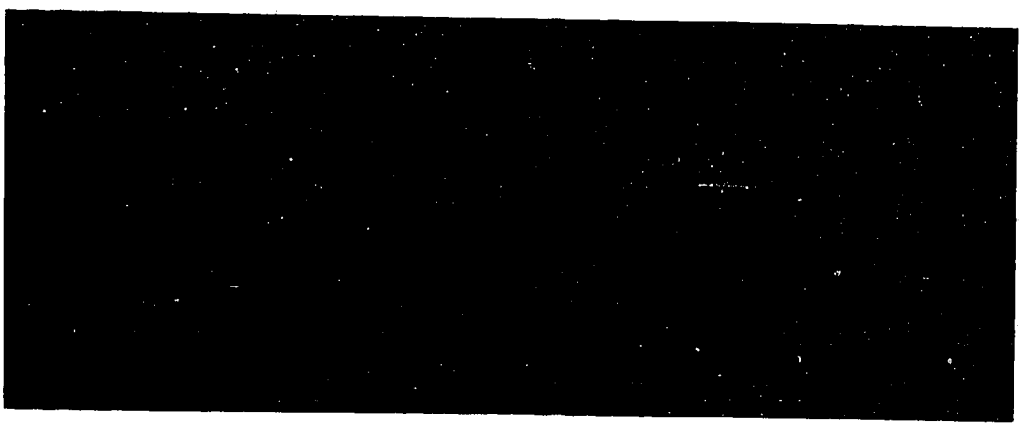

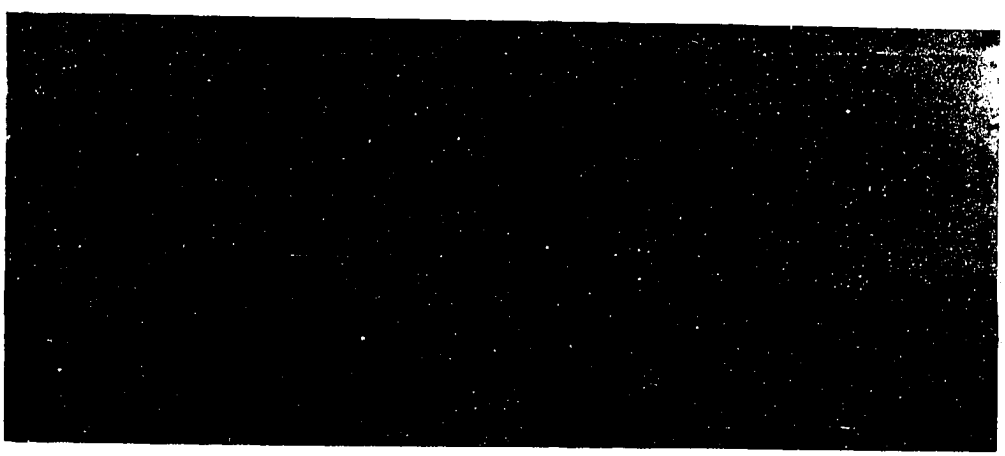

40. Figari, El Palito, c. 1923

41. Figari, Convoy of Wagons Crossing the Pampa, 1923

42. Pueyrredón, Rodeo, 1861

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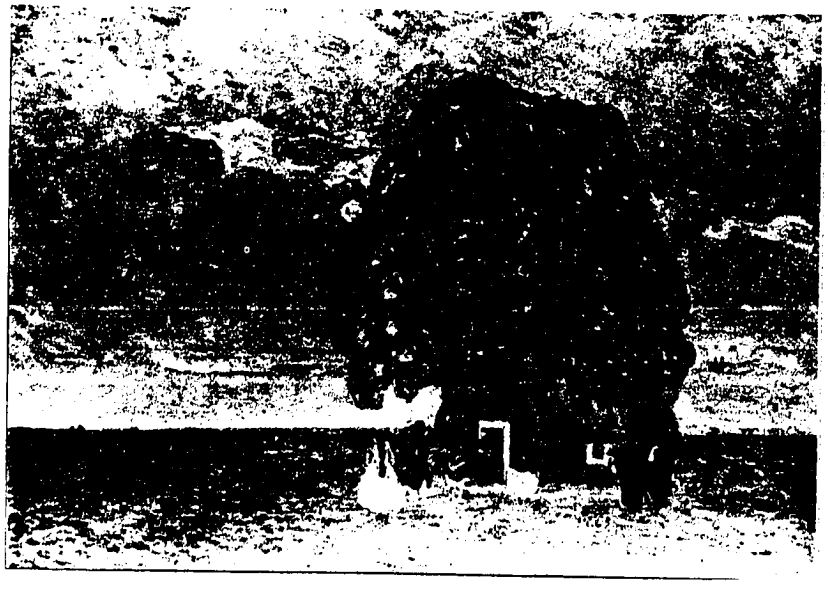

43. Figari, Indians, 1923

44. Figari, Dance on the Ranch, 1923

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45. Figari, La Estancia, 1923

46. Figari, Assassination of Quiroga, 1923

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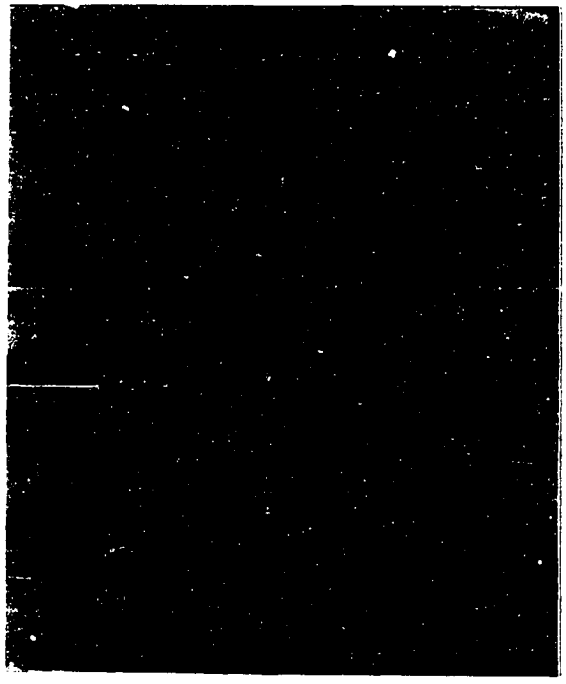

47. Soto Acebal, Don Segundo Sombra

48. Figari, Don Segundo Sombra, 1923

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49. Figari, Soirée (Colonial Epoch), 1922

50. Figari, Salón de Rosas, 1924

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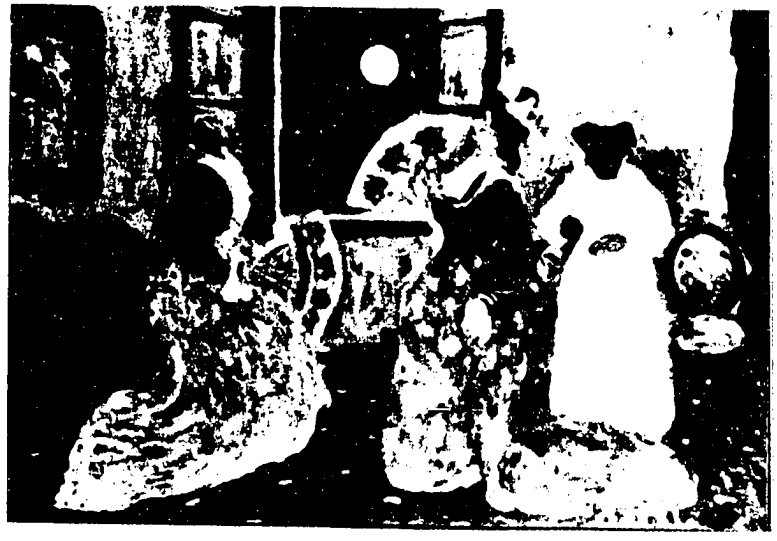

51. Figari, Colonial Lady, c. 1925

52. Figari, Spring, 1923

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53. Figari, Candombe, 1924

54. Figari, Candombe, 1924

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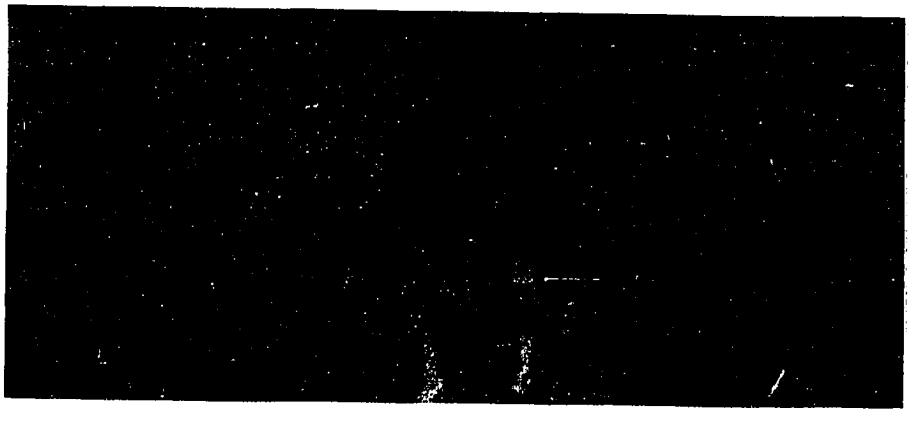

55. Figari, Candombe, c. 1924

56. Figari, The Kings Go to Visit the Governor, c. 1921

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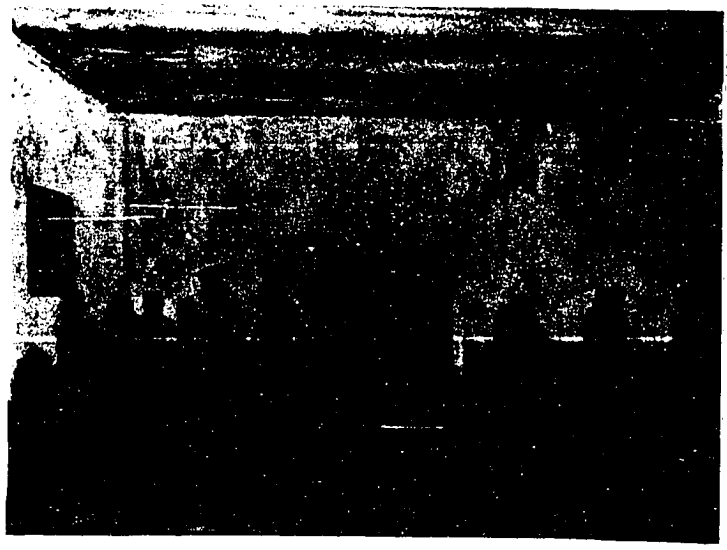

57. Figari, Life, c. 1925

58. Banquet for Figari (seated in center) and Jules Supervielle (standing behind him) sponsored by Proa, Noticias Literarias and Martín Fierro, 1924

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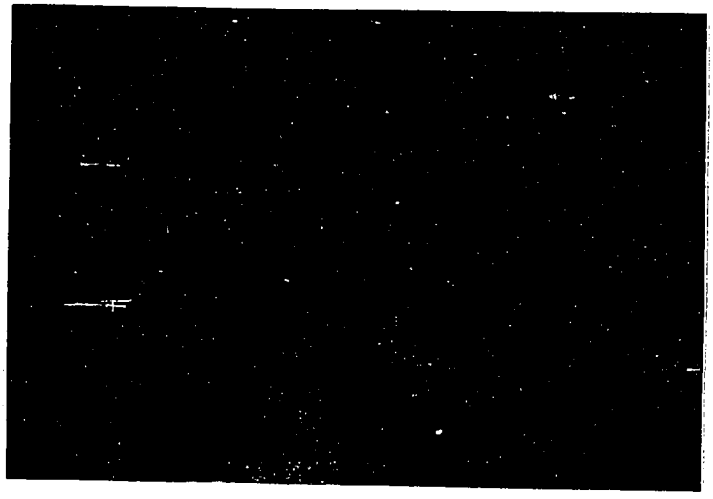

59. Malharro, Nocturn, 1900

60. Figari, La Pampa, 1927

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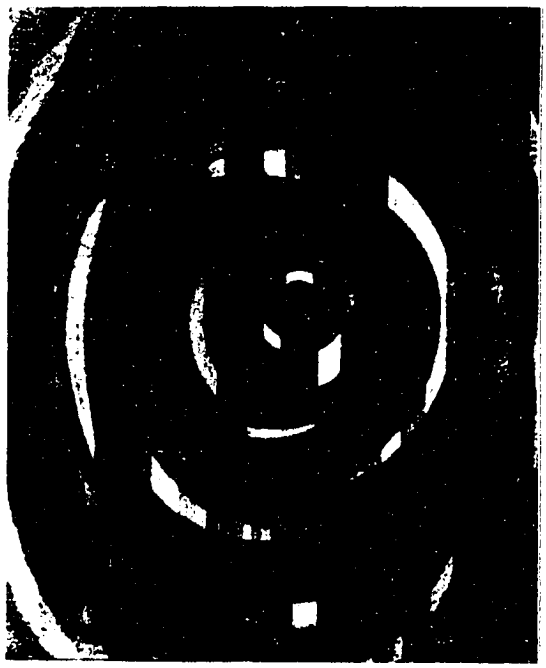

61. Pettoruti, Spring, 1914

62. Pettoruti, Centrifugal Forces, 1914

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63. Ballá, Mercury Passes Before the Sun Seen Through a Telescope, 1914

64. Pettoruti, Dynamic Expansion, 1914

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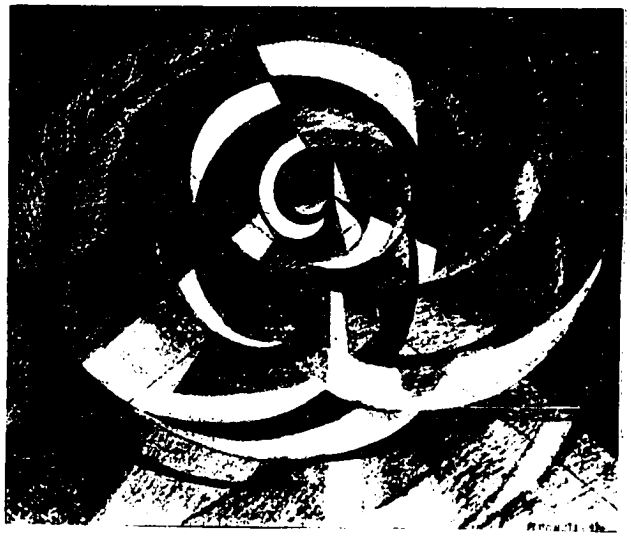

65. Pettoruti, Harmony, Movement, Space, 1914

66. Diagram of Harmony, Movement, Space showing use of the golden section

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67. Pettoruti, Lights in the Landscape, 1915

68. Ballá Bandiera sull'altare della patria, 1915

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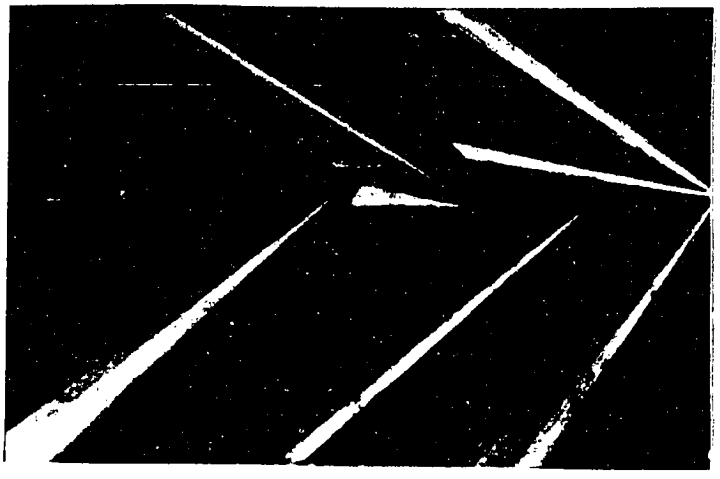

69. Pettoruti, Dynamism of the Wind, 1916

70. Pettoruti, City Country, 1914

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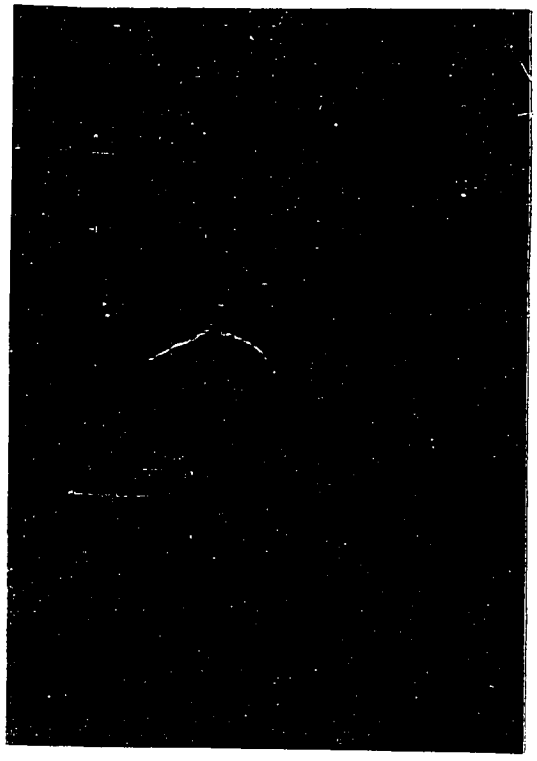

71. Pettoruti, The Siphon, 1915

72. Carrá, Circular Synthesis of Objects, 1914

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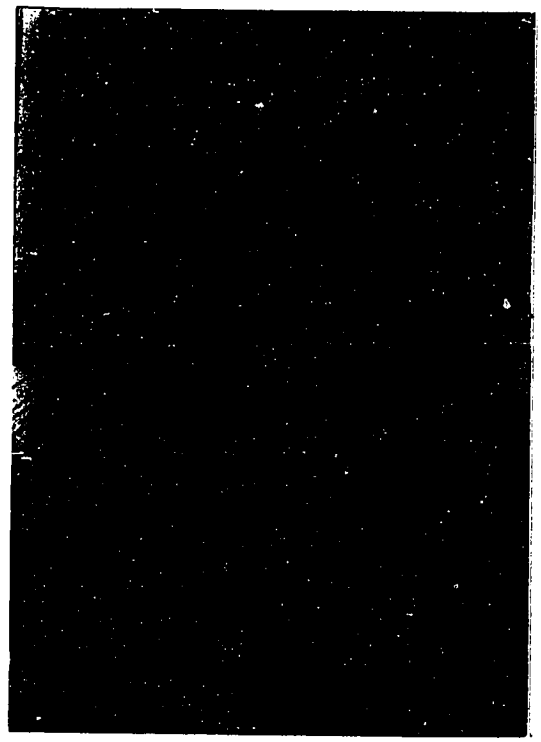

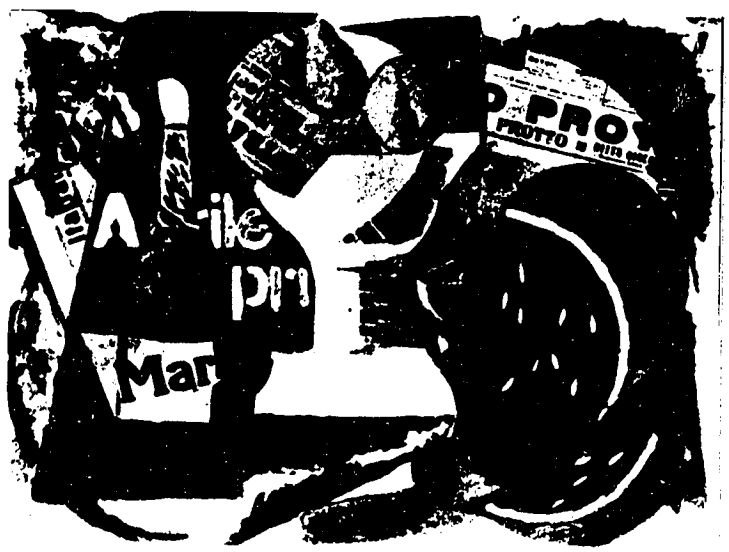

73. Pettoruti, La Voce, 1916

74. Soffici, Watermelon, Fruit Bowl and Bottle, 1914

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75. Pettoruti, Glass and Orange, 1915

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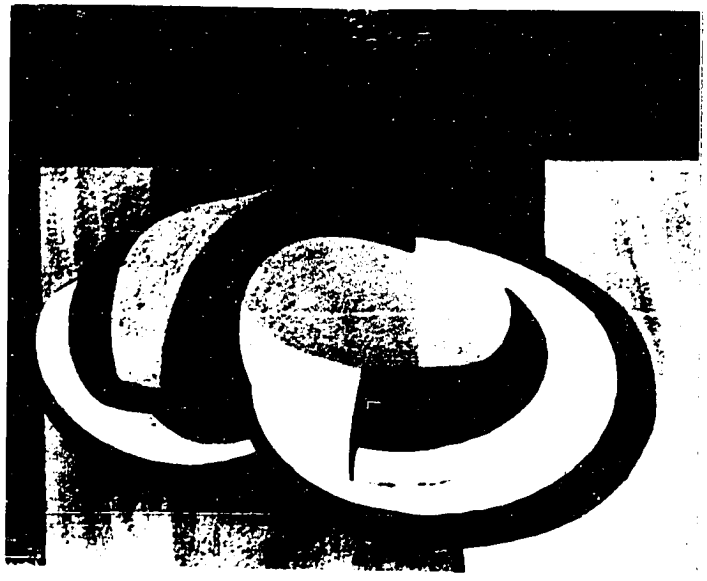

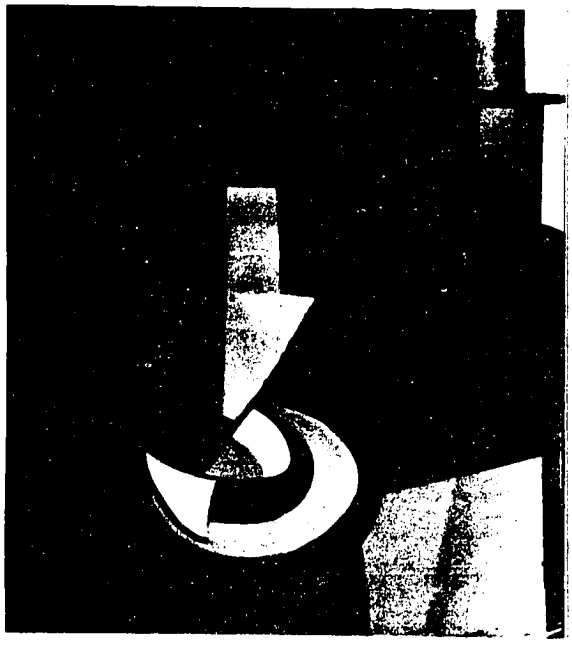

76. Pettoruti, Pear, Bottle and Cup, 1916

77. Pettoruti, Woman in the Cafe, 1917

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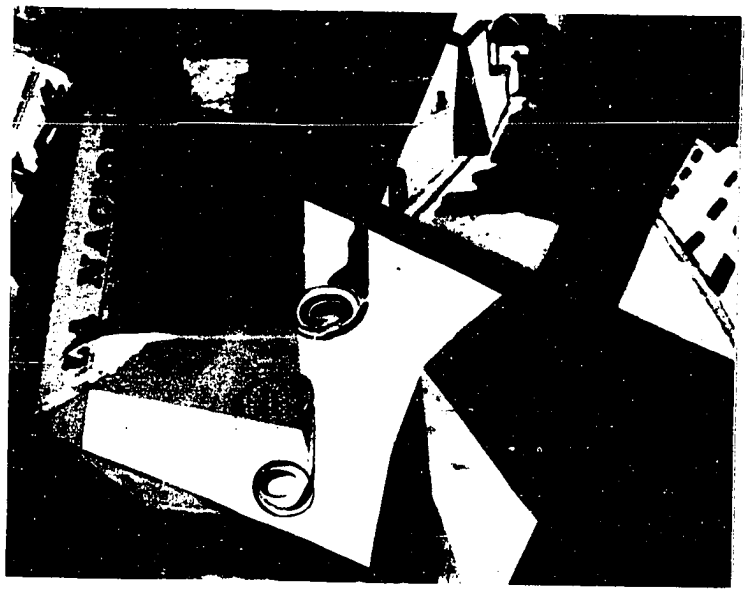

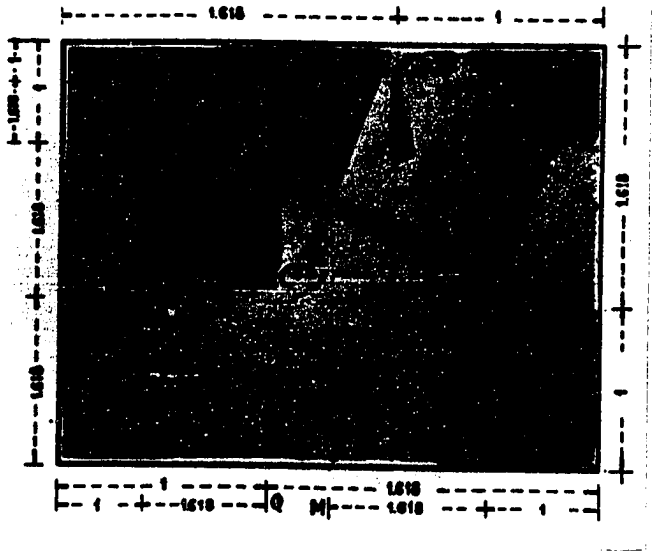

78. Pettoruti, My Window in Florence, 1917

79. Diagram of My Window in Florence showing the use of the golden section

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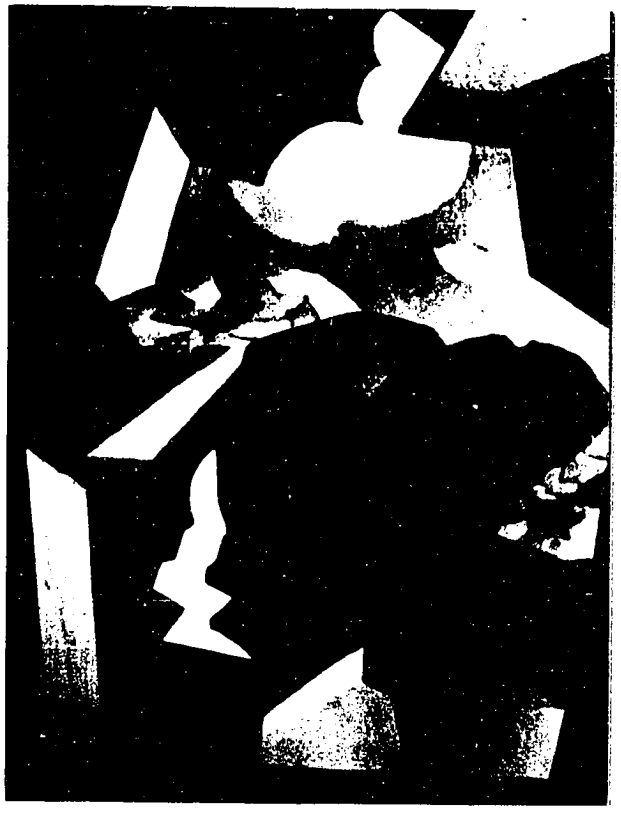

80. Pettoruti, Friend in the Window, 1917

81. Pettoruti, The tunnel, c. 1917-18

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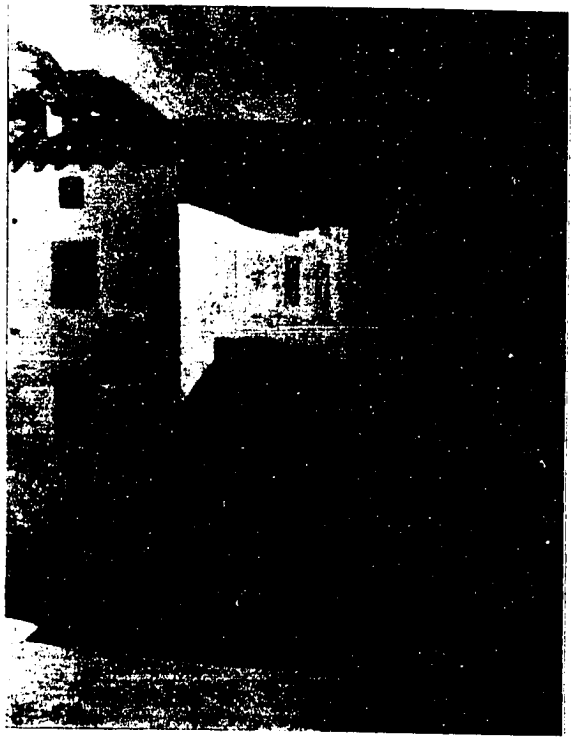

82. Pettoruti, The Lone Oak, c. 1917-18

83. Pettoruti, Village in Tremosine, Lago de Garda, 1918

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84. Pettoruti, Corner of a Garden. 1917

85. Pettoruti
Vallombrosa
1916

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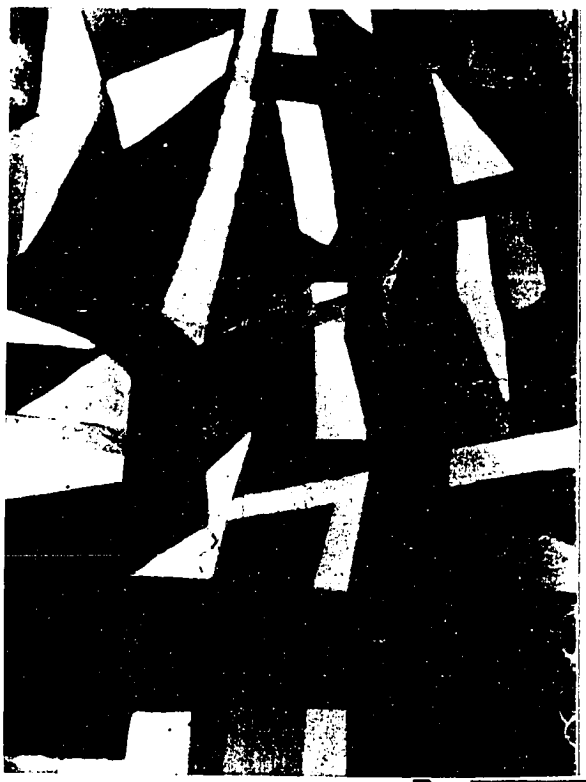
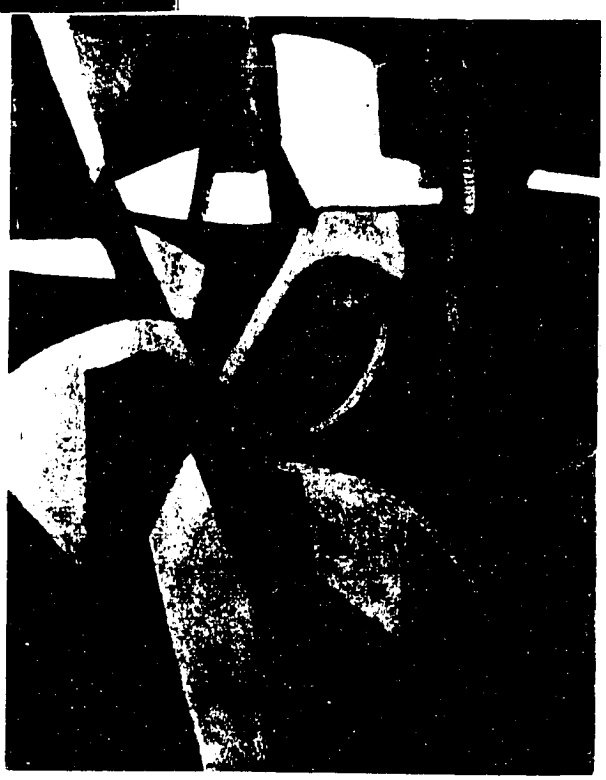


86. Pettoruti, The Park, 1916



87. Pettoruti, Little Girl in the Garden, 1917

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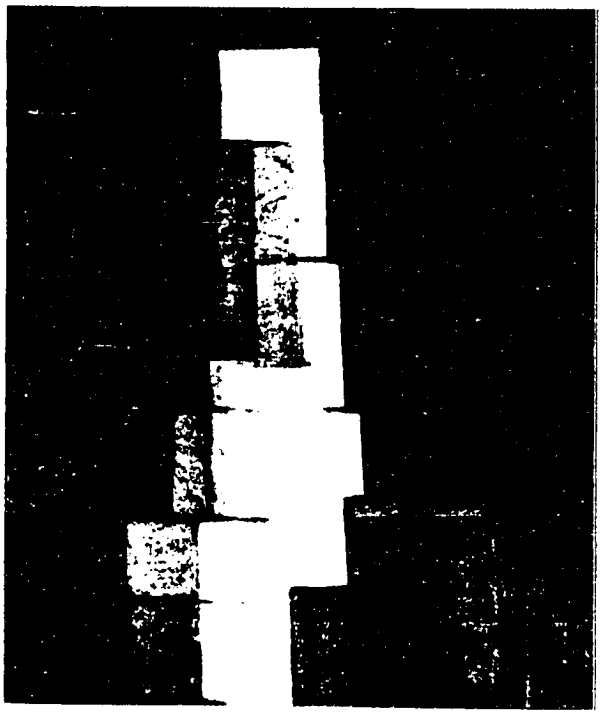
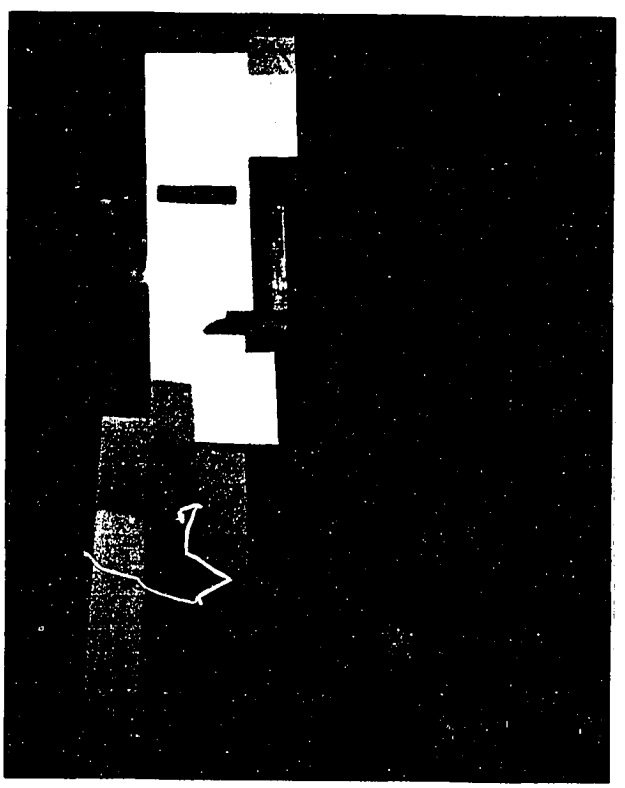


88. Pettoruti, Luce Elevazione, 1916



89. Pettoruti, Portrait of the Painter Xul Solar, 1920

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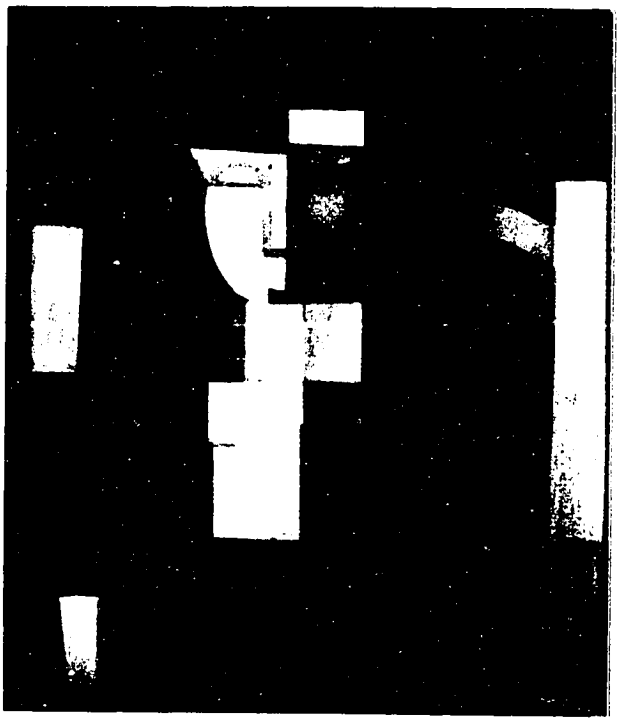
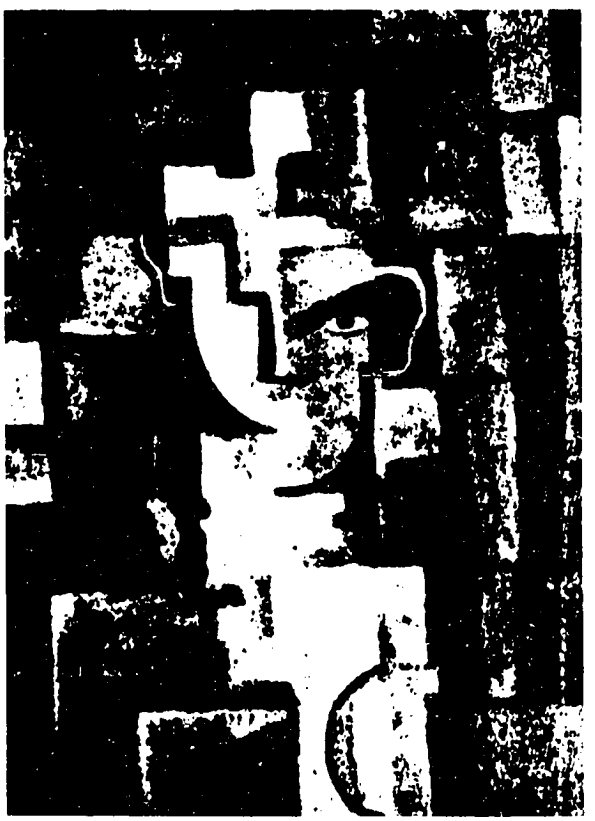


90. Pettoruti, The Lady with the Green Hat 1919



91. Pettoruti, Ultraist Portrait, c. 1922-23

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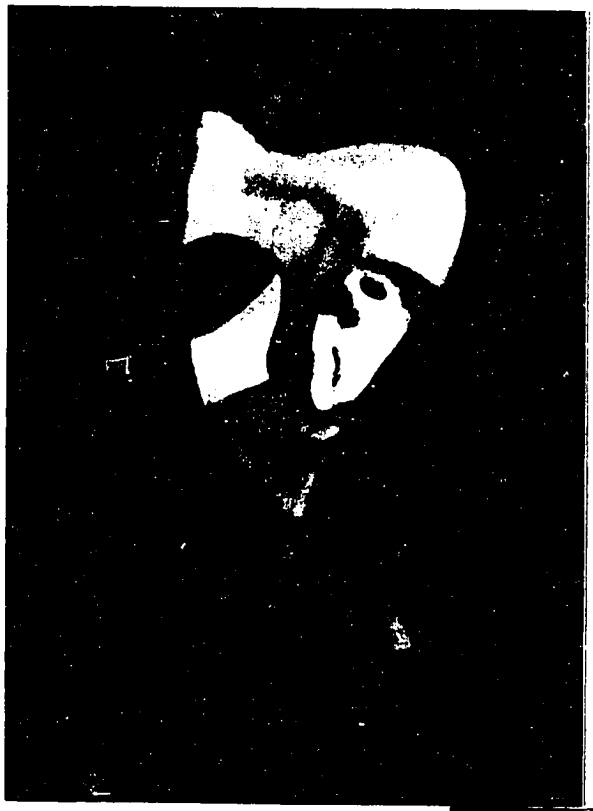
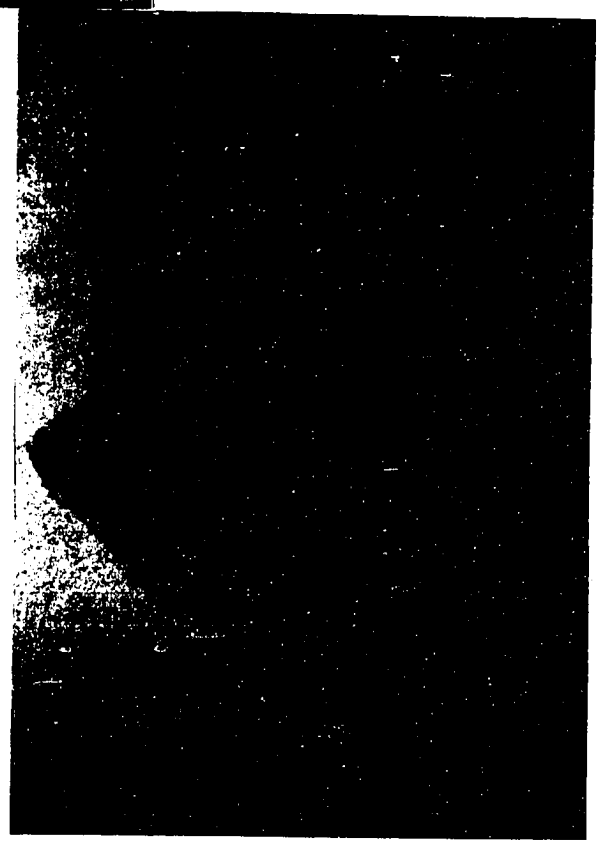


92. Pettoruti, Self-Portrait, 1918



93. Pettoruti, Self-Portrait, 1917

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94. Pettoruti, Maria Perenno, 1919

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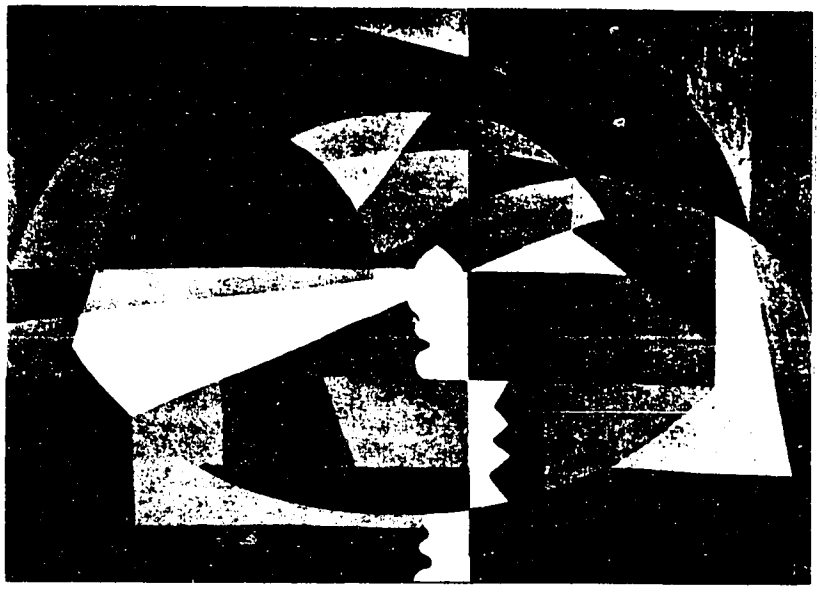

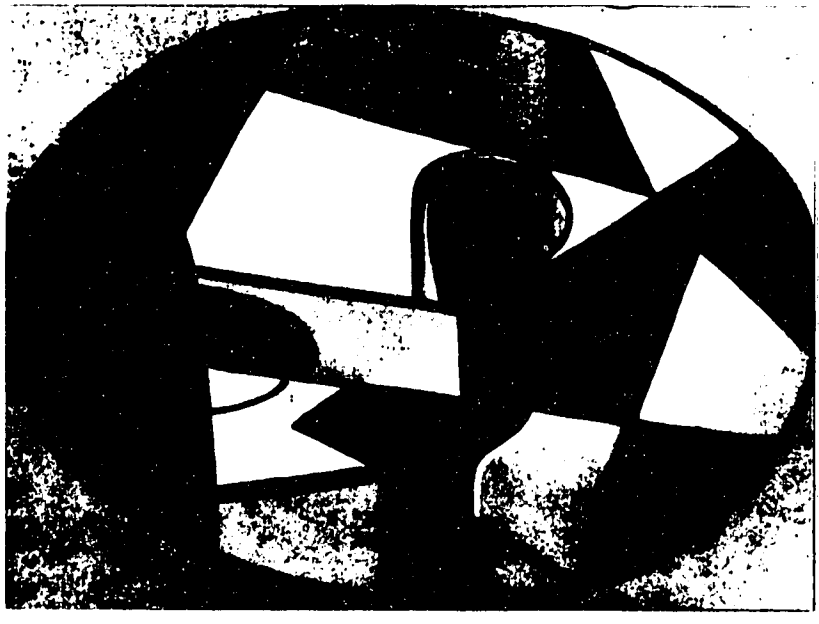

95. Pettoruti, Blue Grotto of Capri, 1918

96. Pettoruti, Composition, 1917

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97. Pettoruti, The Philosopher, 1918

98. Pettoruti, The School Teacher, 1918

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99. Pettoruti, The Dancers, 1918

100. Pettoruti, Outskirts of Milan, 1919

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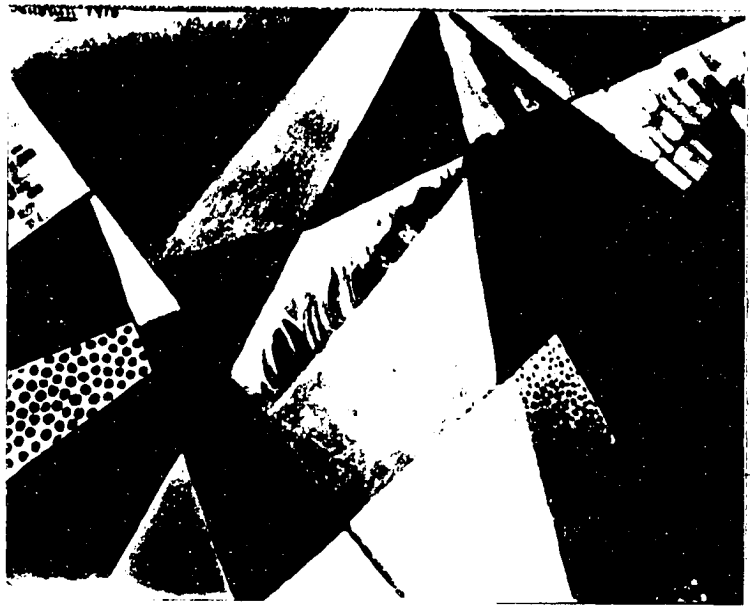

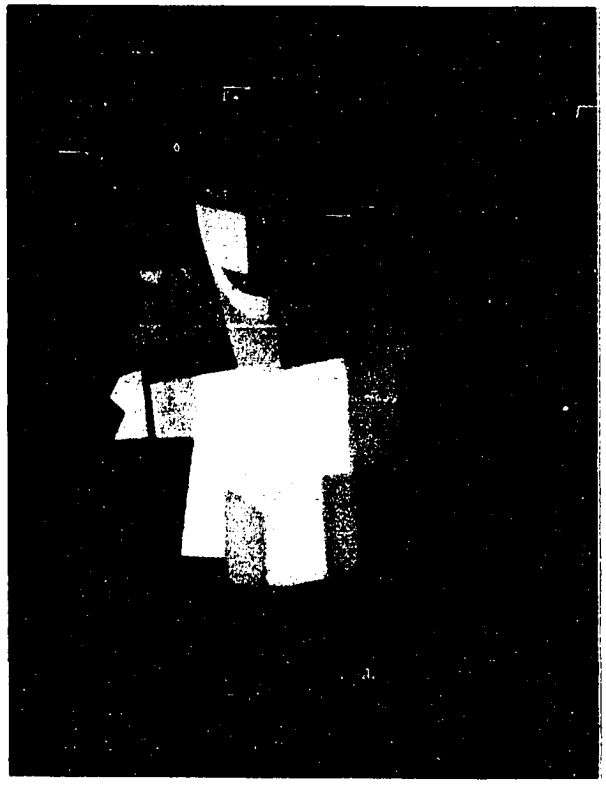

101. Pettoruti, Synthesis of a Garden, 1915

102. Pettoruti, La Pensierosa, 1920

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103. Pettoruti, The Blind Flutist, 1920

104. Pettoruti, The Guitarist, 1920

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MARTIN FIERRO

PETTORUTI

105. Front page of Martín Fierro with reproduction of Pettoruti's The Dancers, 1924

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106. Article on Pettoruti by Xul Solar in Martín Fierro, 1924

107. Pettoruti, Tranquil Day, undated

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ATLANTIDA

EL GRAN ROTATIVO

EL UNICO DIARIO DEL MUNDO QUE SALE UNA VEZ POR SEMANA

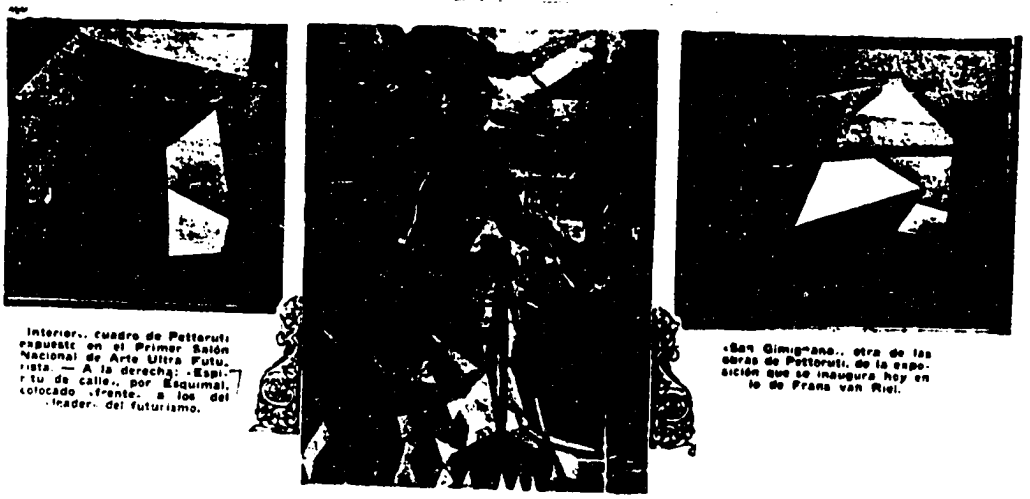
Buenos Aires, 4 de diciembre de 1924 — Año VI

LA MAS ESTUPENDA DEMOSTRACION DE ARTE DEL SIGLO

El primer Salón Nacional Ultrafuturista de lo de Frans Van Riel es monstruosamente genial. Los pinceles estupendos de nuestros mejores maestros pictóricos se han dado cita para constituir un conjunto maravilloso de líneas, de colores y de formas.

La luz fulgurosa de Pettoruti, rotundamente eclipsada

Última hora



Interior», cuadro de Pettoruti expuesto en el Primer Salón Nacional de Arte Ultra Futurista. — A la derecha: «Espiar tu de calle», por Esquimal, colocado «frente» a los del «leader» del futurismo.

«San Gimignano», otra de las obras de Pettoruti, de la exposición que se inaugura hoy en lo de Frans van Riel.

108. Article on the "Salon Nacional Ultrafuturista," Atlántida 1924

109. Pettoruti, Interior and San Giminiano, reproduced next to an example of "Ultrafuturist" work, Atlántida, 1924

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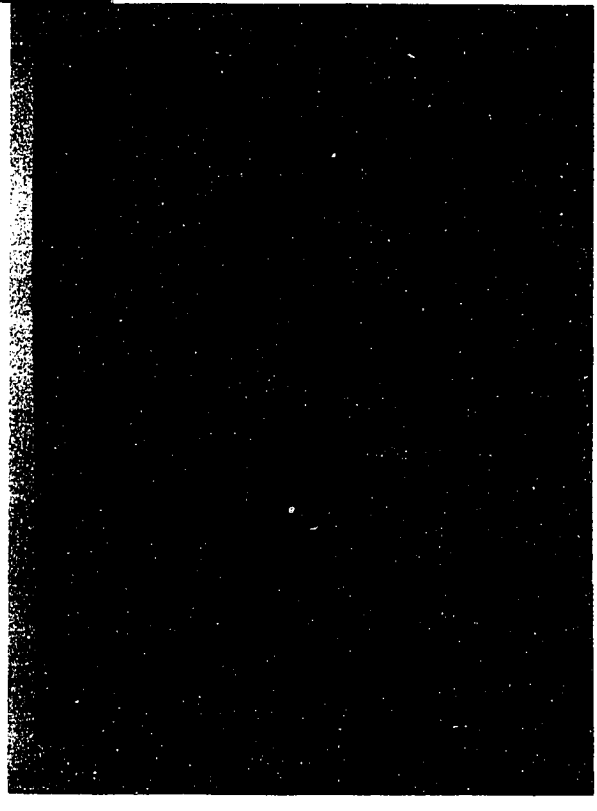
110. Pettoruti, Portrait of Carolita, 1925



111. Picasso, Portrait of the Wife of the Artist, 1923

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112. Pettoruti, Portrait of Carolita, after painted study, 1925

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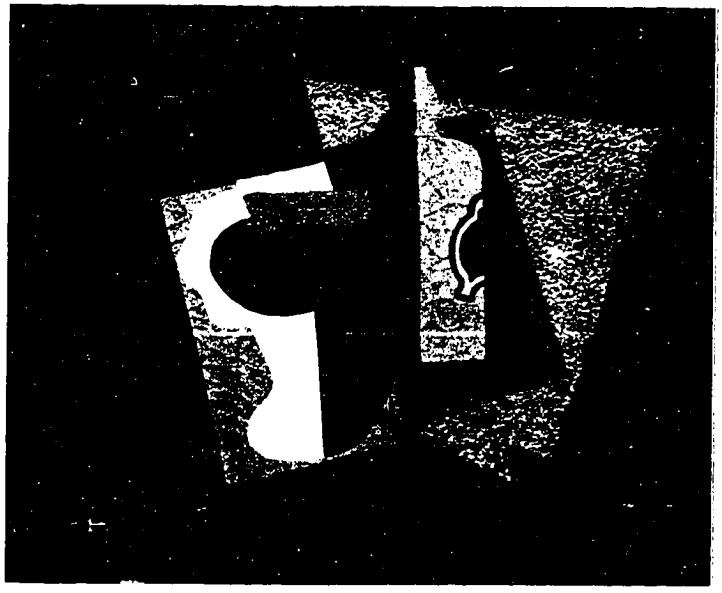

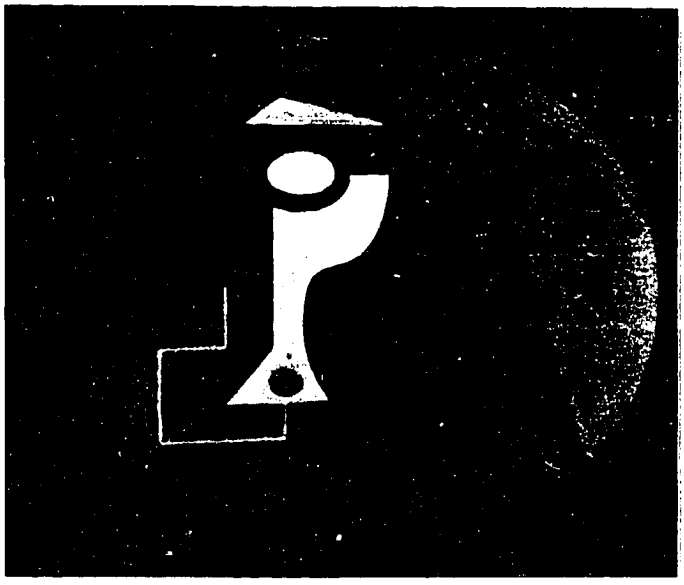

113. Pettoruti, Cherries, 1924

114. Pettoruti, Small Goblet, 1925

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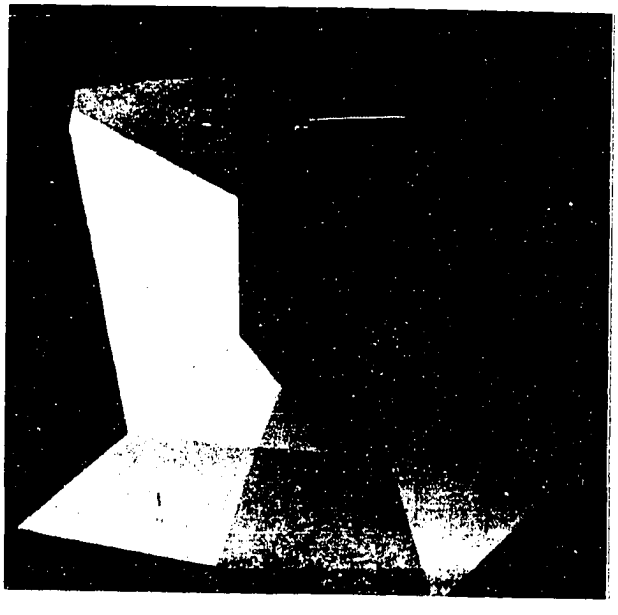

115. Pettoruti, Shadows in the Window, 1925

116. Pettoruti, Shadows, 1916

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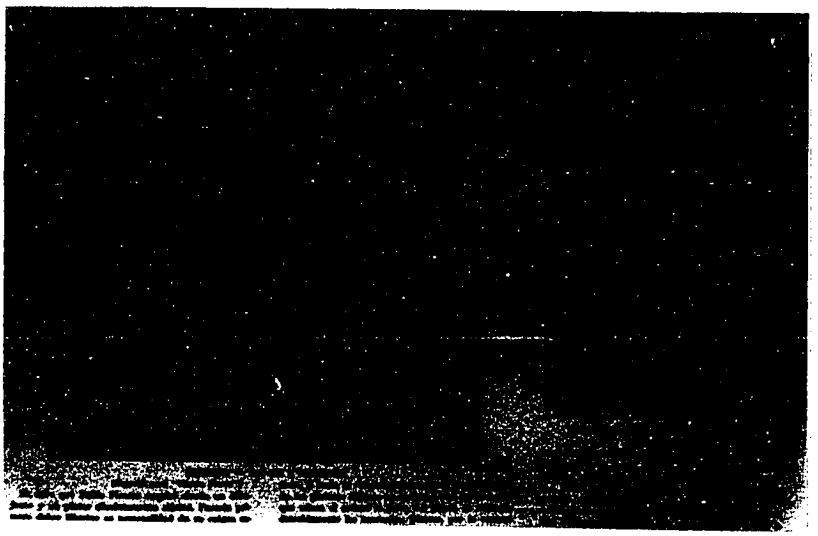

117. Picasso, drawings reproduced in Martín Fierro, 1926

118. Pettoruti, My Harlequin, 1927

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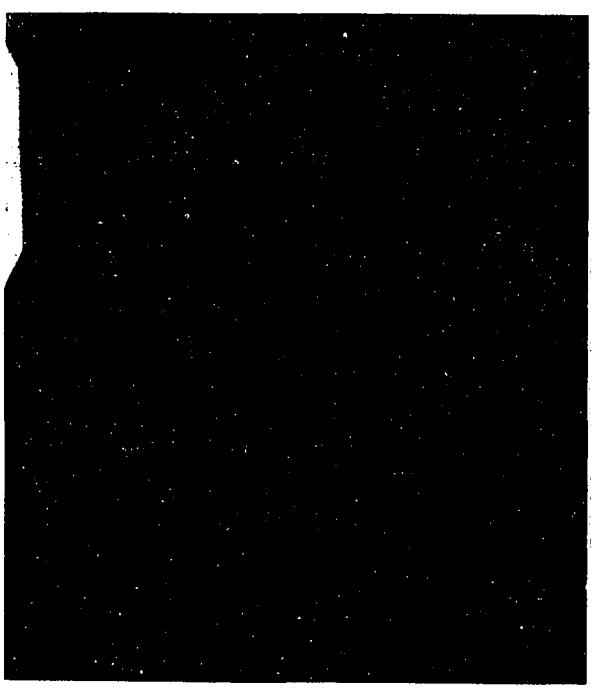
119. Pettoruti, Harlequin, 1928



120. Pettoruti, Song of the People, 1927

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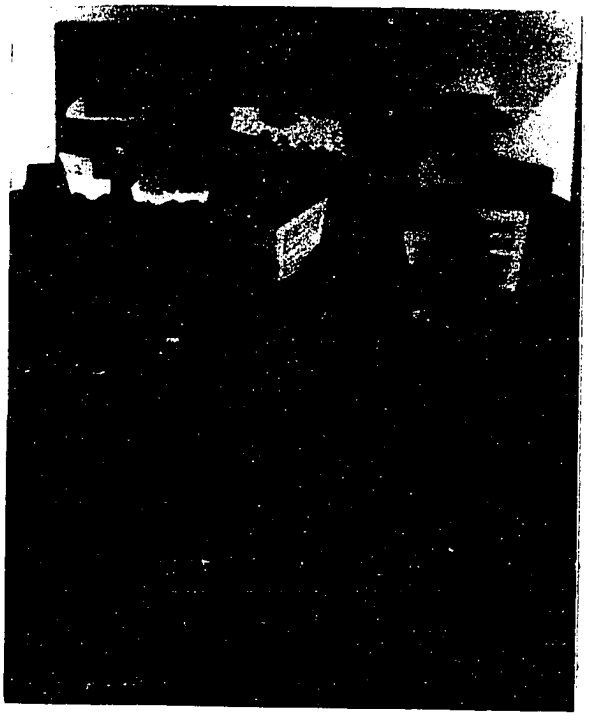

121. Pettoruti, Quintet, 1927

122. Figari & Son? Cabaret, 1922-1925

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123. Curatella-Manes, The Family, 1912

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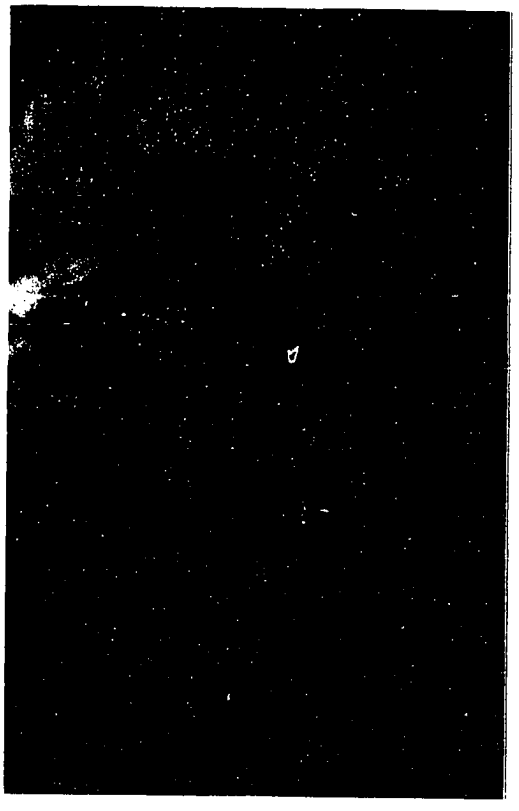
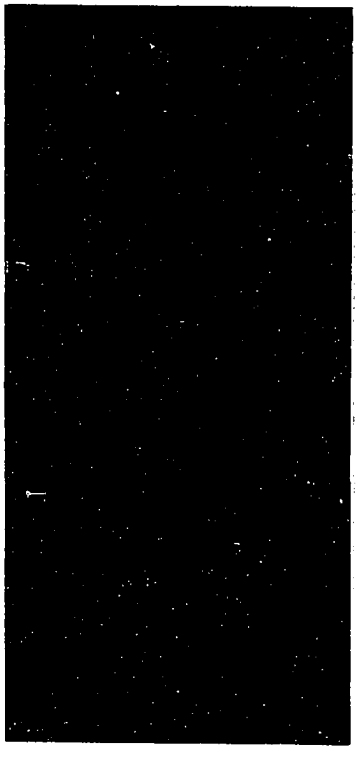


124. Curatella-Manes, Old Florentine, 1912



125. Curatella-Manes, Study, c. 1917

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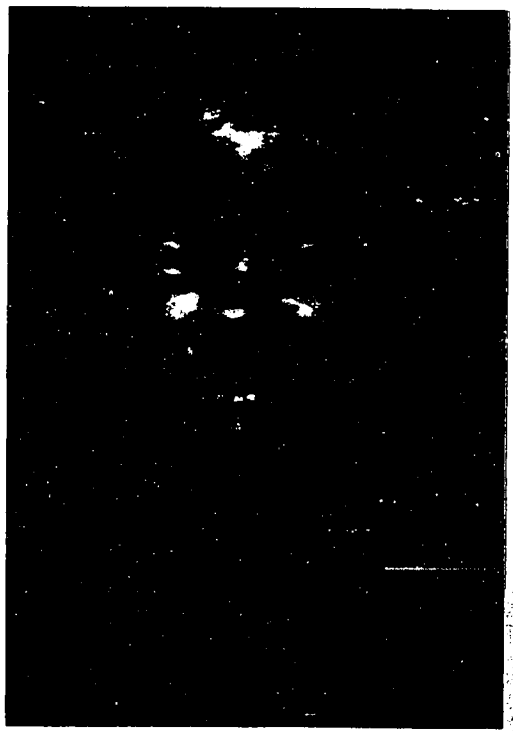
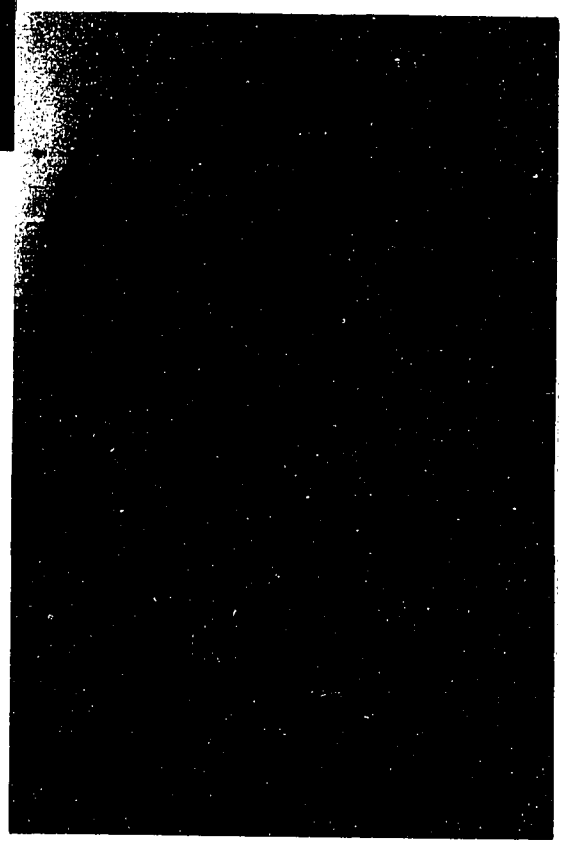


126. Curatella-Manes, Boy from Flanders, 1917



127. Curatella-Manes, Isis, 1917

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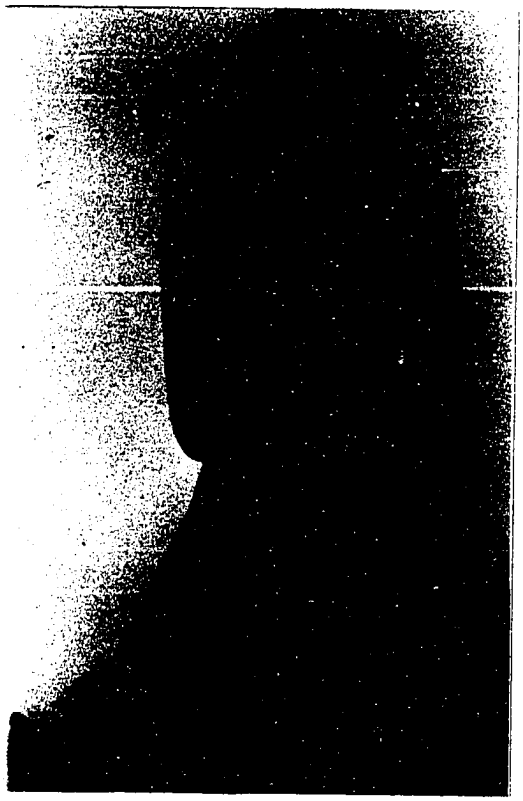

128. Curatella-Manes, La Pensativa, c. 1920

130. Lipchitz, Seated Bather, 1916

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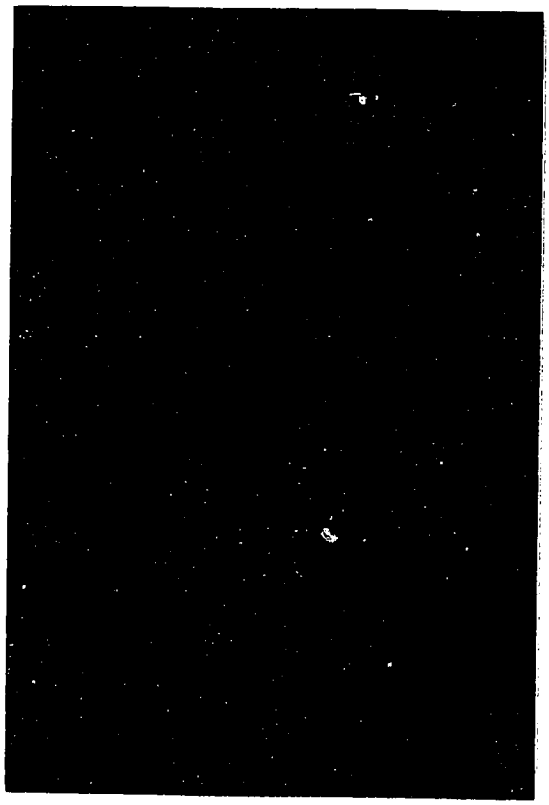

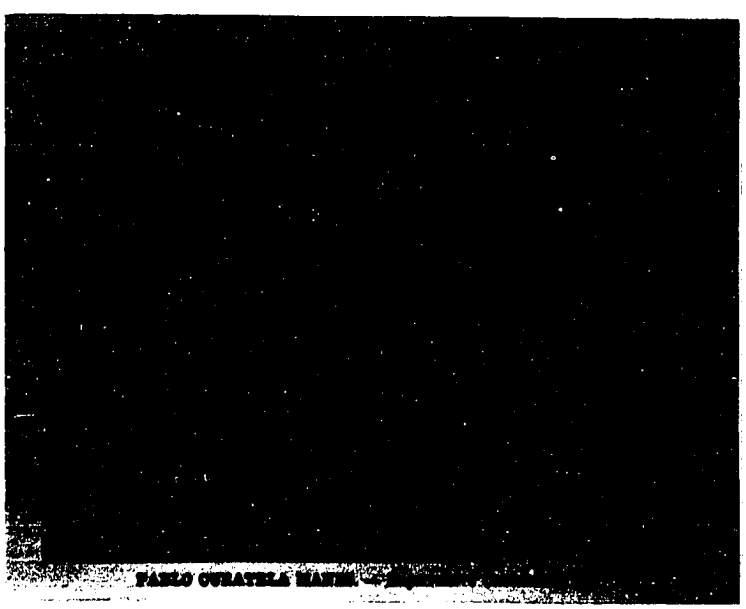

129. Curatella-Manes, Study, 1919

131. Curatella-Manes, Three Bathers, 1921

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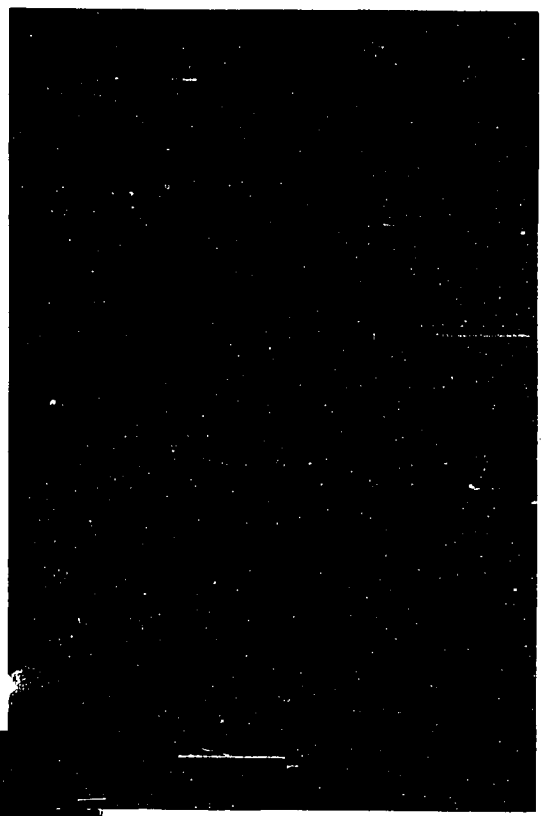
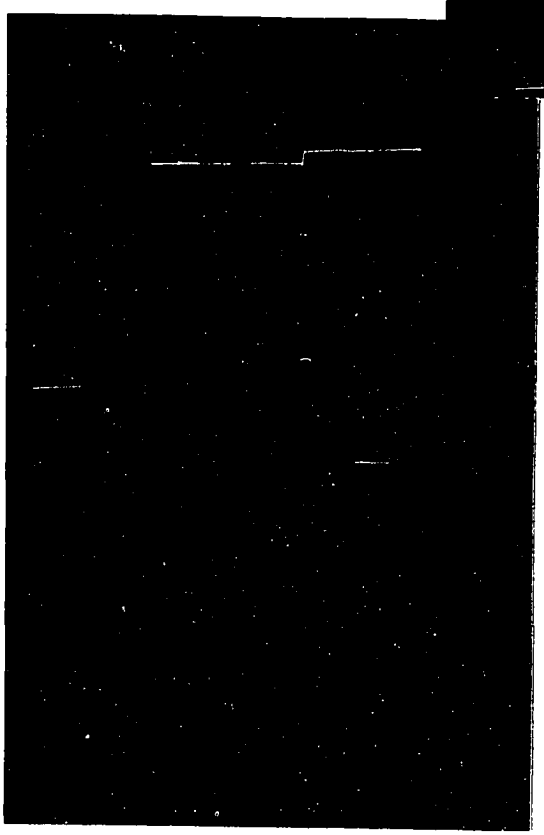
132. Curatella-Manes, *Woman with a Thick Coat*, 1921





133. Curatella-Manes, *Woman with a Thick Coat*, 1921

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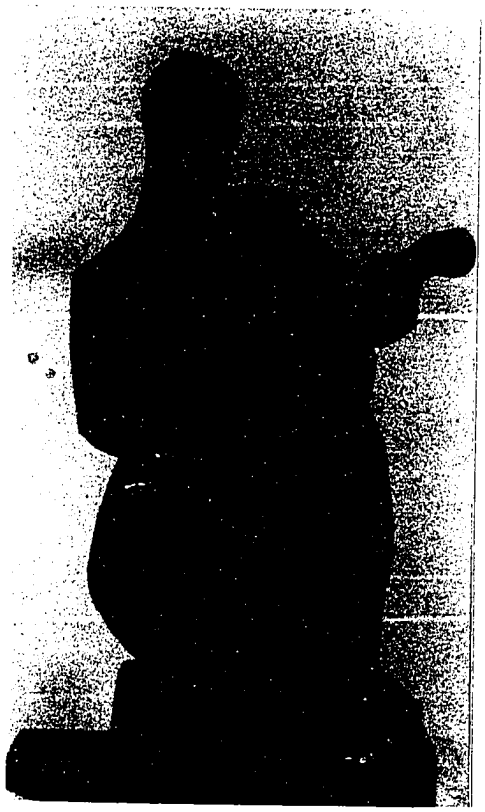
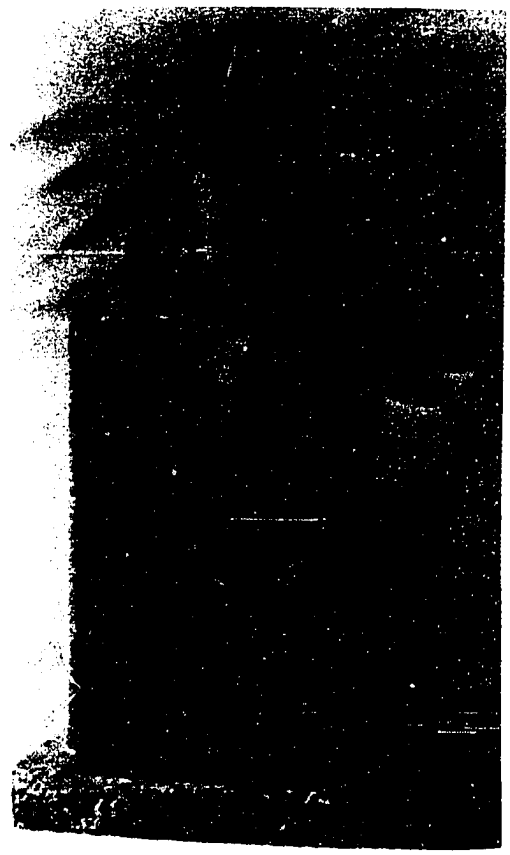


134. Curatella-Manes, Guitarist, 1921



135. Lipchitz, Seated Man with Guitar, 1918

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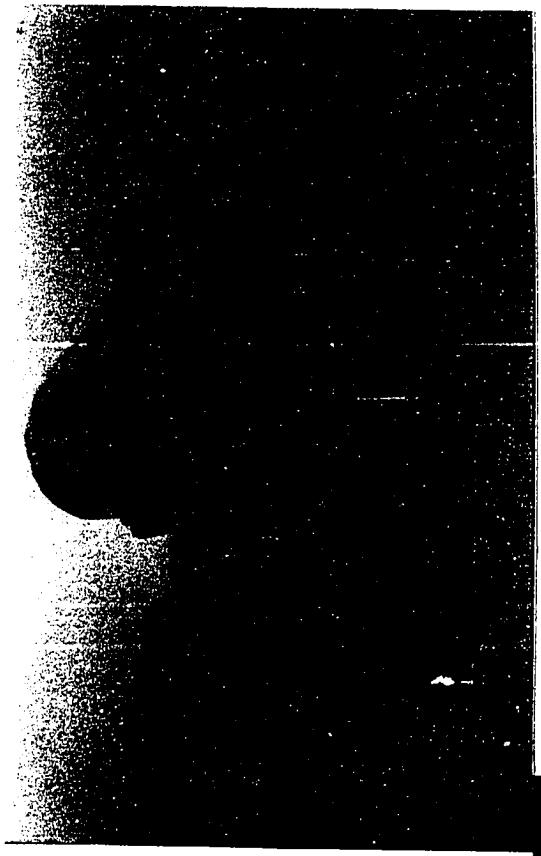
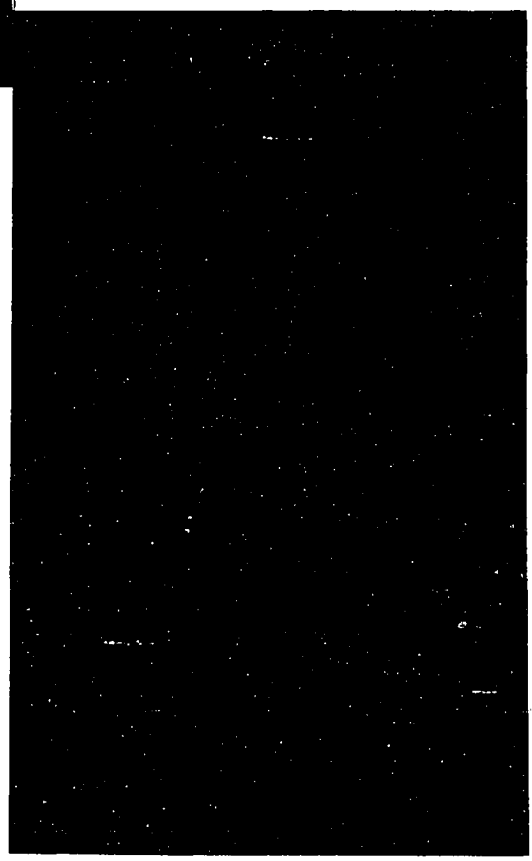


136. Curatella-Manes
Accordeonist, 1921-22



137. Curatella-Manes,
The Man with the
Double-Bass, 1922

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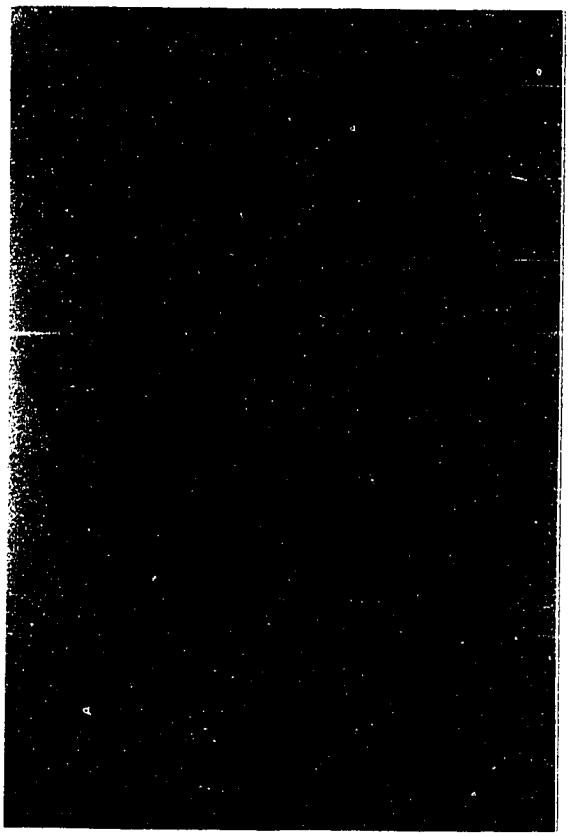
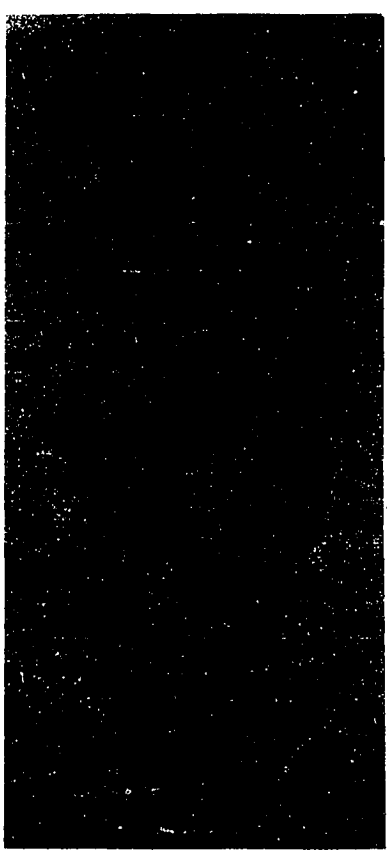


138. Curatella-Manes, Santa Teresita,, 1921



139. Curatella-Manes, Bather, c. 1922

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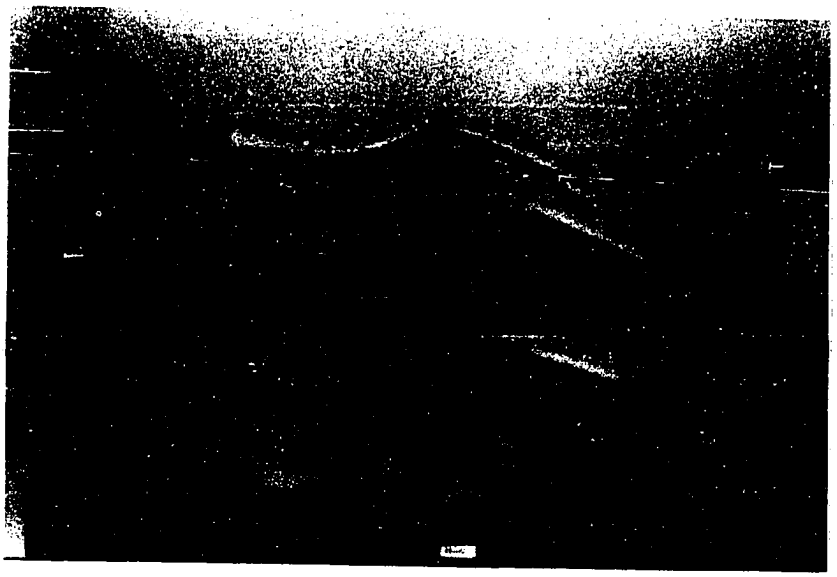

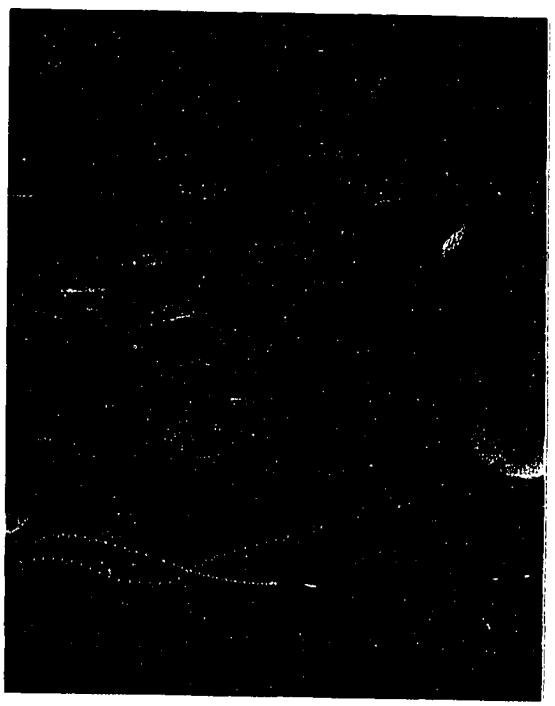

140. Curatella-Manes, Reclining Nymph, c. 1922

142. Curatella-Manes, Creole Theme, 1921

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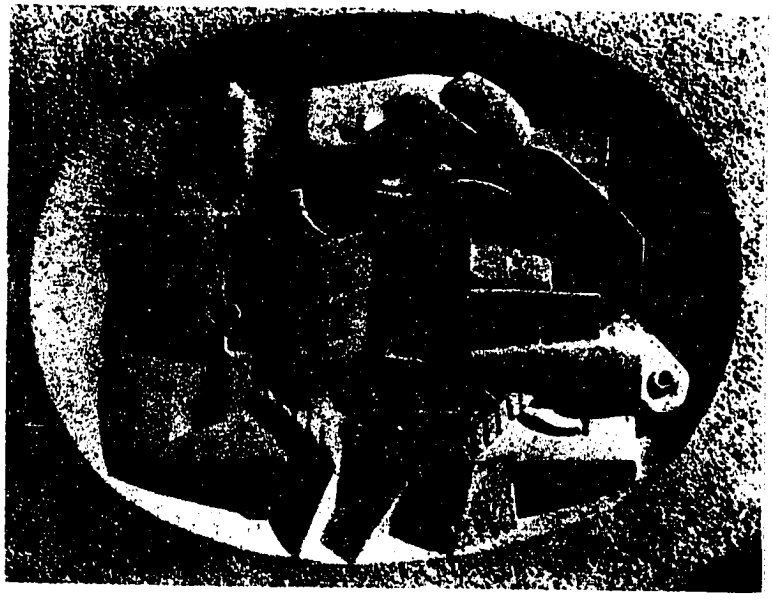

141. Curatella-Manes, The Guitar, c. 1922

143. Lipchitz, Still-Life with Musical Instruments, 1918

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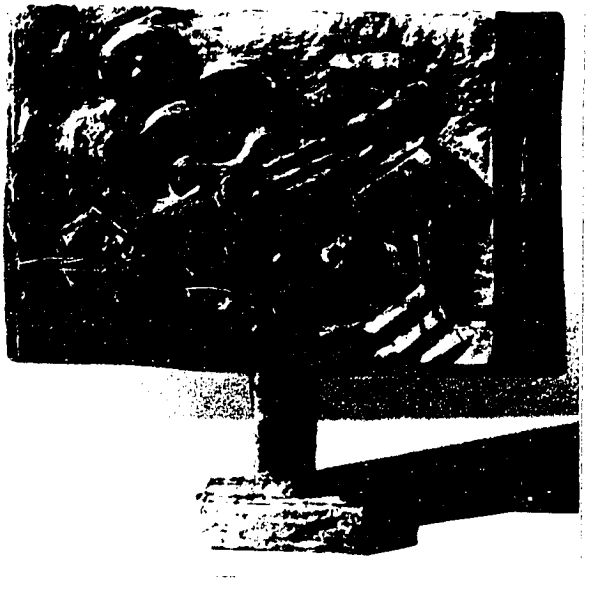

144. Lipchitz, Figure with Guitar, 1922

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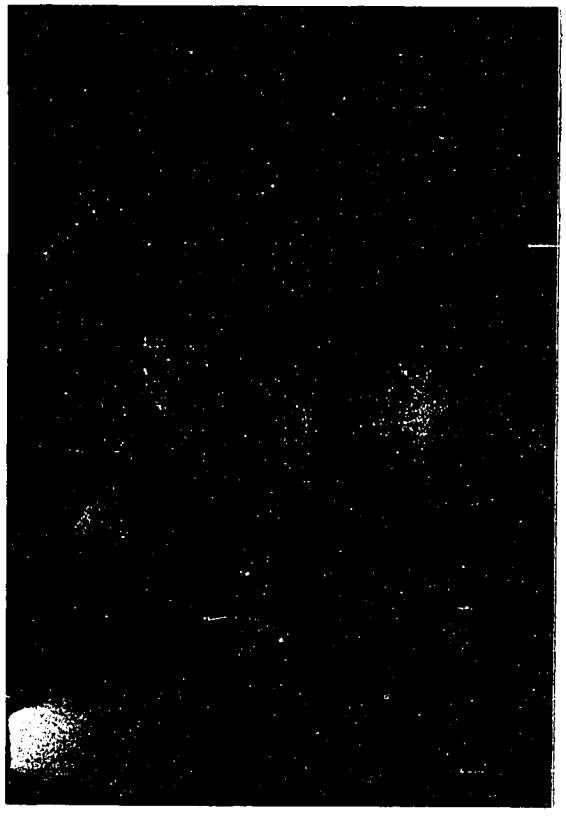

145. Curatella-Manes, The Cuirassier, 1923

146. Curatella-Manes, Dragon, 1924

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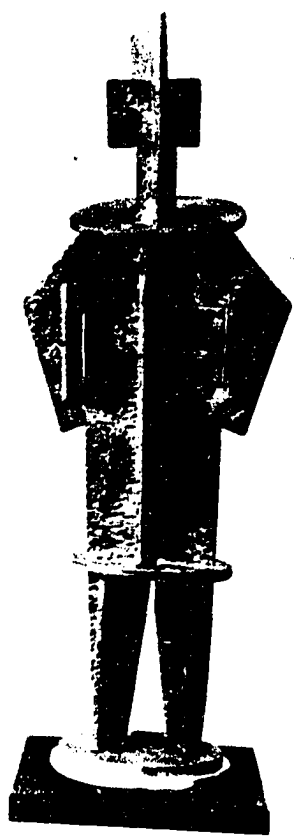
147. Curatella-Manes, The Man with a Lasso, 1923



150. Lipchitz, Detachable Figure (Pierrot), 1915

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148. Curatella-Manes, The Acrobats, 1923

149. Curatella-Manes, The Acrobats, large version, Teatro San Martín, Buenos Aires

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151. Curatella-Manes, Spatial Construction, 1923

152. Curatella-Manes
The Fall of
Icarus, 1923

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153. Gullén Ayerza, The Fall of Icarus, Tomb of Jorge Newbery, Buenos Aires

154. Double-Page Spread on Curatella-Manes in Martín Fierro, 1924

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155. Curatella-Manes, La Douce France, 1925

156. Bourdelle, Tragedy, 1912

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157. Curatella-Manes, The Dance, 1925

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158. Curatella-Manes, Rugby, 1926

159. Lipchitz, Acrobat on a Ball, 1926

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160. Curatella-Manes, The Saint, 1926

161. Curatella-Manes Creole Idyll, 1928

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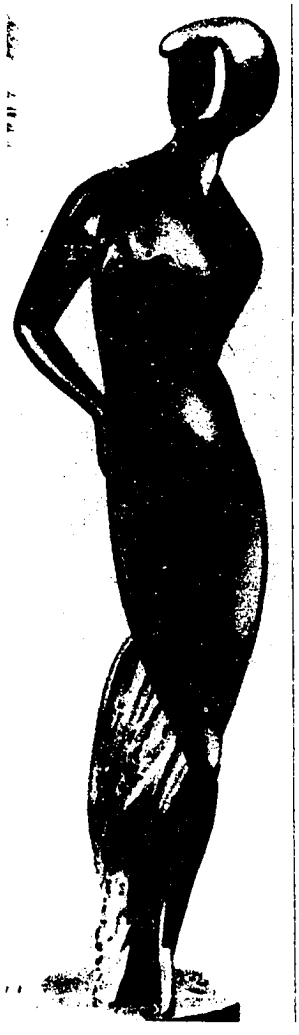

163. Archipenko, Standing Concave, 1925

162. Curatella-Manes, The Three Graces, 1929

164. Curatella-Manes, Annunciation, 1930

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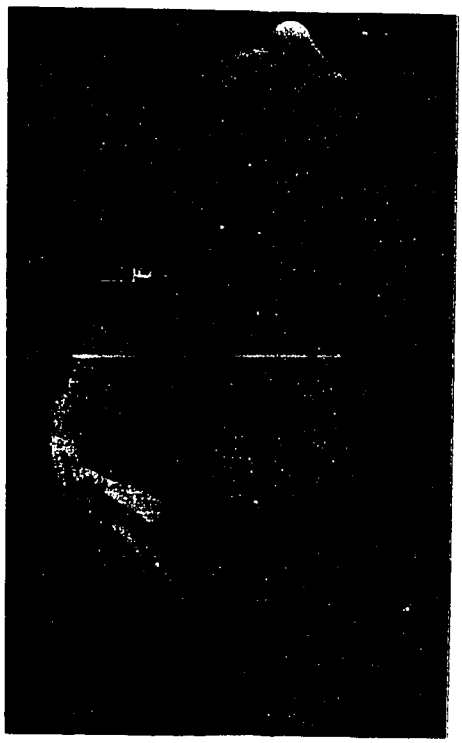

165. Curatella-Manes, Maternity, 1930

166. Curatella-Manes, Pomona, 1930

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167. Xul Solar, Burial, 1914

168. Xul Solar, Cuatro Anjos, 1915

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169. Xul Solar, Annunciation, 1917

170. Xul Solar, Wounded Sun, 1918

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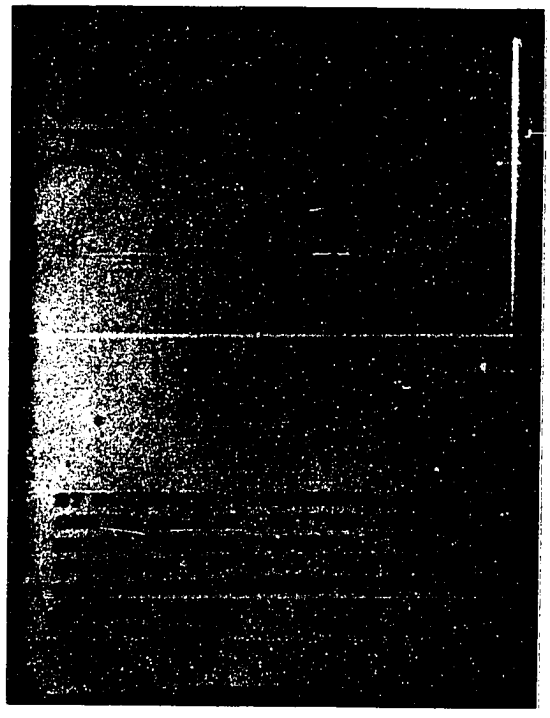

171. Catalogue cover of Xul Solar's exhibition, Galleria Arte, Milan

172. Xul Solar, Troncos, 1919

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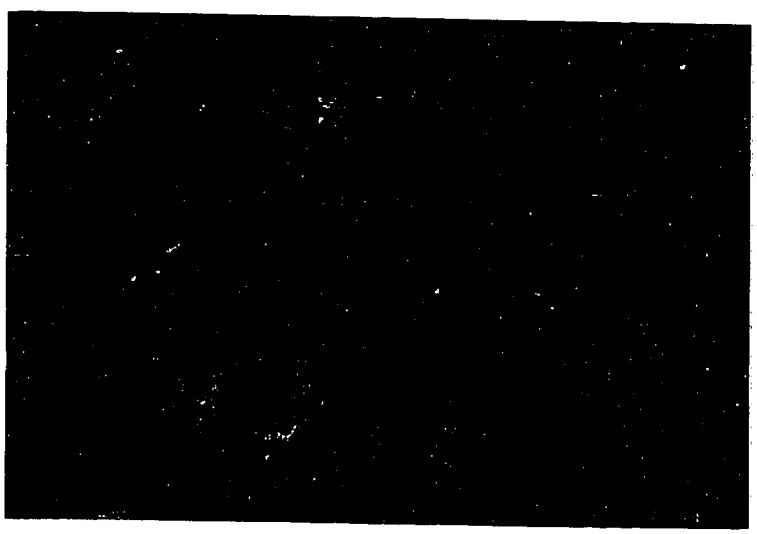

173. Xul Solar, The Greeting of Maria Perenno (to Pettoruti), 1921

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174. Xul Solar, Potes, c. 1921

175. Xul Solar, Decoras, c. 1921

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176. Xul Solar, The Four, 1921

179. Cesar Klein, Election poster for the National Assembly, Munich

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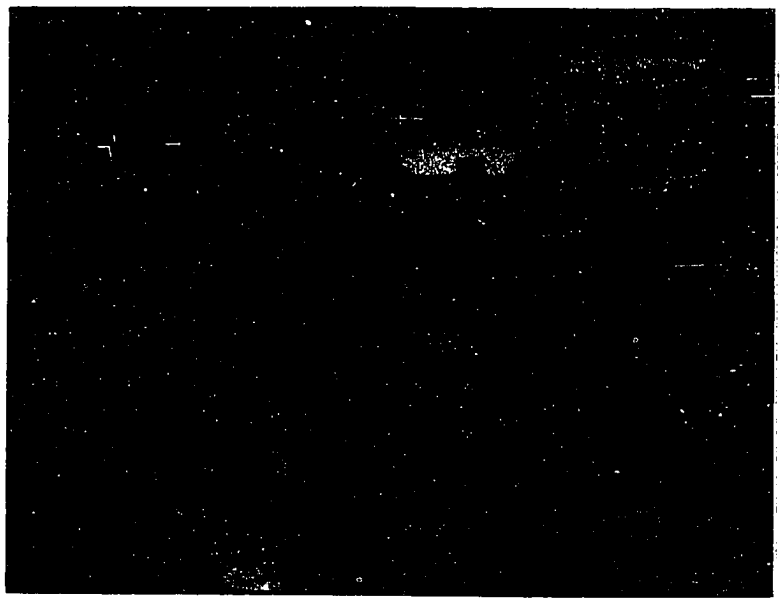

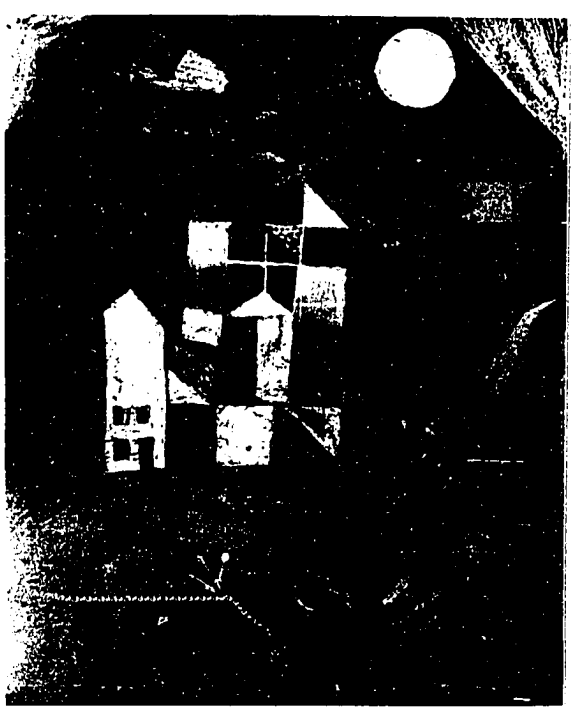

177. Xul Solar, Mask with Visor, 1923

178. Paul Klee, Villa R, 1919

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180. Xul Solar, Juzgue, 1922

181. Kandinsky, Blue Segment No. 235, 1921

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182. Tchelitchew, The Green Man, c. 1920-23

183. Xul Solar, Angel of the Karma, 1923

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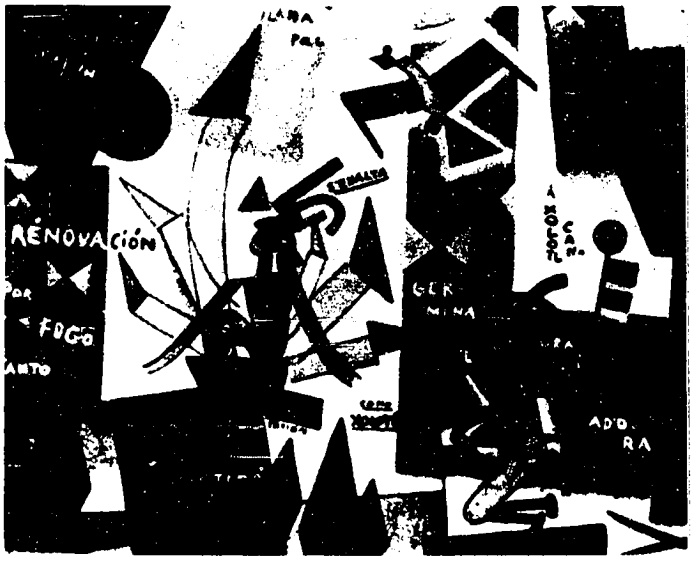

184. Xul Solar, The Bark of Isis, 1922

185. Xul Solar, Nana Watsin, 1923

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186. Xul Solar, Retrato Renea, 1923

187. George Grosz, Republican Automatons, 1920

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188. Xul Solar, Idyll, 1923

189. Xul Solar, Couple, 1923

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190. Xul Solar, Cintas, 1924

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191. Xul Solar, Jefa, 1923

192. Xul Solar, Jefa Honra, 1923

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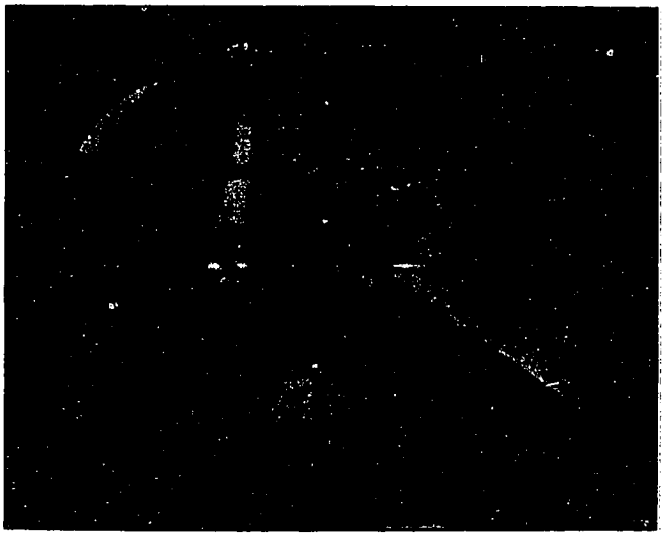

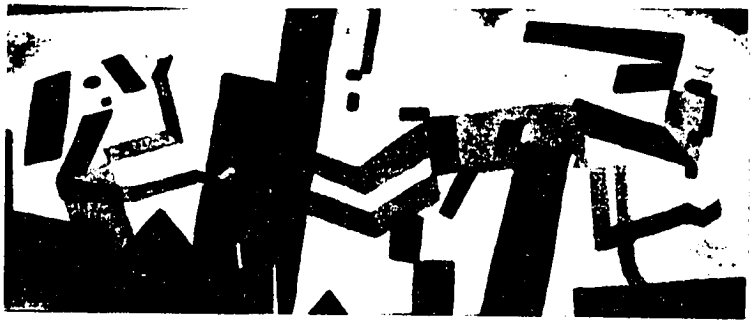

193. Xul Solar, Message, 1923

194. Xul Solar, The Three, 1923

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195. Xul Solar, Quero Hipnotismo, 1923

196. Xul Solar, Jefe de Sierpes, 1923

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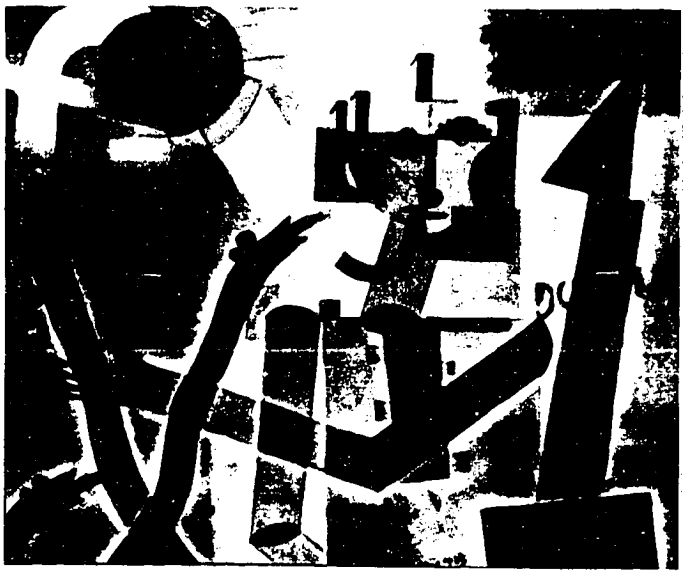

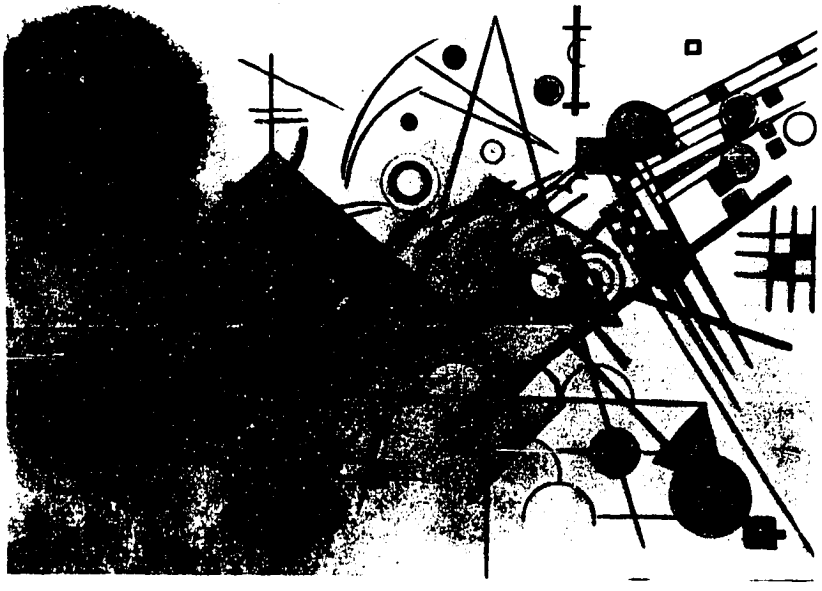

197. Xul Solar, Man of the Serpents, 1923

199. Kandinsky, Composition 8, #260, 1923

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198. Xul Solar, Septuplets, 1924

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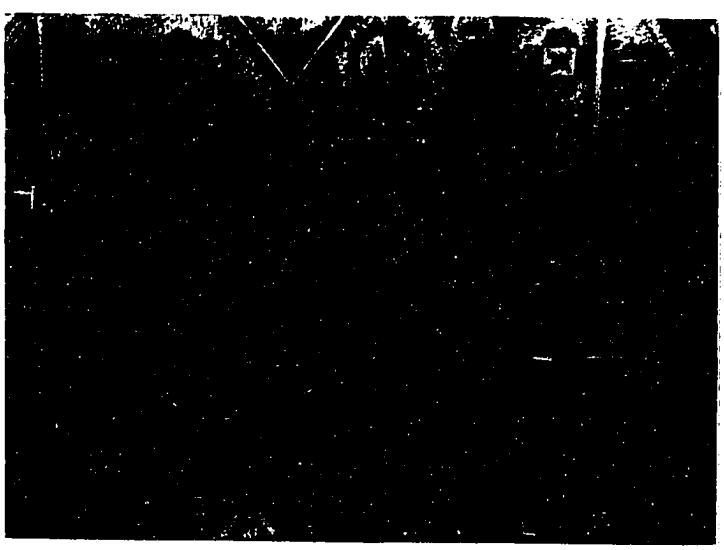

200. Xul Solar, Scenery, 1924

202. Paul Klee, Cosmic Flora, 1923

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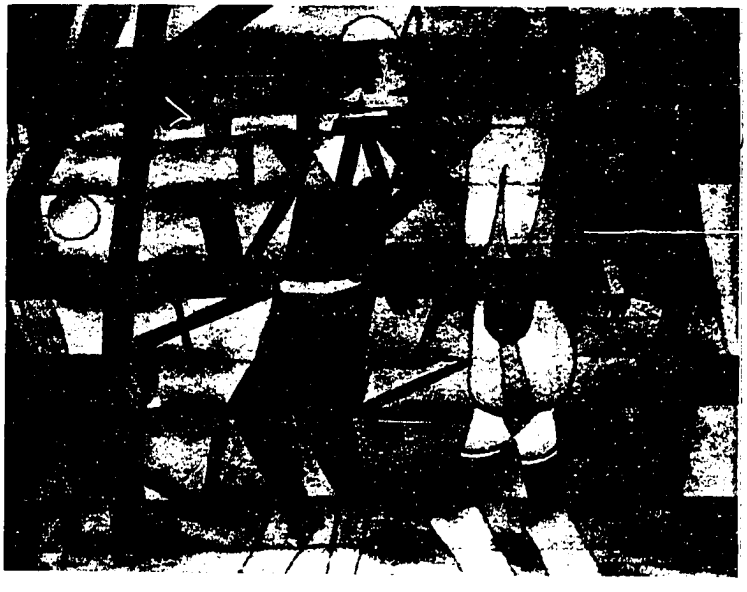

201. Paul Klee, Moon Game, 1923

203. Xul Solar, A Couple, 1924

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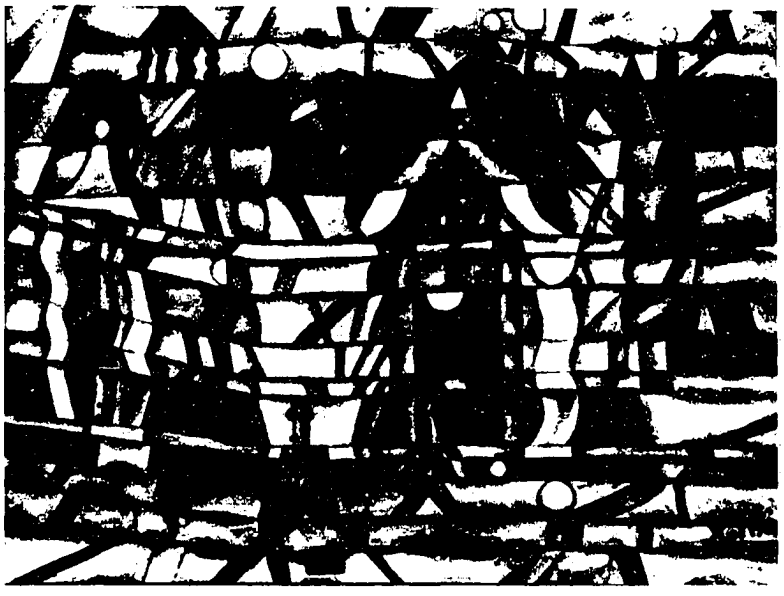

204. Xul Solar, Colonial House, 1924

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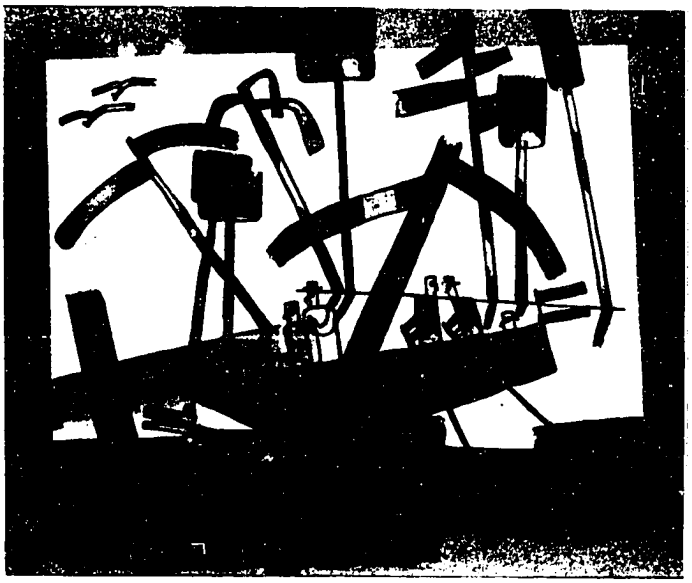

205. Xul Solar, Añoro Patria, 1922

206. Xul Solar, Ronda, 1925

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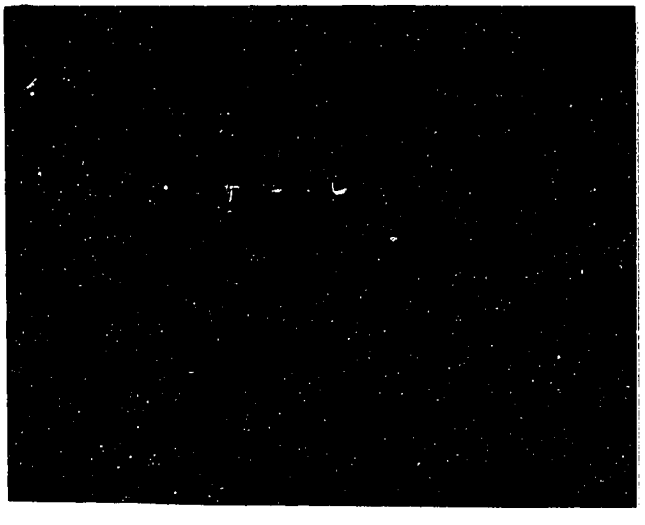

207. Xul Solar, San Danza, 1925

208 Xul Solar, San Danza, 1925

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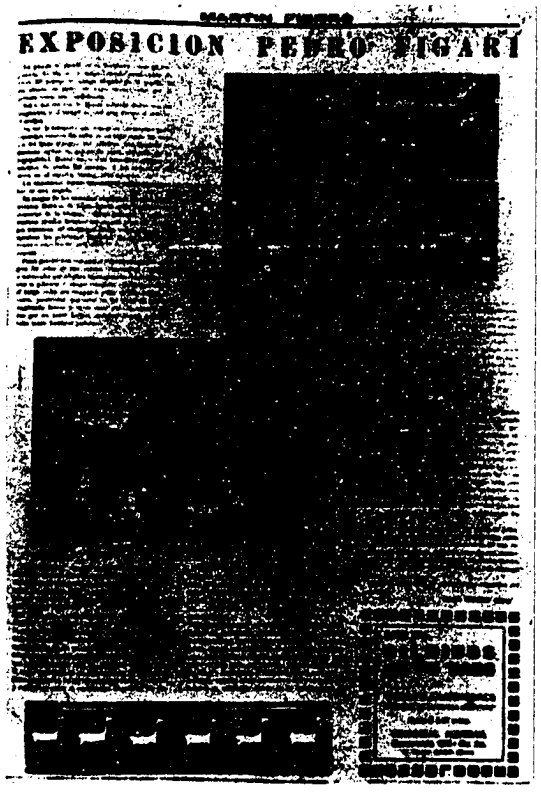

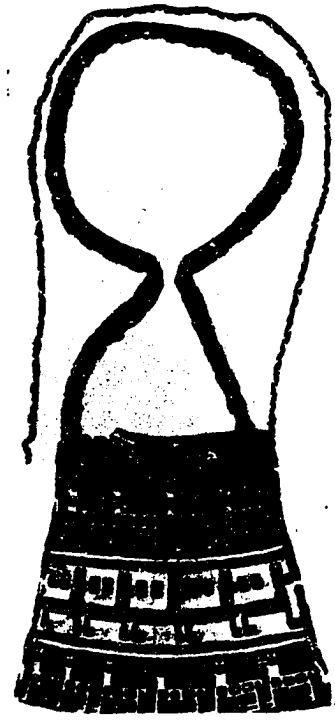

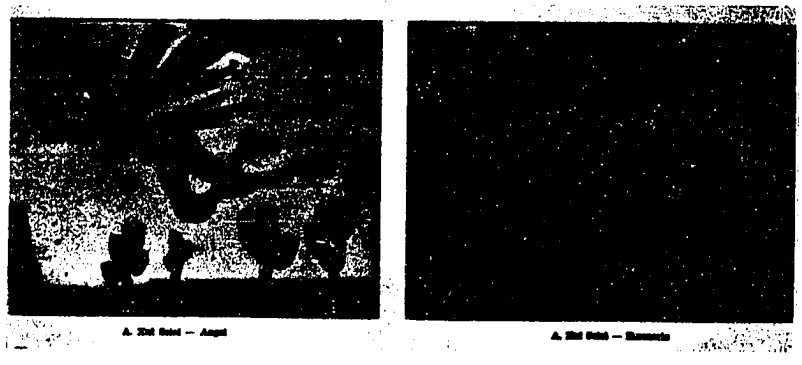

209. Page from Martín Fierro with border of llamas

210. Small bag with llama design from ancient Peru

212. Xul Solar, Angel and Scenery, in Martín Fierro, 1926

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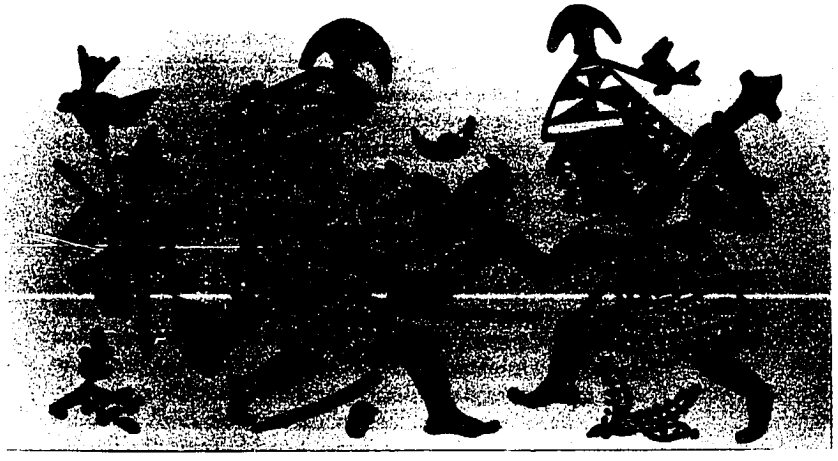

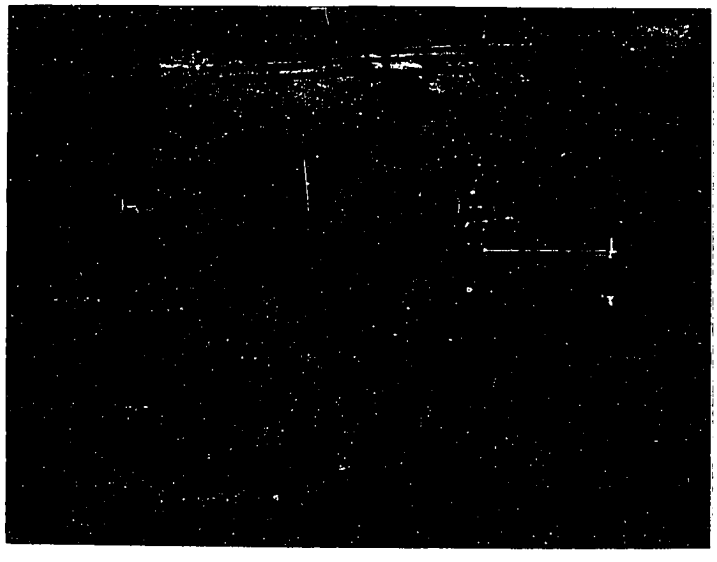

211. Mochica warriors. Painting from a vase. North Coast, Peru

214. Xul Solar, Barbaros, 1926

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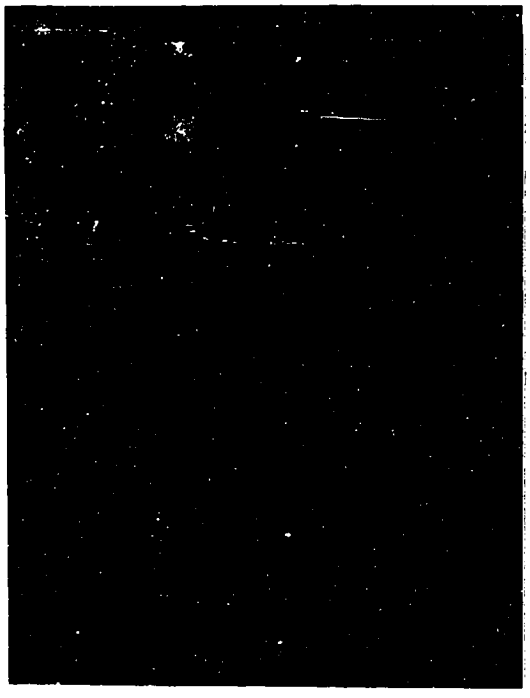

213. Xul Solar, Milicia, 1926

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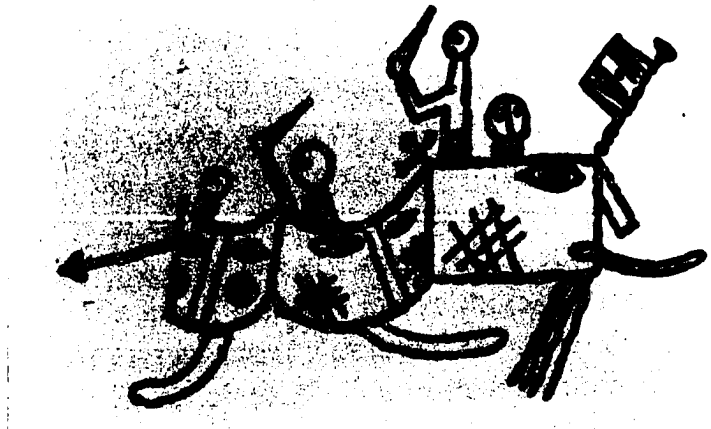

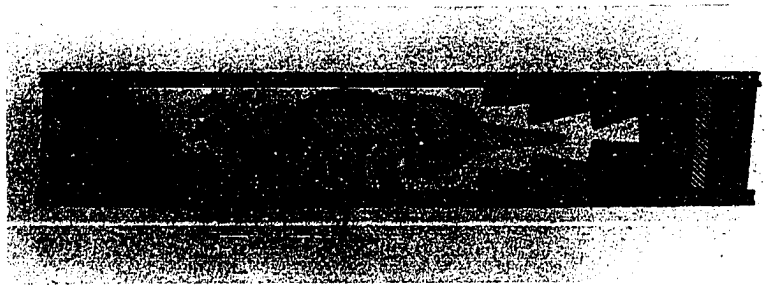

215. Xul Solar, vignette for the book El idioma de los argentinos by Borges, 1928

216. Ancient pottery design from the South Coast of Peru

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217. Xul Solar, Otro Drago, 1927

218. Xul Solar, Vuel Villa, 1936

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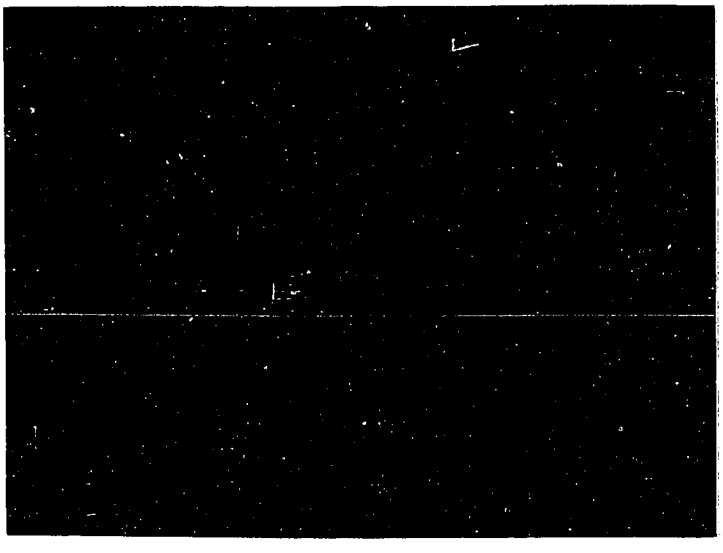

219. Xul Solar, Manifesto, 1927

220. Xul Solar, Southern Cross and Round Dance, 1927

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221. Xul Solar, Carpa Fiesti, 1927

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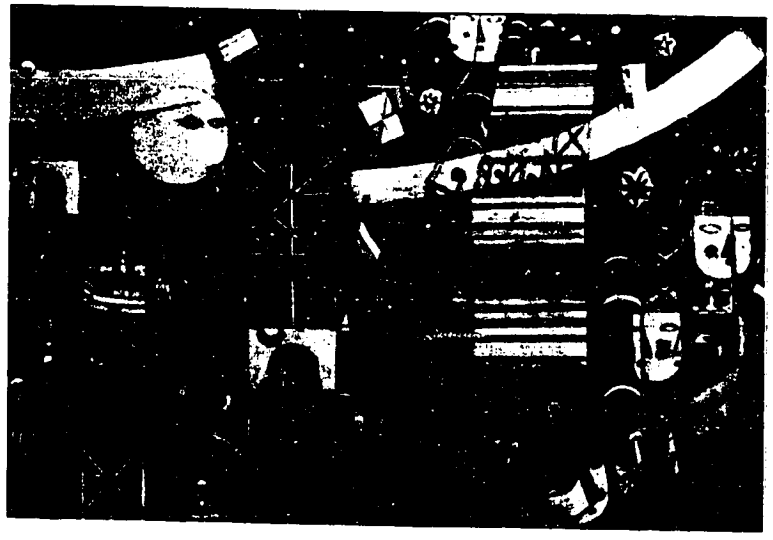

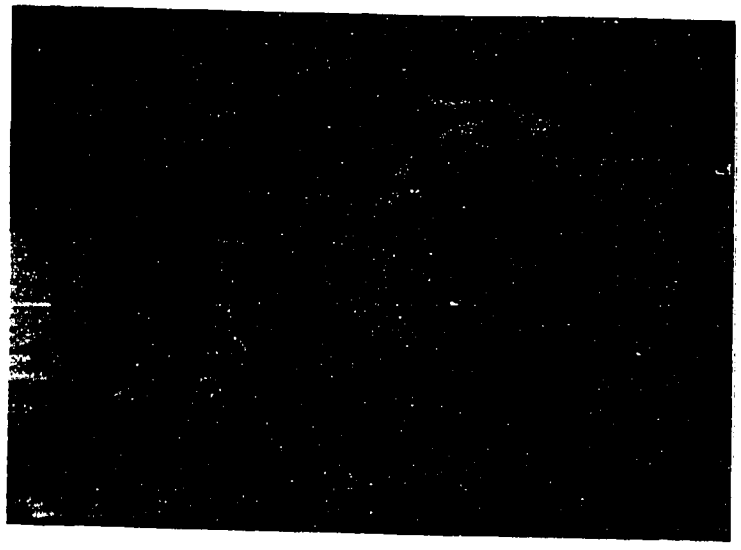

222. Xul Solar, Watercolor, shown in the Nuevo Salón, 1929

223. Xul Solar, Palacio en Bria, 1932

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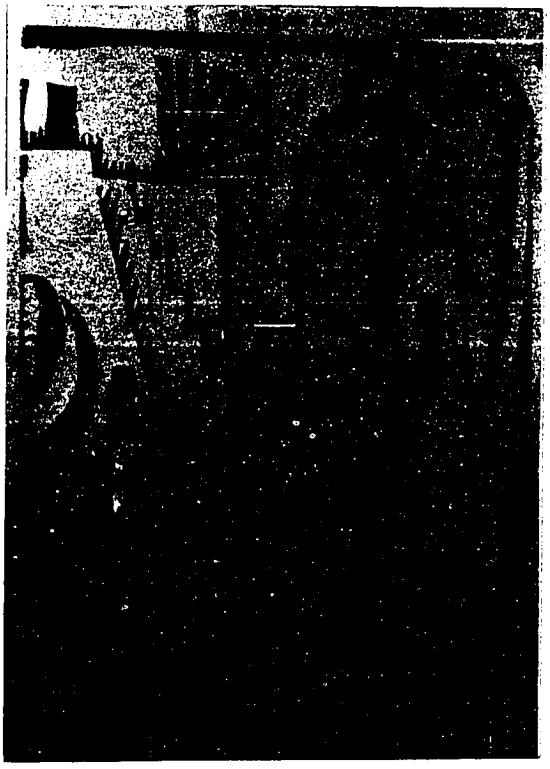

224. Norah Borges, Terraces, in Grecia, 1920

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225. Norah Borges, The Angel of the Violoncello, in Grecia, 1920

226. Norah Borges, The Woman with a Mantilla, in Grecia, 1920

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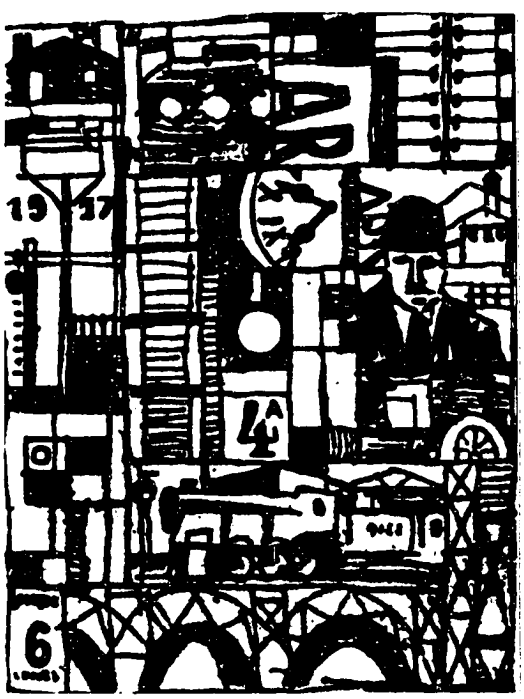

227. Barradas, Un tranvía, 1917

228. Torres-García, Drawing, 1917

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229. Norah Borges, St. Sebastian, cover of Ultra, 1921-22

230. Lyonel Feininger, ill. for first Bauhaus proclamation, 1919

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231. Picasso, Pierrot, 1919, from Raynal, Picasso, 1922

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232. Norah Borges, Garden, cover of Proa 1922

233. Norah Borges, Children and Comets, 1923

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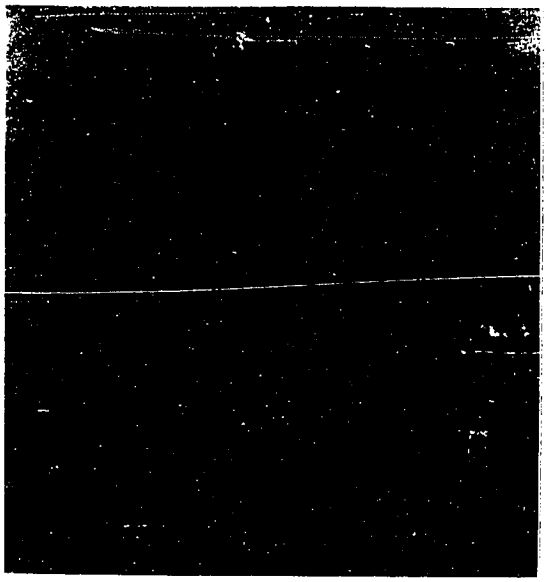

234. Norah Borges, Untitled, 1923

235. Norah Borges, Untitled, 1923

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236. Norah Borges, Landscape of Buenos Aires, 1923

237. Silvina Ocampo, Patio con luna and Almacen rosada, Martín Fierro, 1927

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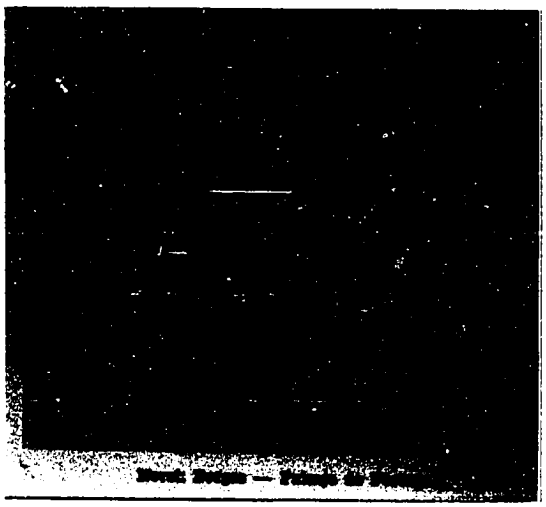

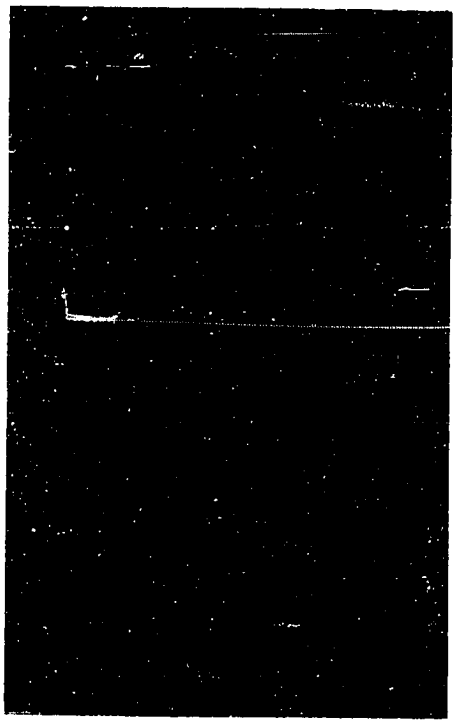

238. Norah Borges, Landscape of Portugal, c. 1923-26

239. Norah Borges, Raúl Gonzalez Tuñon, in Martín Fierro, 1925

240. Norah Borges, Guillermo de Torre, 1927

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Los dibujos de Norah Borges

241. Norah Borges, The Three Sisters, Martín Fierro, 1925

242. Norah Borges, Girls at Sunset, Martín Fierro, 1926

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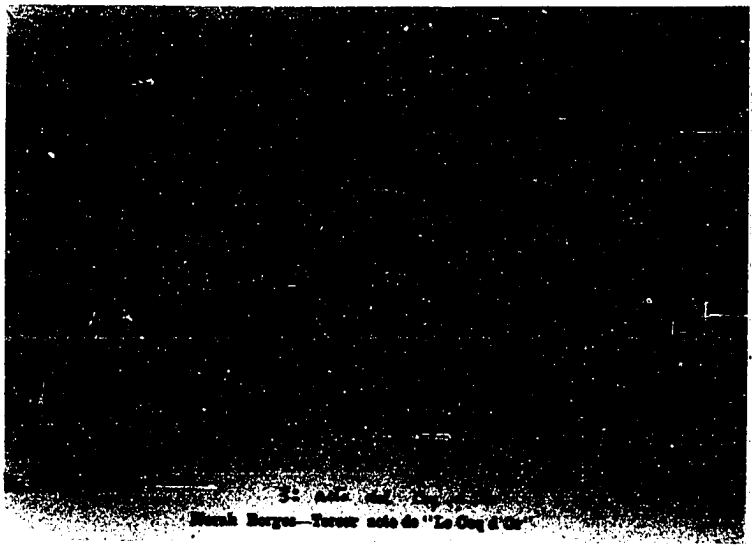

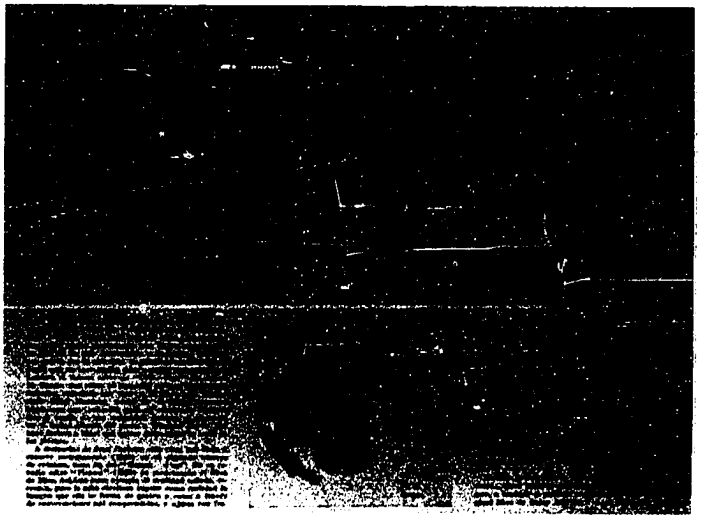

243. Norah Borges, Le Coq d'Or, ill. in Martín Fierro, 1927

244. Norah Borges, "The Young Visitors," ill. in Martín Fierro, 1927

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245. Norah Borges, "Un cuadro sinóptico de la pintura," Martín Fierro, 1927

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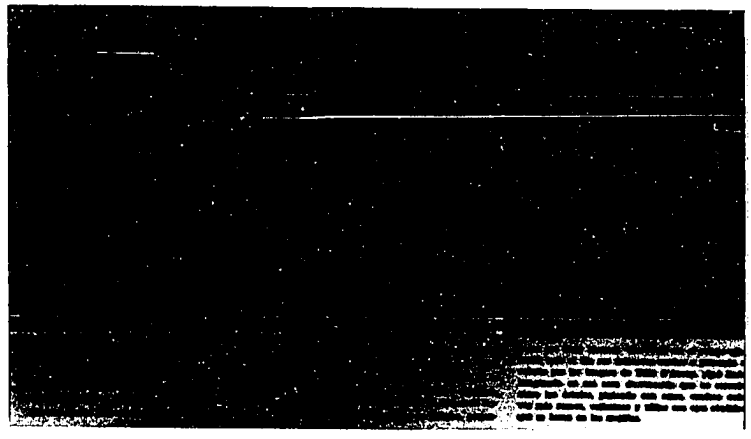

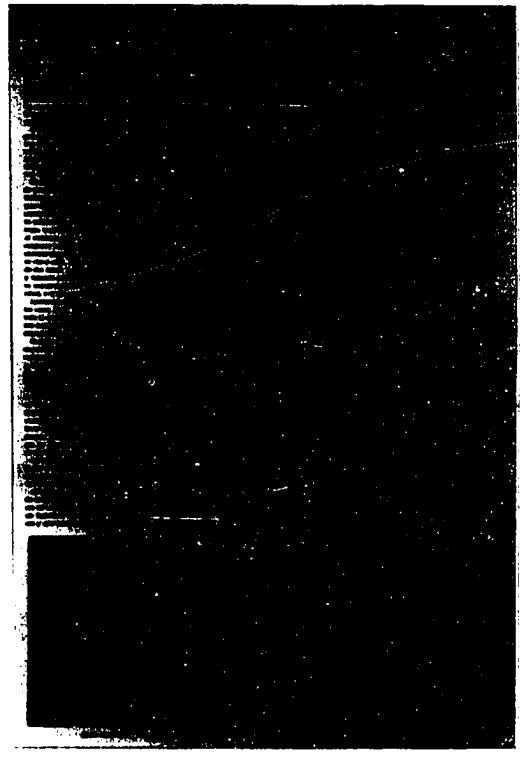

246. Irene Lagut, Paintings reproduced in Martín Fierro, 1927

247. Marie Laurencin, Paintings reproduced in Martín Fierro, 1927

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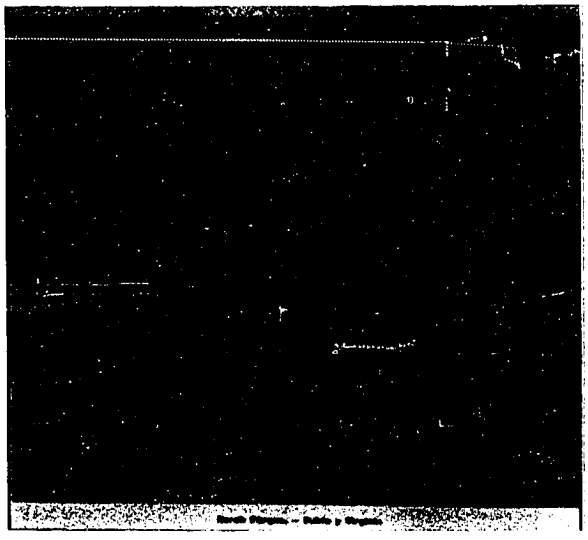

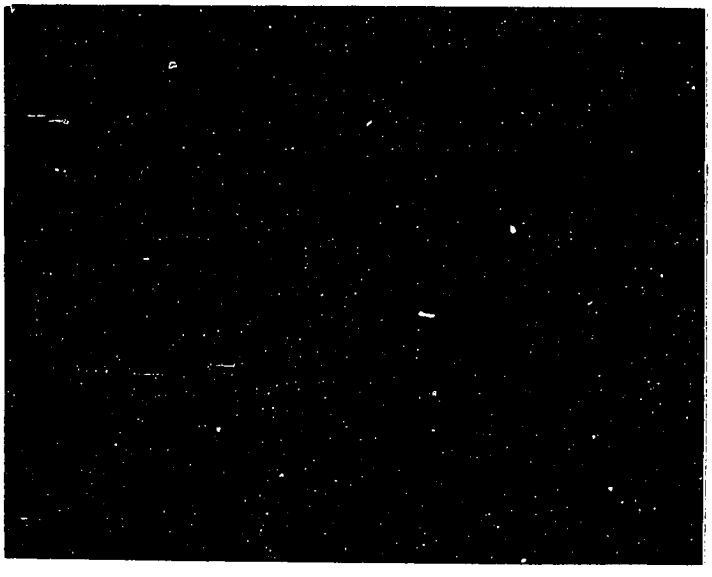

248. Norah Borges, Pablo y Virginia, Martín Fierro, 1927

249. Norah Borges, Guillermo de Torre, 1929

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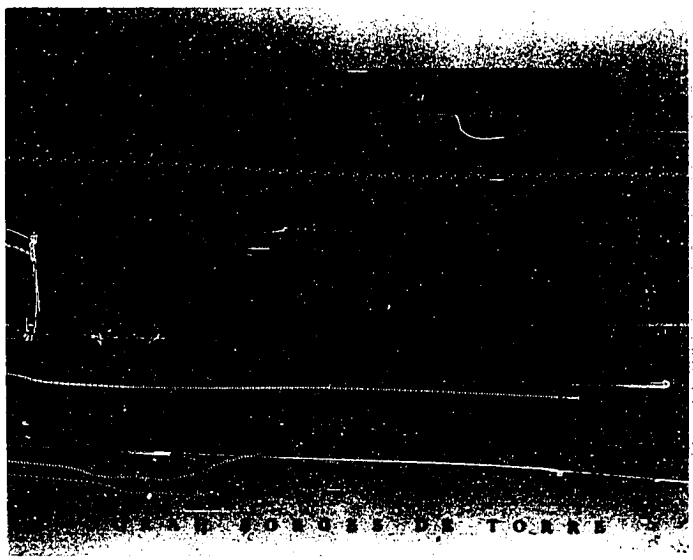

250. Norah Borges, Santa Rosa de Lima, c. 1929

251. Romero de Torres, On the Way to the Wedding

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252. Norah Borges, Landscape, c. 1930

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Updated Information

Since the completion of this dissertation, new information has come to light on the painter Xul Solar whose complete archives were not available to me at the time of my research in Buenos Aires. On page 344 I repeat the information given up to then regarding the location of his disembarkation in Europe believed to have been "some port" on the Mediterranean. But when new data came to light in 1988, it was confirmed that he disembarked in London in 1911 from where he traveled to other European countries and lived in Paris until 1916.

Two other sections involve the discussion of paintings. On page 356 I suggested that Troncos and Androdentro might be the same painting. But as of 1988, it is known that they were in fact separate works on a similar subject. In another section on page 370 and 371, information about the Mexican god Nana Watsin in my discussion of the painting by that name was omitted. In Mexican mythology, Nana Watsin was a scabby god who threw himself into a sacrificial fire and arose to become the sun, reinforcing the idea of purification in Xul Solar's work.

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