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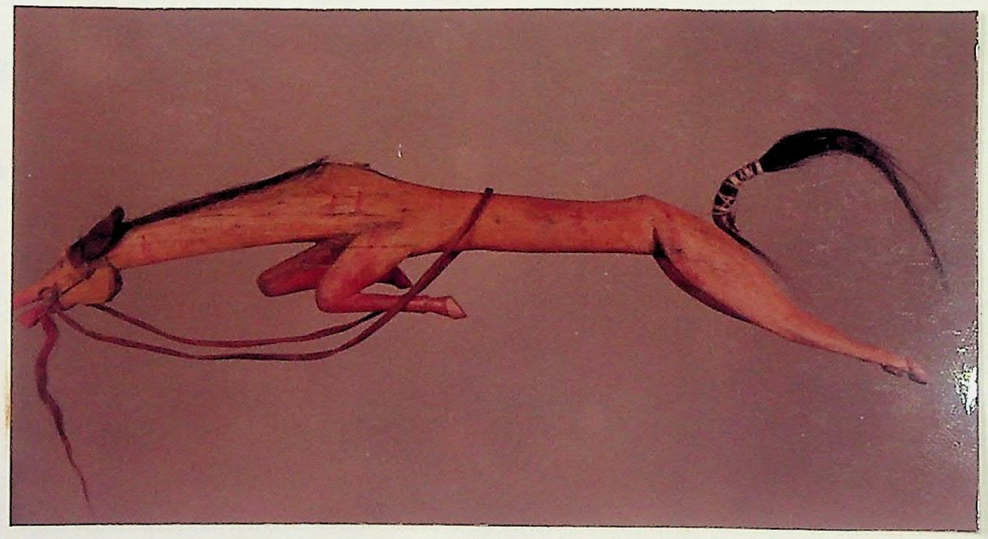
NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ART



THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ART

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO:

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CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS

North American Indian Historic Tribal Locations

North American Indian
Twentieth Century Tribal Locations

Chapter I

North American Indian Art?

There is no word in American Indian languages for art as an independent concept, separable from the rest of daily life. One cannot separate, for instance, Indian clothing from wearing, sewing, ceremony or medicine power. The following description by the artist George Catlin is of a Blackfoot chief:

"The dress for instance of the chief ... whose portrait I have just painted, consists of a shirt or tunic, made of two deer skins finely dressed, and so placed together with the necks of the skins downwards and the skins of the hind legs stitched together, the seams running down on each arm, from the neck to the knuckles of the hand; this seam is covered with a band of two inches in width, of very beautiful embroidery of porcupine quills, and suspended from the shoulders to the hands, is a fringe of the locks of black hair, which he has taken from the heads of victims slain by his own hand in battle. The leggings are made also of the same material..... And over all, his robe, made of the skin of a young bufallo bull with the hair remaining on, and on the inner or flesh side, beautifully garnished with porcupine quills, and the battles of his life ingeniously, though rudely portrayed in pictorial representations. In his hands he holds a very beautiful pipe, the stem of which is four or five feet long and two inches wide, curiously wound with braids of the porcupine quills of various colours, and the bowl of the pipe ingeniously carved by himself from a piece of red streatite ..."[1]

The Indian tradition of spiritual harmony with the environment permeates every aspect of life. It manifests itself by what, for lack of a better word, we may call 'presence'. Here 'presence' becomes an artistic counterpart. "The presence of Indian Art is contained in its ability to project psychic intent or idea through design impact," writes Ralph Coe in Sacred Circles.[2] Indians, he continues, knew much about strongly optical devices and symbolic equivalents - the smallest design upon a bracelet, earring or mocassin does not lack its specific impact. "Presence involves not

only the marks that strike us as symbolic but also the arrangement of patterns into signs that demonstrate a high level of affinity with nature,"[2] for example the representation in beadwork of water, leaves, wild flowers and sky.

Indian works are usually restricted to what can be held in the hand or worn, a nomadic lifestyle necessitated transportable posessions; occassionally though it might be as big as a tree, as in the sculptures of the Northwest Coast where the people were relatively sedentary, In general though, the Indian could encompass a great deal on a small scale: "a whole thunderstorm might be reduced by the artist to a small Pawnee drum where a thunderbird with lightening streaks projecting from enveloping wings scatters swallows into the ominous rush of the wind ... An unassuming peyote kit becomes a microcosm of prayer, song and deep contemplation far beyond the confines of its box container."[2]

Symbolising the relationship between man, myth and natural phenomenon involved ritual and drama. This can be seen in the transformation masks of the NorthWest Coast ... by the pulling of a string (at the appropriate moment in the dance) the outer animal carving revealed the inner human mask. In the Indian world it was possible to become closer to animal spirits by wearing their hides or incorporating their images into designs. Charms, fetishes and shamans' dolls are also used to the same end. The shaman[3] with his arts helped to induce visions and spirits. Magic and the occult played an important part. Presence made art a lever between what exists and what might exist.

"By subtly altering, decorating, formalising and packaging materials the perception of the quality and role of plant or animal life as man's spiritual accompaniment is enhanced ... Indian art evokes a living treasure: nature. The Indian use of natural fibres, tendons, quills, furry parts and hides is highly aesthetic. These materials are expertly manipulated, selected, tanned, softened, or even toughened. A falcon enfolded in brightly painted cloth becomes a source of mystic power."

Ralph Coe, "Sacred Circles"[2]

I hope to show that the art of the North American Indians is an integral part, not only of their culture, but of their everyday life. While many art-forms are inextricably linked with religious be beliefs and activities, others have developed primarily for socio-economic or practical purposes. For instance a pattern or motif may serve to re-enforce the identity of a particular tribe, as do many puberty rituals when the initiate learns the legends, the history, the beliefs and laws of his tribe, and how he shall be expected to behave as a fully fledged member, all the while he is undergoing tortuous ordeals. The experience of initiation reminds him of and intensifies allegiance to the tribe, and so do the visual marks he carries or wears, and they also remind anyone outside the tribe.

In the Northern Woodlands and Sub-Arctic regions, totems[4] serve a similar purpose, they define marriage relationships. Totems always deal in dualities, for example the Penobscot (of the North-East Woodlands) owed allegiance to aquatic animals, and these were divided into saltwater animals and freshwater ones. According to Claude Lévi-Strauss,[5] the anthropologist, the purpose is to prevent incest. In a composite tribe such as the Penobscot, blood relationships were often forgotten. So, if a man and a woman owed allegiance to the same totem they were considered related, and were not allowed to marry

Prestige and status (as elsewhere) are indicated often by clothing or ornamentation. Among most Plains tribes a feather war bonnet represents an heroic deed for each feather. Woodland Indians aimed to achieve prestige and dignity through costume, and much thought went into the decoration of garments, even those clothes adapted from the Whites became unmistakably Indian. In Oklahoma a buckskin beaded dress in the Cheyenne style has become a prestige symbol among women (from all tribes) because of rarity and high cost.

The disciplined Sioux had a complex system of honours and rewards. "The beautiful pipes and pipe bags, the horse-hair and scalp fringed war shirts, the society bundle wrappers and medicine hoops were all symbols of authority and supernatural power .... To the Indian they were evidence of fragile relationships with space, the creator, and with their disciplined world." [2]

There are over 300 aboriginal tribes in North America, and each of them is different. Anthropologists tend to divide up the area into "culture regions" (seen in the maps), but there is much diversity even within each region.

Different tribes were at different stages of civilisation. In the South-West, a sophisticated town-dwelling people known as Pueblo Indians have a culture which has changed little in 1,000 years. They still plant the same crops of corn and squash as their ancestors did, and they devoutly cling to their religion, steeped in ritual. Beside them live Navajo and Apache tribes who are characteristically nomadic hunter/gatherers, and quite war-like. They are thought to have migrated from the North some time before the historic period. Both cultures co-exist quite happily (in spite of raids on pueblos by Navajos in the past) and the Navajo have borrowed many cultural elements from the town dwellers, most notably the arts of sand painting, and weaving which they developed to a much higher standard.

The Navajo and Apache might be thought to have more in common with the Plains tribes. The Plains culture did not emmerge until the arrival of the horse, which was its catalyst. Formerly impoverised bands from all directions who migrated onto the Plains acquired a new identity when they adopted the horse and the rifle. Their culture was dependent upon the bison, and on the fleetness, bravery and endurance of those hunters. Their art reflected their needs, in praise of movement, in honour of heroic deeds. They were war-like, but they were no match for the United States army. Soon after their brief triumph over Custer in 1876, the Plains Indians were methodically cleared from their lands and the "horse culture" came to an end after only a hundred years of existence.

More successfully tenacious were the Iroquois of the North East Woodlands, who had formed themselves into a confederacy of six tribes by 1722. Sedentary agriculturalists, they have been called "The Greeks of America". Their success however would seem to be due largely to their unremitting ferocity. The fiercest were the Mohawk (the name means cannibals) who lived just west of the Hudson River in New York State. To this day these Indians speak their own language, and conduct intriguing "False Face" rituals.

Neighbouring Algonquin tribes lived in peril of the Iroquois, in the Great Lakes region. The forests were abundant, and they practised a combination of agriculture, hunting, fishing and gathering. Their religion was the Grand Medicine Society. Arts were refined, although trade influences were quickly adopted, a weakness perhaps indicitive of their iminint downfall.

These tribes will be discussed in the following three chapters. Regrettably, I have had to draw the line somewhere, and among the aboriginal Americans I have ommited are those who came from the North-West coast, for some of the finest wooden sculpture originates there; and the Eskimos who, because they live in such a harsh environment, have been relatively unintefered with; there are many others. The tribes that are included are, perhaps, the ones that I feel the most sympathy for, particularly the Sioux, and the Navajo. Their art has a harmony, a natural elegance that seems to come from an affinity with the materials, and an element of the unknown.

Chapter II

THE WOODLANDS:

THE GREAT LAKES AND THE NORTH-EAST

It is the Woodland Indian, rather than his counterpart in the Plains who can be taken to represent the most distinctive type of aboriginal of North America. Unlike the Indians of South and Central America who amassed substantial material riches, developed elaborate monarchial societies, and left plenty of remains including the ruins of their vast temples and cities, the Woodland Indians worked in perishable materials such as leather, birchbark and feathers, and their social organisation was flexible. Significantly, the Aztecs and the Incas collapsed, almost at their first contact with Whites, whereas the Woodland Indians fought stubbornly well into the eighteenth century.

The Northern Woodlands (stretching across the interior of Canada from Alaska to the Atlantic Coast) can be roughly divided into two peoples: Athabascans to the West, and Algonkian speaking to the east. This chapter is about the Algonkians. The Woodland people were so fully dispossessed of their lands, when not exterminated outright as most of the New England and coastal Virginia tribes were - that it is easy to forget the richness of the lives they led in scattered freedom. Their downfall occurred in the period after the French and Indian war (1754 - 59) which was the culmination in the struggle between the French and the English for posession of North America. Deaths were due not only to fighting, but to epidemics and whiskey as well. In 1787 Indians were ensured

land in the North-West territory, but in the wake of the revolution, settlers poured into these lands along the Ohio river, and demanded protection from the Indians.

The major life forces were represented by supernatural beings alive in the flowers, animals, birds, and the sky and the stars. The animals became clan symbols, totems. The otter and the muskrat were emblems of the first degree of "lodge"[6] of the Ojibway Grand Medicine Lodge ritual society, and medicine bags were made from their pelts. During rituals offerings of tobacco from these pouches were made, to protect initiates or later to strengthen prayers. Humans and animals and the supernatural are closely linked in myth. Penobscot tribes who had aquatic animals for totems explained their association by an origin myth: a giant frog swallowed all the waters of the earth, causing universal drought, but a mythical hero slew it and thus released the waters. Some of the people were so thirsty that they foolishly rushed into the water, where they were transformed into the various aquatic animals. Relatives who escaped the transformation then assumed the names of these animals became the founders of the various Penobscot families. As time passed, the descendants gradually assumed the characteristics of the animal whose name it bore.

The underwater panther or "great lynx" was a terrifying spirit known for drowning people. But, because of his power and cunning he was greatly sought after for his curative powers. Fortunately the evil side could be warded off with thunder, so protection could be sought from the thunderbird. Symbols for both creatures appear in designs, more usually the thunderbird symbol is used especially on clothing, conferring

Quilled pouch, Mesquakie.
The bottom portion is the skin of a mallard duck

success in war on the wearer while protecting him from the revenge of the mythical panther.

The Great Lakes Culture

Lake Michigan was at the centre of the Great Lakes area. The abundance of water, game and hard wood forests shaped the living pattern of the people. As well as seasonal hunting and gathering, corn farming was practised, wild rice gathered, and fish and small game were caught. So people were relatively sedentary, building large villages, and sometimes a separate village for winter.

The Grand Medicine Society was the dominant religion. Initiates purchased entry into the different degrees by gifts and feasts. Picture writing was used as a memory aid to recall songs and ritual sequences. All the Great Lake tribes kept a variety of medicine bundles, which could be the property of the clan, or of an individual who made his own according to a dream-vision. Some simply contained relics of important chiefs, some held ancient treasures. They were powerful in warding off disease, bringing luck in love and success in war. Bundles are still owned by many Indians in the area and the Grand Medicine Society is still active in a few places. In some tribes it has been replaced by the Drum religion, in others by Peyote (Native American Church) or Christianity.

Quilled birchbark box, Micmac, 10½ X 8"
Man's patchwork shirt and skirt, Seminole, Length 56"

Arts

A complex religious system fostered refined arts. Bark was commonly used for containers, canoes and for covering conical or dome shaped wig-wams. Snow-shoes and toboggans were used, plaited baskets and twined bags were made. There was fine carving in wooden bowls, spoons, war-clubs and dolls for use in medicine bundles.

Porcupine quill embroidery of this area is outstanding. Native dyes were used giving bright long-lasting colours. The dyed quills were usually sewn onto leather smoked a rich brown or dyed a brown black, the better to show the colours. The Mic Mac of Nova Scotia excelled at quilled decoration of birch-bark. They used a wide variety of circles, diamonds, scrolls, squared circles, concentric motifs, and sometimes outlining of designs to expand the optical effect.

Working with birch-bark is a specialised craft of this region. The bark when peeled has a soft pliability, and is fawn while the inner layer is pink. It can be stitched, rolled, bent or engraved and pictures drawn on it. Midewiwin scrolls[7] are made from birchbark, softly incised with little figures engrossed in ceremony.

Silk ribbons in assorted widths and colours were traded or given as gifts, as were glass beads. The technique of ribbon applique was introduced by the French after 1750, and this was used as a trimming on the edges of garments and bags. Wide bands of overlapping ribbons were applied to womens skirts and blankets.

Woodland Indians always sought to achieve dignity and prestige through costume. With trade and the greater variety of cloth, beads and silk ribbons came a sort of fashion-conscience. Commercial clothes were adopted. Dark blue or black was favoured for decoration with glass beads. The Ojibway specialised in floral style beadwork on black velvet. Even British military uniforms were adapted. A dress uniform coat, originally given by an army officer to an Osage chief in the 1850s, was then worn by his daughter when she married, conforming with a custom of allowing children to parade their father's war honours, and subsequently such coats were worn at weddings for almost 100 years. Shoulder bags, adapted from military pouches were carried as prestige objects, as many as twelve at a time (but usually only one or two).

Some metalwork ornaments were produced in imitation of trade pieces. Hammered coins were used, and after the 1860s, flat sheets of nickel silver. The most common ornament was a perforated woman's brooch.

Wood-carving, metalwork, quill embroidery and skin tanning are no longer viable crafts, but a few Great Lakes crafts are still practised by women who make yarn sashes and twined bags, good ribbon applique, patchwork and bead decoration.

Cross cultural influences affected the Great Lakes and neighbouring areas. Ojibway influenced Plains Ojibway and Cree in the production of natural floral design. Many Great Lakes groups were pushed out onto the Prairies, such as the

Nebraska Winnebago, Iowa Prairie Potwatami and Santee Sioux who all shared both Woodlands and Plains traits.

Warfare was a highly respected activity among Woodland tribes, the Iroquois were the most notoriously blood thirsty (and are discussed overleaf). The Kickapoo violently resisted the French, English, and Americans in turn, and even today there is a Kickapoo band in Northern Mexico who remain in hostile opposition to any attempt at acculturisation or outside inteference. Other Algonquin tribes concentrated on hunting, fishing, trapping and garden-farming. All, even the hostile Iroquois with their emphasis on independence, maintained seasonal thanksgiving ceremonies: the mid-winter festival, the strawberry festival, the green corn festival and the harvest festival. These rituals were to thank the spirit beings for past benefits to the community and to hope for continued providence.

The North-East: Iroquois

The Iroquois still occupy much the same territory as they did prior to the arrival of the Whites. Today they live on scattered reservations in New York State and Canada, but they have maintained a surprising amount of their culture. They still speak their own language and follow the religious teachings of their prophet, Handsome Lake, participate in False Face ceremonies, and maintain some old arts.

Traditionally the Iroquois village was built on flat land alongside a stream or lake, surrounded by a fortification of logs. Around it, forest was cleared to plant gardens and to encourage deer which browsed on fresh growth. In the village each family occupied a rectangular longhouse. Descent was reckoned through the mother (matrilineal) and one family would have included the grandmother, all her daughters and their husbands and children, as well as her unmarried sons.

The Iroquois were politically organised into a confederacy of six (originally five) tribes, a league which was supposedly the model for the constitution of the United States. Each tribe had its own sachems, but these were limited in power: they dealt with the tribe's relations with other tribes, and not with clan matters. The hereditary sachem titles were controlled by the head-woman of the lineage. Although they had a constitution, the League could not levy taxes or police its members. Nonetheless the League was a powerful military force, and alliance was sought by the Dutch, English, and later the United States.

Pine Tree Warriors

The title of "Pine Tree", unlike the inherited sachem titles, had to be earned by courage and success in war, and there were no shortage of opportunities. The Iroquois were surrounded by traditional Indian enemies and later fought White settlers. The Pine Tree upstarts presented a problem to the Council of Sachems, which was really concerned with peace.

Iroquois war parties carried bows and arrows, but these were only used for ambushes; they preferred closed in fighting with the club the Algonkians called a tomahawk. The Iroquois warrior also carried a shield and wore a sort of armour made of sticks laced together with buckskin. The object of warfare was both to kill and to obtain captives. Some captives were adopted to replace lost husbands or children, most of the others though were reserved for orgies of torture which would last as long as the victim could be kept alive.

In "Man's Rise to Civilisation"[8], Peter Farb puts forward this explanation:

"A tribe is by its nature a fragile organisation; it lacks institutions that promote unity within the tribe. For a tribe to survive it must find some way to achieve internal unity - and that way is usually through external strife". The tribe's social economy could not support and advanced type of warfare ... "Nor could male labour be constantly be diverted from the needs of clearing fields and building houses. Acquiring new land was of no benefit for the Iroquois lacked both the political machinery and the manpower to administer it. The emphasis was not on building a mighty war machine but on becoming expert in psychological warfare. Rather than face to face combat, the Iroquois and their neighbours fought a war of nerves whose weapons were torture, ambush, ruthless massacre and even the howl of the night. The Iroquois did improve on the warfare practised by most tribes. They adopted some of the conquered peoples to replace their own losses. More than half of the Iroquois tribes - particularly in the seventeenth century when warfare had increased - consisted of adopted

Hurons and Algonkians who had been trained to equal in ferocity any native born Iroquois."

Religion: False Faces

There seem to have been three classes of supernatural phenomena: the gods, spirits and ghosts of the dead. A person's ghost still maintained interest in the tribe after death, and ghosts were thought to participate, unseen, in special wintertime feasts, and also to accompany raiding parties, if only to watch.

Religious rituals were organised in shamanistic groups. Members of the False Face societies participated in curing ceremonies with the aid of large wooden masks. There are various types of mask: crooked mouth, straight lipped, spoon lipped, hanging mouth, tongue protruding, smiling, whistling, long-nosed, horned, pig, and blind. They are usually painted red or black, or sometimes a combination of both. More recent examples have white as well. Other trimmings include circular metal eyes, horse hair, and corn husks.

Each dancer carved his own False Face from the trunk of a living tree, according to a vision he had had. During the ceremony, the spirit revealed itself to the maker, and having cut the mask free, he then finished carving the features and painted the mask. Small packets of tobacco were sometimes tied to the hair of the mask. When not in use they are wrapped in clean white cotton and put away face down.

The false faces should not really be regarded as masks, since they were not intended to hide anything. The Iroquois regarded them as portraits into which the supernatural has made itself manifest. The wearer behaved as if he were the supernatural being who whom he incoporated. A group of members would perform curing ceremonies in the house of a sick person; they humped, lurched, crawled and trotted through the house, grunting, howling and singing as they went. They danced around the sick person, sprinkled him with ashes, shook their huge rattles made from the carpices of turtles, and sang out their incantations.

Surprisingly enough, the Iroquois of West New York still conduct these rituals, although the dancers now drive cars to go to the aid of the sick.

Arts

There is a good tradition of wood carving; as well as the False Face masks, the Iroquois made beautiful effigy pipes which display some humour, as in a pipe bowl seemingly grasped by a little bear, whose elongated tail forms the stem, and another human head bowl with the pipe stem in its mouth.

Beaded wampum belts served as gifts, and also were binding symbols of agreement among the North East Indians. Several wampum belts can be associated with W.Penn's founding of Pensylvania. Trade beads influenced the Indians colour sense, previous to 1700 the taste was for autumnal colours with brown, russet, cream and blue predominating, nineteenth century colours were much brighter, less natural reds, yellows, greens ...

Designs included double curve, the scroll, and geometric. Some show cross patterns, others "folded" symetry. Huron and Abeneki sent votive belts with Latin inscriptions to the Cathedral of Chartres to attest their allegiance to the Virgin Mary in 1678 and 1699.

At Lorette (near present day Quebec) in the late seventeenth century, nuns instructed Huron women in the art of chain stitching and embroidery, and like beading, fine cotton embroidery became a naturalised Indian craft. Some of the floral motifs though seem to come from some more ancient tradition. The typical Woodland double curve motif resembles native ferns, and Frank G Speck noted a slight tendency to connect these disigns to medicinal plants, but also stated that the double curve "could represent the bonds uniting the different members of the chief's family, the sub-divisions of the tribe, or the officers of the council. This symbolism has however, been almost totally forgotten except by a few of the older people".[9] Ralph Coe suggests that the design (as seen in a Penobscot collar illustrated here) closely resembles the design on Shang and Chou bronze ritual vessels. Given the Asiatic origin of American peoples, the design may very well have survived in this way.

Chapter III

THE PLAINS

The Plains was the culture which produced the Indians most popular in fiction and cinema. It was a short lived culture a hundred years at the most, paradoxically its emergence was due to two things which the Indians owed to White adversaries: the horse and the rifle. The Indian tribes who learned to use them created a highly mobile and brilliantly colourful society. In order to hold it together its members were forced to invent rituals and ceremonies which gave a positive assertive identity to the groups, and which defined the place and responsibilities of every member. The artefacts discussed here are nearly all connected with this aspect of the lives of the people who made them.

The Plains area comprises from the Rocky mountains to the Misissippi Valley, and from Texas and Oklahoma north into Canada. The earliest Plains dwellers were scattered semi-sedentary groups, who managed to survive by planting corn, beans, melons, squash and some tobacco in rather poor soil, in addition to seasonal bison hunting on foot. As early as the 1540s, Coronado observed that bison could provide most of the Indian's needs:

"With the skin they build their houses, with the skins they clothe and show themselves, from the skins they make ropes and also obtain wool. With the sinews they make threads with

which they sew their clothes and also their tents. From the bones they shape awls. The dung they use for firewood since there is no other fuel in that land. The bladders they use as jugs and drinking containers."[10]

With the arrival of the horse, however, hunting bison gained precedence over agriculture; farmers were either driven off their lands or became hunters themselves. The Indians first obtained horses from the Spaniards settled in New Mexico, who introduced them around 1720-30. Horses were bartered or stolen from group to group, and the animals spread northward - as well as the knowledge of how to break and train them. In addition some horses (mestanos, or mustangs) had gone wild and roamed the Plains in herds.

The whole of the Plains became peopled by groups of great diversity, from all directions. There were Athabascans from the North (Kiowa and Apache), Algonquins (Cree, Cheyenne, Blackfoot) and Siouans (Mandan, Crow, Dakota) from the East, Caddoans (Pawnee, Arikara) from the South, Uto-Aztecans (Comanche, Ute) from the West . Most of these imigrants had previously had a poor, depressed existence and it was not until they were forced out onto the Plains and adopted the horse culture that they discovered their own identity. By about 1800, the major differences in culture had disappeared. (A sign language developed which helped overcome the problems of inter-tribal communication). The Sun Dance ceremony, for instance, was eventually observed by virtually every tribe.

Posession of the horse led to new discipline in hunting bison.

The herds could now be pursued on horseback, and the choicest animals killed. New wealth was acquired. Permanent villages disappeared, and with them rules for marriage and residence, customs and crafts. Millitancy was heightened and skill in horsemanship became a new test of physical prowess and bravery. For example, the Comanchees of the Southern Plains developed the finest light cavalry in the world (with the Sioux in second place) and spurned activity of any kind on foot.

The acquisition of rifles in the mid eighteenth century increased warfare. For nearly fifty years an armaments race ensued, as successive groups became supreme in supplies of guns and horses, and the powerful allies they could muster; when threatened by the Whites it was difficult to overcome inter-tribal emnities. The United States Army were able to exploit this situation by employing scouts from one tribe to aid in the defeat of their rivals.

Associations

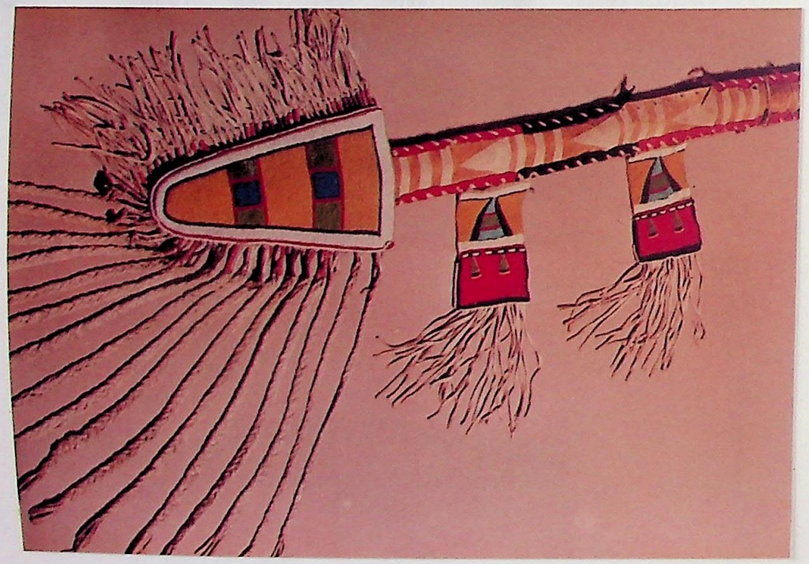
The Plains Indian developed a society known as the composite tribe. During most of the year the bison lived scattered in sm small herds, but during the late summer rutting season, they came together in huge herds. The Indians came to have a similar social cycle, spending most of the year living in small family bands, uniting only at the time of the summer encampment with other bands for tribal ceremonies and a communal hunt. Owing to feuds, band membership tended to change quite often.

The primary way in which identity was achieved was not through

clans but through non-kinship sodalities (associations that bind people around a single interest, like college fraternities, or secret societies ..). There were dance societies and feasting societies, and societies based on a common super-natural experience. Some were only for women, like craft guilds, others were open to both sexes, like the Crow Tobacco societies, which centred on the growing of certain tobaccos for ceremonial uses.

The Cheyenne had six military societies. A youth could join any one of them, but usually he joined the one his father belonged to. These societies served not only as the tribes military forch, but also as police. Each society had a particular area of responsibility, such as protecting the movement of encampment from one place to another, or enforcing the rules against individual hunting that might scare away the bison. Only the bravest of brave warriors could belong to the elite military society known as the Contraries. They said yes when they meant no, went away when called, came near when told to go away, called left, right, and sat shivering on the hottest day.

The Mandan, Hidatsa, Arapaho and Blackfoot had a special hierarchy of societies based on age, so that a warrior society existed for every male from the youngest to the oldest, with the exception of the effeminate male, known as the berdache. No scorn was attached to his position. He was regarded with a certain degree of sacred awe for being the subject of a condition that was not of his own doing. The berdache permanently adopted woman's role and woman's clothing, he became skilled at female tasks of beadwork and skin tanning



Girls dress, Sioux, c.1900
Lance case, Crow, incised buffalo skin and beads.

and was eligible to join women's societies. Meanwhile, a member of a warrior society purchased his way up the ladder of age grades until he reached the topmost and was entitled to wear the feathered war bonnet. At each step he selected a seller from the next oldest brotherhood, and then purchased his rights. Often, a buyer had to relinquish his wife.

Non kin sodalities were vital to the people of the Plains in the absence of a clan structure. Without the sodalities, their complex rules and regulations that often seem ridiculous to us today, the tribes would have been reduced to mere collections of bands. The sodalities brought unity to one of the most diverse peoples on earth.

Arts

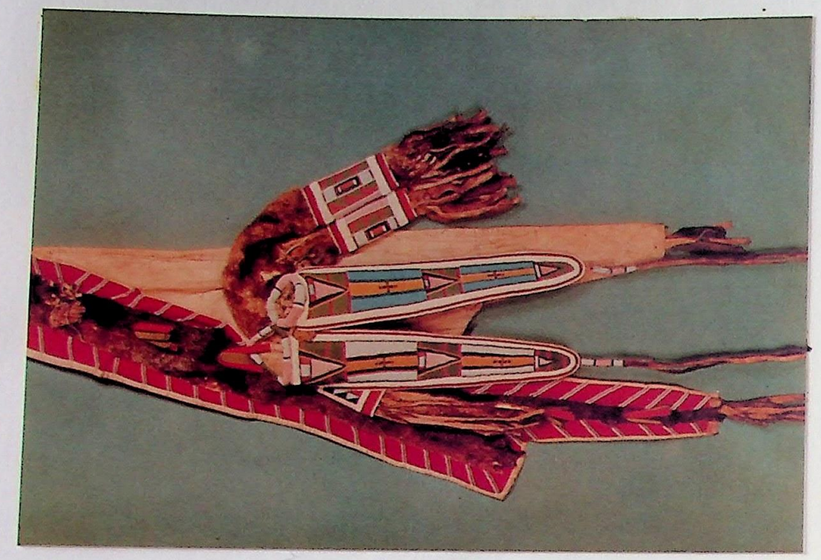
Eastern Sioux costume and wood-carving were quasi Great Lakes in style. Early 19th century Plains quillwork was influenced by the closely spaced and refined Woodlands patterns, but became more bold and visually oriented. From harmony in cream, orange, brown and black, the colour scheme grew to include red, green, blue, and finally multi-coloured in the Reservation period at the close of the century.

"... ceremonial objects had to be activated to convey their symbolic associations. A fragile bird-skin, or deer toe rattle withdrawn from the concealment of a medicine bundle had the power to invoke the spirits and space and that which is beyond"[11]

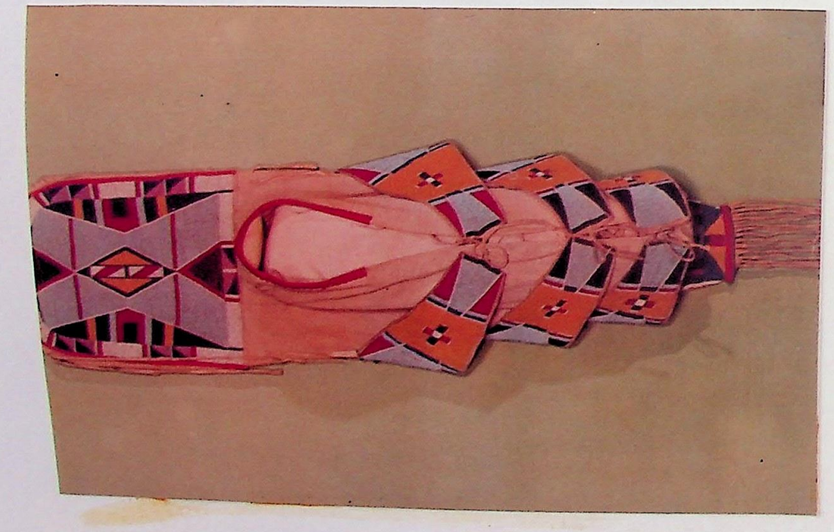
The lightest objects were favoured ... roaches and hair ornaments were light enough, horsehair and elk-horn were used for heavy duty. Streamers of eagle feathers, and dyed horse tails attached to feather bonnets, clothes with flaps and fringes, became animated in dance and movement. Everyday transportable posessions were embellished: eagle feathers, crow feathers, trailing green and red felt, in movement gave flamboyance to saddles, horse trappings, moccassins, and tobacco pouches were made in praise of movement, significant as emblems of tribal responsibility or ceremonial dignity. Pipe bowls with stems that were like projectiles, often with feather fans attached.

The most sacred objects of all were the medicine bundles. In Crow society an Indian who had received several visions which entitled him to make bundles, would still purchase another bundle from some great medicine man. "Sometimes too the power of a purchased bundle was overshadowed by a later vision, adding still another bundle to the owner's posessions. In such cases the original bundles were usually abandoned but they were seldom destroyed. So some Indians posess a variety of bundles, each different from the others in content, and often also in the purpose for which it was used."[11]

A beautifully quilled bundle wrapper from the Teton Sioux Elk Dreamers society depicts an Elk head with exagerated antlers. It was an erotic symbol for the Indians who were guardians of sexual prowess within the society. The cult reflected the Sioux concept of sexual passion "Supernatural power lay behind manifestations of sexual desire;



Quiver & bow case
Nez Perce, c. 1880, Length 60"



Beaded Cradle Board, Crow, c. 1900, 40½" X 11"

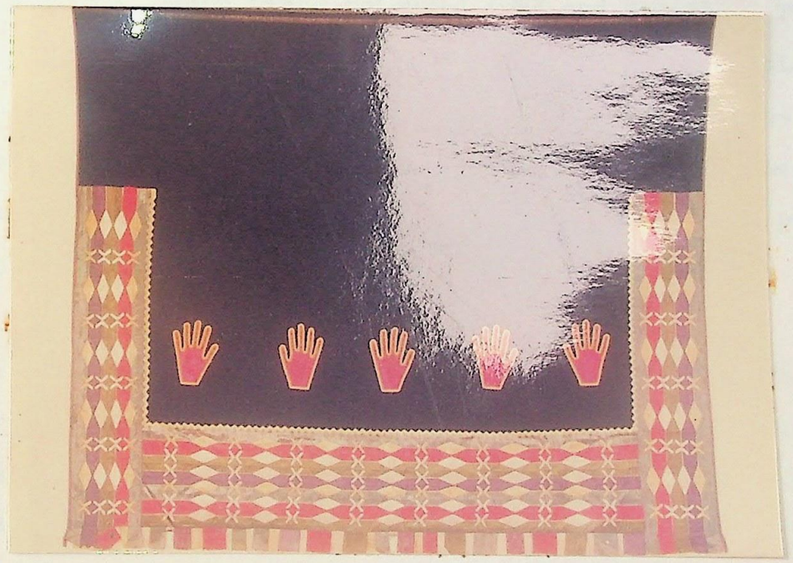
consequently numerous mythical creatures were thought to control such power, and of these the bull elk was thought the most important," wrote Helen Blish[12]
The last Elk Dreamers official meeting was in 1885.

Clothing, Beadwork and Painting

Most Plains tribes produced skin garments and rawhide trappings elaborately decorated with bead or porcupine quill embroidery, but each tribe used distinct designs and techniques. The Western Sioux developed the widely spaced designs of abstract triangles, boxes and stepped lines against fields of blue or white beads. Further west, the agressive Blackfoot developed their war shirts with bold chequer-board designs during the 1860s and 70s. During the reservation period some of the finest work was done by Crow and Blackfoot, often on cloth rather than skin, entirely covered with beadwork. The Blackfoot specialised in dresses and capes which featured strongly contrasting bands, carried from shoulder to shoulder. While the Crow decorated their horse trappings with white beaded lines against bright blue, yellow and green hour glass and triangular figures.

Painted bufallo hides were made by all tribes. In general pictographic designs were the work of men boasting about their exploits, but also tribal aspirations and lore. Quilled or painted abstract designs were usually done by women. In the Central Plains and Upper Missouri the standard designs were a sunburst of concentric circles made up of feather-lik elements ("black bonnet designs") which seem to have been worn by men, while women wore a box and border design; however

Painted hide, Sioux. Lent by the Linden Museum, Stuttgart



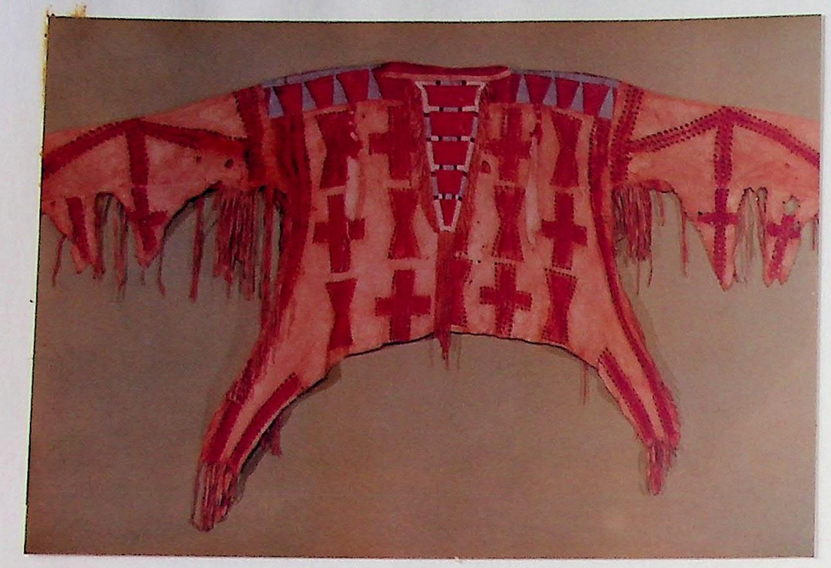
Painted Hide, Box and Border Design, Sioux
Ribbon Applique Shawl, Osage, 55½ X67½"

both styles were painted only by women. Bufallo robes, tipis, and tipi linings were decorated with depictions of war exploits in in the pictographic style. This was an individualistic style, the artists might vary more. In general, the older hides show both human and animal as "stick" figures, with straight lines for limbs, and dashes or hooks for feet and hooves. Later a more naturalistic style was formed. In general Northern Plains examples tend to use solidly coloured silhouette forms without internal detail, while Central Plains use outline drawings with alot of internal detail.

After the reservations were set up and Indians moved to them much of this type of painting was done in European notebooks a and ledgers, using trade coloured inks and pencils. They were usually made for Indian use. However a small commercial development took place. Paintings on small deer hides or elkskins, and miniature tipi covers were made for sale. At least one Shoshone man produced paintings which were probably done with the aid of stencils.

The design of a painted shield was usually due to a vision. The form was cut from the thick neckskin of bison, and shrunk so as to become convex. Sometimes this was painted, but usually a soft outer buckskin cover was fitted over the rawhide. Occassionally a third protective layer was added. A special type of Cheyenne shield had cross-hatched lacing taking the place of heavy rawhide; it was considered a form of magical protection; it could not stop arrows.

The parfleche is common allover the Plains region. It is a simple painted rawhide container. Designs vary from tribe to

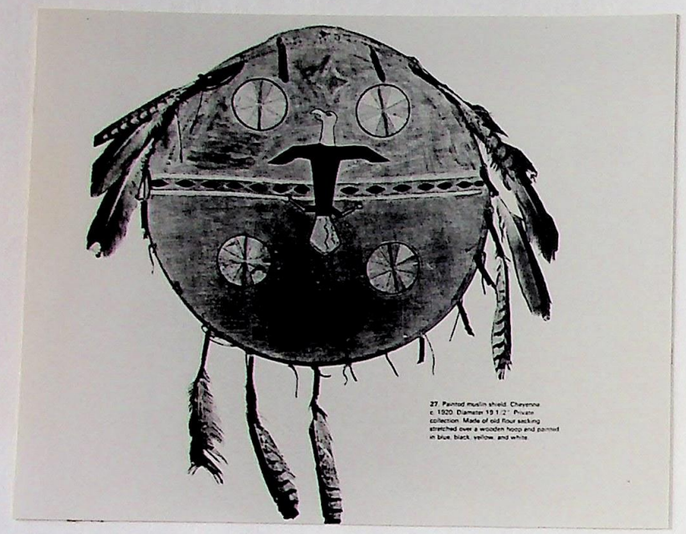


Painted and perforated man's shirt, Blackfeet c.1900
Painted shield, Sioux, c.1850

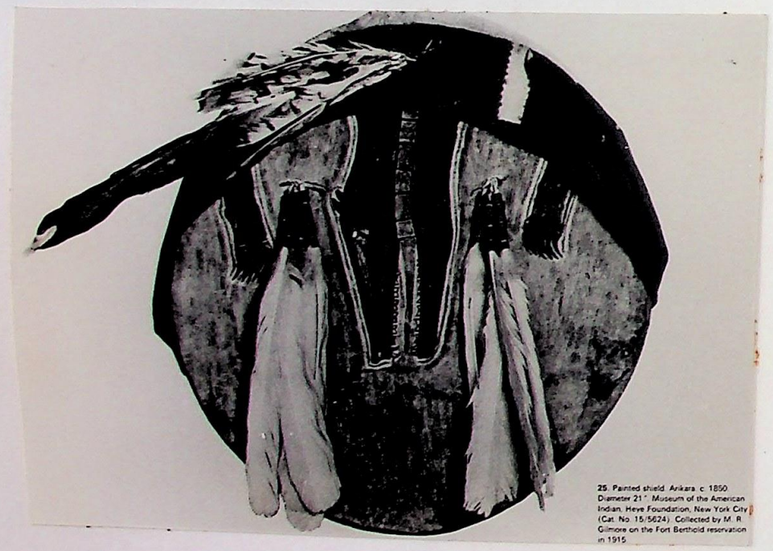
tribe in details of pattern and lacing, but are almost always simple and geometric. Some tribes occasionally use curved elements. Rarely, a naturalistic design is used on a parfleche intended to contain religious equipment. The designs are laid out on the stretched hide with the aid of a willow stick ruler.

Featherwork was an importan craft among most of the Plains tribes. Feathers were used in making a variety of head ornaments, the most famous being the feather war bonnet. Warbonnets had a highly symbolic meaning. Traditionally, each feather represented a brave exploit, not necessarily of the wearer, but of the tribe itself. A warbonnet may also represent the council of fire, each feather signifying a member of council with the horsehair tips being the scalplocks of each warrior. The central plumes represent the wearer. Usually the side drops are ermine, the front band is of seed beads on hide. Feathers also served as decorations on shields, pipe stems, shirts, leggings, coup sticks and banners. They were used in a type of dance ornament known as a bustle or "crow belt". Some Cheyenne and Arapaho bustles are very aesthetic with their refined use of cut leather, painted designs and added trim in the form of beadwork or quillwork, metal bells, fringes, dyed feathers and ribbons.

The most significant form of sculpture in the Plains are carved pipes. Usually made from red pipestone (catlinite), they are found in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Where catlinite was not available, shales, soapstone, calcite, chlorite and limestone were used. In the historic period of the Plains



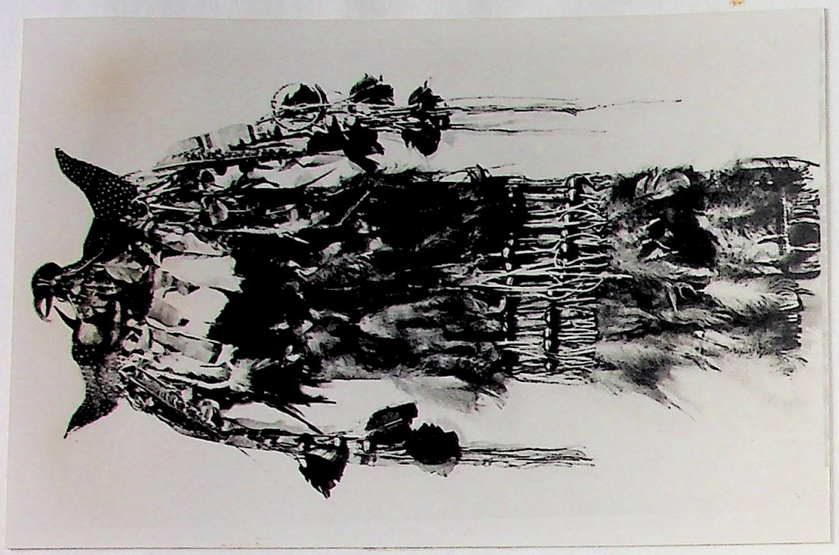
27. Painted muslin shield. Cheyenne c.1920. Diameter 19 1/2". Private collection. Made of old flour sacking stretched over a wooden hoop and painted in blue, black, yellow, and white



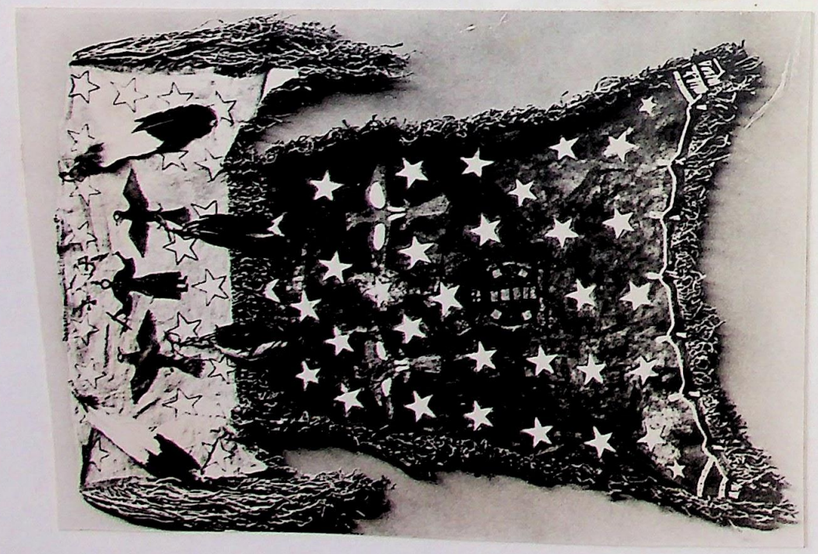
25. Painted shield. Arikara c. 1850. Diameter 21". Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York City (Cat. No. 15/5624). Collected by M. R. Gilmore on the Fort Berthold reservation in 1915.

the Iowa and Ute Missouri produced some of the finest effigy pipes. The Sioux and the Chippewa, living near the Minesota pipestone quarries, still produce well carved pipes; though they are for sale to tourists and collectors, they closely resemble those made in the 1830s. A standard modern version has a T shaped bowl, and a carved bison standing on the stem. Pipe stems carved of green ash wood are also often elaborately decorated. The stems were usually wrapped in a form of quill plaiting and decorated with woodpecker beads, mallard duck necks, horsehair, ribbon and feathers. Others are decorated with animal forms carved into the wood portion. The Teton Sioux specialise in shallow relief carvings of deer, turtles, sheep, elk, and dragon flies.

A limited amount of woodwork was done in parts of the Plains area (compared to the Woodlands). Individualistic "love flutes", Grass Dance whistles (sometimes carved in the form of a bird), some bowls in the Eastern Plains and various ornaments such as mirror frames and Horse Dance sticks, were carved for use in certain dances. Some Eastern Plains groups often added carved decoration to their cradle boards, such as the Osage, Pawnee, and some Eastern Sioux. Wooden doll like fetishes are found in many parts of the Plains. Santee Tree Dweller dolls and Prairie Potawotomi in Eastern areas were due to an extension of the Woodland tradition. However dolls are found in Crow Indian medicine bundles and also Arapaho bundles.



Feather Bustle, Arapaho



Ghost Dance Dress, Arapaho

The End of The Plains Culture

After the Civil War White settlers streamed westwards. Treaties were made and broken, but the policy of restricting the Indians to valueless lands soon changed to a war of extermination. Tensions between Whites and Plains Indians increased during the 1870s, at the same time the buffalo were fast disappearing, many of them slaughtered by professional buffalo hunters, whether for commercial reasons or to attack the Indians' food supply, by 1880 the herds were dangerously thinned. By 1885 they had disappeared.

On July 5th, 1876, the elite Seventh Cavalry, led by Lieut. Colonel Custer was defeated at the Battle of Little Big Horn, by a combined force of Sioux and Cheyenne led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. But it was only a temporary victory, from that time on United States troops pursued the Plains Indians from one waterhole to the next, encampments were burned, the inhabitants slaughtered. The survivors were herded onto reservations where starvation, disease, and alcohol took their toll.

About 1890, the prophet Wovoka revived the Ghost Dance religion. It was most enthusiastically adopted by Plains Indian tribes. Ghost dancing, it was believed, would bring back the ancestral dead, and the herds of bison, and cause the disappearence of the Whites. The Indians would be immune to White bullets by wearing "ghost shirts" - dance shirts decorated with mystic

designs of arrows, stars, birds and so on. The United States Army sent out cavalry to suppress the Ghost Dance. The Sioux rebelled. Sitting Bull was killed (accidentally, while being placed under arrest) at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota. Some three hundred Sioux, most of them women and children waiting to surrender, were massacred by trigger happy troops.

Ritual and Visions

Ritual and Warfare

Almost all the sodalities were concerned with war as well as religion. Most tribes had engaged in warfare before they migrated onto the plains, but with the development of Plains culture, warfare became as ritualised as medieval knighthood. The reasons for inter tribal war were usually the capture of horses and guns - and also because, like the Iroquois, the composite tribe needed a common enemy as a rationale for its existence, external strife promoted unity within the tribe. Another reason was to gain status.

Exploits were graded according to the danger involved, the exploit itself was known as a "coup" (from the French word for "blow", a coup stick was used to strike an enemy's body, it was often striped like a barber's pole). Later, counting coups referred to a recital by a brave of all his deeds. As he proclaimed each one, he hit his axe axe against a pole. Every time a brave acquired a new honour, he performed this ritual. However if he lied or exagerated, he would be immediately challenged by someone who had been on the same war party.

These heroic deeds were recorded in picture writing on tipis and on bison robes. They gave the warrior the right to hold public office. Among many tribes, each coup earned an eagles feather, thus many coups are indicated by the elaborate head-dresses of some Plains war leaders.

Scalps were taken from dead and wounded enemies as trophies, but were insignificant compared to coups. It is unlikely that scalp taking was an aboriginal practice, probably it was learned from the White settlers who offered to pay bounties for Indian scalps.[13] Whatever the origin, the custom of scalp taking quickly spread allover North America. Scalps are sometimes found among the contents of sacred bundles, presumably a scalp might be thought to contain the power of its original owner. Scalp locks may also be used to decorate clothing.

Visions

Indians elsewhere believed in the reality of visions, but none were so extravagant in ritual and insignia as the Plains warrior societies. Other Indians tortured captives, but none evoked so much pain in themselves. Occasionally a spirit might come of its own accord in a vision, just to befriend a mortal, but more usually the Plains Indian had to go in active pursuit of a vision. He did this by isolating himself, fasting and thirsting and practising self-torture, at the same time imploring the spirits to take pity on his suffering. Among the Crow it was the custom to cut off a finger from the left hand. Cheyenne youths undergoing puberty rites, thrust skewers of wood under the skin in the breast. The skewers were attached to ropes which were tied to a pole. All day the youth leaned his full weight away from the pole, tugging at his own flesh while imploring the spirits to give him a vision.

Religions everywhere have been obsessed by mortification of the

flesh, as a means of transcending earthly limitations to reach for the level of the gods; for example, many ascetic orders of Christian monks, the whirling Dervishes of Islam, and the hermits of Buddhism.

At last (suffering considerably) the Plains Indian youth received supernatural guidance, which would support him for the rest of his life. During his vision, the youth usually learned what items he should collect for his sacred bundle ... such as feathers, a stone pipe, a piece of skin, maize kernels ... and put in a small pouch. Occasionally, the youth might also receive a song, which would in future serve as a call for supernatural aid. This guidance would be of particular help in dangerous undertakings wwhere individual skill was not enough - such as riding among stampeding bison - or entering an enemy camp, so it was considered well worth the ordeal.

Among some Indians the desire for visions led directly to shamanism. Shamans are not only profound visionaries, but spiritual leaders and guardians of the individual's and the tribe's physical and mental health, and often judges and politicians as well. All are technicians of the sacred, in contact with the spirit world.

Chapter IV

THE SOUTH WEST:
PUEBLO AND NAVAJO

The Pueblo Indians developed a sophisticated town dwelling society based on agriculture. They have occupied this area for over a thousand years, and are perhaps the most conservative and resistant to change of any group in the United States, in spite of almost continuous White contact for over four hundred years. They were certainly influenced by the early Spannish settlers, but have managed to retain their aboriginal culture to a surprising degree.

The South West comprises New Mexico and Arizona. The land varies considerably, mountainous regions with pine and juniper blending into arid desert with cactus and sparse vegetation. There are three distinct types of culture, the Pueblo; the Navajo and Apache who are nomadic hunters; and The Papago, Pima and Yuma had a primitive farming and gathering existence.

Thanks to the preservative qualities of the dry climate, a good deal is known about the prehistory of the region. The "Anasazi" (from a Navajo word meaning the old ones) were the earliest known plateau people, inhabiting the areas around the San Juan, Rio Grande, Upper Gila and Salt Rivers, a large part of Utah and a corner of eastern Nevada. During Basketmaker I (100-400AD) and Basketmaker II (400-700AD) periods, they

rituals in its own cycle of ceremonies, and each is dedicated to the worship of a particular set of supernatural beings. It is difficult for outsiders to realise how complex the ceremonials of these cults are. Every colour and every piece of material in the dance costume, every step, and every gesture are full of significance. Each of the six Kiva groups dances at least three times a year. Membership in a kiva is not hereditary, but rather each youth is sponsored by a ceremonial father whose kiva he joins.

The most vigorous cult at Zuni, and the one most Whites have heard of is devoted to Kachinas, the nearly two hundred happy spirits who live beneath the surface of the waters. The Zuni believe that the Kachinas visit the village each year, at which time they are impersonated by Zuni men wearing costumes and large masks. The masks are treated with great reverence, for once the dancer puts one on, it is believed that he becomes temporarily transformed into the Kachina itself. The owner prizes his mask above all else, and it is usually burnt at his death. (The Kachina dolls have no spiritual significance at all, contrary to the usual belief. They are devices to educate the young in the identification of the numerous kinds of kachinas.

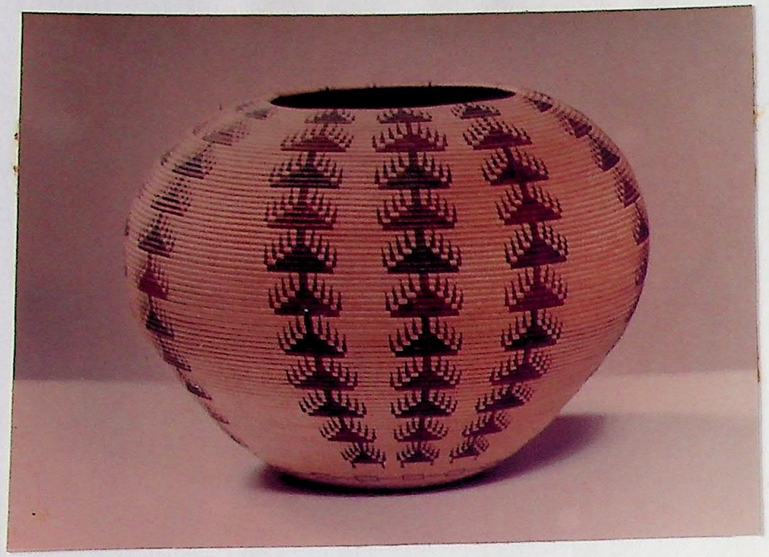
Pueblo Art

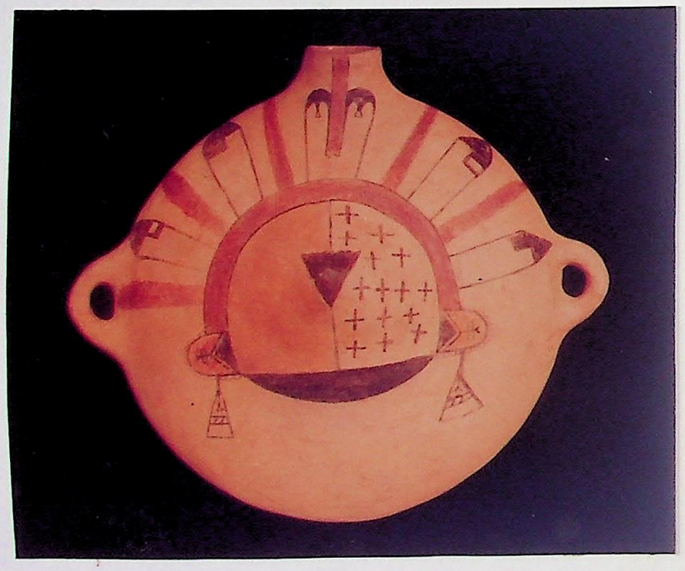
Pottery

Prehistoric Hopi pottery underwent a slow deterioration until the late 19th century. A Tewa potter named Namphego from Hano first studied the old pottery and sparked a revival of fine quality ware which has continued to the present day. It is a distinctive ware usually identifiable by the character of the clay. The unslipped ware fires from an orange to a cream in an uneven mottling (caused by oxidisation in the firing), sometimes the pottery is slipped in red. Designs are painted in red, black and sometimes white. The forms are usually conventionalisations of human and natural forms.

Zuni, Acoma, Laguna, Santa Ana, Zia and Isleta, to the east of the Hopi, all make a related type of pottery with a white slip and painted designs in red and black. At Zuni pottery is usually decorated with a design laid out in equally divided sections, renging from two to four. Designs include rosettes and animals with arrows drawn from their mouths to their hearts. The thinnest pottery is produced at Acoma. It is painted in black and various shades of red orange and tends towards allover patterns of geometric units, or a style (probably borrowed from Zia) of birds and flowers.

Lucy Lewis, a famous potter from Acoma has developed a new style based on prehistoric wares in black and white. Probably more pottery is produced at Acoma than any other pueblo.





Basket by Datlalee, 1917/18, Washo, Nevada
Canteen, Sikyatki, Arizona

produced a profusion of baskets (hence this name) and sandals and the beginnings of pottery, and pit houses, precursors of kivas (underground ceremonial chambers). These are still the secret centres of pueblo ritual, prayer and purification.

During Pueblo I (700-900AD) the villages were made up of rectangular living chambers in true masonry, these developed into multi-roomed houses with kivas during the next period (900-1100AD); communal dwellings of several storeys and several hundred rooms were constructed in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico shortly after 1,000 AD. Pottery was made of finer paste, with black designs on a white background or slip. This painted pottery developed during Pueblo III (1100-1300AD), and so did cliff houses and towns in large caves which were were dwelling complexes for richer and larger communities such as Canyon de Chelly and Mesa Verde. These pueblos were abandoned for some unknown reasons about 1270. Period IV was (1300-1700AD) was famous for its kiva murals and Sikyatki pottery. This pottery was distinguished for its free-hand design and spatter technique. Houses of the period were built into cliffs and then on top of mesas, which led to the pueblos constructed around courts or plazas which are lived in today. The Historic period or Pueblo V extends from about 1700 to the present.

The parallel ancient Hohokam culture (300AD to the present) was located in the desert valleys of the Salt and Gila Rivers below modern Phoeinix, Arizona. They were the ancestors of the Pima and Papgos. Their accomplishments included the development of irrigation farming and the decorative form of etching shells

with fermented juices from the cactus, during the Sedentary period (900-1200AD). The Hohokam were the first people to use a true etching process. Mosaic jewellery which has survived into the present was flourishing in Classic times (1100-1300AD), influenced by the Mixtec Indians of Mexico. The historic and modern basket weavers of the Pima and Papago tribes are descendants of the Hohokam.

The Pueblo Indians include the Hopi and the Zuni and the Eastern Pueblo (such as Taos, San Ilfedonso and Isleta). Although only about thirty "pueblos" (the word is Spannish for village) survive, it is amazing that so much of their culture is still intact. Influences which have filtered through include Catholicism (which seems to co-exist with the old religion), Spanish and Western clothing, and most tribes speak Spanish and English as well as their native language.

One reason for the survival of Pueblo culture is the strong social organisation and centrality of government. All of the Pueblo Indians are organised as tribes, which are based on the family, and on equality of members. The tribe is composed of a number of groups or social institutions, among them clans, secret clubs and specialised societies that carry on warfare or perform cermonials. Clans stress the common ancestry of the group - even where exact relations had been forgotten, the fiction of kinship was perpetuated to promote solidarity within the tribe.

Zuni Clans

The Zuni kinship system is matrilineal and matrilocal. The husband goes to live with his wife's family, who may add on an extra room for its daughter's new family. The constant addition of rooms is one of the reasons a Zuni village looks like a jumble of houses. A wife can divorce her husband at any time simply by leaving his belongings outside the door.

Clan membership though is not based on residence but on who one's parents were. Rather than emphasise territoriality, this emphasises common ancestry. The most important ways it does this are by special insignia and ceremonies, the use of the same name, and shared mythology and clan history. No distinction is drawn between a close relative and one who is not a blood relative. Clans emphasise the alliance of various families, and in that way they reinforce the solidarity of the tribe. Each clan posesses an assortment of secret paraphanaelia - costumes, fetishes, and sacred altars. There may be esoteric insignia such as face decoration, and clothing designs and even symbolic patterns painted on houses. Each clan has its own rituals and great secrecy is maintained. Punishment for a disclosure to an outsider is severe, often flogging or even death.

Clans also control agricultural fields, maintain burial fields, and preserve peace among members. Various clans hold the right to certain offices. For example the Priesthood of the North is always a member of the Dagwood clan and the Priest hood of the South is always a member of the Badger clan, and the head of the Kachinas comes from the Deer clan.

Zuni Religion

Because of their dependance on agriculture in an arid region, the Pueblo people have developed a complex religious life centred around rainmaking and crop fertility. The average Hopi or Zuni man spends almost half his life participating in dances or cermonies, or in preparing for them; a great deal of time and energy is spent making ceremonial clothing and fetishes and learning songs in preparation for the actual performance of the dances. This is men's work, so it is the Pueblo men who make the masks, prayer sticks and Kachina dolls. A good Kachina carver is judged not for individual style, but by how he interprets the given elements. A mudhead or squash kachina always looks the same.

In Hamilton A. Tyler's study of Pueblo religion, she says "That local underworld is not only the place from which the race emmerged and the place to which its individuals return, but it is as well the storehouse of all life-giving crops which are in season drawn up to nourish the living".[14]

Sacred Circles: "Not only men and animals, but plants, stones mountains and storms, astral bodies, clouds, sky and underground have spirits which may be evil or benificient to human beings"[15]

The Zuni is the most devoutly religious. There are six specialised religious cults: the Sun, the Uwanami (rain-makers), Kachinas, the Priests of the Kachinas, the War Gods and the Beast Gods. Each cult posesses its own priesthood, its own fetishes, its own kiva. Each devotes itself to particular

Basketry

Basketry is practised in many of the Pueblos but is usually very simple undecorated work. Painted yuca leaves were used for mats and winnowing trays at several villages, but are only made at Jemez, and the Hopi towns today. On the Third Mesa the women specialise in wicker baskets made on frameworks of summac. These take the form of round trays with colourful designs worked into them. The patterns, done in native dyes usually represent kachinas while birds and whirlwind patterns are also common. On the Second Mesa the speciality is a type of coiled basket made of yucca leaves around a grass core. While the technique is completely different the designs and colours are very similar to those used on the Third Mesa.

Weaving

Weaving is an old Pueblo craft. In early times the principal material, a type of native cotton was grown to be spun. After the introduction of sheep by the Spanish, wool was used for decoration, often as embroidery on a cotton garment. Throughout the Pueblo area, weaving was the man's work. Kilts, belts and sashes had to be woven for use in ceremonial dances. Among the Hopi, men used also make the costume for their brides. The woven designs, mainly consisting of transverse stripes are usually quite simple. Twills in diamond and herringbone could also be produced. A special type of white belt, known as a "rain sash" is done by braiding, the strands becoming alternately the weft and the warp. Except in Hopi villages, the women do all the embroidery.

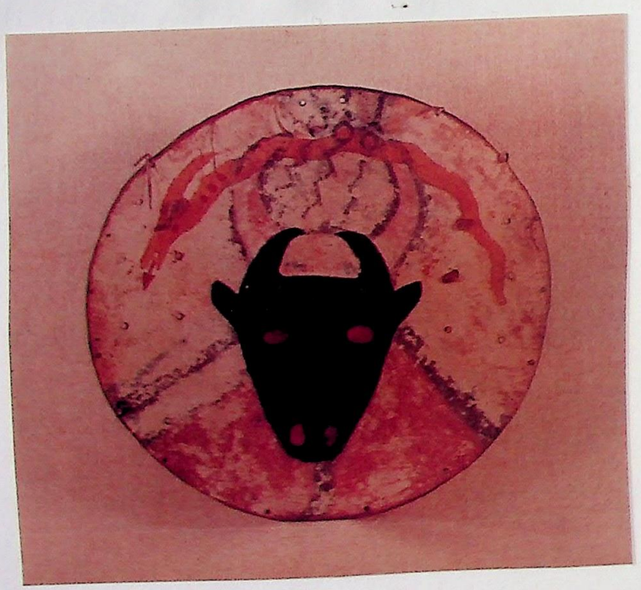
Kachina masks

Masked ritual was most highly developed in the Western Pueblos, especially at Hopi and Zuni. These tribes sometimes allow non-Indians to witness masked dances (the other pueblos prohibit spectators altogether). The masks are usually made of heavy leather or rawhide in a variety of basic shapes. Some cover only the face, some, inverted cylinders, the entire head. The masks are re-painted with appropriate designs before each dance, and appendages such as ears, mouth and nose are made from feathers and fur (or evergreen) ruffs. Often the same basic mask can be used to represent several kachinas, by a change of ornaments and painted designs. In former years these masks, along with other ceremonial equipment, were jealously guarded in the kivas. Now a few which have never been ceremoniously used are being made strictly for sale. The breakdown in religious restrictions is a result of several factors. Inter-marriage between tribes has weakened adherence to the rules, and also some of the material being offered for sale is from reservations.

Old Hopi Kachina dolls are quite flat with little detail of hands or feet. This style has continued in a type of doll given to ingants. However there has been a tendency towards realism, and natural bodily proportions with even muscles depicted. The material most often used today is the soft root wood of the cotton-wood tree. Zuni dolls can be distinguished from Hopi dolls by two features: they have movable arms and they are dressed in cloth rather than painted clothing.

Fetishes

Stone or wood fetishes are carved for a variety of religious usages by most Pueblo groups. Often they are used as shrine



Painted and beaded Elkskin Robe, Taos Pueblo, 48 X 60"
Shield, Tesuque Pueblo, Diameter 20"

figures or offerings in the Kivas (sacred underground chambers), or in holy places that are situated away from the village proper. The wooden War Gods at Zuni are still made each year. Equally impressive are the war god images of the Acoma and Laguna, and the wooden shrine figures carved for altars in Hopi and Zuni kivas. But the highest form of stone carving is to be seen in the animal fetishes made from hard-stone, which are only excelled by some of the stone carvings produced in the North West Coast area.

Jewellery

Stone and shell were commonly used for jewellery. Turquoise was locally mined and prized for its decorative value everywhere among the Pueblo people. Shells, on the other hand, had to be imported from Mexico or California, and because they were are and associated with water, they also were valued ornaments. Some silverwork was probably done by Pueblo smiths from the 19th century onwards, but it so much resembles Navajo work that it is not usually recognised. Recently, however the Hopi have developed their own style, with the recessed part of the design blackened out. At Zuni in recent years the work is characterised by the use of small turquoise sets or by elaborate inlays of blue turquoise, black jet, and red spiny oyster shell.

Painting

Painting has always been a Pueblo art since prehistoric times when artists worked on pottery and kiva walls. Some groups such as the Hopi make dry sand paintings for some kiva ceremonies, and elaborate designs on Butterfly Dance tablitas.

101. Mask
New York (

100. Mask. Navaho. Brooklyn Museum, New York (Cat. No. 03.164). For use in the Yei-be-chai Dance.

Navajo Masks

Navajo and Apache

The Navajo and Apache groups both speak related languages of the Athabascan linguistic family, and it is generally believed that these two groups migrated from the North at some date before the historic period. The Navajo are today the largest tribe in the United States (over 75,000) and own the largest reservation.

Formerly, the Navajo people were semi-nomadic, practising some agriculture learned from the Pueblos, but also hunting small game and utilizing the variety of natural vegetable foods. They were generally quite war-like, and often raided the Pueblo villages for their crops when they were ripe, or the Spanish settlements for horses and other booty. After the introduction of domestic animals, the Navajo became sheep herders; at present many families depend upon sheep as their main source of food, supplemented by packaged foodstuffs, purchased at local trading posts.

The Navajo prefer to live in close proximity to their Pueblo neighbours, and have borrowed many cultural elements from Hopi and Zuni. The famous dry san paintings, made by the Navajo as part of important healing ceremonies, probably derived from an earlier Hopi style. However the Navajo have a tendency, even when borrowing to adapt and elaborate other forms to their own cultural styles , so they are distinctly Navajo in feeling. This is equally true of their textiles. The techniques were borrowed from the Pueblo, but the finished work was usually more elaborate and far superior to the simpler Pueblo work.

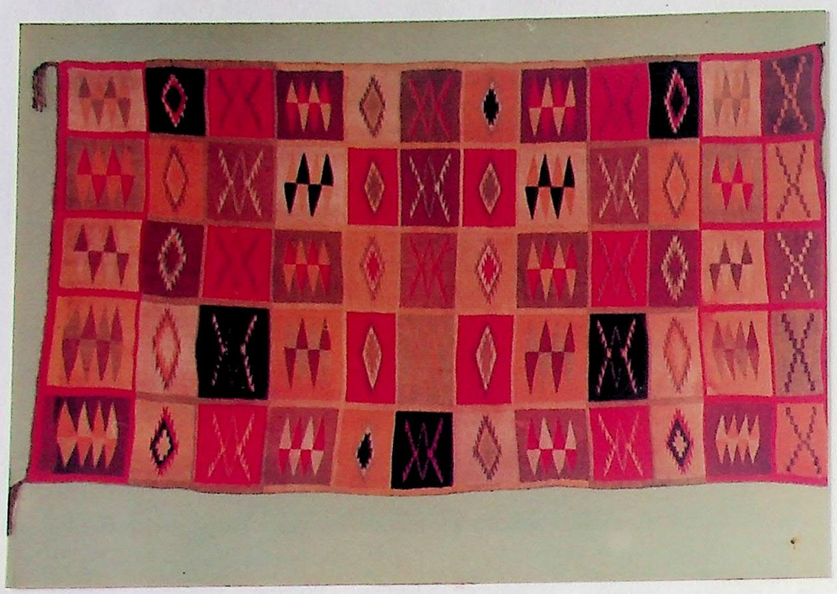
Sand paintings

Sand paintings are made on dry sand with natural earth colours, ground shell, charcoal, and pollen. They are usually completed in one day and then destroyed in the ritual process of transferring the magic potency of the painting to the patient being cured. Although they are figurative, the drawings are geometric, angular, slender. Extraordinarily beautiful, their very transience makes them more precious.

Several efforts have been made to preserve them, nonetheless. either in the form of watercolours, by weaving the designs into rugs or by various techniques of glueing the sand on board backing. The older religious taboo about making a sand painting for commercial use has weakened, due to a combination of a breakdown in the religion and a desire for monetary gain. This has gone so far that in recent years a popular craft form involves using the paintings preserved on boards as framed pictures, or even setting these paintings into table tops.

Weaving

The Navajo learned weaved some 200 years ago from the Hopi and Zuni, and the styles of the textiles have changed continually since then. At first the Navajo copied the simple banded designs of their neighbours when they wove blankets or dresses for the women. Later designs became more complex and better yarns were introduced. A host of local styles developed; later still revivals of some older forms were urged by the traders. Contemporary patterns of stripes, bars, diamond and triangle like elements are reminescent of the actual landscape, with



Germantown yarn rug, Navajo, c. 1885-90
Apache Mountain Spirit Dancers

its mesas in parallel horizontal lines, canyons and plateaux forming stepped volumes. About 1890 the handspun wool warp threads were replaced by cotton yarns and brightly coloured aniline dyes were introduced. Recent weavers however have revived the use of natural vegetable dyes. The same attention to balance in design that was paid by the Pueblo potters is applied to Navajo weaving designs. The stripes in a chief's blanket are laid out with exactitude so that the progression from the centre is equal on either side.

Apache

The war-like Apache absorbed influences from all directions, the different Pueblo tribes, Navajo, and Plains to the north. The Apache Gans Masks, are adaptations of the Pueblo masks. With open-work tablita-like structures attached to soft skin or sacking headcovers. Originally the "Gans" were sent as delegates of the Supreme Being (the giver of life) to reveal to the Apache the good ways of life, i.e. to govern, cure, plant and harvest, to hunt, and to be disciplined. They returned to their caves disappointed with the Apache corruption of their teachings. Four dancers and a clown (Mountain Spirit Dancers) impersonate the Gans at a girl's puberty rite; they descend from a Mountain Cave to enact the creation myth. (Burden baskets used at this rite were painted with black and red wave like designs around the middle and decorated with Plains-like buckskin. Whereas Apache tray baskets with spacious pin-wheel or lily-like designs are an influence from West California.)

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS

For most aboriginal tribes, religion plays a foremost role in the shaping of a culture. As a language, art has served religion in societies everywhere. A tribes spiritual beliefs are formed by the tribes needs and what the environment has to offer. At the level of the hunting band, it is the shaman who is responsible for its spiritual well being. The shaman, a mystical, priestly and political figure, guardian of the tribal "conscience", exists in a dual world: the ordinary world and a shadow world inhabited by spirits. Spirits exist in any object, being or phenomenon.

By virtue of his ability to enter the spirit world, usually in a trance state, the shaman acts as a communicator. When healing, he usually puts the patient into a trance as well. In an article on Haitian voodoo (reprinted in Science and E.S.P.) Francis Huxley suggests that ecstatic and trance states ..
"allow buried intentions to act themselves out and become conscious, first to other people, and then to oneself, finally in full consciousness. As he progresses the initiate gains command of his own person ... "
Many comtemporary performance artists strive, through pain / endurance to become acquainted with that unconscious self. In modern Western society the role of the contemporary artist tends to be regarded with similar mixed feelings of awe, mysticism and suspicion (occasionally contempt) as was accorded the Indian shaman, although not always deservedly.

The sedentary lineal tribe has more time for leisure, to engage in cermonies, to pursue refined arts. Religion is an activity for everybody. Superior gods control more than a specific area or territory, they control ideas, each one reigns over an activity and thereby protects people who engage in it. Among the Zuni the water serpent Kolowski is the guardian of springs wherever they exist; Chakwena woman aids in rabbit hunts, each of the medical societies has its own beast god which assists it in its specialities be it curing colds or removing bullets.

Cultural revivalistic movements spring up in the face of oppression. The reviv al of the Irish language here to oppose English rule is one example. Disilllusionment, hopelessness and apathy among the defeated Indians prepared the way for revivalistic and messianic movements that promised the return of the good old days. Most groups identified with the Jews and early Christians. The roots of many nativistic movements - the Maori of New Zealand, Kikuyu of Kenya, Bantu of South Africa, and Ghost Dancers of North America - can all be found in the appeal that the story of the jews had for these people. Some primitive peoples have claimed descent from one of the ten lost tribes of Israel. The climax of the many revivalistic movements in America was the Ghost Dance.

But one group of people it made no impression on was the Navajo. They totally rejected it. The most significant element in the Ghost Dance was the promised return of the dead Indians. One aspect of Navajo religion that clearly separates it from that of the Pueblos is the Navojos' fear of ghosts. What to

other indians was welcome news - the return of their ancestors - fukked tge Bavajo with dread.

In 1799 a Senaca prophet, Handsome Lake preached his "New Religion" to the Iroquois. The Quaker influence was evident, he renounced witchcraft and instead emphasised introspection, compassion for those who were suffering, and good deeds even in thought. He believed in silent prayer and the confession of sins and he recommended the bible as a good guide for any Iroquois to follow - however he rejected the New Testament, and Jesus played no role in the new religion, for that would have been to adopt the beliefs of the oppressors. Wherever the two pieces could be fitted together traditional Iroquois festivals and beliefs were combined with Christian rituals. For example, the Iroquois had a feast resembling the Eucharist to mark the New Year, at which time a white dog was sacrifinced to the great spirit.

The most vigorous religion today, Peyotism seeks spiritual independence. Peyotism teaches accommodation to a white world, and even more, it gives the Indian a method of cultural emancipation without violence. Peyote is a small cactus, without any spines, whose rounded top is cut off and eaten. It contains stimulants related to strychnine and sedatives related to morphine. But since ther is no proof that it is addictive, it cannot be classified as a narcotic. Hallucinations are usually in the form of colour visions, sound sensations are less frequent.

The ritual use of peyote has been incorporated into the Native American Church. It is a pan-Indian movement. Definitely Christian in orientation, the indian feels that eating peyote is his exclusive way of partaking of the holy spirit.

Messianic movements are capable of reviving cultures that have suffered military defeat, epidemic and acculturation, and are on the verge of breakdown.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Chapter 1, Introduction

P.1, no word for Indian Art, description Blackfoot chief's costume - "presence" - arrangement of patterns.

p.2, Small in scale, transportable - big scale Northwest Coast sculpture - micorcosm - symbolism, ritual & drama - transformation masks - magic & the occult - presence.

p.3, Art an integral part of daily life - socio-economic reasons - identity and allegiance reinforced by design as well as ritual

Totems define marriage relationships - prestige and status indicated by costume -
Symbols of supernatural power.

p.4, 300 tribes - Three areas to be discussed: NorthEast Woodlands, Plains, and SouthWest.

Chapter 2, The Woodlands

P.5, Woodlands Indian distinctive aboriginal - fought stubbornly Athabascans and Algonkians - the downfall.

p.6 Supernatural beings - totems - myths - the great Lynx

p.7 The Great Lakes Culture
Sedentary people - villages - Grand Medicine Society - medicine bundles - contemporary religion.

p.8 The Arts
Bark - carving - quillwork - birchbark - ribbon applique

p.9 Costume - fashion - uniforms adapted - metalwork -influences.

p.10 Warfare: Kickapoo - festivals

P.11 Iroquois
Reservations - maintained culture - village - matrilineal
League of Six - sachems.

p.12 Pine Tree Warriors - war parties - captives, torture - unity within the tribe.

p.13 False Faces
Three types of supernatural being - False Face societies - description of mask, how it is made.

p.14 Curing ceremonies

Arts
Effigy pipes - wampum belts - embroidery - the double curve.

P.16 Chapter 3, The Plains

Fiction - the area - early Plains bison hunters

p.17 The horse - diversity of the peoples

p.18 Speed, wealth - millitancy, Comanche light cavalry rifles - armaments race - U.S. exploit this.
Associations
Composite tribe - social cycle imitate bison

p.19 Sodalities - Cheyenne military societies, the Contraries Age societies - the berdache.

p.20 Sodalities brought unity to diverse peoples.

Arts
Quasi Great Lakes in style - ceremonial objects

p.21 Lightness, in praise of movement. - medicine bundles - Teton Sioux Elk Dreamers.

p.22 Beadwork on skin, on cloth, dresses & capes, horse trappings - Painted buffalo hides - pictographic by men, abstract by women - pictographic tipis and linings.

p.23 Stick figures: silhouette painted by north, outline with interior detail by Central Plains - painted shields, visions, form, Cheyenne cross hatch - parfleche

p.24 Featherwork: head ornaments, war bonnet - decorations on shields, feather bustles -
Carved pipes - effigy pipes.

p.25 limited woodwork: love flutes, Grass Dance whistles, horse dance sticks.

p.26 The End of the Plains Culture
American Civil War - Treaties with Indians - extermination buffalo disappear. Little Big Horn - pursued - reservations. Wovoka: the Ghost Dance - Wounded Knee

p.28 Rituals and Visions

Ritual and warfare - medieval knighthood - inter tribal war - coups - pictographic record - eagles feathers

p.29 Scalping and scalp lock .

Visions

Self torture - Cheyenne youth's puberty ritual - religious everywhere -

p.30 Vision - guidance - dangerous undertakings - Shamanism.

P.31 Chapter 4, The SouthWest

Town dwelling Pueblo Indian - 1,000 year old culture - Spanish influence - area, land varies - distinct cultures. Pre-history: Anasazi - Basketmaker I and II: baskets, sandals, pottery, pit houses.

p.32 Pueblo I: villages of masonry, multi roomed houses - Pueblo II: several storeys - black & white pottery - III Cliff houses and towns in caves, later abandoned IV Kiva murals, Sikyatki pottery.
Hohokan culture 300ad on - ancestors of Pima and Papago - etching shells - mosaic jewellery

p.33 Pueblo Indians: Hopi, Zuni and Eastern pueblos - influences absorbed: religion, clothing, language
Strong social organisation - clans stress common ancestry, promote solidarity.

p.34 Zuni Clans : matrilineal - adding on rooms -
Clan membership based on parents - common ancestry emphasised by special insignia and ceremonies.- secrecy.
Clans control fields, preserve peace - Priesthoods.

p.35 Zuni Religion : rainmaking - men prepare for ceremonies - "underworld" - Zuni devotion, six special cults with separate ceremonies - membership not hereditary.

p.36 Kachinas - happy spirits - masks - impersonation/transformation dolls, teaching aids.

p.37 Pueblo Art

(Pottery: Hopi, revival of old style - Zuni pottery - Lucy Lewis revives prehistoric designs.

p.38 Basketry: simple - Jemez, yuca mats - 3rd Mesa wicker, patterns done in native dyes represent kachinas - 2nd Mesa, coiled baskets, yucca leaves, grass core

Weaving: old native cotton - sheep's wool embroidery - weaving man's work ; "rain sash" - women do embroidery.

p.39 Kachina masks: Hopi & Zuni masked rituals - made of leather - re-painted designs - breakdown in religious restrictions - Kachina dolls - stone or wood fetishes.

p.40 Jewellery: Turquoise and Shells - late silverwork.
Painting : sand paintings, elaborate Butterfly Tablitas.

p.41 Navajo & Apache

Athabascan speaking - Navajo formerly semi-nomad - warlike - raids. Sheep herders.
Close proximity to Pueblos - borrowed cultural elements

p.42 Sand paintings - curing - transient - efforts to preserve taboos weakened.
Weaving: banded designs - reminiscent of landscape - balance in design.

p.43 Apache: influences from all direvtions - Mountain Spirit Dancers - Basketry.

FOOTNOTES

1. George Catlin, Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Conditions of North American Indians New York, Dover Publications, 1973, p.30 (written during eight years travel, 1832-1839)

2 Ralph T. Coe, Sacred Circles, London, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1977, p.p. 15 & 16. A catalogue of a major Indian artefact exhibition, held in the Hayward Gallery in 1977.

3. Shaman: mystic or spiritual leader. Although shamans are usually associated with the geographies of northern and central Asia, they can be found in Africa, Oceania, Australia, the Americas, and northern and eastern Europe, wherever hunting-gathering peoples still exist.

4. Totems: Animal (or plant) taken by a tribe to be the emblem of their mysterious relationship with it.

5 Claude Levi Strauss, A World on the Wane, New York Criterion Books, 1961, Totemism, Boston, Beacon Press, 1963.

6 Lodge: rank of Grand Medicine Society.

7 Midewiwin scroll: record of cermony performed.

8 Peter Farb, Man's Rise to Civilisation, London, Paladin, 1971, p.106.

9 Frank G. Speck, "The Double Curve Motif in North Eastern Algonquin Art," Canada Department of Mines, Geological Survey, Memoir 42, No. 1 Anthropological Series, Ottawa, Government Printing Bureau, 1914, p.2.

10 John Bakeless, Coronado, Eyes of Discovery, New York, Dover, 1961, p.p. 92, 93

11 Sacred Circles, p. 164

13 Scalping: White settlers early offered to pay bounties on dead Indians and scalps were actual proof of the deed. By liberal payment of scalps, the Dutch virtually cleared New York, before the English supplanted them.

Among Plains tribes apparently only Sioux and Cree placed any value upon scalps. Both tribes were late emigrants from the East, where they probably learned the custom from the Whites.

12 Helen H. Blish, A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1967, p.199

14. Hamilton A. Tyler: Pueblo Gods and Myths, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1964, p.3

15 Sacred Circles, p.196

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THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

COLLAGE
A VITAL INSTRUMENT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF HISTORY OF ART AND COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

FACULTY OF FINE ART

BY

ANGELA BENNER

APRIL 1982

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

INTRODUCTION

General criteria.

The process involved in the creation of a work of art has posed many vital questions for both artist and critic throughout the ages. While the viewer may not be conscious of the complexity of the creative process, it must be remembered that the final product is the culmination of a process involving a conscious, and sometimes a sub-conscious interplay of innovative actions and responses. These are tempered by personal, social, and historic influences.

To assist in the appraisal of the final product, attention must be paid to any visual clues which have a vital role to play in guiding the critic through this complex process.

As a result of its physical nature, collage is a medium which lends itself to the provision of such visual clues.

In the first place are the personal factors which influence the artists' ideas. These factors are such that no two works by the same artist, using the same content and methodology are ever identical in all respects. Each piece of work will be affected by time changes, personality fluctuations and temporary influences.

In the second place come the natural factors stemming from the world around us. This is an ever-changing and mysterious world which we often find beyond our comprehension. But our knowledge of it is constantly being added to by scientific investigation and perceptual contact, all of which tend to influence our artistic concepts.

A third influence can be ascribed to technological progress, particularly in relation to the media. Developments in the fields of television, video, films and printing have all contributed to providing new and exciting visual information on a massive scale. The personal , natural and technological factors do not merely build up isolated pieces of information in the artists' mind but rather do they coalesce to form a body of knowledge which ensures that decisions , such as those involved in making a work of art, are soundly based. While these considerationa apply to all works of an artistic nature, they are of particular significance insofar as collage is concerned, as this medium, especially, lends itself to change.

Collage as a medium.

Collage concerns itself with the dismantling of objects and the assembling of fragments. It is thus a continuous process of taking apart and putting together selected materials. This selection and rejection process is subject to constant assessment by the artist.

Collage working methods involve the combination of physical, perceptual and intellectual elements. Decisions concerning the selection of materials can be based on purely perceptual assessment. Superficially, this may seem to be a random choice, but in fact it is invariably of subconscious significance. An element assimilated in this way may lead to a spontaneous innovation in the original theme. In fact, in rare cases, the inspiration for a whole collage can be traced to what appears to be a 'random' selection. However, if the artist has a specific idea in mind for a new piece of work, he must consciously select materials which he considers are an adequate expression of his idea. Elements must be chosen because they are necessary and most appropriate for communication of his idea.

The variations in the selective process are of course not mutually exclusive. Some pieces of work come about through a finely tuned relationship between intuition and analysis. Sometimes a collage can be merely a first step in the crystalization of an idea which as yet has not come to maturity in the artists' mind.

An ongoing problem in the artistic field is how to give concrete form to visionary ideas. The difficulty lies in the fact that the visionary concepts are generally an amalgam of ideas and relationships. The essence of this problem is what to include, and how to include, elements of the visionary concepts. It seems that the greatest advance towards the solution of this problem lies in the concept of collage. Collage has the capacity of relatively easy change which allows it to reflect, more closely, the artists' personal collage of reality and the rapidly changing world of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER ONE

COLLAGE: A NATURAL INSTINCT

Making pictures by sticking together bits and pieces stirs the imagination and releases hidden associations. Just as it is natural to sing and dance and tell stories, it is part of Man's creative urge to take scissors and paste and cut up and stick down shapes and images. Often it is not until one image is placed alongside another that the realiastion of an idea comes about. For these reasons collage has a place outside its position as a legitimate art form.

Ideas have been expressed in this form as far back as the twelfth century in Japanese calligraphy when poems were laid on coloured papers pasted down onto a sheet and small stars and animals were sprinkled among the calligraphs onto the pieces of delicately tinted paper.[1] Among the most famous of such illustrated manuscripts is the 'Isehu', a collection of thirty-one syllable poems by the tenth century poetess Ise. The tradition of these collage poems still survives in Japan, where New Year greeting cards are frequently written on such pasted patterned paper.

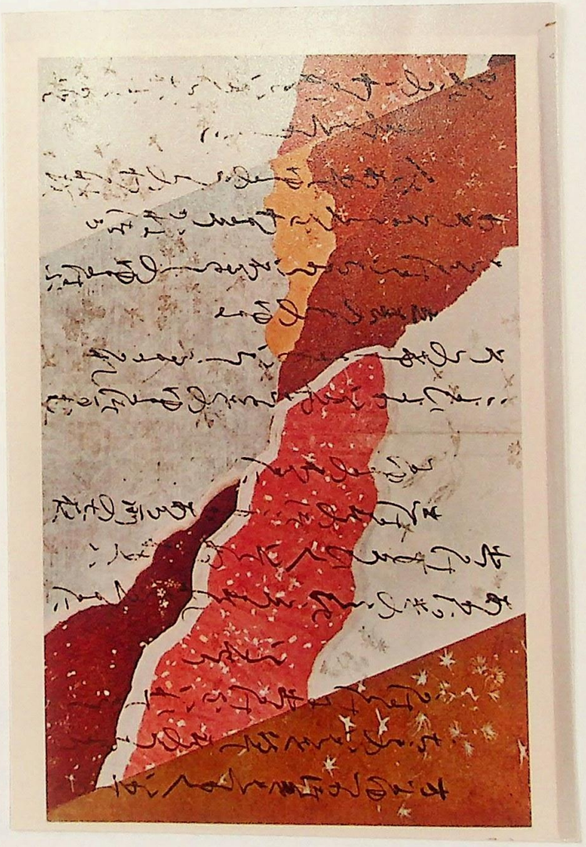

Fig.1. Page from 'Ishue' by Ise. 12th century.

The art of cutting grew up in the East and reached a peak of brilliance in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By the middle of the sixteenth century the art of paper cutting had spread westwards from Persia across Turkey and in and around Constantinople individual craftsmen became famous in the field.

About the same time cutting and pasting paper was used in western Europe. Genealogical registers contained family insignia and heraldic emblems which were constructed by painting and sticking together cut-out images in paper and occasionally even in cloth. Especially notable is the 1612 family register of the Nuremberg patrician Hans Eberhard Pfaudt, which contains delicately scissored cut-outs, glued to black silk, of deer and birds pursued in a hunt. Assemblages and collages were made using natural materials as well. In Austria especially, feathers and straw were used to make decorations and emblems for gifts and celebrations. It was common practice in South Germany and Switzerland from the late rococo period to the early nineteenth century to make small religious objects from coloured waxes trimmed with gold. There is an example of a small beautifully decorated box containing a doll-like wax effigy of the Madonna wrapped in gold brocade, glistening with cut-out paper stars and laid on miniature silk cushions. Weather charms were made from the early sixteenth century through to the nineteenth century. These charms were often filled with tiny painted portraits of saints juxtaposed with Benedictine crosses, seeds, stones and other small objects to ward off evil luck and to be efficacious against bad weather and illness.

Tiny paper collages were made as markers in prayer books in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in and around South Germany. They were made with care and were full of fine details and finely cut lace. Many collages were also made from butterfly wings and postal markings. Folding screens, known to collectors as 'découpage' screens were used to hold a myriad of images.

These employ prints, fashion-plates, verses garlanded with lace-decorated borders. These screens were sometimes known as 'quodlibets' because of the medley of images they contained. Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) used paper and scissors to make pictures for his relatives' children. His most astounding work in this line is the four-leaf folding screen he decorated towards the end of his life (1873-4). It is packed with crowds of people, landscapes and portraits of famous contemporaries.

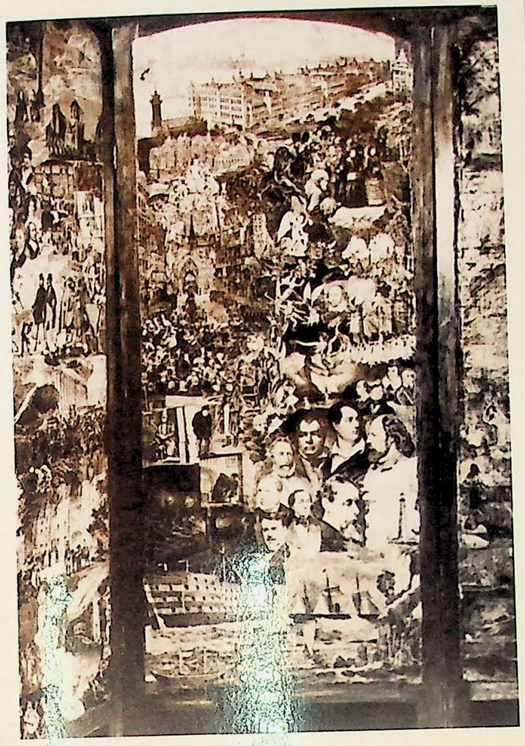

Fig.2. Section of a four-leaved screen by Hans C. Andersen (1805-1875).

The picture poems of Carl Spitzberg (1805-1885) were unique collages. A pharmacist, he began to travel, collecting along the way recipes and information on the culinary arts in which he was passionately interested. During the mid 1850's he noted down a series of recipes for his niece. These he illustrated with collages including snippets of engravings and woodcuts. Parts of the composition were emphasized with his own drawings and water-colours. His choice of components for these collages was based on a juxta-position of the words and items in the various recipes. For example, in 'Ross-bif' (roast beef) he pasted together half a horse and a picture of half an ox, 'ross' being a rather high-flown word for 'steed'.

In 1890 collage became of use in the making of posters. William Nicholson

(father of Ben Nicholson) and his brother-in-law began to make collages to form the layout of advertizements. Shapes were made to stand out more clearly and text and signatures were stuck down as typographical elements.

Photo-montage, a new technique, had developed in parallel with photography. Apparently, the first montages were put together by a Swedish photographer, O.G. Rejlander (1813-1875) who opened a studio in London in 1855. He produced a large allegorical photo picture, 'The Two Paths of Life'. For this he used thirty separate shots of figures and backgrounds. In 1858 he was followed by H.P. Robinson (1830-1901) with a photo-montage entitled 'Fading Away' which was made from five negatives. The pictoral effect was achieved by retouching the edges of each cutout and assembled figure with a brush.

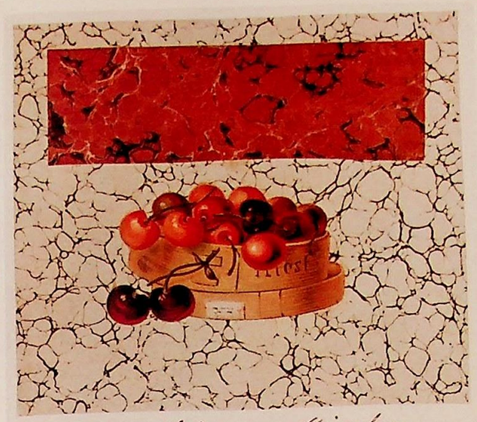

Fig.3. 'Marmelade von Kirschen' by Carl Spitzberg (1805-1885).

Journalistic photography likewise turned to using photo-montage for the purposes of recording actual events. Collaged printed posters and images became fragments of bigger collages. The Swiss-German symbolist painter Arnold Bocke (1827-1901), aided by his students, wallpapered a whole restaurant in Florence with posters. This has proved to be an ongoing collage which to this day is maintained and recovered with modern printed material.

By the turn of the century montage was being used for commercial publicity and for picture postcards. Up to this time, collage was used in a way that was outside the realms of legitimate, recorded, art history. This kind of utilization is still going on in many homes, the decoration of private spaces, gifts, cards and scrapbooks. In these kinds of collages lie a wealth of recorded information laid down with a distictive personal approach. As John Berger suggests in Ways of Seeing:

> Sometimes people have boards in their bedrooms or livingrooms on which they pin pieces of paper, letters, snapshots, reproductions of paintings, newspaper cuttings, original drawings, postcards. On each board all the images belong to the same language and all are more or less equal within it because they have been chosen in a highly personal way to match and express the experience of the room's inhabitant.[2]

NOTES

1. H. Wescher, Collage, p.7.

2. J. Berger, Ways of Seeing, p. 30.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CUBIST MOVEMENT: COLLAGE - AN ADDED SURFACE DIMENSION

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Georges Braque (1882-1963) were two of the main innivators in the use of collage. It could be said that between them they made collage a medium which was accepted into art language. By the early nineteen hundreds they were at a stage of understanding the laws of painting so much so that they knew that painting has its own expressivity which owed nothing nothing to traditional concepts. At this time their work was becoming highly abstract and its connection with reality was becoming increasingly tenuous. Thus they came to re-examine some commonplace objects around them to discover that the introduction of a piece of paper or some printed lettering could offer their work a new potential by injecting it with a slightly sculptural quality and modifying the painted spatial dimensions. It was in 1912 that Picasso first glued 'a mark' into one of his paintings, a still-life depicting a glass, pipe, newspaper, a lemon and other objects. Onto this painting he stuck a piece of oil cloth patterned with imitation chair caning on which he painted wood strips to emphasise the illusion. From then on both Picasso and Braque produced many pieces of work containing collaged elements. They were particularly fond of the use of printed lettering to suggest words thus modifying the way in which a painting can be read.

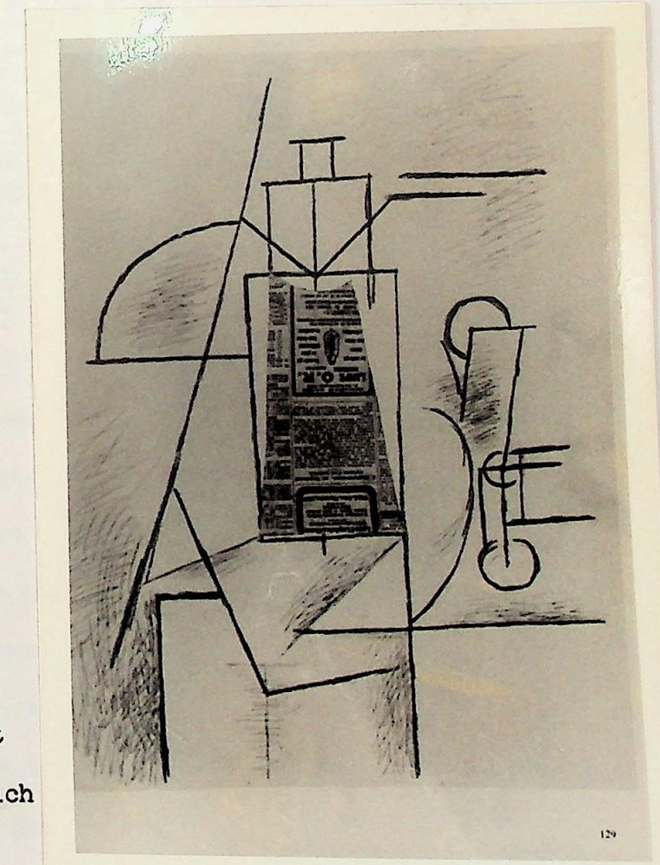

Fig. 4. Picasso. 'Still life with bottle and wineglass. 1912.

It seems the discovery of collaged additions into paintings came just in

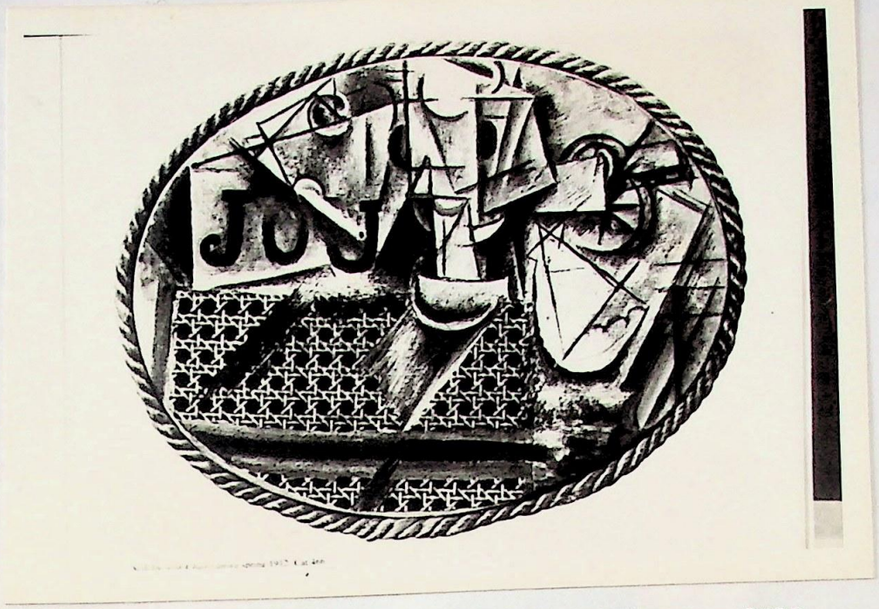

Fig. 5. Still life with chair caning. Picasso. 1912

time to balance the progress made by Picasso and Braque in abstracting their work.

> We see how Picasso and Braque varied these indications by the effects of differerent substances, by optical modifications. How they discovered a type of painting which allied intellectual communication with visual pleasure... On one hand the material reality of the picture and particularly in the case of papier colle takes precedence over the information it conveys, but on the other hand the intelligibility of a group of letters, the discovery of a plastic sign suffice to upset our vision of material reality.[1]

About this time George Braque was struggling to finda way of opening out the two dimensional surfaces of his paintings. He found the answer to this problem when he began to collage printed matter, characters and numerals into his work. He found that including these elements introduced a balance to the breakdown of pictorial forms. This harmaony was created by virtue of the fact that the letters signified forms resistant to deformation because of their innate two dimensional flatness. At this time the use of printing was growing commercially and so it came to pass that artists began to come under the influence of elements they saw daily, in advertisements as Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler explained in his book <u>On the road to Cubism</u>:

Lyrical painting had discovered a new world of beauty which lay dormant, unremarked in the wall posters, shop windows and business signs that play such a great role in contemporary visual impressions.

this word needs evaluation

Cubist collages began to show a sentimental quality which alleviated the tight formalism of previous times. This sentimentality was, at the same time balanced by the banality of the printed work which introduced figurative echoes of daily life into the increasingly abstract compositions.

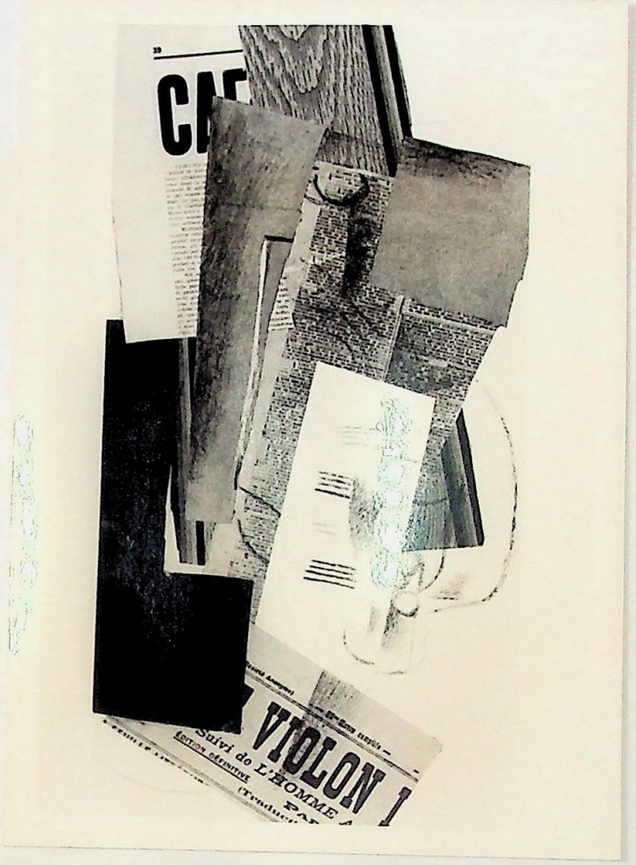

Fig.6 Glass carafe and newspaper. Braque

During the Summer of I912 Braque began to collage imitation wood-grain and marble into his paintings, being familiar with these patterns from the training he received in his early days as a painter and decorator. Along with these patterns and numerals Braque and Picasso included in their collages many images of musical instruments. These they found addes a dynamic sound element into the visual substance of their work. Braque discovered that another notable advantage in pasting papers was the invlauable help they offered him in the

layout of colour.

> The final grasp of colour came about with the papier colles. This is a fact which critics never really understand. There, it was possible to clearly disassociate colour from form and to see its independence in relation to form.[2]

Picasso as time passed began to utilise collaged elements more and more. He began to choose foreign objects more carefully, picking materials which had specific personal associations. He bagan to stick down, into his work, visiting cards, labels from bottles, match box covers, tobacco packages etc. With these he was able to give a specially charged power to his work because these specially chosen materials held their own particular significance from having already passed through much handling.

In using these materials Picasso broke through yet another barrier- that of the 'worthiness' of a material. He proved in practice that any material can be serviceable to the artist so long as personal intentions, emotion and motivation can be translated through that material. In the history of collage, I913 was the year of discoveries. During I914 the use of these discoveries became more systemised. Stuck in elements were used more and more to emphasise relationships between texture and colour tones. The collages of this time began to reflect the very loud patterns of check and polka-dot that were creeping into vogue in the cloth fashions of the period.

Fig.7 Harlequin. Picasso. I915.

Juan Gris (I887-I927) was another artist instrumental in the development of collage technique during the cubist movement. He worked most of his life as

a caricaturist for magazines at the Salon de la Section d'Or he exposed his first two pictures that contained collage elements. The 'Wash Stand' and 'The Watch' in which the backgrounds are rendered in purely frontal vies and the objects are seen as is from above. He saw his own work as a kind of flat coloured architecture which, inevitably included the use of elements taken from reality. For example the 'Wash-stand' included a piece of a mirror stuck in a way as to by means of reflection repeat images of details of the work. In his collage 'Le Torero' Gris used cut up posters to emphasise a feeling of dismemberment and dispersal of the image of an eye, ear and nose fanning out in circular spinning patterns. Unlike Picasso or Braque, Juan Gris always combined his collage elements with oil paint or gouache paint.

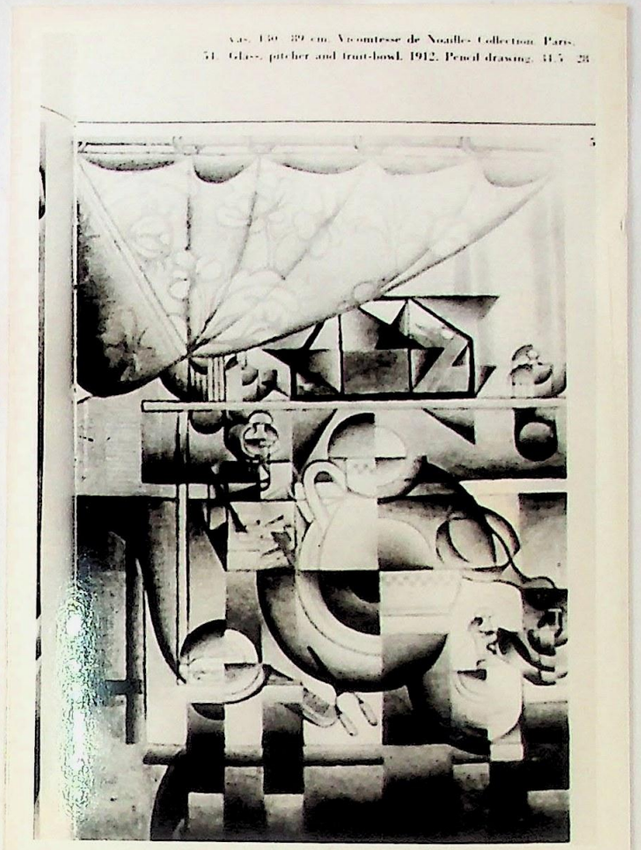

Fig. 8. Hand-basin. Juan Gris 1912

Experimenting with the interplay of planes he began superimposing layers and disguising the outlines of certain objects. His work is a fine example of harmony between the conscious and subconscious. He would allow components to come together and suggest forms. From these suggested forms he would begin a process of deliberate modification until the desired composition took shape. It was not long before sculptors began to see the advantage of collage in the making of three dimensional work.

Archipenko (Alexander, 1887-1964) began to execute studies for sculptural work in collage because he found the versatility of this medium introduced a new element of

Fig.9 Still life with newspaper
Juan Gris.

spontanaeity into his working designs. He also found collage an excellent means of composition clarification. He had this to say about his new use of collage:

> When in I9I2 I utilised various materials in sculpture for the first time, it was because certain plastic forms which cried out for realisation within my conception could not be realised with the materials theretofore used for sculpture. And quite naturally I was obliged to find new techniques for these new materials. On the basis of my experience I can say that it is the new formal style that calls for different kinds of materials and not vice-versa, the new materials that create new styles. Their use is the product, not the goal.[3]

He began to use together metal, glass, wood etc. He christened his new type of assemblages 'sculpto-painting' insisting that his aim was to render simultaneously the form and colour of objects.

Henri Laurens (I885-I954) began making papier colles as early as I9I5. He used

this medium experimentally to work out compositions problems in his metal reliefs. His collages began to represent still lifes. For the most part he used wrappings in browns, blues and blacks, adding occasional livelier tones. Laurens style of collage which incorporated large precise shapes suggest spatial relationships by as little as a few white lines on a dark ground. Often he used collage to bring an abstract quality to an otherwise figuratively based work. As in 'Head' and 'lute and clarinet'.

Having stopped making collages in I9I8 Laurens returned to this medium in the I940's pasting into his drawings pieces of mat-brownish toned paper to give the effect of shadows behing figures.

In accordance with these innovations many artists such as Marthe Donas (I885-I967) Ferdnand Leger (I88I-I955) Sonia Delaunay-Terk (b.I885 in Ukraine) Georges Vladimir (I885-I937) and many others discovered the medium of collage and each incorporated foreign materials in their work in a way that was highly personal. At this time concern about the structural elements of an image was widespread and collage seems to, during this period prove a means of expression for the changing attitudes towards the picture plane. Throughout Europe, especially in France, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Russia and Scandanavia, collage was hailed for its ability to remain apart on the picture plane while, at the same time forming an active part in the imagery employed.

NOTES

I. Picasso- The Cubist Years I907-I9I6 p.I28
A catalogue raisonee of the paintings and related works.
Pierre Dax and Joan Rosselet.

2. Selection of Georges Braques notebook. The day and the Night

3. Quoted in Erich Weise. Archipenko Collection (Junge Kunst) Leipzig. I923.

4. Berggruen Catalogue.

CHAPTER THREE

FUTURISM: MATERIALS AND MOTION

Collage techniques were widely used by many of the futurists. It is interesting to see how the use of this medium evolved in accordance with the political and technological developments of this time (1909-30). The new methods of communication such as newspapers, photography, telephone, and film were becoming more acceptable. Far from being inhibited, many artists were inspired and tried, if a little awkardly, to avail of these developments in order to affect a revolution in art. Cubism had been concerned with problems of an aesthetic nature, but the advent of the war and the age of machines began to roll carrying with it artists who strove to reflect some of the noise, motion, energy and dynamic realities surrounding them.

Boccioni, Balla, Severini, Carra and Russolo, the artists who first signed the first futurist manifesto, all practised collage techniques. Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916) advocated the use of glass, horse-hair, mirrors, wood, cement and electric light. He explained his interest in these materials saying: 'with the aid of transparent glass bottles, disks, sheets of metal, illumination from within and without, we can bring to expression the planes, movements, tones and half tones of a new reality'.[1] In a pen drawing shaded with tempura, he included the use of the title page of the Initial Futurist Manifesto

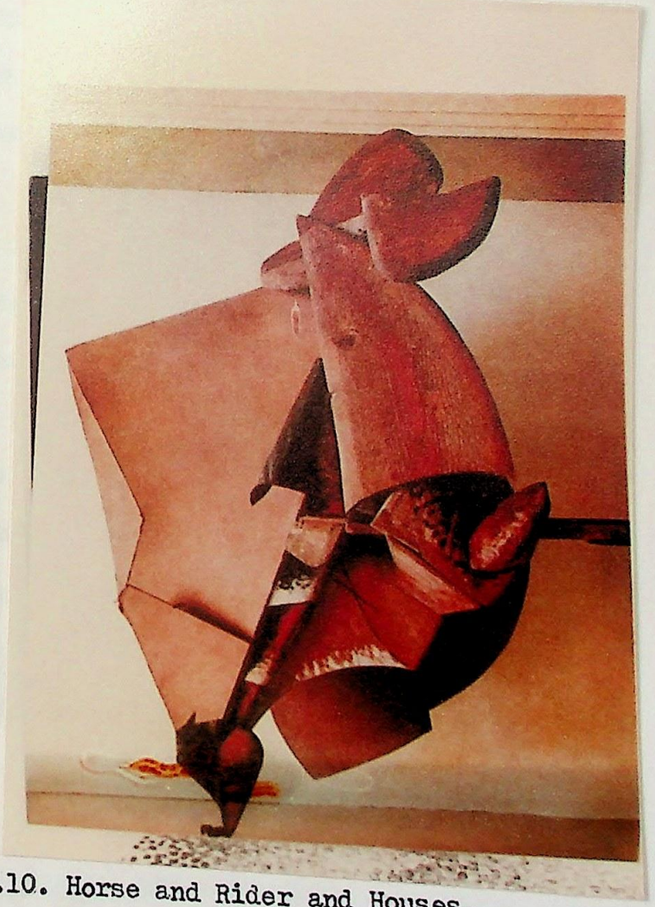

Fig.10. Horse and Rider and Houses. Boccioni. 1914

with the half hidden name of the author. In other sketches he used paper exclusively for the disposition of pictoral planes, after which he would cover them with paint, rendering the structures of the papers hardly visible.[2]

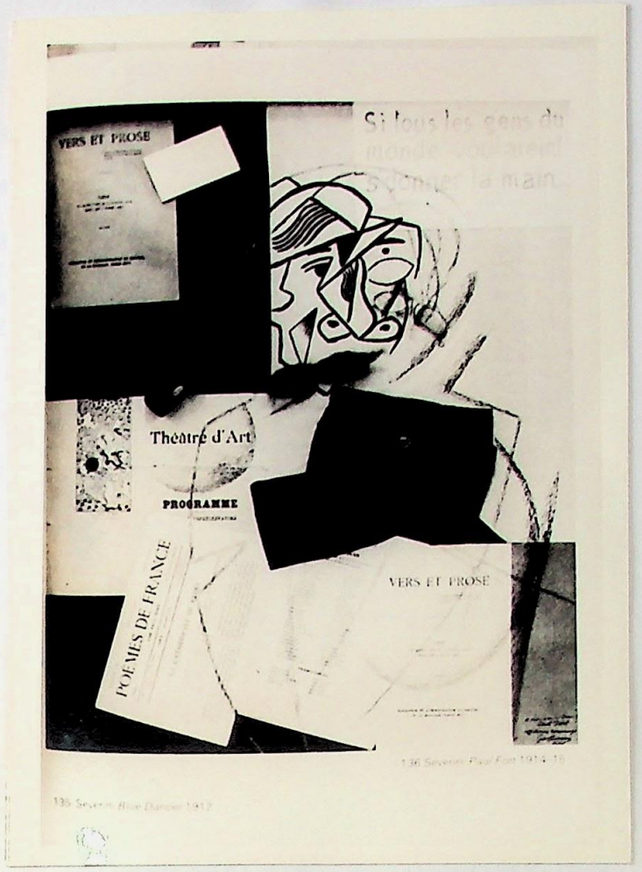

Fig.11. 'Blue Dancer' Severini. 1912.

Futurist use of collage can also be seen in the work of Gino Severini (1883-1966), a friend of Boccioni. Severini settled in Paris in 1906 after which he only made occasional visits to Italy although he stayed in close contact with other Italian futurists. In Paris he became close friends with Braque and other French artists living around Montmartre. It was mainly through his efforts that the exhibition of futurist paintings was mounted at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune.

Severini's interest was from the start inspired by the Crevelli Triptych of 1486 in the Brera, Milan, of a painted image of St. Peter holding a gilded key surrounded by a garland of saints whose halos contain real pearls. He thus began sticking sequins into his pictures to give them a relief quality. Severini's use of letter forms was differnt from that of the cubists in that he used verbs in order to inject a feeling of movement into his work. By 1913 he was beginning to use a whole variety of extraneous material. In that year he exhibited the 'Portrait of Marinetti' at the Sturm Gallery, onto which he glued half a false moustache and a pice of felt onto the jacket lapel as well as cutout captions from the subjects' most important works, the Manifesto du Futurisme and Imagination sans Fil (both were translated versions). These bits of broken down text

were laid down so as to seemingly leap out from the surface. During the war Severini continued with his collages which reflected an increasingly decorative attitude with bright coloured patterns and polka dots dominating. As a result of his mathematical studies in which he computed the proportions of lines and surfaces, he also designed a few purely geometrical compositions.

During 1914 a difference of opinion arose among the group of artists responsible for the futurist magazine 'Lacerba'.[3] This differnce of opinion concerned specifically the methods of using collage materials. In an article entitled 'Il Cherchio si Chuide' (The Circle Closes), Giovanni Papini struck out against the growing tendency towards a graphic use of collage. He saw that foreign materials and extraneous objects were no longer being translated or transformed into an integral part of the drawings and paintings of the time. He supported a use of collage that was not frivilous, a use of materials that enhanced their inherent chromatic and organic qualities instead of the illustrative graphic work that he was beginning to see about him.

Fig. 12. 'Still life with water-melon'. Soffici. 1917.

About the year 1914 Soffici inserted collage elements into some still life compositions. Nevertheless typographical elements still dominated the pictoral field. The central problem in the futurist use of collage was that the use of words and letters collaged into the drawings and paintings brought

a topical aspect into the work. The cubist use of collage allowed only a vague suggestion of everyday issues to present themselves but now collage was close to serving an almost propagandist role.

The Czech painter Rougena Zatkova (1880-1924) in about 1913, executed a present for the Russian artist Mikail, which was a totally abstract composition of movement and colour using metallic foil of gold, silver and green, along with some bits of plastic film and tissue paper in rose, yellow and orange. She also made some metal reliefs making up an organic arrangement of metal bands vaulting each other off the surface.

Most of the other futurist artists such as Rosai, Primo Conti, Achill Lega, Neri Nanetti and Emilio Notte occasionally used collage techniques but mainly for documentary or graphic purposes.

The second phase of the futurist movement began after the World War and was again centred in Rome around the circle of Balla. It was Depero and Prampolini who played a major role in this second part of the futurist movement, bridging the gap between the generations. Prampolini's paintings were becoming increasingly geometric in their construction, containing stuck-in coloured segments. This was done in a somewhat decorative style which was to dominate this second phase of the movement. Ivo Panaggi (1901) and Vinicio Paladini (1902), two students of architecture, both looking to find new means of expression, joined Balla's

Fig.13. Enricio Prampolini 1914.

circle and began to turn out a series of manifestos. In 1919 Prampolini issued his Manifesto for Futurist Decorative Art which was followed by manifestos for Futurist aerial theatre, futurist dance, futurist furniture and futurist scenography. It can be seen now how the futurist trends were paving the way for Dadaism. In 1922 the mechanical futurist ballet by Panaggi and Paladini was performrd by two Russian Dancers[4]. For one of the dancers Paladini had designed a costume of a 'Human Phantom', the other being dressed by Panaggi in a 'Mechanical Suit'. These costumes were assembled out of cardboard, coloured papers and pieces of cloth, thus covering the dancers in stiff, sheath-like tubes. The dance was performed with aseries of polyphonic strains and noise rhythms. Panaggi made a poster for this occasion using a photograph of one of the dancers combined with a montage of printed texts and illustrations. Later he completed many more montages and collage posters .

Collage found new adepts in the futurist circle founded in Turin by Luigi Colombo, who was also known as Filia. The main link between this group was acommon interest in the use of unconventional materials. The earliest and most unusual collages here were made by Farfa (1881-1964) whose real name was Tommasini. Although Farfa supported many of the futurist manifestos he remained aloof and did much of his work alone. His first post-war work collages had a decorative linear quality. Later he made fantastic figurative images and grotesque creatures. Farfa was creatively versatile and wrote poetry and music

Fig. 14. 'Composition 12' Balla 1912.

as well as working the areas of ceramics, metal and wood sculpture. His collages were full of double meamings and subtle allusions. Probably his most amusing inventions were the Dam-Dom collages made from a domino set and coins. Collages by the Bulgarian-born artist Nicolay Diulgheroff (b.1901) and by Pippe Orani (b.1909) also contributed to this circle of futurists. In the 1930's Prampolini continued to lead the way as an innovator in the use of new materials in easel painting in Italy, combining natural objects with industrial components, and combining painting with montage.

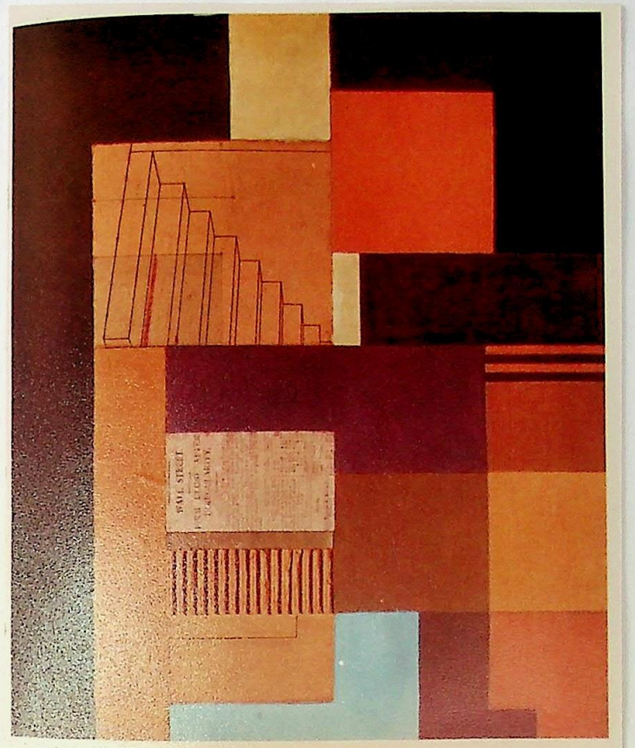

Fig. 15. 'Construction with Wall Street.' Vordenberge-Gildeweirt. 1924.

In such a short space of time, as a result of the dramatic events and changing attitudes towards the medium, collage splintered to heights where it could encompass expression of materials in space, assemblage developed from pasting paper onto canvas to material cimbinations of all types.

NOTES

1. Manifesto tecnico della scultura April 1912 . From ~~Futurist~~ art and Theory, Oxford 1968.
2. 'Still life with Selzer siphon' Yale University Art Gallery. Collection Societe Anonyme, New Haven, Conn.
3. 'Lacerba' was founded by Soffici and Giovanni Papini in 1913.
4. Performed in 1922 at the Circolo della Cronache d'Actualita.

CHAPTER FOUR

COLLAGE DURING THE GERMAN EXPRESSIONIST PERIOD

Collage played only a minor role in the work of the German artists up to the end of the First World War. It was Hilla von Rebay (1890-1967) who devoted herself most extensively to collage, with which she became involved in 1913. This involvement sprang from within her own work pattern and her collages held the freshness of a spontanaeity uninfluenced by cubist or futurist philosophies. She became fascinated with the degree of precision it was possible to attain making lines and shapes with a scissors. Her work displayed a sensitivity to the nature of materials. Her work expressed a discovery of the white background and its ability, when used a certain way, to create a space between one cut-out shape and another. She produced a large body of collages many of which anticipated the concerns of modern artists.

Gabrielle Munter (I877-I962) a friend of Kandinsky produced an interesting collection of postcard size collages. Her landscapes changing sometimes into rhythmic progressions and geometric constructions.[I]

Herwarth Walden eho founded the Sturm Gallery in Berlin in I9I2 worked in a way that contained something of the folk art and expressionistic concepts which were spreading through Germany from Munich at that time. A change is seen in her work when her religious and landscape themes grew less and less figurative in order to give way to more pure colour-forms. She injected a luminosity into the red and violet hues in her work, to these forms she added pasted in gold and silver papers. In I924, she combined collage and tempera for an abstract composition of black centres from which radiate coloured beams. With the growth of Nazism she returned to Sweden and then onto Switzerland where a few years ago she started a new collage proceedure using a white net work of lines on a black background and then filling

certain parts whith cutout pastel drawings to obtain highly coloured effects.

Paul Busch b. I889 studied in Berlin before the war amd began to use collage in conjunction with water colour. As he continued his use of different materials he deveiloped a specific interest in costumes, which he designed in glowing colours for the ball held in der Sturm. For these he produced a seried of water-colour collages. Apart from these artists mentioned and a few isolated examples of collage works artists generally were more concerned at this time with new abstract painting and expressionist ideas that reflected those dramatic times. It was not until the growth of the Bauhaus that collage really took off in Germany.

NOTES

I. These can be seen in the Stadische Galerie Lenback Haus, Munich.

CHAPTER FIVE

DADA- LIVE COLLAGE

> We live for uncertainty, we want neither sense nor values that flatter the bourgeoisie. We want non-values and non-sense.
> I

The mutiny which led up to the explosion of the Dada movement had been under way for years, evidence of re-evalutaion of traditional means of visual expression was clearly present in the work of Boccioni, Picasso and others. Berlins cultural life remained virile throughout the war. The most original aspect of collage work of the Berlin Dadaists was their vivid propagandist use of photo-montage.

Raoul Hausmann, an active member of the Dadaist movement, took to making collages in I9I8. He began using newspapers and cut up posters and went on to use photographs. In photo-montage Hausmanns aim was to make a series of

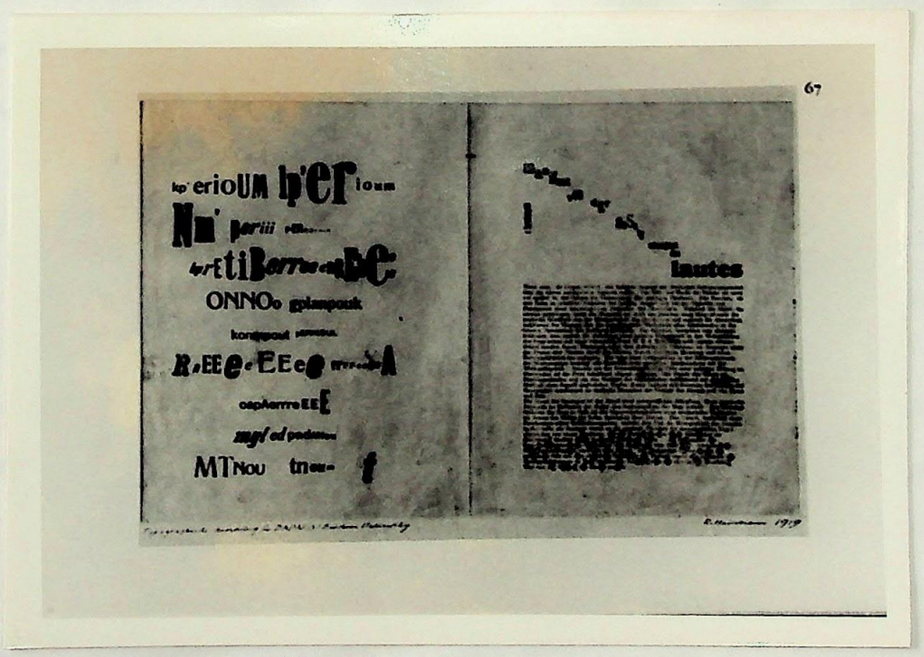

Fig. I6.Raoul Hausmann I9I9

static films, a visual analogue to the 'simultaneous ' Dadaist poems. His output was prodigious. He often made collages to promote and explain many of the Dadaist events and philosophies. One particular collage he entitled 'Dada Cordial'. This was a collage of colour illustrations and texts packed with political allusions to Dadaism. In 1919, Hausmann founded the review, 'Der Dada' which lasted four issues. In 1919, Hausmann also produced three collages, 'Portrait of an old woman' 'Portrait of a poet', Portrait of a porter'. The heads were pasted together from pieces of newspaper with mangled texts from a wood-cut he made. Hausmann had a natural talent for the combination of arbitrary and heterogenous elements in his work, he would bringthese together in complete optical unity. Along with his collages and montages, he also created some sculptural assemblages incorporating many objects in daily use.

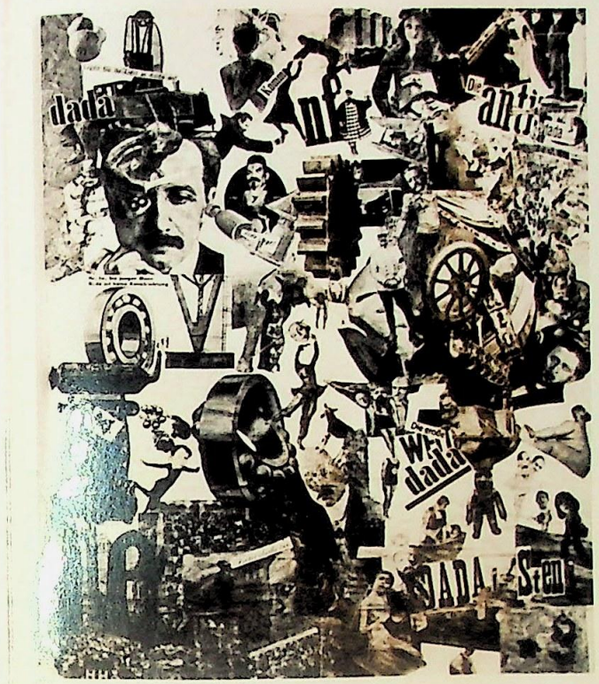

Fig. 17.'Cut with a kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly epoch. Hanna Hoch.

Together with Hausmann, as she became drawn into the Dadaist circle, Hanna Hochs collages reflected her sensitivity to the military defeat of World War I and the ensuing revolution. At the Dadaist fair, she displayed energetic pieces such as the montage 'Cut with a kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly epoch! Her more personal work involved the making of grotesque dolls gaudily attired with coloured bits and pieces. She also made collages from objects around the house. Her work displayed humorous and nonchalant qualities.

Amongst her Dadaist documents is a large collage dated I922 which contains a group portrait of all her Dadaist associates. Aside from these Hoch created many collages of vari-coloured geometric paper shapes even after the Dada fashions came to an end. She continued to explore new collage possibilities and the potential of unexpected juxta-positioning.

> I would like to wipe out the solid barriers that we human beings in our self-confidence tend to draw around everything within our reach.. I wish to demonstrate that little is also big and big is also little, and that the only thing that changes is the stand-point from which we judge, so that all our human laws and prin-ciples lose their validity.[2]

In her more modern work Hoch made many dream-scapes and collaged growth forms. Occasionally in her recent work evidence of Dada spirit is seen in a flash like an old splinter.

Fig.I8. Love in the grass.
Hanna Hoch. I925.

Kurt Schwitters (I887-I948) is a figure so central to Dada that he is sometimes considered to have headed the movement whereas in fact it was only with some effort that he came to terms with the Dada movement in Berlin. He was a faith-ful painter for a long time, studying to make accurate copies of obects at Dresden Academy. He believed painting to be a creation of a harmony whereby one element is blended with another in form and colour. In fact, he saw his collages as paintings saying:

> I call small compositions which I have painted 'Merz drawings! In reality, the expression, 'drawings' is not sufficient because these small works are essentially painted, that is coloured and flatly formed.[3]

With regard to his Dadaist activities in I9I9 Schwitters conceived and named his own particular direction as 'Merz' originating from the word 'Kommerz' the second syllable of which he viewed somewhere in isolation as an abstract form. His life-long devotion to collage grew out of his feeling that creating abstract form is consistent with re-evaluation and metamorphosis through the act of making constituent elements things in themselves. Gradually, Schwitters

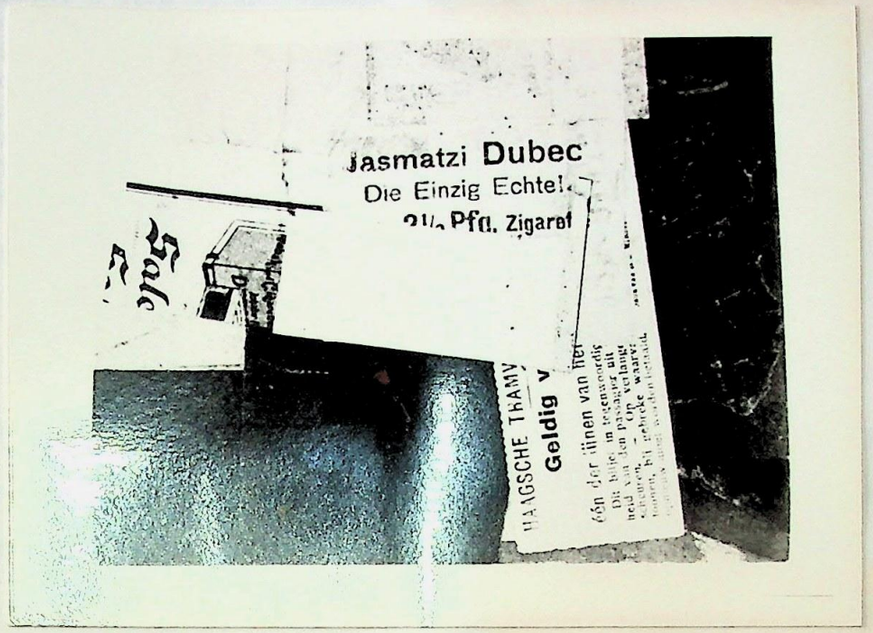

Fig. I9. Geldig. Kurt Schwitters, I929

developed an interest in machines. He'acquired a love for the wheel and recognised that machines are abstractions of the human spirit.' He also came to realise that creating artistic forms was synonymous with the devaluation of constituent elements as things in themselves.

> Schwitters places disparate elements in a completely synthetic, arbitrary and abstract manner. While it is true that the figurative or referential elements he employs maintain their singular identity and carry over the mood and character of their non-art origins, it is important to note that Schwitters never links his various elements, whether recognisable objects or not, into any kind of narrative frame-work.

However absurd the materials he used Schwitters always managed to be sensitive to their individual natures in the structuring of their well balanced compos-

itions, making a kind of scaffold or frame-work to contain the elements which supported a play of rectangles, angles and circles. The centre core of Schwitters work was the great picture book he collaged like a reference diary, from his daily life. For this he doggedly collected materials from anywhere at any time.

> Since the material does not matter, I take whatever material I like if the picture requires it. Because I balance different kinds of materials against one another I have an advantage over oil painting, for in addition to balancing and evaluating colour against colour, line against line, form against form- and soon I also evaluate material against material, wood against burlap for instance... every artist should be permitted to put together out of nothing more than say blotting-paper so long as he knows how to give it form.[5]

Schwitters was equally productive a poet as he was a painter. From about I920 onwards he hunted through the world of language for the linguistic and typographical elements he needed. In his work he broke down the barriers other artists had struggled with, between literary and visual components. Because of his ability to interlock word and image his poems often had a visual shape to them. Underneath his plans and ideas for assemblage,even art, lay a life-long devotion to the most simple act of papier colle.

Marcel Duchamp (I887-I968) worked independently shattering the rigidity of cubism by introducing continuous movement in the bizarre relationships he set up in works such as 'The King and Queen surrounded by swift nudes' and of course, the very famous 'The bride stripped bare by her bachelors, even'. For Duchamp, the mechanical contrivances represented a dead end, not that ready-mades were his last word but from I9I5 to I923 he immersed himself in the fabulous enterprise of this assemblage. 'The bride stripped bare of her bachelors, even', 'The large glass'. The completion of this work was a gradual working out, over many years, by way of many preparatory designs, of a genuine invented object. This piece has many meanings and can be read on

? needs explaining

many levels. It is a supreme example of collage. The very fact that Duchamp never could complete, or that is he uncompleted 'The bride stripped bare by her bachelors, even' suggests that this circle of work could not be categorised in the linear bracket of most two-dimensional work. This piece of work reflects in the changing sketches, studies and mathematical calculations the harmony of separate sections of individual character with the wholeness of the large and broken glass, which sets it free in space by divorcing the image as a whole from a background.

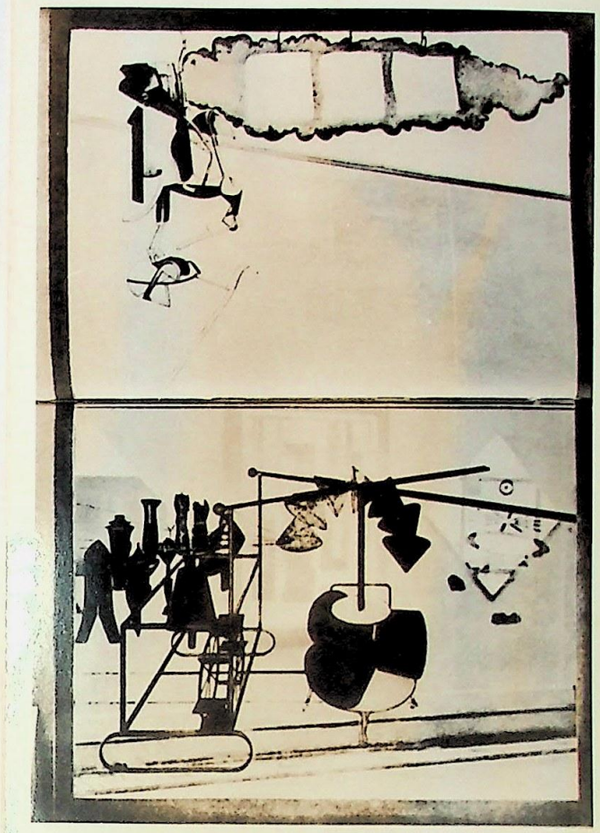

Fig.20. 'The Large Glass- The Bride stripped bare by her bachelors, even' Marcel Duchamp.

With his ready-mades, Duchamp made a leap forwards. His choice of these objects lay not in a judgement of good or bad but was determined by pure chance His manner of titling changed the whole significance of the object. He went on to assemble his 'improved ready-mades! In these pieces he corrected the objects by making small additions and alterations. For example, a collage he made in I9I4 which contained for its basic structure a cheap colour print of a Winter landscape over which he painted tiny dots of red and yellow and called the result 'Parmacy'.

The protest inherent in the work of Duchamp was, in time, supported by Picabia (I879-I953) who like Duchamp was injecting into his work forms which were moving and dynamic and increasingly intense. Picabia supported Duchamps

ideas about the objectivity in the work and the subjectivity involved in the title. Picabia worked for a number of years on a set of mechanical drawings, some of which were printed in Steiglitz's magazine 29I. The fantastic machines in his drawings were transformed into portraits of Steiglitz himself as well as Vauxcelles, Tzara and others. They were simultaneously diffused and held together by their startling texts and titles applied by the artist. Picabia worked also on a set of female machines which gave rise eventually to the volume 'Poems et dessins de la fille nee sans mere.' Close to Duchamp and Picabia was Jean Crotti (I878-I958). In I9I4 he moved from Paris to New York where he came under the influence of these two artists. In I9I5 using horse-hair, a paper head-band, two porcelain eyeballs and some lead sheet and wire he made a collage; an assemblage to portray Duchamp. (Portrait to Measure).

Fig.2I. 'The completed complete score for Marcel Duchamps Band. Right hand page. I945.

The American in the group of artists surrounding Duchamp was Manray (b.I890). This artist deserves a high place among the pioneers of modern art for his talents and passion for invention. His career as an artist was from the beginning steered by experimentation. He aimed to make each piece of work a new, complete andunique entity which would be unlike the work of any other artist and even unlike himself or in the style of Man Ray. In I9II, he assembled his first collages of abstract composition; out of cloth samples

from pattern books, he collaged rectangular patterned wall-hangings. In 1914, he assembled a painting- a small oil painted name and date which read 'Man Ray 1914' in large letters. In this he converted the cubist idea of typographical forms into a dada work consisting only of the artists name and date. It was at this time he made the collage entitled 'Chinese theatre' a kind of still life centered about a Chinese figure dressed in shimmering gold paper. By 1916, he was working with coloured paper. He constructed a picture called 'Rope Dancer' with which he was disatisfied. He noticed on the floor the negatives of the cut out shapes he had used to create the 'Rope Dancer! Getting to work with these scraps he made a new construction of the 'Rope Dancer' which he now called 'Rope Dancer accompanies herself with her shadows'. A title which in real Dada form was as important as the piece of work itself and reveals the

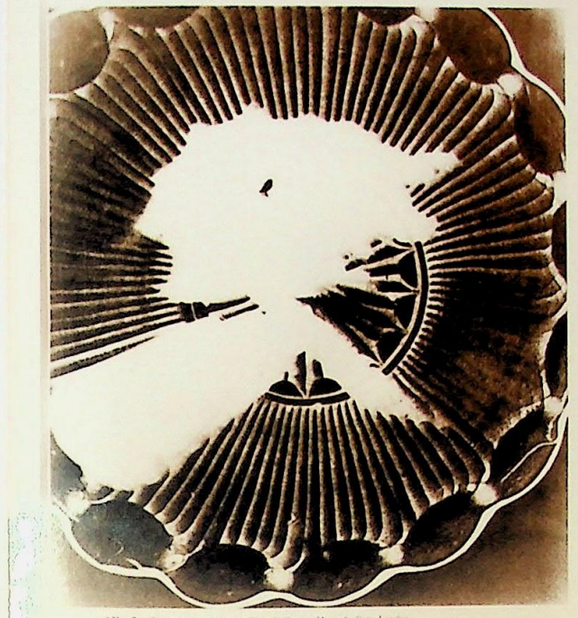

Fig. 23. Rayograph Photo
Man Ray. 1927.

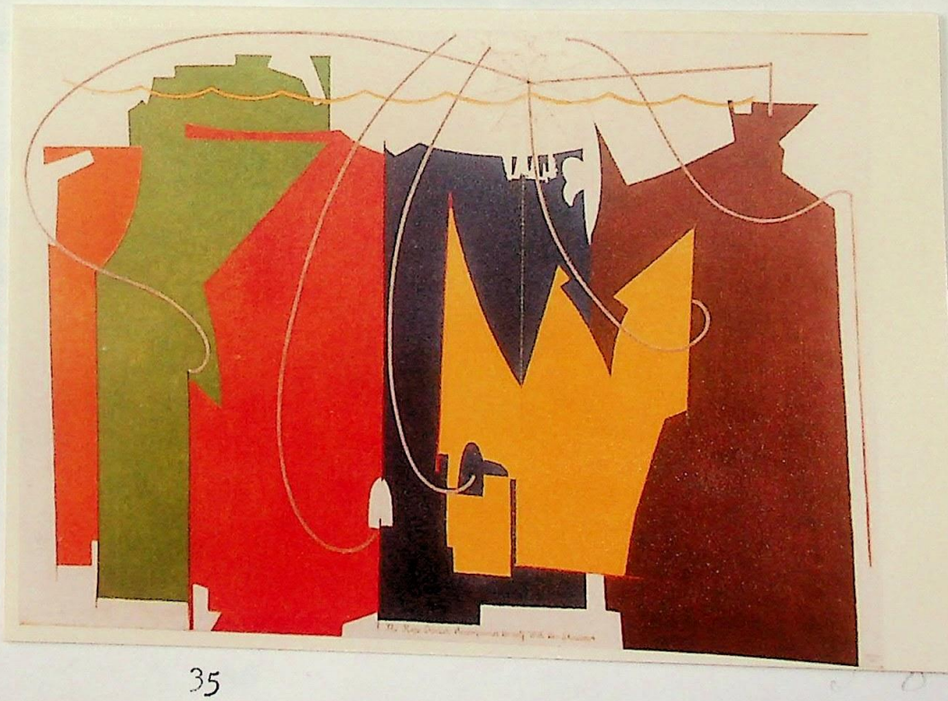

Fig. 22.
Rope Dancer accopanies herself with shadows.
Man Ray. 1916.

What?

new reality in the work.

The some year Man Ray produced a series of interesting collages using luminous coloured shapes which he juxtaposed and linked using line drawings. In some cased the lines consisted of silk threads. In these collages he used hues to give the illusion of transparent layers. The success of these collages seems to be due to Man Rays determination to create work which provided information of a definitive rather than purely attractive and aesthetic nature. The spirit of Dada emanated from the latent humour in the subjects created by Man Ray. These humourous or bizarre qualities are set off by an element of formal, disciplined definition.

?

The fragmented collages of Hans Arp (I877-I966) made yet another contribution to the development of collage in these times of Dada Adventures. Both painter and sculptor, Arp had been in Paris up to the middle of I9I5. Here he made his first collages. These were constructed of black, gold and blue papers, of symmetrical construction and gave a feeling of doorways into an unknown reality. Because of the war, Arp moved to Zurich. Here he continued to make collages using coloured papers, printed cloths, wallpapers, labels and paper lace which he combined in an individual and totally abstract manner. Arp believed in the use of collage because of his own discovery that drawing with paper and a scissors removed the egomania which so easily creeps into the hand and brush work of many paint works. He also made reliefs from

Fig.24.'Geometric collage' Hans Arp. I9I6.

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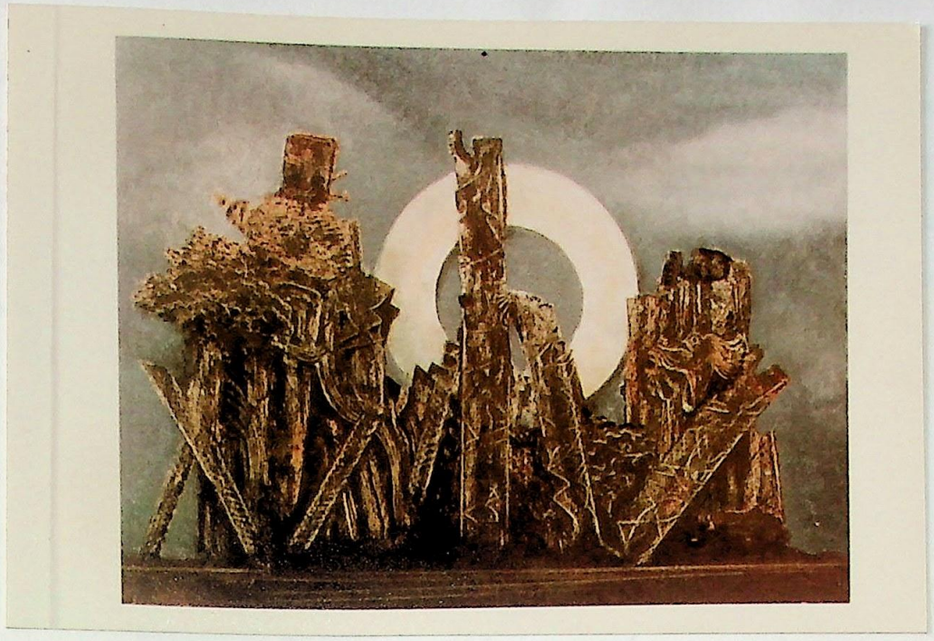


Fig. 25.'The Great forest' Max Ernst. I927.

box-lids and other odds and ends which he nailed together using the natural forms locked in bits of timber.

Marcel Janco whose impressive masks made quite a contribution to the Dadaist scene (these were made of pins, card, paint,wire,horse-hair, etc.) said of Arps collages:

> It was wonderful the way forms organised themselves without his having to do violence to his material.

At the first Dada evening-a collage of events (held in February, I9I6 in Zurich) both Arp and Janco were on the programme as offering explanations for their work. At this event Arp referred to his own work as 'paper pictures.'

When after the war Max Ernst (b.I89I) befriended Johannes Theodor Baargeld and came into contact with some of the Dada Documents a new direction began to make itself visible in his work. In these documents he recognised a situation similar to a state of mind he had discovered in himself. Together with Baargeld he brought out a magazine 'Bulletin D' in I9I9 which reproduced one of his earliest Dadaist works, 'Fruit of a long experience' a painted relief assembled out of old wood, cardboard, wire and fragments of a defective

pull-bell. In I920, Max Ernst, Baargeld and Arp founded founded the Dada group, a year later came the exhibition 'Dada-Vorfruhling' (Dada-Early Spring). Entrance to this exhibtion was through the toilets and lead to a bizarre assembly of Dadaists works. About the experience which opened up his way towards collage Ernst explains:

> One rainy day in I9I9, in a village on the Rhine my gaze was caught obsessively by the pages of an illustrated catalogue relating to anthropological, mineralogical, and palaeontological research. There I found collected the elements of a figuration so remote that its sheer absurdity provoked in me a sudden intensification of my faculties of vision- a hallucinatory succession of contradictory images, double, triple, multiple, piling up with the persistence and rapidity characteristic of erotic memories and visions of half sleep. Those images in turn demanded to be united on new planes, in a new unknown (the plane of contradiction and disagreement).[6]

After this experience Ernst produced a whole series of collages in which he combined many seemingly irreconcilable elements. The collagesinclude images from physics, alchemy, anatomy and natural sciences. Ernst so extended the possibilities of collage that he was declared as the inventor of collage true and proper.[7]

The term collage could be said to cover works in which components of separate intellectual or perceptual categories are combined. Of the fifty-six collages exhibited by Ernst in Glaerie au Sans Pareil in Paris, only twelve contained pasted-

Fig. 26. Snow Flowers.
Max Ernst. I927.

in elements. The remaining forty-four being done by other techniques such as line drawing, gouache, watercolour and print.

The new ideas that were taking shape about this time often surfaced only as a by-product of the notorious dadaist adventures. But these ideas have a real importance in the development of collage by breaking down the barriers between two-dimensional and three-dimensional collage. In the of this a spectrum was created ranging from collage as a two-dimensional additive art medium to a collage life-style--the dynamic patterns of people in a particular space at a given time.

NOTES

I. Raoul Hausmann
Pamphlet against the Weimar conceptions of life. Published in April I9I9.

2. Her goal as she set it down for the catalogue of an exhibition.-
The Hague in I929.

3. Exhibition Catalogue- Kurt Schwitters. Los Angeles:U.C.L.A. Art Galleries (I965) Page 9.

4. Introduction by John Coplans and Walter Hopps for'Kurt Schwitters-
A Portrait from life' by Kate Traumann-Steinitz.
5. Periodical Merz 1923.
6. Max Ernst, Beyond Painting and other writings, by the artist and his friends New York, 1948.
7. 'La peinture au defi' by Louis Aragon, 1930.

CHAPTER SIX

SURREALISM - SELF REALISATION

> Everything leads us to believe that there is a certain state of mind from which life and death, the real and imaginary, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, height and depth are no longer percieved as contradictory. I

The Surrealists did not produce art as explanation. The idea to mobilise the creative powers of the subconscious and leave it to them to evolve the new forms of expression was easier to realise in written form rather than in visual image. This was a struggle for many artists during the surrealist era. Andre Breton conducted spiritualist seances in an attempt to induce a trance or hypnotic state whereby pictures, drawings,images and sometimes whole pictures would be created.

Andre Masson (b.I896) attempted during I924-25 to realise in drawings an equivalent for automatic writing. He set down on paper a whirl of marks. Within these dramatic lines, forms of birds , animals, trees, heads etc. would automatically appear. Masson associated these with the four elements. In I927, he began to stick coloured feathers into these drawings to give them a quality of quivering motion, and a feeling of flight. For his collages Masson used only natural objects believing that only these could inject the drawing with the dynamism of live radiation.

Fig.27. Automatic Drawing. Masson I924.

He used collage because he found that employed foreign materials could evoke directly an emotion by virtue of the mood emanating independently from each object.

> It is no longer the hand that traces the forming of objects, but the hand, which enamoured of its own movement, and that alone, delineates the involuntary figures in which as experience shows,[2] these forms are destined to be embodied.

Joan Miro (I896) was quite concerned with collage and montage because of the role they play in the relationship between form and content and abstraction and configuration. Miro maintained and energetic independence from all dominant trends. He positioned himself in the perimeter of many circles. At the end of I9I9 Miro settled into a studio in Rue Blomet in Paris. Here a strong friendship grew between himself and Masson his neighbour. Through Masson, Miro became acquainted with many new surrealist ideologies. He began to work with the idea of 'the real' and the Unreal and soon found a need to use collage. In I929, he produced a stream of collages which were underlined by relationships between line, space and plane.

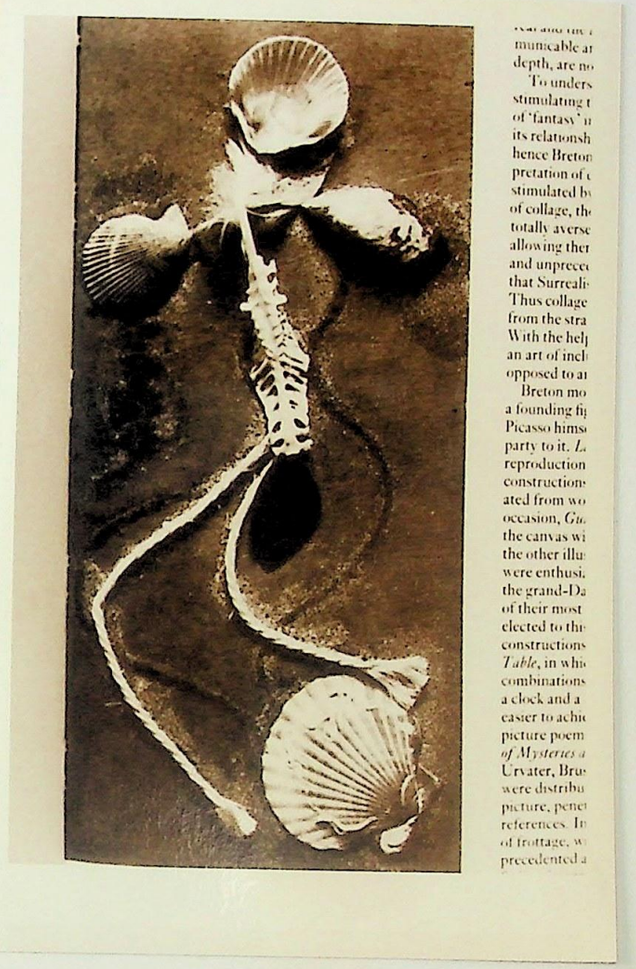


Fig.28. Ludian Battle Imp. Shells, Bone and Rope. Masson.I937.

> These stupendous collages of I929 were a criticism of painting itself (which has been decaying since the stone age says Miro). He declared war in an out burst of anti-painting. It was easy to smash the vehicle of other painters, but Miro went further. He suppressed line and colour and created a new medium, which represented a new concept in painting, a new entry, a challenge, a negation. He finally arrived at a sense of promordial space. 3

In the final work in this series of collages he used a hat pin and a small feather to convey the straight backed posture and soaring agility of a dancer he saw. He succeeded in this collage in blending formal rigour and humour and in attaining a symbolic and objective visual harmony. In all these collages dated 'Summer I929' pasted paper form the structure of compositions originating from the distribution of colour in space. In I933, Miro worked out a whole new series of ideas through collage. He began by using cut-up illustrations and images which he gathered each day. He laid these out as a source of departure. From these collages emerged eighteen large canvases bearing their own unique worlds of fantastic forms. By I934, Miro had returned again to collage overlaying new materials in new ways.

A new excitement was brought to the surrealist movement by Salvador Dali (b.I904) He used his excellent skill in paint to combine extraordinary and incongruous images. From an ongoing interest in the simulation of light and shade Dali hit upon the idea of actually making lights and shades. This he did by sticking piles of stones, painted in bright colours onto a canvas. In I928, Dali collaborated with Luis Bunuel on a film which was to portray a whole collage of events. It was based on the idea of taking any daily newspaper and rendering in film every last item contained within it. The Surrealists promptly laid claim to this film 'Un chien Andalou' as a sort of communal spiritual centre-part.

Dali spent the Summer of I929 experimenting to find a way of working which would give way to the subconscious ability to dictate automatic conceptions. He spent entire days intfront of a blank canvas waiting for inner visions to take on a visual conception. At times these came clearly into focus before him, at other times he would wait for hours with nothing happening. The work was carried out in the:

> unconscious, between sleep and waking. In a state of hypnogological submissiveness, that the conscious mind stood by like an empty receptacle waiting to be filled, the hand, however expert, serving only to record the upsurging vision, 5

The purpose of this was to find a way of expressing various perpectual realities. Dali concerned himself mostly with painting. His paintings held a new angle on collage, the nature of which was more abstract than physical and is found in the incongruity of relationships between the images he assembled with his paint brush. He himself described his paintings as handmade photography.

Towards the end of the 1920's, the various surrealists' experiments awakened a new interest in collage, and in 1930 there wa s a massive exhibition of work in this medium. This was held in Goemans Galerie in Paris and included works by Picasso, Juan Gris, Arp, Max Ernst, Braque, Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia, Miro, Tanguy, Dali, Magritte and others. For the illustrated catalogue Luis Aragon wrote anessay entitled 'A Challenge to Painting' (La Peinture au defi). It was the first basic written work on collage and its historical development. Tzara, too, who had been following at first hand, the development of this medium, published a document on collage in which he wrote:

> A shape cut out of newspapers and incorporated into a drawing or a painting is a veritable embodiment of that which is universally understanable, a piece of reality which enters into a relationship with every other reality that the spirit has created. The diversity of materials, which arouse tactile sensations, gives the picture a new depth.

It was for its qualities of versitality and directness that Magritte (1898-1967) used collage. He believed that everything in existence is equivocal, subject to change without notice. Collage, he found, could give a physical embodiment to things of ephereral nature.

Valentine Hugo (1887-1967) was the only womwn officially recognised as a member of the Paris group of surrealists. She undertook all sorts of experiments in various materials. Many of her collages arose from her visits to the theatre, an art form for which she had a passion. She was wildly enthusiastic about song and dance, in particular Diaghilev's

Ballets Russes. During these performances she made sketches which she later translated into encaustic paintings on wood. She subsequently moved into the area of collage, employing photographs, lace straw, stones and cutout stripes. In surrealist production through the 1930's material assemblages and collages ran parallel courses. Now and again it was the sculptural assemblages that met with favour, insofar as the combination of elements was direct, whereas in collage, great amalgamation was needed and therefore combinations were more obscured because individual components would have to be transformed.

It is difficult to segregate artistic trends and movements in England between the two world wars because of European influences on various levels. The first modern collages of English origin seem to be those of Edward Burra (born 1905). Towards the end of the 1920's Burra's style was shifting towards a synthesis of spatial definition and surrealist content. His inclination to cut and paste probably came from his earliest influences. His subject matter centred around scenes of the underworld and night life. Burra interpolated his collage into the mass of painted figurative details in his work. He put together strangely assorted animal and abstract images to form unearthly creatures. Recently he is using picture postcards, fashion plates and cutout illustrations of all kinds.

68 Edward Burra *Composition* 1929, collage. Courtesy of Lefevre Gallery, London

as if out of some Surreal theatre.

The most famous and faithful of native American

Fig.29 'Composition'. Edward Burra. 1929.

In 1933 collage began to appear in the work of Ben Nicholson (born 1894)

not a clear line of thought as explained

It would seem that this change may be due to his increasing tendency towards abstraction. In a picture he painted while on a visit to France, he found himself attempting to create pictoral space by the stratification of line. About this time came the change towards collage, a medium which has been indispensible to Nicholson ever since. The discovery came about one day when something he saw made him draw new connections between images, words and objects. He saw some word written in glowing red letters on a glass window. As the wordswere written in French, a language he did not understand, the letters on the glass became mysterious glowing red shapes, evocative of childhood sensations.

> This name was printed in very lovely red lettering
> on the glass window - giving one plane -
> while through this window were reflections of what
> was behind me as I looked in - giving a second
> plane -
> while through the window objects on a table were
> performing a kind of ballet and forming the eye
> or life-point of the painting - giving a third
> plane - .
> These three planes, and all their subsidiary planes
> were interchangeable, so that you could not tell
> what was real and what was unreal, what was re-
> flected and what was unreflected and this created,
> as I see now, some kind of space or an imaginative
> world in which one could live.

In December 1933 Nicholson made a series of white reliefs of rectangles and circles. Forms were built up or stripped down to create a multi-level world of light and shade.

> Ben Nicholson has long known how to coax small
> areas of white to an astonishing pitch, and it
> is one of the qualities of these (modern) works
> with his reliefs... there are often places where
> a small geometric shape makes its appearence as
> if a segment or a chip of hardboard had unexpect-
> edly flown off while he was encising or carving
> and the resulting area being incorporated into
> the design.

John Piper (born 1903) has become renowned for his collage work. His practice of replacing objects with appropriate materials led to the series of collage work of coastal spaces in which the collaged elements evoke a feeling of some hidden space or secret reality. He says himself

about these pictures:

> Pure abstract is undernourished. It should at least be alloed to feed on a bare beach with boxes and broken bottles, washed-up objects, crates, tins, water-logged sandshoes, banana-skins, starfish, cuttlefish, dead seagulls, sides of boxes with "this side up" on them and fragments of sea-chewed linoleum with washed out patterns.

After this series Piper continued to make collages which became increasingly abstract in their nature. He began to interpolate his mechanical constrauctions with nautical objects. From 1940 on collage appeared only occasionally in Piper's work, but he turned to its use again in 1961. More recently he has developed his own individual graphic collage procedure, combining pieces of lithographs in colour and in black and white and then printing directly over them so that lines, contours and textures intermesh together.

Fig. 30. 'Hope Inn' John Piper. 1933.

The surrealist rage began to spread about London after a big international exhibition in June 1936 at the New Burlington Galleries which had sixty eight artists representing fourteen countries. The English committee was headed by Roland Penrose and the committeee included Herbert Read, Paul Nash and Henry Moore. The work of Paul Nash was given much notice at this and other exhibitions. He discovered that there were things in nature which

awakened his imagination in a certain way that objects become liberated from their meaning, use and context. Eileen Agar (born 1901) contributed many flights of fancy to the art work produced at this time. Her involvement in surrealist trends caused her to make a series of very imaginative collages using many brightly coloured objects. As she developed,her work became more harmonious, but during the war, her work seems to decrease in its colourful nature and become harder in character.

By 1942 Ernst, Braque, Duchamp. Tanguy and Masson were all in New York were the surrealist magazine V.V.V. was founded.

Laurence Vail (1891-1968) associated with the Dadaists from the start. He made some bizarre collages and also a large three-panelled wall screen, which he assembled in 1940-41, is comparable to that of Hans C. Andersen's famous four-leaf screen. In the side panels of Vail's Screen appear an explosion of grotesque forms of human existance, all whirling and interlocking. Vail subsequently produced many collages to cover bottles with exoctic landscapes and suchlike.

Fig. 31. 'Portion of Scrap Screen' Laurence Vail.

Another contributor to American surrealism was Joseph Cornell (born 1903). His relationship with the French surrealists was tenuous and he continued to work alone.

At the 'Fantastic Art Dada Surrealism Exhibition' in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Cornell exhibited an assemblage called 'Soap Bubble Set', a strange still-life incorporating a coloured egg in a wineglass, a doll's head on a pedestal, a pipe and a strip of shapes and wooden cylinders pasted over with old engravings.

Surrealist art was the counter-revolution to the aesthetic abstractions of the cubist trend. It fulfilled a human need to throw caution to the wind and express some harsh realities. It was difficult to find ways of doing this and it is evident that the mdeium of collage can take credit for its part in this struggle.

NOTES

1. Andre Breton, Second Manifesto of Surrealism, Paris 1929 .
2. William Rubin and Carolyn Lancher, Andre Masson.
3. Mario Bucci, Miro, p. 39.
4. Salvadore Dali, Secret Life New York, Abrams.
5. G. Picas, Surrealism 1919-1939, The chapter entitled 'Object and Image: Dali from conquest to conquest'.
6. Ben Nicholson, 'Notes on Abstract Art' Horizon October 1941.
7. Ben Nicholson, 'Recent Paintings on Paper' Waddington and Tooth Galleries Ltd., 2,34 Cork Street London WLx 1PA
8. John Piper, 'Abstraction of the beach' XX ieme siecle, No. 3, 1938.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BAUHAUS: CONSTRUCTIVIST MOVEMENT

The new dynamism generated by mass production did not go unfelt by artists of the day. A fascination developed among many of them for the logic of the machine and the science of engineering.

Robert Michel (b.I896) was wounded in an air crash in I9I6. The india-ink drawings he began to make subsequently reflected something of his experience. In order to facilitate his powers of expression, Michel began to collage real references into his work. He was trying to translate his obsession with the real functioning motor into a field of dynamic abstract rhythms. For this he used numerals, fragmented words, torn up brocheurs and prospectuses mingled with blue-prints of airplane construction and even more concrete objects such as small m etal wheels and a souvenir speedometer. Sometimes he would hang his watch on a drawing in ordet to set the inherent mechanism in motion and reinforce its significance, if only for himself.

For Ella Bergman-Michel (b.I896) her search for new abstract forms was synonymous with her inclination to use materials. A collage she did in November, I9I8 'People with heads are rare' is packed with ironic allusions to current events and time/space references, through her use of pasted words and cut up maps and calendars. The collaged components express her attitudes in a tightly composed construction. In I920, the Michels left Weimar to settle in the mountains near Frankfurt. The seat of government at this time was moved to Berlin. Artistic activity came under the wing of the Bauhaus founded by Walter Gropius. Robert Michels work saw a change and he embarked on anew set of collages. In order to make his own materials, in a fashion, he began to photo-copy blue-prints and architectural drawings.

He began drawing on extremely thin paper which he then pasted , drawing side down onto tinted hard grounds. It was in this way he created a transparency in his work. Along with this he used levers, pistons and other objects and also a whole set of lock and key drawings with titles referring to Yale.

Ella Bergman-Michels work also underwent a change at this time. Her collages became more objective and grew out of a more scientifically concieved composition. She composed some rigourous collages of horizontal/vertical nature in which she created a fine balance between geometric and biological shapes.

Before the War Johannes Molzahn (I892-I965) also studied at Weimar School of Fine Art. He was concerned with making work which could embody his perceptions of the cosmic forces. On account of this, themes of spirals, loops and ribbon forms scaffolded his constructions. By I920, Molzahn was using collage. He began to incise lines into his painted forms,a print on cloth or paper and then stick down these printed negative lines into the work.

Many cosmic references in his paintings and collages came from cut up zodiac published material, and old almanacs.

For Molzahn collage offered an apt formal means of concretising and differentiating visual ideas and formed a vital accessory role in his work.

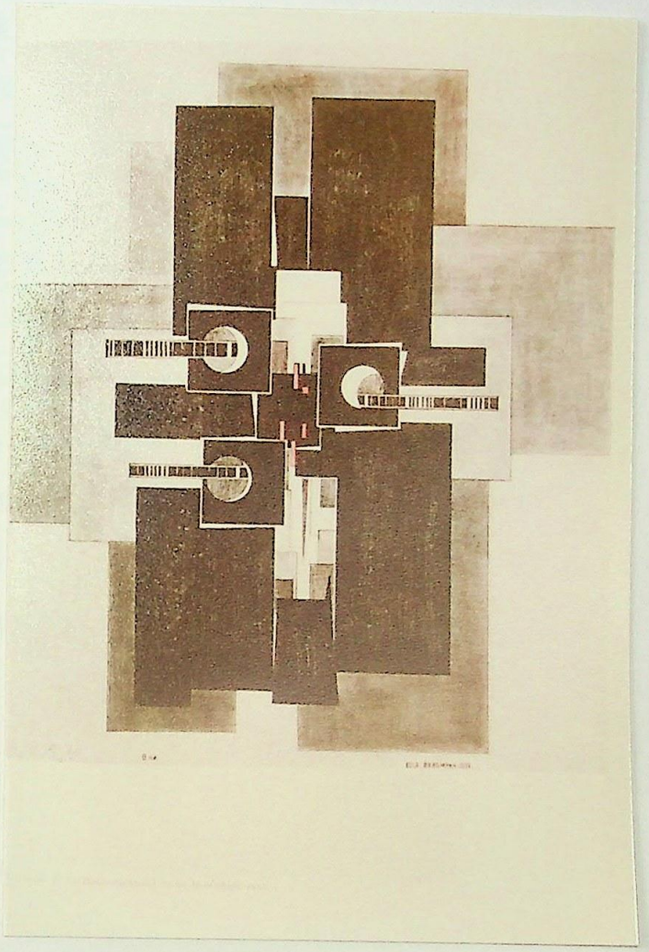


Fig.32.'Of Moons Light'
Ella Bergman-Michel.

The Dresden artist Edmund Kesting (b.I892) is a fine example of someone who used

collage to express a constructivist attitude. His work is the result of many personal experiments in collage and montage. He very much wanted to break through restriction and potential illusions of the picture plane. For this reason he substituted many obliquely disposed components for the conventionally uniform canvas panel. In the process of stretching his canvas he sometimes left part of the stretcher exposed, thereby creating actual recession on the surface plane, this effect he intensified by the use of light and shad in the tonal modulations. In other pieces he would use wood, stretched wire and wire netting. These he called'pictures with interlaced canvas.' Onto these changeable surfaces he mounted various rings, discs and rods which oscillated independently like pendulums. These constructions added yet another dimension to the picture planes by forming linear projections out from and into the depth of field of his constructions.

Besides these canvas constructions Kesting also produced paper collages which he called cut graphics.

During the inflationary years when paper money ceased to be worth much, Kesting made artistic us of thousand, million and billion mark notes which he allowed poke out clearly from his melee of paper folds. During the I920's Kesting began working with photograms and transparencies of fibrous webbing found in natural forms.

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (I895-I946) began to draw and paint as a patient in Military Hospital in I9I6. In I920 Moholy-Nagy moved from Odessa to Berlin where his work began to show concerns for the translation of landscape formations into abstract colour planes. In these work, in true constructivist style appeared many numerals and letters along with a whole variety of stuck down elements. In his book 'von material zu Architecture' he explains that his collages stemmed from his interest in the relationships between depth and height. I

His organisation of materials is so clear that nothing of their objective practical aspect is lost. By I922, Moholy-Nagy was turning towards pure abstract construction. His work of that year is based on elementary geometric forms in rigorously vertical and horizontal positions. With these forms he intersected coloured strips to create a relief of lateral balance. During his time in Berlin Moholy-Nagy began also to work with photograms in response to a question in his mind about how an artist could make use of printed matter. He also began to make use of transparent materials such as netting, plastic film, incised glass plating and so on. With these materials he could create non objective, non-rational composition of light and shade.

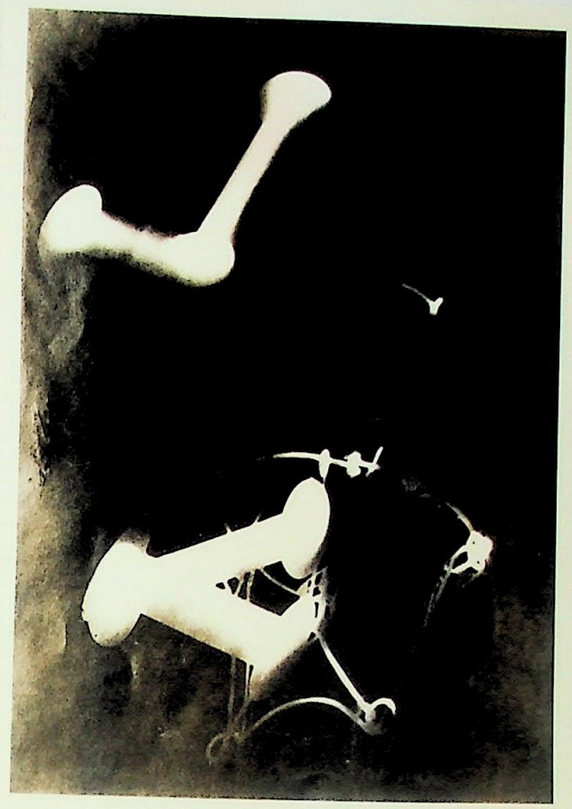


Fig.33. Untitled. Moholy-Nagy. I92I.

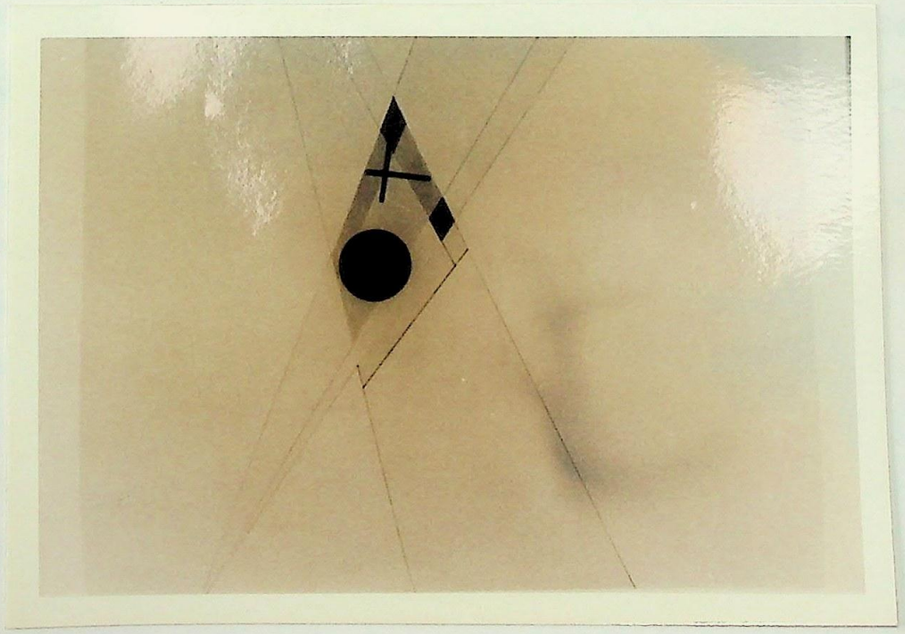


Fig. 34. Moholy-Nagy.

The Bauhaus principle was based on the idea that art education must be founded in learning through the discovery of nature and the use of materials. Art nedded to be thought of architecturally. Withe the institutionalising of this idea in practice a whole body of collage work permeated throughout central Europe.

Shortly after founding the Bauhaus in I9I9, Walter Gropius invited Johannes Itten to come to Weimar where he assigned him the direction of the first basic course in the school; a programme oriented mainly in familiarising the students with materials in a way that would help them arrive at an understanding of their own particualr abilities and interests.

Johannes Itten (I888-I967) accepted this position and soon a whole array of materials of opposing natures were being used in collages and assemblages for the purposed of learning and exploration by Hans Hoffman (b.I899) ,Erich Diekmann, Nicholas Vassilief and others. When Itten left the Bauhaus in I923, he was replaced by Joseph Albers (b.I888) and joined Moholy-Nagy who deepened these artistic investigations by the introduction of specific excersised of a more practical nature. Albers was appointed Master after the Bauhaus moved to Dessau. In his own work, he was particularly interested in stained glass. In I92I he made two reliefs, one from fragments of coloured glass and the other from regular glass mosaic squares covered by different types of wire grating. This interest in materials was shared by Oscar Schlemmer who embarked on compositions incorporating materials as incongruous as glass and metal and wood and paper.

Together in the Bauhaus, Schlemmer and Albers worked and organised works which evolved into a whole world of collage-costume, dance,posters,stage construction and decoration. Over and beyond its usefulness in teaching, collage was the favourite medium at the Bauhaus for all sorts of practical tasks such as advertising, invitations and cards to commemorate special events.

Willie Baumeister (I889-I955) appears to have experimented in collage as early as I9II when he corresponded with Schlemmer by means of collage letters, During the years after the war, Baumeister and Schlemmer shared a common interest in taking painting from the boundaries of the frame and adapting it to large wall surfaces and also an interest in the translation or reduction of the human figure to pure abstract formulae.

Fig.35. 'Tennis Player' Baumeister. I9I5.

In I922, Baumeister devoted himself to 'Machine Pictures' initially abstract compositions which incorporated more and more figurative images with the passing of time. By I927 his work became more amd more concerned with human movement. He began to study the motions involved in sporting games and he endeavoured to capture in his work fleeting movements and gestures and to harmaonise with these an element of planal abstract balance. For these pruposes he found collage invaluable, juxtaposing and contrasting photographs on the picture surface he managed to introduce a concept of time into a static representation.

In an essay 'Rhythms and Zeitkopper' (Rhythms as embodiment of time) written in the Winter of I943, Baumeister discusses the use of collage and photo-montage in modern art - painting to the two-fold function of pasted in components-

optical and psychological.

> It begins with a piece of cut-out photograph (head, body or something else). Such a fragment detatched from its original background is laid, isolated on a piece of paper. For all that, practically speaking, it remains on the surface, there occurs, never the less and impressively a phenomenon involving a body in space. To the highest measure, it is distinguished from all the visual natural aspects and from all the visual naturalistic impressions based on perspective.

Friedrich Vordemberge-Guildewart (I899-I962) was one found his own constructivist language. His visual language arose out of familiarity with materials. In Hanover in I9I9 Gildewart was working on collages and relief drawings using architectural plans,newspaper and coloured rectangles. He used old-fashinned frames acquired during his time spent as a cabinet maker. One picture actually incorporates, inside it, a whole frame. Gildewart also had a very particular way of using photographs. By pasting the photographs into the picture either upside down or at an angle he drained awat their realistic aspects and converted them into non-representational pictorial components inf full harmony with his repetory of abstract forms. Unlike many other artists Gildewart did not use collage in an instrumental fashion but rather as a complete means of expression. The seriousness with which he viewed his work in collage is evident from his often quoted motto 'Collage is more powerful than the sum of fantasy

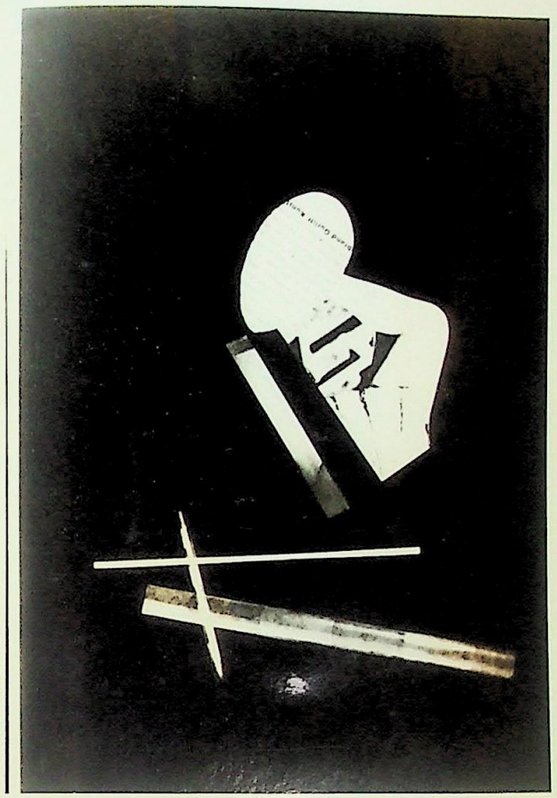


Fig.36.'Composition 38A'
Gildewart I927.

plus bravura in the manipulation of the brush'

The Hungarian artist Laydes Vajda (I908-I94I) had taken part in the constructivist movement in Budapest. While living in Paris from I930-34 he produced a seried of photo-montages of pokitical character. After returning to Budapest he became concerned with the study of folk art and icon painting. Here he did some watercoloured, ink drawn collages containing Hebrew letters and fragments of correspondence.

By the mid-I930's techniques of collage and montage were abroad in the world at large. By now accepted as an indispensible means of visual communication no longer considered revolutionary or outrageous.

MOTES

I. Munich I929, Translated as: The New Vision: from Material to Architecture. New York. I938.

56

1-8

CHAPTER EIGHT

RECENT TRENDS- PERSONAL EXPRESSION

The move towards abstraction which was growing ever more popular brought with it a new move in the area of collaged assemblages.

In America as in England this move was sparked off by those artists who had connections with Paris - the artistic hub. Among the Albert E. Gallatin (I882-I952), Charles G.Shaw (b.I892), Charles Biedemann (b.I906) and Suzy Frelinghujsen and others. Although at first American approaches to abstract art-collage followed European prototypes and lead to no new typically American solutions. Ad Rheinhardt (I9I3-'67) was one who paved his own way. He covered his pictorial fields with dense structures only comprehensible when viewed as a whole.

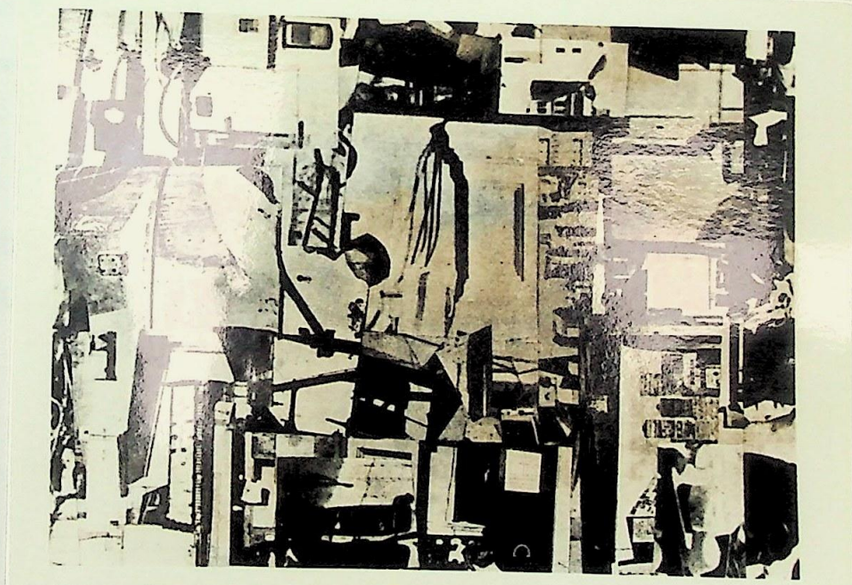


Fig. 37. Ad Rheinhardt.'Newsprint'

The multiplicity of levels became even more dazzling as Rheinhardt added his coloured papers and cut up photographs. He made one collage entitled 'News-

print' which consists entirely of newspaper. This piece is a fine example of his multi-level way of working; each image holds its own story while at the same time forming a part of his paper metropolis which can be seen also as an almost complete abstraction of light and shade- a world of black and white tones.

Hans Richter who settled in New York in I940 began a series of paintings and collages in which he was aiming to introduce movement and time sequence into a static plane. In I943 he started a large scroll picture which he later entitled 'Stalingrad, victory in the last' The composition is vigourous and a play between order and spontanaeity. He collaged another scroll 8 foot high 'Liberation of Paris' using newspaper to inject an air of reality into the abstractinn of his work.

In I942, Peggy Guggenheim opened up her gallery'Art of this Century' where she invited William Baziotes, Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell to take part in her international exhibition of collage. At the time she made this offer none of these three artists had worked in this medium.
Pollock, by nature more inclined towards paint than collage responded by taking some papers and tearing madly, sticking the pieces into his painted masses along with buttons, keys and other objects. Baziotes composed 'The Drugged Balloonist' incorporating cloth, leaves, butterfly wings. For him too, collage was to remain a medium for occasional usage.

Robert Motherwell took to collage with a natural flair and soon adopted this way of working quite consistently. He found collage a positive means of solving compositional problems. During the years 1943 and 1944 Motherwell embarked on a whole series of collages, his work displaying a whole field of evocative contrasts and a real understanding of materials.

> The sensation of **physically operating on the world** is very strong in the medium of Papier collee or collage, in which various kinds of papers onto the canvas. One cuts and chooses and shifts and pastes and sometimes

tears off and begins again. In any case shaping and arranging such a relational structure obliterates the need and often the awareness of representation. Without reference to likeness it posesses feeling because all decisions in regard to it are made on the grounds of feeling.

Charmion Von Wiegand (b.1900) arrived at a non-representational style by 1941. By 1946 she was beginning to use collage. In these collages she creates a systematic organisation which becomes almost a relaxed celebration of materials and colours. Recently she has immersed herself in oriental philosophy for which she has always had an interest. Her involvement in this seems to have become for her a source of harmony which she tries to express in her art work. A concrete step in this direction is her introduction of Chinese characters into her collages. Sometimes they are cut out and pasted, sometimes painted, sometimes varied or decorated.

13 Il cigno di Mallarmé, 1944-47

Fig. 38. Robert Motherwell. Il cignio di Mallarme. (1944-47)

Henri Matisse (1869-1954) had nothing to do with collage until 1931 when he received an offer from the American collector Albert C. Barnes to decorate a room in his private museum in Pennsylvania. To facilitate his task-solving, Matisse began to cut black, light blue and pink shapes that could be moved about and interchanged at will. The result of this in 1931-32, was a series of collages concerned with colour, surface and plane relationships. He went on to design many collage covers for the magazine "La Verve". As time passed Matisse relied more and more on collage techniques as he could not exercise enough control over pencils and brushes.

Often what he collaged held a tremendous gaiety within a minimum amount of pictorial elements. This work he called drawing with a scissors.

The end of World War Two brought a new attitude towards abstraction and subsequentially collage. Abstraction was considered less objectively, artists seemed more inclined to use the abstract idiom as a means of expression of subjective moods and experiences with such preoccupations as difinitive formula.The concern for indeterminate textures grew to shelter the artists' anonymity thus clearing the way for the use of collage as a manifold means of decoration. In this move towards lyrical abstraction Paris played an important role with artists such as Jeanne Coppel (b.1911) and Joe Dowling (b. 1925) exhibiting in Galerie Allendy in 1950.

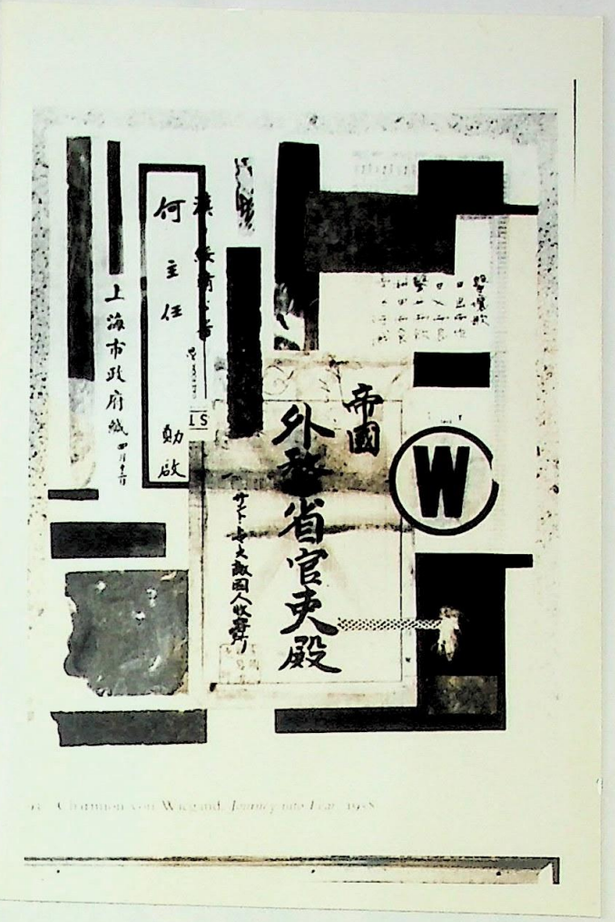
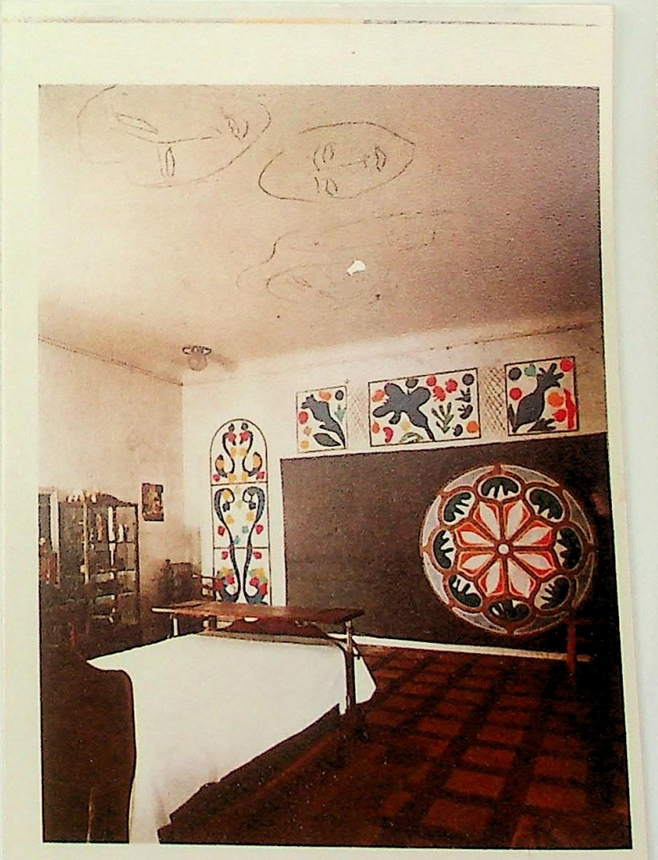


Fig. 39. Charmian Von Wiegand. (1958) Journey into fear.



Matisse's bedroom in his apartment in Nice

Fig. 40. Matisse's bedroom in Nice.

The Italian artist Alberto Burri (b. 1915) began to paint while he was a prisoner of war medical officer in Texas. He began his change to collage about 1950 letting his thick masses of paint break up and crumble in the canvas. Then he began adding scraps of paint-soaked rags. Soon he began sewing materials together with large crude stitches and attaching pieces of sacking. In the seams and pieces between he used red paint gushing out like bloody scars. Sometimes he undercoated his work with gold or black giving his work an odd ceremonial air.

Fig. 41. Matisse. Section of mural.

In 1949 a Danish artist resident in Paris, Robert Jacobson (b. 1912) began to make dolls from household refuse to portray his friends. The demand that artistic information should be replaced by mere information and thereby reflect total unselective reality is best fulfilled by Daniel Spaerri (b. 1930). He began to use his collages as a means

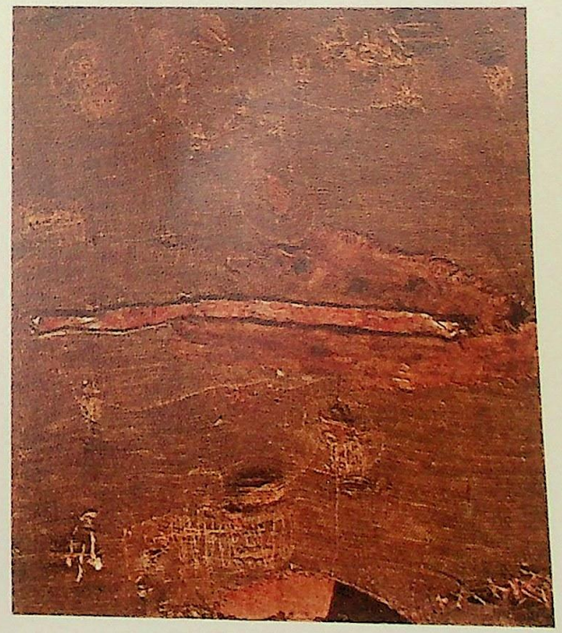


Fig. 42. Alberto Burri .

of recording banal daily events, attaching plates of left-over breakfast, full ashtrays and the like to a surface. In this way collage becomes a purely technical problem and a means of perpetuating situations brought about by chance.

In the field of modern collage Robert Rauschenberg (b. 1925) is one of the biggest innovaters. His aim being rather to bridge the gap between art and reality than the creation of an aesthetic work- thus finding any object worthy of being perpetuated. He deals with visual situations involving multi- plicity.

Fig. 43. Robert Rauschenberg.

Autobiography.

> I had to make a surface which invited constant change of focus and an examination of detail. Listening happens in time - looking also has to happen in time.[2]

Pop art has also made an addition to collage materials. Some of the most unusual ideas in collage in recent years have come from the Italian artist Enrico Baj. His work arises out of a protest against abstract art which he feels has petrified with time. This approach has led Baj to a style of figurative work which is so basic it is near tobeing naive in appearance, bringing together some of the most heterogeneous materials. In 1959 he studded heads and busts with bits of broken mirror and coloured glass. It is in fact the realist elements included in his work that charge it with unrealistic qualities.

As a reaction to the pop art influences on collage there is now a new romantic trend in the objects chosen and their incorporation into collages. This reawakened urge can be seen especially in Paris where artists are beginning to search for special or significant objects. Odd trinkets and bizarre bibelots are beginning to appear in their collages. Banal objects have finally been well and truly accepted into the art world. There is now a return of a natural inclination that suggests future collage work which will express the imagination, invention and uniqueness of the artist.

NOTES

1. '<u>Robert Motherwell</u>' by Frank O'Hara.
   'Beyond the Aesthetic' April 1946.

2. '<u>Robert Rauschenberg</u>' by Gene R. Swanson.
   'Rauschenberg paints a picture'. Art News. Number 2. April 1963.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the introduction, the world is everchanging and mysterious. When an artist creates a piece of work he is not merely presenting a visual statement, he is also posing a question. The problem is to unravel the inherent dualism in the visual structure. The different movements in the history of collage show what an indispensible role this medium has played in this area.

Many of the barriers have now been broken down and the modern artist is free to use any material form necessary for his individual expression. He id free to work with any subbject matter he chooses... philosophy, astrology, photography... without the bonds of imposed aesthetic formalism. The personal choice of the artist can now be accepted as legitimate and he is now free to express in his own way, his own personal collage of reality.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

One of the revolutionary changes which have taken place this century has been the mass-production of art objects. This has come about through new technological developments in the fields of printing and reproduction. The availability of new materials such as perspex, polystyrene and plastics have also contributed to this development. The result of this has been that precious objects of art, hitherto available only to a few, have now come to the notice of everybody, thus making a work of art a commonplace object. Artists have become sensitive to this change and have responded to it by working with commonplace objects, thus imbueing them with artistic significance.

Accompanying this change, artists began to turn away from object making

and veered towards the art of performance and events, using their bodies, music, time and space. This poses the question whether these media can become art material in their own right, to be used in conjunction with already established materials and so open the way for a more expansive type of collage.

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