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Picasso: (in)human face

> The inhuman in human beings: that is what the face is from the start.[1]

In the history of the visual arts there are few projects interrogating the face to rival Picasso's. One context for this enterprise is, perhaps, its dialogue with the ubiquitous phenomenon of photographic portraiture, and another is the growing discourse in Picasso's lifetime of the prehistoric, ontologically grounding, origins of art. The largest collection of pictures showing faces made by a single artist only occurs, in other words, when art's role in portraiture seems definitively to have been consigned to the past, and when the project of the artistic representation of the human was subject to renewed anthropological speculation. Alongside, and as if in answer to, the advent of a photographic pantheon of errant human appearances, prehistoric art seemed to make visible the origin and the destiny of 'the human' as a question of the human face.

This essay is in part an inevitably highly selective survey of Picasso's representations of the face (it does not have the space, for example, to discuss Picasso's first forays in the deformation of the face during 1907, when he worked on *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, the ambitious and discomfiting work now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and nor does it attend to important representations of faces in sculpture). Instead, with the help of an essay on vernacular portrait photography by Georges Bataille published in 1930, it seeks to set Picasso representations to work as a questioning not only of the face, but also of the category of *the human*. Bataille is recruited again later, when the appearance of prehistory is brought to bear on the Picasso's imagery of the human face. The claim is that there is a relationship between Picasso's works and a crisis in the notion of a continuous human history.[2]

'The Face' in Picasso?

> Men do not forgive us for tackling the human face.[3]

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[1] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Athlone Press 1988) 189. I should like to thank Chris Townsend for the invitation and for his patience and Jeff Byrne of the Department of Philosophy at The University of Essex for the chance to present my work to a very helpful audience of PhD students. I owe thanks, as ever, to Dana MacFarlane for her comments on the text.

[2] One writer in an exhibition catalogue of 1964 links 'Picasso's unique achievement' to the inaugural role that modern figurative art seemed to have in the questioning of and quest for the human. 'It may be… that the return to the human figure is not only a question of method: it could be a reflection of the human quest - man again in search of man.' K.J Geirlandt, 'Figuration and Disfiguration', *The Human Figure Since Picasso*, exh.cat., Gent: Stadsbestuur van gent, museum voor schone kuntsen, 10 July -4 October 1946, XLVII.

[3] Picasso c.1951 recorded in Genevieve Laporte, *Un amour secret de Picasso* (Monaco: Editions du Rocher 1989) 77.

It is important, first, to note that talking about Picasso's representations of the face is by no means a straightforward task. Trivially, in writing on the visual arts the conventional designation of 'head' or 'bust' is applied to many representations that we might want to look at as 'faces' (*Head of a Woman*, *Bust of a Man*, and so on). Perhaps more importantly, when dealing with Picasso, faces are of course also central to portraiture, where the face is an identity, a personality fashioned as a public image. So thinking of some of Picasso's works of art as representations *of the face* is always a constructive act in relation to the assumptions embedded in the language of art history, one that raises the question as to when, and under what circumstances, a head, or a bust, or indeed a portrait, becomes for us 'a face'.[4] To turn the question around, we could also ask in what way a face manages to be a face without being tied to the mien of a particular historical individual? Or (and this is an important question since it throws into relief Picasso's particular achievement), without being identified with some notional image of a social group or 'type'? Many faces represented in the history of European art, faces that are not intended as portraits of individuals in the history of art, reproduce just such 'genre' ideologies (the same can be said of much of the photographic archive). Picasso's faces, for all kinds of interesting reasons, do not.

If thinking of a generalised face in Picasso seems to pull us away from the imperatives of portraiture (while raising the interesting question as to what his non-portraits represent), in recent years the traffic has sometimes been in the other direction: pictures that were once thought of generically as representations of (mere) faces have been re-inscribed as portraits, the consequence of an ever more effective sleuthing out of Picasso's life history. An epoch-making event in this process was the 1996 exhibition *Picasso and Portraiture*, held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.[5] In 1939 the same institution exhibited a 1909 picture called *Woman with Pears* (Museum of Modern Art, New York); in 1996 it became *Woman with Pears (Fernande)*, the brackets signalling that the identification of the subject as Picasso's then partner Fernande Olivier was circumstantial, generally known but not hitherto given in the official title.[6] The change of title is in its way perfectly reasonable – but 'Fernande' is, to use Picasso's words that appear in the epigraph to this essay, an 'abstract idea of reality' that now stands between us and the painting as a depiction of the face as a pictorial reality. '(Fernande)' is the inscription of a 'real person' guaranteeing the factual drama of the painting *as portrait*.

Of course, there are plenty of examples of works by Picasso that set out to be portraits, and were called as such from the outset. In many cases these paintings or drawings (most are in one of these two mediums) bear superficial resemblance to the great tradition of portraiture in European art, 'superficial' in the sense that they display their credentials as updated old masters rather too ostentatiously. So, for

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[4] A recent exhibition in London got called *Renaissance Faces* in recognition of the ambiguous status of many early paintings as portraits or types, but also perhaps acknowledging the oscillation between looking at portraits as historical record and as the expression of (historical) ideas of the face. See *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian*, London, National Gallery, 15 October 2008-18 January 2009.

[5] *Picasso and Portraiture*, ed. William Rubin, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989)

[6] Alfred H Barr, *Picasso: Forty Years of His Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art 1939) 69, and *Picasso and Portraiture*, 277.

example, the impressive 1918 *Portrait of Olga Khokhlova* (**fig.1**) imitates the work of Ingres. According to the standard Picasso narrative, this same Olga went through many different visual manifestations in subsequent years, however, to the point where, as even the 1996 exhibition catalogue acknowledged, the question of portraiture seems to become redundant. *Woman with a Hat* (1935, Centre Georges Pompidou) just about gets to be subtitled '(Olga)', as does even the ossified *Seated Bather* (1930, Museum of Modern Art), but *Repose* (1927, Collection Steven Cohen) remains a nameless monster.[7] This is not to say that such monsters have not elsewhere got to be more or less seen as Olga, but that once we get to works such as *Face* of late 1927 (**fig.2**), the identification rests on a version of the pathetic fallacy, where what is interpreted as a feeling of horror – expressed in its recent re-titling as *The Scream* by its present owners (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) - seems so oppressive that it is not only assumed to have a basis in the 'reality' of Picasso's failing relationship with his wife, a basis that is more or less indexical, but to reflect the notional psychic state of the artist at the time it was painted.

The image of truth?

> is it reality that creates reality / or the abstract idea of reality which provokes it and makes it appear.[8]

The powerful presence of such fantastic deformations as those evident in *The Scream*, and their uncertain relationship to any kind of model of portraiture, prompt such questions over the nature of their truth.[9] Picasso himself, in various interviews and reported conversations, often spoke of the way in which representations can be said to embody or reveal the truth. The word 'truth' was important to Picasso when paired with the word 'lie'; the dialectical relationship between these two potent words could even be said to constitute Picasso's theory of art. 'We all know Art is not truth', he remarked in 1923 (when in his early forties and by then a supremely successful artist), 'Art is a lie that makes us realize the truth, at least the truth as it is given to us to understand.'[10] Importantly, in this theory, truth is something that artists *make*, not something given in reality that is faithfully copied in artistic representations. He explained this with reference to previous instances of what are often called different styles; his theory of art thus also constitutes a sketchy *history* of the visual arts:

> From the painters of the origins, the primitives, whose work is obviously different from nature, down to those artists who, like David, Ingres and even Bouguereau, believed in painting nature as it is, art has always been art and not nature. And from the point of view of art there are no concrete or abstract forms, only forms that are more or less convincing lies. That those lies are

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[7] See *Picasso and Portraiture*, 331, 61, 355 respectively. Unusually, the title *Repose* was - with obvious bitter irony - given by Picasso
[8] Undated note by Picasso, *Picasso: Collected Writings*, ed. Marie-Laure Bernadac and Christine Piot (London: Aurum Press, 1989) 372.
[9] The topic 'Picasso and Truth' was recently treated by T J Clark in his 2009 Mellon Lectures at the National Gallery of Art, Washington.
[10] 'Picasso Speaks', statement publishsed by Marius de Zayas in 1923, reprinted in Dore Ashton, *Picasso on Art* (New York: Viking Penguin 1972) 3.

necessary to our mental selves is beyond any doubt, as it is through them that we form our aesthetic point of view of life.[11]

The natural motif, something that seems to exist so incontrovertibly, is produced by art alone. But in Picasso's case the creation of an image of nature results not in a single distilled style repeated in every work but a long, notionally endless series of depictions, each apparently expressing a wildly *different* reality from the previous one. If there could be said to be a programmatic purpose to this wilful heterogeneity, it is to underline the absence of an objective standard of truth for art:

> If I pursue a truth on my canvas, I can paint a hundred canvases with this same truth. Which one, then, is the truth? And what is truth – the thing that acts as my model, or what I am painting? No, it's like in everything else. Truth does not exist.[12]

Picasso goes a step further here: the absence of objective truth is not merely a matter for the domain of art. *It's like in everything else*. Truth does not exist. In this light, I want to argue, Picasso's faces insist that the most powerful 'truth' of all is the 'lie' that is humanity, of a commonality, a shareable experience that could also be a confirmation of the self. At the same time, Picasso thinks, all artistic representations of human faces in the history of art, including his own, give rise to some lie 'necessary to our mental selves', a particular humanist truth to live by, something so compelling that it produces our very sense of 'humanity'.[13]

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[11] 'Picasso Speaks' 4. It is likely that, even at this point, the word 'primitives' here refers to Italian artists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, rather than to non-western 'art', for which the term only became current later on. It is also possible, given the reference to 'painters of the origins', that Picasso is imagining some primordial style of painting equivalent to, for example, the Assyrian sculpture that he had seen in the Louvre, or that he was aware of the paintings in Altamira, Northern Spain, discovered in 1879 but only accepted as genuinely 'prehistoric' (and now thought to be from around 14500 years BCE) some twenty years later.

[12] Picasso reported by Hélène Parmelin, Ashton 21.

[13] Picasso scholars might object at this point that my argument is far away from the artist's own frequently-voiced commitment to a biographical reading of his work, and indeed to its 'humanity'. A key passage might be the famous statement to the photographer Brassaï in 1943: 'Why do you think I date everything I do? Because it is not sufficient to know an artist's works – it is necessary to know when he did them, why, under what circumstances… Someday there will undoubtedly be a science – it may be called the science of man – which will seek to learn more about man in general through the study of creative man. I often think about such a science, and I want to leave to posterity a documentation that will be as complete as possible. That's why I put a date on everything I do.' (Brassai, *Conversations with Picasso*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (London: Chicago UP 1999) 33. As I have argued elsewhere, there is, however, no simple way of reading this statement, heavily inflected with ideas drawn from the new discipline of ethnography, which points away from the personal toward 'man'. Another objection to the tenor of my argument might be that Picasso frequently makes statements that seem to appeal to an essentialist notion of humanity, including, for example, the wonderful passage where he also questions the nature of the face: I seek nothing… I merely set about putting as much humanity as possible

But what 'aesthetic point of view of life' is inaugurated, then, by what one hostile critic called Picasso's 'monstrous, inhuman' faces?[14]

Portrait as a Dream
The distinctive ambiguity of the notion of portraiture in Picasso's art rests on the fact that although many of his works can be said to depart from the faces of known individuals they were almost never commissioned; moreover, once the process of representation gets underway, wild metaphors take over from disciplined or humble analogies.[15] This is not to say that Picasso ever let go of the particularities of a face, but that some feature or other, or combination of features and manners, becomes the motor for a chain of imaginative transformations on terms dictated by painting and caricature, and by the modes of, for example, gothic horror or burlesque. One important critical reflection on the question of Picasso as a portraitist was inspired by his contribution to the Salon d'automne of 1944, which comprised 74 paintings and 5 sculptures, most of which were made during the Occupation (the Salon became

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into my pictures. Too bad if that offends some idolaters of the conventional human effigy. Besides, they need only look at themselves a little more carefully in the mirror… What is a face when you get right down to it? Its photograph? Its make-up? Or the face as its was represented by this or that painter? What is in front of it? Inside? Behind? And all the rest? Doesn't everyone see it in his own way? There are very few distortions. Daumier and Lautrec saw the face differently from Ingres and Renoir, that's all. I see it like this… [Picasso, cited in Anatole Jakovsky, 'Midis avec Picasso', *Arts de France*, Paris no.6, 1946, 4, 8, translated in *Picasso, Tradition and Avant-Garde*, exh.cat. (Madrid: Museu Nacional del Prado.Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 6 June-4 September 2000) 381]. Although this passage reinforces what I have argued above regarding the constructive role of art in shaping truths, it certainly also seems to insist on an underlying humanism and on a playful rather than a profound process of pictorial improvisation. My argument in this essay does not, in the end, seek to prove an intentional anti-humanism that would, in that case, fly in the face of Picasso's own belief in 'humanity'. On the one hand, I would argue, as I do in this essay, that the constant re-inscription of the face generates meanings that exceed the self-understandings of the artist. On the other hand, I think that Picasso's own statements stand themselves in need of careful interpretation, even bracketing, made as they were in response to certain questions and at certain moments in his career, in order to defend or assert certain critical readings, and coming down to us in the form of unreliable recollections by third parties. The frequency with which the discourse of 'truth and lie' recurs in these recorded conversations seems to me to justify, at least, taking it seriously as a kind of theory that, if we need one, can frame Picasso's art as a whole. For some excellent considerations that relate to some of these issues, see David Lomas, *The Haunted Self: Surrealism, Psychoanalysis, Subjectivity* (London: Yale 2000), especially Chapter 3. See also Neil Cox, *The Picasso Book* (London: Tate 2010), Chapters 1 and 3.
[14] The critic was Raymond Cogniat. See Picasso in conversation with André Warnod in 1945, in Ashton 18.
[15] One notable but disastrous example of a commissioned (group) portrait is that of *The Soler Family* (1903, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Liège). The four famous portraits of dealers from 1909-11 were not commissions as such, but were instead attempts to court favour.

known as the 'Salon de la Libération' thanks to the expulsion of the Nazis from Paris only a few months before). The exhibition was the focus of considerable attack, much of it of a crude and reactionary nature, warranting the policing of the displays in order to protect the work from destruction by angry (conservative-minded) students. Confronted by the array of painted faces on display, a sympathetic Georges Limbour argued that while 'artists are giving up portrait painting, which has become an unpopular genre… Picasso, has restored its expressive importance and at the same time given it new meaning.'[16] What Limbour meant by the word 'portrait' here is contextualised by a childhood memory that the paintings prompt him to recall. He and his friends found joy and wickedness in the distorted reflections of their faces produced in a mirrored ball that was a garden ornament. Crucially, and here is a resonance with Picasso's own theorisation of 1923, these 'deformations… showed us the way to a distant enchanted region where we again wore our true faces, restored and purified.' (A 'lie' here produces a 'truth'.) For Limbour, Picasso's 'portraits' provoke a similar sense of wonder, even if 'the dream through which he sees human faces' produces a much more resourceful set of reflections than a distorting mirror, representations that open up the face like a flower, putting profile and full face into play, mingling humour with 'legitimate anger' by planting bizarre still life confections ('a bit of garden, a fish, even a fork and spoon') atop women's hats, or by adding an animal snout to a woman's face.[17] Limbour obviously had 'portraits', such as the absurd *Seated Woman with a Fish Hat* (19 April 1942, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam) on his mind, where Picasso's long established pictorial device of doubling profile and frontal views of the face is in evidence. One way of interpreting Limbour's wonder at the multifarious revelations of such 'portraits', and his own anecdote of the fascination of the face seen distorted as a way of returning to the 'true' face, is to look at Robert Doisneau's well-known photograph of policemen and members of the public standing before some of the works during the 1944 Salon in a marvellous photographic contrivance capturing the reverberations between Picasso's pictorial faces and those of his contemporaries (**Fig. 3**). Of course, the comic effect here is partly the result of the unifying effect of monochrome over the heavy colours and textures of Picasso's canvases. The compression of space allows the head of a painted man to press against the semi-profile of the central officer, while the unfolded skull of the *Woman in an Armchair* (**Fig.4**) gets parodied in the de-doubled profile made of two women on the right. But what really matters is the sense of looking at faces, and at a pictorial language, caught in the reality of the human face in 1944, with all its certainties, privations, secrets, compromises and histories of thwarted desire. It is the photographic juxtaposition that makes this visible, and this is a clue to the significance of photography in making the human face into a question.

Photo –The Inhuman Face
Notwithstanding his resistance to the notion of reality, Picasso's depictions of faces thus manifestly belong to the era of the ostensibly realist media of photography and film. As Limbour suggested, the widespread abandonment of portraiture was something Picasso seemed to defy; it was of course a commonplace that photography had supplanted the portrait artist. Yet photography is in play in Picasso's depictions of

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[16] Georges Limbour, 'Picasso au Salon d'Automne', translated in Marilyn McCully (ed.), *A Picasso Anthology: Documents, Criticism, Reminiscences* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain 1981) 222-4, this reference 223.
[17] Limbour 224.

the human face in numerous ways: beyond Picasso's own sustained engagement with photography as a method for recording his work and as a medium in its own right, the camera was a source of revelations of the nature and history of the human face, and photography a visual idiom to be incorporated and reinvented in painting.[18]

Picasso's work of the late 1920s and the 1930s interrogates the strangeness, the alien nature of the human face rendered visible in the juxtapositions in Doisneau's comic photograph. What makes Doisneau's comedy possible is the fact that, in turn, Picasso's project was at least in part mounted under the pressure of a vast accumulated archive of banal vernacular photographs and portrait photography of politicians, writers or actors made for consumption in the popular press. During his lifetime Picasso assembled a vast collection of postcards, newspapers and old portrait photographs, many of which became the pretext for his works. In the latter category, for example, around 1919-20 Picasso made ostentatiously leaden line drawings from nineteenth-century *cartes de visites* (calling cards featuring a studio photograph of the subject) in his possession.[19] Some of the sitters for these photographs are notable historical individuals, but most, although always identified by name, exist merely as forgotten minor figures of their generation. Picasso's drawings render them even less substantial, somewhat ghostly, painfully awkward in their gestures.

A more violent recuperation of ephemeral *cartes de visites* occurred years later in Georges Bataille's short text 'Figure Humaine', which addresses the fate of the human face, and of the dignity of the human form, in the wake of such forms of photography.[20] Written in 1929 for the journal *Documents*, it parades yesteryear's fashionable appearances, fin-de-siècle fantasy portraits and provincial wedding photography (**fig.5**) under the rubric of absurdity. 'Figure Humaine' was written as a longer piece in the style of the 'Critical Dictionary' section of the journal, which featured freely interpreted entries for a notionally endless pseudo-Encyclopaedia, vehicles for cultural critique initially dreamt up for the journal by founding editor Carl Einstein. Its principle argument is that, for prior generations, or for those living in cultures where a belief in a supernatural realm remains vivid, the image of one's ancestors was the subject of vague nostalgia or a terrorising fantasy, images that permitted Europeans to live life according to a combination of high ideals (of ancestral lineage and dignity) and freely expressed desires (of fear, desire etc.). With the advent of photography, however, it becomes impossible to sustain any presupposition of ancestral dignity, or of the progress of civilisation. The sight in photographs of dead predecessors parading their erotic fantasies or their social status is said by Bataille to provoke in his own generation both laughter and a lurking sense of horror. Laughter works to diffuse the appalling aspect of the sight of these

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[18] For Picasso as a collector of photos and postcards see Laurence Madeleine, *Les archives de Picasso: "On est ce que l'on garde!"* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2003) and for Picasso as a photographic practitioner and for his use of photography as a direct source for paintings see Anne Baldassari, *Picasso and Photography: The Dark Mirror* (Houston: The Musuem of Fine Arts 1997)

[19] For examples, see Baldassari 156-9.

[20] Georges Bataille, 'Human Face' translated by Annette Michelson, in Alastair Brotchie (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Acephalica* (London: Atlas Press 1995) 99-106. Clearly a literal translation of the title is 'Human Figure', but I think that the content justifies the standard interpretation.

ancestors, but cannot prevent them from haunting every action or feeling of the living. The wedding photograph is chosen deliberately in order to undermine its primary intention as a testament of a social rite, as an assertion of the orderly procession of the generations: Bataille's target is, in fact, the very idea of 'human nature':

> If… we acknowledge the presence of an acute perturbation in, let us say, the state of the human mind represented by the sort of provincial wedding photographed twenty-five years ago, then we place ourselves outside established rules in so far as a real negation of human nature is herein implied. Belief in the existence of this nature presupposes the permanence of certain salient qualities, and, in general, a way of being, in relation to which the group represented in these photographs is monstrous, not aberrant.[21]

Where does Bataille detect monstrosity in such an ordinary provincial scene? Benjamin Noys has argued convincingly that whereas the photograph seeks to present the 'safe passage of one generation to the next represented by the bridal pair and their families', the crux is in the repressive violence necessary to produce the social order of which the photograph is an instance, and the irruptive and destructive violence that is repressed therein.[22] Bataille's focus becomes the bride and groom, seen now as 'the parents of a wild and apocalyptic rebellion', as 'monsters breeding incompatibles.'[23] But in addition to this narrative of social organisation and the disorderly forces that work against it both within one generation and then in the delinquent process of breeding and raising the next, there is a further visual dimension to Bataille's argument that can illuminate Picasso's faces.

For Bataille the procession of faces in old photographs exposes 'the absence of a common measure… which is, in a way, one aspect of a general disproportion obtaining between man and nature', a disproportion that, in turn, Bataille maps onto a gulf that, he believes, separates the supposedly congruent conceptions of an 'irreducible self' and the 'intelligible universe', a gulf bridged only in metaphors.[24] The visual moves follow: the faces in vernacular photographs appear to confirm this sense of metaphysical disproportion; their countenances and postures strive for a physical transformation, a striving that is in its means nonetheless visibly outmoded. This striving belongs to an effort to 'regain, at last, a *human face*', regain it, that is, after the procession of European centuries where the mismatch between the ideal of the human self and of aberrant natural appearances was permitted (presumably thanks to the absence of the technology to render this mismatch visible) to have 'free rein'. It is, in other words, the bizarrely flirtatious or pompous facial expressions, the corsets, the frockcoats, the awkward personal carriage of the generation who saw themselves, for the first time, in and through portrait photography that later expose their campaign

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[21] Brotchie 101.

[22] Benjamin Noys, *Bataille: A Critical Introduction* (London: Pluto Press 2000) 21. Noys observes in passing that Bataille reads this photograph to the limit of the frame, by which he means that the whole organisation of the image becomes the expression of the repressive violence that provides for the idea of a human nature as the basis for a civilised society.

[23] Brotchie 102.

[24] Brotchie 102. In an argument familiar from his other texts of the period, Bataille goes on to elaborate this gulf in opposition to a Hegelian notion of contradiction.

for humanity in the form of a human *appearance*, rendering it from the standpoint of the present both comically dated and - a typically Bataillean thought - erotically sordid.[25]

Picasso had a number of photographic wedding portraits in his collection, again often in the form of *cartes de visites* with their stiff poses meant to impress or sentimental gestures meant to melt hearts. By 1925, in the context of Picasso's growing relationship with some surrealist poets and artists, the notion of the embracing couple had become something vaguely monstrous (*The Kiss*, 1925, Musée Picasso), a sense of decorum overcome for the couple by animal groping and a fantastic intermingling of features. By the time Bataille published his essay, Picasso's dismembering of the face was in full swing. His own collection of old wedding photographs could now be seen Bataille's way, as appalling manifestations of grotesque and aberrant discontinuities in the history of the human face. Perhaps the vision of the human face as only the site of a series of monstrous differences informed Picasso's own attitude to his pantheon of faces and heads, something evident in his installation of the 1932 Paris retrospective exhibition at the Galeries Georges Petit (**fig.6**). Some authors have seen these photographs as evidence of Picasso's stylistic heterogeneity and of a gambit against any reading of the work as one of progressive development from naturalism to forms of expressionism or abstraction.[26] In the context of the discourse of *Documents*, however, they can appear symptoms of disorder in the universe, of a lack of any continuity among so many different manifestations of the face, not simply within Picasso's art, but in the appearance of the human itself.[27]

But although it is perhaps plausible to claim that Bataille's text, or the many other texts in *Documents* that addressed human appearance, had a direct impact on the direction of Picasso's art (one, in the model of 'influence', that would have to be consciously registered), this is not what matters here. Rather, as a contemporary figuring of the crisis in human figuring, albeit in the medium of cultural criticism rather than artistic representation, I want to suggest that Bataille's approach to the manifestation of the 'human' in portrait photography renders visible two important expressive themes in Picasso's human faces: the juxtaposition of 'bourgeois' domestic interiors with grotesquely deformed visages and the evocation of animal features or behaviours in human expressions or actions, something that another of Bataille's essays of the period further develops. The motif of a figure, usually a woman, seated in an armchair preoccupied Picasso from as early as 1908 (e.g. *Woman*

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[25] Brotchie 104-5.

[26] See Elizabeth Cowling, *Picasso, Style and Meaning* (London: Phaidon 2002) 14-15 and Christopher Green, *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo* (London: Yale University Press 2005) 6-7. They are talking about another photograph of the same show, but the points can be made in both cases, and both feature juxtaposed heads and bodies in wildly different styles.

[27] It is worth noting that Bataille's 'Human Face' is only one of a number of interventions in the journal that insist upon aberrant human appearances. For discussion of some other texts, including Bataille's 'The Deviations of Nature' and Ralph von Koenigswald's 'Heads and Skulls', see Simon Baker, 'Human Figures' and Michael Richardson, 'Heads' in Dawn Ades and Simon Baker (eds) *Undercover Surrealism, Georges Bataille and Documents* (London: Hayward 2006) 186-203.
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with a Fan, 1908, The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg), and was the subject of many variations during the years of Picasso's deep involvement with the practice we call Cubism. During the period just before the First World War, Picasso made a number of highly coloured paintings where the semi-abstract planar forms of a seated figure appear against schematic decorative elements recalling the bourgeois living room. In *Card Player* (**fig.7**) the face of the ambiguously-gendered figure is constructed using a vocabulary that Picasso recycled in many drawings and paintings, where the features are rendered schematically using forms recalling the hands of a clock set against layered and tilting planes and simple linear marks as signs for ears and the outline of the head.[28] In this example, Picasso lovingly paints a tress of brown hair to one side, and deploys a similar box of tricks in painting what seems to be the wooden surface of the high-backed chair in which the figure sits. But what is of special interest here is the grey-green decorative painted panel and wainscoting on either side of the figure, for these carefully rendered elements, albeit folding inwards under the gravitational pull of the cubist creature at centre, play out a contrast that Picasso would turn to greater expressive effect some time after the war.[29] The turning of what was at first perhaps a visual game between the complexities of Cubism and decorative patterns into a disturbed or violent contrast seems to have been mediated, in a way that is difficult to unravel, by a series of classicising portraits of Picasso's first wife Olga Khoklova that are tied to photography. The Ingresesque portrait of Olga of Spring 1918 mentioned above (**fig.1**) is in fact based on a photograph of her sitting, loosely holding a fan, in a upholstered low chair; the dense floral patterning on the chair, the dress and the fan contrast with the stark isolation of the face. The juxtaposition of bourgeois self-presentation with the vacant introversion of the countenance here is perhaps no more than an accident of the Ingresque mode in which Picasso worked. But a comparison with the photograph shows both the act of censorship that Picasso performed on the surrounding objects (including decidedly un-classical African sculptures), and how he modified the face in the direction of melancholy. What the photograph permits Picasso to 'see', in other words, is both a figure of the nineteenth-century bourgeois order of humanity and an image of alienated, disturbed subjectivity. Later in the 1920s Picasso begins to render this figure as if an emanation of the monstrously inhuman face that Bataille found in wedding photographs, this time pinioned or imprisoned in a domestic interior.

The process is initiated in part by efforts to describe the face as a doubled or split entity. In works such as *Seated Woman* of 1926 (**fig.8**), the motif of the warped wainscoting reappears, but the figure is no longer made out of an ironic cubist vocabulary of painted planes. Instead a linear tracery is blocked in to form a graphic sign of great complexity, in which the features of the face turn in on themselves and change orientation, while the mass of the head is, metaphorically, peeled outwards and flattened in conformity with the picture surface. These are the beginnings of the face made out of profile and frontal views mentioned by Limbour and so familiar as an invention of Picasso. In one sense this doubled face is a visual conceit that Picasso had been exploring since the beginnings of his Cubism, one signalling the artistic

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[28] For examples, see Neil Cox, *Picasso's 'Toys for Adults': Cubism as Surrealism*, (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland/University of Edinburgh 2009)

[29] It is impossible to survey all the cubist variations in this idea, but it is important to note that Picasso played on the theme as much in representations of male as female figures (e.g. the major work *Man with a Pipe*, 1915, Art Institute of Chicago).

fantasy of the full possession of the three-dimensional object in the two-dimensional representational idiom of painting, and especially of such a magical possession of the body and the face.[30] Yet it is also an expressive mapping of the face in terms of the monstrous, as is evident in the violence done to the face in paintings of the summer of 1927 that depend on the new vocabulary even if it is here downplayed. One variant now in the Musée Picasso, Paris (**fig.9**), once again reinforces the strong connection between the monstrous and the bourgeois home. Here the figure seems to sit before a balcony (perhaps the armchair's tracery also suggests that it is an outdoor metal one), but merges with the vestige of a decorative moulding that could recall a picture frame as much as wainscoting (it 'frames' two abstract breasts). The face here is subject to wilful reorganisation along a vertical axis, a conceit developed in a whole series of paintings and drawings in the following years. A work known as *La Demoiselle (Head)* of early 1929 (**fig.10**) shows a face turned into an irregular slab with three strands of black hair to one side and a mass of foliage-like hair on the other. The three strands hang from a point representing the nose (in the form of two fine dots), while a horrible zip of a mouth runs up the centre, topped by two eyes, one light, one dark. But once again, this figure is seen seated (note the chair post to the right) in a wallpapered room, and sports a bright red striped blouse. The oppressive sense of scale again might be thought to reflect the close-up claustrophobia of film stills, but it also relates to Picasso contemporary work on a monument to the poet Guillaume Apollinaire, work that led to imaginary monuments of a vast scale including a monument modelled on the face in *La Demoiselle*.[31] (This is a typical example of Picasso's to and fro between the insistent two-dimensionality of painting and the idea of sculpture: a reinvention of the human form driven by painting gives rise to sculptural imagery.) Caught somewhere between the sculpturally monumental and the trenchantly two-dimensional face are some painted geometricised monsters (e.g. *Woman in a Red Armchair*, early 1929, Musée Picasso, Paris, *Figure in an Armchair*, 13 May 1929, Sintra Museum of Modern Art, The Berardo Collection, Lisbon).

The de-doubled face that emerged around 1926 fed another embodied fiction: of the face sundered to become a kissing couple. A number of paintings made in the first half of 1929 pursue this idea (e.g. *The Kiss*, 25 August 1929, Musée Picasso, Paris). Here the splitting of the head takes the form of another vast stone monument resting as if on some desert or beach and seen against the sky, while other variants place the head in a domestic space. The activity of kissing, the dynamic of the kiss, is in many of Picasso's representations allowed to crunch and fold back the human face and to reveal its animal mouth and groping tongue. A painting of 1931 (*The Kiss*, 12 January 1931, Musée Picasso, Paris) shows a couple whose noses, apparently emerging from the bed sheets, interlock promiscuously while their two mouths merge to form a single set of upper and lower teeth. The rolling eyes of the (male) figure recall those of the drooling 'hero' played by Pierre Batcheff in one scene of *Un Chien Andalou*, the scandalous surrealist film of 1929.

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[30] This pictorial fantasy is discussed in Leo Steinberg, 'The Algerian Women and Picasso at Large', in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (London: Oxford University Press 1972) 125-234.
[31] *Monument, Head of a Woman*, 1929 (Private Collection). For story of the monument, see Peter Read, *Picasso & Apollinaire, The Persistence of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2008).

Limbour's short review of 1944 touches, of course, on depictions of the human face made animal. One example of what he might have meant is a painting like *Bust of a Woman* (6 July 1943, private collection) featuring something like a dog's snout in place of a nose, with a distended head to match.[32] He may not have known another remarkable work, the porcine *Woman in a Grey Armchair* (**fig.11**), a painting of grim malice from *poisson d'avril* day, 1939.[33] The palette and the blocky structure of the body recall several of Picasso's woman-in-an armchair compositions of 1910, but the inversion of the snout, the deformed head and displaced features reflect variants of hysterical women depicted from around 1929 to the end of the 1930s.

This animal imagery came into its own when Picasso worked on *Guernica* (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid) during May 1937, for here the central thematic idea of the merging of bullfight imagery with scenes of women expressing rage, terror and despair led to an exchange of representational ideas between animal and human subjects. So the horse, disembowelled and speared, emits a silent cry from its gaping jaw, jabbing its knife-like tongue into space. Similarly on the left, a woman turns her head skyward and opens her mouth wide to the heavens, poking the same knife-tongue into the blackness. For Bataille, in his *Critical Dictionary* entry 'Mouth' published in *Documents* in 1930, the sight of the human head rocked back so that the mouth lines up with the column of the spine was a symptom of fundamental animality provoked by extremely intense affective experience: ire, searing pain or mortal danger. This irruption of animal instincts liberates powerful physical impulses, a purgation that Bataille contrasts with 'the narrow constipation of a strictly human attitude, the magisterial look at the face with a *closed mouth*, as beautiful as a safe.'[34]

There are Picasso paintings in both modes: of uncontrollable animal emission and of tightly sealed mouths as symptoms of inner anguish. Of the former type, alongside the armchair women discussed above, are the series known as the 'weeping women', made in 1937 as preparation for and subsequent reflection upon *Guernica*. To be sure, most of the time Picasso does not show the head tipped back in conformity with Bataille's architecture of animality, but the series pursues the idea of the face contorted beyond all dignity, uncontrollably shaken. Some paintings and drawings light on a medieval image of mourning: a woman biting her handkerchief, tearing at it in anguish as if to strain her teeth from out of their sockets. It is a motif that occurs in the best known and highly elaborated work of the series, the *Weeping Woman* now in the collection of Tate, but a more violent expression of the idea appears, for example, in a work on paper of a few days later now in the Fogg Art Museum (**fig.12**). The putrid colours here embody the anguish, while the construction of the face is effected

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[32] *Bust of a Woman* is reproduced in Christian Zervos's 33 volume catalogue (Z.XIII.37).
[33] In both cases it is sometimes claimed that the hybridisation resulted from a malicious merging of the muzzle of Picasso's Afghan hound with the face of Dora Maar, his main companion (see, for example, the entry on *Bust of a Woman* in Elizabeth Cowling and John Golding, *Picasso: Sculptor/Painter* [London: Tate 1994] 277, or, perhaps, his semi-secret lover and mother of his child, Marie-Thérèse Walter, a claim made for *Woman in a Grey Armchair* in the analysis offered in a catalogue entry on the painting in Madrid 2006, 250. In fact, neither 'portrait' identity is much help in considering the achievement of *Woman in a Grey Armchair*.
[34] Brotchie 64

using devices that the artist has developed over many variants: a vast, bony nose that is an extension of the twisted brow; nostrils that are part animal snout; eyes swaying in sinking boats from which the tears spill, becoming simultaneously the metaphor of two teaspoons gouging out the orbits. The Tate painting combines these images with the claustrophobic bourgeois interior found in earlier depictions of armchair women. In transposing the image of the weeping woman from the context of mass destruction to the corner of some parlour, the painting suggests an anguish coming less from mortal danger than inner anguish. The tight-lipped containment of despair that Bataille identified with the 'narrow constipation of the strictly human attitude', visible perhaps in works as diverse as the *Portrait of Olga Khoklova* (**fig.1**) and the Hövikodden *Seated Woman in an Armchair* (**fig.4**), begins to crack open as the woman's face contorts, perhaps a prelude to uncontrollable quaking and a sky-bound animal yell.

If it is true that Picasso made faces expressing both the animal and the 'strictly human' attitudes, it will nevertheless have become clear that in this context this Bataillean distinction is more heuristic, allowing us to grasp dimensions or (literally) aspects of these representations, than reflective of hard and fast distinctions neatly enshrined in 'opposing' works. And this relates to that other Bataillean idea: of the fundamentally inhuman, monstrous or aberrant appearance of *each* human face when seen against another, a kind of infinite asymmetry and disproportion, and of the horror evident even in the calmest bourgeois face. Bataille, of course, made that claim in the (sepia, or fading) light of old photographs, and in doing so he was insisting on the shock produced by the visibility in photographs of a layer of human history, that of the previous generation, which before photography could be recollected as an ideal and at the same time, in early modernity, readily overcome in a notion of social progress. Now this monstrous zoo could not be so easily forgotten. Photography in this way produced for Bataille a problem of the human as a historical phenomenon. This in turn led him to question, with the aid of anthropology and palaeontology, what moment in history, or outside it, could function as the origin, and the presence, of the human face.

In the Beginning…The (In)human Face
Sometime towards the end of the Second World War, Picasso showed André Malraux a host of 'portraits' of the kind that featured in the 1944 Salon d'Automne. 'Similarities!... we all love prehistoric paintings, but no one resembles them!' Picasso is supposed to have said.[35] Thanks to Dora Maar, we have various photographs of Picasso's attic studio in the Rue des Grands Augustins during the war years that give an impression, perhaps, of the kind of scene that Malraux saw (**fig.13**), a horde of human faces jostling together in the shadows in search of a common identity. Picasso's remark was meant to suggest, no doubt, that Malraux should disregard any temptation to search for resemblance in Picasso's 'portraits'. It was also made in the light of the recent discovery of the cave paintings at Lascaux that Malraux was among the first officials of the new French government to visit not long before he came to Picasso's studio. These images and their dark grotto functioned in the years after the war as a constant point of reference for discussion of the sight and the site of the origins of art.

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[35] According to Malraux, cited in *Picasso and Portraiture* 404.

Lascaux was widely acknowledged to be the finest ensemble of parietal art from the prehistoric era yet discovered. Its principle and first interpreter was a priest by training, the Abbé Henri Breuil, but in philosophical circles it was Bataille who took an intense interest in the art of the caves, and who published numerous articles and a book on the subject, returning again to it in two subsequent books, *L'Erotisme* published in 1957 and *Les Larmes d'Eros* published in 1961, the year before his death. In discussing the art of Lascaux Bataille sought to expose the contemporary conundrum not simply of the origin of art, but of the origin of humanity. A crucial essay is 'The Passage from Animal to Man' published in *Critique* in 1953.[36] Here Bataille argues that prehistoric art allows us to glimpse the origin of art and of man in the same moment, but he goes on to complicate what at first thus sounds like a reassuring picture, for, he says, in these paintings 'we can finally gauge what we still are'. There is a paradox in the cave paintings, which represent animals with such apparent realism but offer very few representations of human beings:

> What these admirable frescoes proclaim with a youthful vigour is not only that the man who painted them ceased being an animal by painting them but that he stopped being an animal by giving the animal, and not himself, a poetic image that seduces us and seems sovereign.[37]

Bataille notes that when human beings are represented in cave paintings, it is often as a hybrid, with an animal head, as in the famous man-bison from the cave at Les Trois-Frères, and, turning to the famous figure dubbed by Breuil a sorcerer or god, Bataille takes issue with the reading of the significance of such strange cave representations. Breuil imagined as 'the spirit controlling the multiplication of game and hunting expeditions'. For Bataille, such interpretations, besides being extremely speculative, impute a set of utilitarian motives to the representation of monstrous figures. He opposes to this the fundamental claim that this 'dream creature negates human life.'[38] Bataille's point is that hybrids, while certainly privileged beings that dominate the animal world in the overall representational schemas in which they appear, nevertheless show men refusing 'destiny that determines them: they overflow into savagery', he writes, 'the night of animality.' Bataille imagines the first humans as victims of powerful emotions of confusion in the face of their reasoning and calculating capacities. Just as modern humanity, in its moment of technological and rational excess, is powerfully affected by feelings of deep pessimism; so the first humans were disturbed by their own reasoning and attempted in their art to resist and at the same time express their separation from the animal. And in developing this argument we sense Bataille's debt to and difference with the philosophy of Heidegger, for it is in the refusal of the category of the thing, fundamental to western European technological reasoning, that Bataille finds the basis of early man's refusal of his destiny, and *in this refusal* his emergence in human being. Bataille reads the majestic representations of bulls and aurochs on the walls of Lascaux not as sympathetic magic designed to ensure a successful hunt, but as acts of atonement in advance for treating the animal as a thing. Early man found magnificence and beauty

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[36] Georges Bataille, 'The Passage from Animal to Man', in Bataille, *The Cradle of Humanity: Prehistoric Art and Culture* (London: MIT 2005) 57-80.
[37] *Cradle of Humanity* 60.
[38] *Cradle of Humanity* 64-5.

in the animals that he was tragically destined to reduce to things, but in his own human appearance he found only something hilarious, ridiculous.

All of this leads Bataille to a conclusion directed at the crisis of modernity. If, in his view, humanity has throughout its subsequent history dedicated itself to the cult of reason that is expressed in the cult of things, at the origin of man the situation was very different. Early man refused his own *image*, and in so doing refused to embrace his destiny as 'a creator of a world of durable things.' Bataille believes that today man can again grasp the reasons why the first men could have wished to refuse their destiny.

> Today's man suspects the inanity of the edifice he has founded, he knows he knows nothing, and, as his ancestors concealed their features with animal masks, he summons the night of truth wherein the world that has ordained his pretension will cease being *clear* and *distinct*.[39]

Such ideas were developed by Bataille in his Lascaux book, and particularly in his numerous discussions there and elsewhere of the strange scene in the shaft at Lascaux, the so-called *Scene of the Fallen Man*. Bataille was fascinated by the juxtaposition of an elaborate representation of a disembowelled bull alongside an ithyphallic stick man, a broken spear, and a strange object comprising a bird on a stick, and he re-thought its meaning over and over again. In his last book, the *Tears of Eros*, he posed it simply as an enigma of the co-presence of fundamental human experiences: of eroticism and of death. And with a cataclysmic sense of historical entropy, Bataille divided the book into two parts: 'The Beginning' (The Birth of Eros) or, in other words, prehistoric art, and 'The End' - everything from Antiquity to the Present Day.

Bataille's Lascaux book brought interesting comment from critic and philosopher Maurice Blanchot. He argued in 1955 that Bataille's reading of prehistoric art expressed a double transgression, of the rules of nature, which thus produces the human world of work, and of the rules that govern the world of work, in an effort to return to nature. This second transgression is for Blanchot the *human* act, and he therefore concludes that humanity has a double origin, or a point of origin that cannot be fixed, a *non-origin*.[40]

In a subtle and sensitive reading, Suzanne Guerlac reinstates the act of visual representation in this problem of origins: for her Bataille's argument rests on a theory of communication through art and the transfiguring effect of resemblance.[41] At the sight of the paintings on the walls of Lascaux a temporal leap of communication across millennia overwhelms the modern visitor. The representations produce in us, so Bataille thinks, a catastrophic performance of the same act of transfiguration of the other: the human beast becomes the human being, so the origin of art performs at the

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[39] *Cradle of Humanity* 80

[40] For a discussion that forms some of the background to my paper, see Douglas Smith, 'Beyond the Cave: Lascaux and the Prehistoric in Post-War French Culture', *French Studies*, Vol LVIII, No 2, 2004, 219-232, this reference 228

[41] Suzanne Guerlac, 'Bataille in Theory: Afterimages (Lascaux)' *Diacritics*, vol 26, no 2, (*Georges Bataille: An Occasion for Misunderstanding*, Summer, 1996) 6-17.

same time the origin of man. The temporal dimension is central, if figuration performs the enduring survival of an address made by Aurignacian man to human being of the future, the performance of this destiny in the present collapses linear time. In this reading, for Bataille, Lascaux can function as the origin of both man and art since the contrast between the striking realism of the animals and the grotesqueness of the humans represented show a play with resemblance, an act of figuration that permits the animal to stand for man, and where the pictures produced have no purpose or use other than to make such a transfiguration possible. For Guerlac, it is the moment when the animals – the human beasts – in the paintings come to resemble us, come to stand in their majesty for us, that we grasp our origin and our end as 'divine animals'. Again, the crucial point is that the contrastingly formless figuration of the humans in the paintings makes apparent, as a communicative act, a negation of the magic of resemblance that Aurignacian man had created: a *deliberate deformation*, rather than a failure to form, an act of interdiction that is fundamentally dependent on the act of transfiguration evident in the realism of the painted animals. 'What seems fundamental' Bataille writes in another essay, 'is the rejection of our face'.[42]

All of the paintings by Picasso discussed in this essay predate Bataille's mature writing on Lascaux, though as we have seen Picasso knew of Lascaux, and certainly of Altamira, and indeed he had two plaster casts of the so-called *Venus of Lespugue* in his collection. Moreover, and again quite obviously, Picasso's faces were made millennia after the foundational act of deformation evident in the fallen men or hybrid sorcerers of Lascaux and Les Trois-Frères. Yet Bataille's essays on prehistoric art speak theoretically for a powerful sense of the sudden *presence* of the origin of humanity in the context of the crisis of the human played out as representation in vernacular photography and as historical phenomenon in the vile inhumanity of the Second World War. It has been suggested above that Picasso's 'strictly human' portraits and monstrous faces interrogate the lack of any meaningful definition of the human in the twentieth century. They do so in part through their display of deforming agony in the bourgeois interior (recalling the stuffed sofas, potted plants and hats of vernacular portrait photography), and by their animalisation of the human face (undermining the humanism of the classical ideal). Picasso's 'dream creatures' negate the ideal of human life, for, like the images of man in prehistoric paintings, 'no one resembles them.'

Yet this imputation of animality to the face needs to be considered again in the dim light of Lascaux, and of the origin of art and the human in the play of figuration between the deformation of the image of man and the transfiguration of the image of the animal. There is no question of course of claiming that Picasso repeats, in the moment when the Palaeolithic 'origin' appears, the sacred and original act of art by conjuring hybrid ands monsters alongside sublime human form, notwithstanding the fact that the classical ideal and the monstrous operate in tandem from the 1920s onwards. Instead, Picasso's animality, and his deformations of the face, need to be read as confrontations with the loss of clarity, the loss of distinction, that Bataille later associates with the shock of the 'Origin', and with the summoning, in modernity, of 'the night of truth'.

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[42] 'The Cradle of Humanity' in *Cradle of Humanity* 169.

Bataille here adapts the Hegelian 'night of the world' to his own purposes. In Hegel's famous Jena-manuscripts description of the inward state, the imagination where representations appear:

> man is this Night, this empty Nothing, which holds everything in its simplicity
> – a kingdom of endless representations, images… This is Night, Nature's
> inner, which here exists – pure self, - phantasmagorical representations are
> surrounded by Night, here shoots a bloody head, - there another white figure
> suddenly comes forward, and disappears just as suddenly- One catches a
> glimpse of this Night when one looks others in the eyes – into a Night which
> would be frightful, - here hangs over against one the Night of the world.[43]

If this 'Night of the world' is made by Bataille into 'the night of truth' or 'the night of animality', it is to show that the cataclysmic presence of the origin of art and of the human as inhuman (animal) throws the modern subject back into the 'frightful' absence of clarity that modernity had promised to overcome. The 'night of truth' is peopled instead by the 'phantasmagorical representations' of the human, the animal and the object world deprived of certainties and of the distinct appearance of a fixed and exploitable reality. Notwithstanding the lightening strike of the origin, the communicative gesture of Aurignacian man, this return of human indistinctness in modernity is no redemption. Perhaps, in this context, the faces that process in Picasso's art are best seen as representational 'lies', phantasms haunting 'the night of truth', flickering in a modern imagination traumatised by Blanchot's 'world of work' or by the horrible outcomes of untrammelled instrumental reason. These faces process before us like so many hybrid animal-men in the torchlight of an ice-age cave, revealing, through their deliberate refusal of an *essential* human face, 'what we still are', which is to say what we have never been before: 'still' present at our origin. Thus, the 'aesthetic point of view' they inaugurate is of that moment where the inhuman appears, *once again and for the first time*, refracted in anguished human eyes.

Faciality?

The epigraph to this essay was meant to signal that the whole argument could be re-inscribed in the terms set out in a chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*, the one headed 'Year Zero: Faciality', and that considers 'the face', as opposed to the mere features of the human head, as a kind of ground, an inauguration, of both signification and subjectivity.[44] If the face for Deleuze and Guattari is an abstract machine, characterised in binary terms as a blank surface the 'skin' and infinitely deep holes 'the eyes'. And if this face-machine attains an apogee in the face of Christ, it is as an image of imperialism, of a merciless sovereignty, an apotropaic face enforcing the space where the binary system can function without remainder, it is social production; it is a 'White-Man face'. Faciality is despotic, authoritarian. The Year Zero of

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[43] Cited in Jennifer Ann Bates, *Hegel's Theory of the Imagination*, (New York: SUNY Press 2004) 66.

[44] Deleuze and Guattari, 'Year Zero: Faciality', *A Thousand Plateaus* 185-211. My colleague Margaret Iversen suggested that there might be a connection between this text and my topic. The import of 'Faciality' in *A Thousand Plateaus* was made apparent to me in a conference paper given by Anne Sauvegnargues in Lyon.

Faciality is the birth of Christ: it is at this point that all prior alternative figurings of meaning, in their heterogeneity, are suppressed.

Over against this face-machine, Deleuze and Guattari set the 'destiny' of human beings: 'to escape the face, to dismantle the face and facializations.' And they conceive of this project in terms of our modern relationship to the moment human of origin and to the polyvocal humanities that the face of Christ suppressed. An escape entails from Faciality demands not a 'return to animality' but the pursuit of 'quite spiritual and special becomings-animal.' The familiar rhetoric of 'deterritorialization' that Deleuze and Guattari deploy in their development of these claims is in part about the reordering of the face through metaphors, the remaking of it according to analogies with landscape. But, drawing upon works of literature, they also institute new 'schizoid' deterritorializations of the face, where heads can become 'probes' giving rise to 'rhizomic' or multiple pathways out of the authoritarian binary system.

> Primitive inhumanity, prefacial inhumanity, has all the polyvocality of a semiotic in which the head is a part of the body, a body that is already deterritorialized relatively and plugged into becomings spiritual/animal. Beyond the face lies an altogether different inhumanity: no longer that of the primitive head, but of 'probe heads'; here cutting edges of derritorialization become operative and lines of deterritorialization positive and absolute, forming strange new becomings, new polyvocalities.[45]

Can this not stand too as a description of Picasso's inhuman faces? Faces shocked out of the binary system, out of the bourgeois ordering of Faciality, by the reappearance of 'prefacial inhumanity' in Lascaux, and probing with so many deterritorializations of the face for those 'strange new becomings'?

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[45] *A Thousand Plateaus* 211. Deleuze and Guattari also tackle the question of masks, non-Western and, metaphorically speaking, contemporary (their discussions of 'primitive' cultures are, I think, highly questionable). Decades before them Georges Limbour, the critic of the 1944 Salon, wrote a remarkable piece in *Documents* (Vol II, No.2, 1930) on the question of the mask in modernity: the mask of which he speaks is just the mask of the 'White Man', something blank, imperious, invisible and rank. This is, perhaps, just one example of the profound debt owed by post-structuralism to Surrealism. (See Georges Limbour, 'Aeschylus, Carnival, and the Civilized', trans. Dominic Faccini, *October* 60 (Spring 1992), 53-57