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The Work of Edward Burra, 1919 - 1936: Context and Imagery.

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University of Edinburgh.

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Declaration.

"I declare that this thesis, The Work of Edward Burra, 1919 - 1936: Context and Imagery, to be submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has been composed by myself and that the work is original and my own".

Signed A.P. Stephenson ..... Date. 1/10/88 ..

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List of Abbreviations.

J.R. ROTHENSTEIN, John. Edward Burra, Harmondsworth, 1945.

T.G. TATE GALLERY. Edward Burra, London 1973.

W.C. CHAPPELL, William (ed.) Edward Burra, A Painter Remembered by His Friends, London, 1982.

W.C. Letters. CHAPPELL, William. Well dearie! The Letters of Edward Burra, London, 1985.

H.G. HAYWARD GALLERY. Edward Burra, London 1985.

C.C. CAUSEY, Andrew. Edward Burra, Complete Catalogue, Oxford, 1985.

[CC.] Plate numbers in parentheses refer to plates in Andrew CAUSEY's Edward Burra, Complete Catalogue with [CC] referring to Paintings and [CCD] Drawings followed by plate numbers.

[pl.] Refers to illustrations contained in a separate volume.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS (Regulation 7.9)

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Title of Thesis THE WORK of EDWARD BURRA 1919-36 : CONTEXT AND IMAGERY

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This thesis analyses imagery in the work of Edward Burra from 1919-36. It outlines sources and suggests a context for their interpretation. The introduction sets out Burra's distinctive approach and his internationalist stance. Introduction to Section One considers the specific nature of Burra's involvement with urban themes and establishes Burra's interest in city groups and types in the 1920s. Chapter One shows how the works of 1923-26 draw on the historical precedent of the crowd as 'popular voice' in English 18th and 19th Century satirical prints and literature and exploit the foreign crowd as a metaphor for Mediterranean pleasure. Chapter Two considers the group images of abroad: bohemian cafes, chic night clubs, Mediterranean terraces and bars and the Parisian bal-musette. Their sources in British, French and German painting, illustration, literature, film and popular culture as well as Burra's own experience are outlined. In Chapter Three, the prostitute and the sailor as distinctive urban types are linked to Burra's knowledge of the South of France and to sources in English and French literature, contemporary painting, German film and popular culture. Burra's use of devices from New Vision and photo-reportage photography is examined. In Chapter Four, the theme of urban entertainment is considered in relation to Burra's travels to Paris, Barcelona and Madrid, and New York. In particular Harlem night and street culture suggests a distinctive purchase on abroad as a spectacular show, incorporating the display of criminal types.

Introduction to Section Two outlines the themes dominant in Burra's work from c.1929-1936. It offers parallels with contemporary British and Surrealist interests and sets changes in iconography and style against the socio-political situation of c.1929-31. Chapter Five considers Burra's collage practice and places it against Dada and Surrealist artists' use of the medium. It examines sources in Ernst's work and suggests a distinctive type of humour at work. Chapter Six relates Burra's imagery to Freudian concepts and records the influence of Conrad Aiken's work. It places these interests within surrealist investigations in the early 1930s. Chapter Seven examines the bird theme in Burra's works of the 1930s and its idea of sexual encounter. It examines Burra's use of anatomical and biomorphic metamorphosis, the importance of Ernst and Dalí, and Read's theoretical writings. It sets these against contemporary interests in totemism, anthropo-morphism, 'primitive' sculpture and alchemy. These works propose the female perfomer as an erotic figure carrying associations of the femme fatale. In the conclusion, Burra's contribution to British Surrealism and modernism in the Inter-War years is assessed and the importance of this period to later developments in Burra's work evaluated.

Introduction to the Thesis.

My thesis analyses imagery in the work of Edward Burra in the period from 1919-1936 and referring to hitherto unpublished material contained in the Tate Archive, London and in private collections, suggests a context for their interpretation. Unpublished interviews with Burra's friends and relatives have also been tremendously useful in supplementing these sources. Furthermore, the recent publication of extensive secondary material on Burra's life has greatly expanded knowledge of his work and his interests in the Inter-War period. Recollections and memoirs by Burra's circle of friends in William Chappell's Edward Burra. A Painter Remembered by his Friends (1985) and a collection of Burra's letters, Well dearie! The Letters of Edward Burra (1985), edited by Chappell, have provided a wealth of previously unknown biographical details about the artist and information about the circles in which he mixed. These sources along with the timely publication of Andrew Causey's Complete catalogue (1985) and the Hayward Gallery, London retrospective catalogue (1985) have contributed considerably to the earlier critical studies by John Rothenstein in Edward Burra (1945) and the Tate Gallery exhibition catalogue (1973).

These available publications have given detailed accounts of Burra's interests and in particular they have focused on his family background. To summarize, Burra was born in 1905 into a wealthy, upper middle class family who owned a large early Victorian house at Springfield, Playden, near Rye. Burra came from a highly conventional

and politically conservative family, whose values he never completely rebelled against. This comfortable background provided him with the social skills and well-bred manners, which allowed him to mix in élite society circles without being conspicuously out of place. Burra's father, a London barrister, encouraged his son's interest in art from an early age recognizing that Burra's ill health, due to an attack of rheumatic fever combined with anaemia at the age of 13, would not allow a conventional career. The settlement on him of a private income allowed Burra to study art and practise as an artist freed from financial constraints throughout his life.

Due to his ill health, Burra's education was unconventional and irregular, and had to be carried out largely at home, with the exception of a period from 1913-19 when he attended a boarding school in Potters Bar. Because Burra was taught at home, the family library at Springfield played a crucial role in forming his early tastes. Its importance was noted by Rothenstein in his writings and more recently, this has been reinforced by the artist's sister, Anne Ritchie, and by William Chappell in their contributions to Edward Burra, A Painter Remembered by his Friends (1982). As they note, the library contained a wide range of English and French literature, which had been amassed by Burra's parents and grandparents, and a substantial collection of art books and art journals dating from the 1860s. These played an important role in providing Burra with an extensive knowledge of art history. Of special note were the large selection of mid-Victorian and Edwardian art magasines and art history publications, which had been collected by Burra's grandfather. These included reproductions of English satirical prints by Hogarth,

Cruickshank and Gillray, late 19th-Century and early 20th-Century illustrations and studies of 19th-Century British and French painters.

Burra's artistic training started first with art classes in Rye, from c. 1919-21, with a local teacher, Miss Bradley, and then in the art department of Chelsea Polytechnic from 1921-23. His earliest surviving works are pencil and ink drawings with watercolour dating from 1922. They represent the Springfield environment including family members and picnic groups, and also feature local scenes such as markets. The way in which they focus on narrative content and on recording appearances and gestures indicates that Burra's early artistic approach was illustrational in conception and influenced by graphic sources, particularly prints and engravings. The works suggest a method of working in which figure outlines and a mass of details were drawn within a general composition and then key areas of interest, such as facial features or dress, were worked up. This allowed the quick accumulation of visual data with watercolour or coloured wash being applied afterwards to emphasize decorative patterns or suggest local colour.

Throughout his art training, Burra concentrated on becoming proficient in drawing; a skill which he had identified from an early age as the key to becoming a professional artist. At Chelsea, he studied life drawing, illustration and architectural drawing. Life drawings and portraits of friends from 1923-24 reveal an accomplished ability to render the human figure in simplified, clear outlines. From 1923-25, Burra continued his studies at the Royal College of Art at a time when, under William Rothenstein's direction, the College was adopting a

changed role as a training ground for practical designers and artists. Under the tutelage of Randolph Schwabe and Raymond Coxon, Burra's skill as a draughtsman developed further and he considered registering for another year in the Autumn of 1925, but decided against this.

Burra's work from this period emphasizes through its wide range of imagery and inclusion of different types of experience that he had from the early 1920s established an idiosyncratic conception of art. The works include subjects from literature, such as Walter de la Mare's Peacock Pie (1913), register interests drawn from contemporary art, such as the gypsy subjects made fashionable by Augustus John, and use ideas derived from magasine illustrations taken from the weekly comic papers such as Chips, Comic Cuts and Peg's Paper. They reveal Burra as being adept at infusing subjects set at art school with his own interests, often incorporating details chronicling contemporary life.

For example, many works conspicuously focus on travel as a major theme. Whilst this theme may have been encouraged by Burra's first-hand experience of travel to Switzerland with his mother in 1920, it was a subject which he derived from the contemporary fashion magasines such as Vogue and Tatler, which he was reading at this time. Vogue covers, illustrated by Georges Lepape, Helen Dryden and Erté, featured foreign travel and continental fashion as modern subjects for illustrators. Furthermore, they employed a stylized figure language and flattened spacial depth, which Burra adopted in many of his works. This fascination with an elaborate, theatrical style was further reinforced by Burra's interest in the theatre and costume designs of Albert Rutherston and Claude Lovat Fraser, and later from 1925, in

those of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes which performed in London. This interest is most fully recognised in Burra's later theatre and costume designs for Rio Grande (1932) and Barabau (1936); projects which have been recalled in more detail by Frederick Ashton and Ninette de Valois in their contributions to Chappell's Edward Burra, A Painter Remembered by his Friends (1982).

More "serious" fashion journals such as Vogue and Tatler were influential on the younger generation of the 1920s because of their cosmopolitan approach and wide ranging reviews, especially featuring Paris exhibitions, French literature and music as well as fashion reports. They provided Burra with regular exposure to contemporary French taste. Burra had developed from pre-art school days a knowledge of French literature, which had been encouraged by private French lessons. From the early 1920s, he had studied Zola, Balzac, Hugo, Baudelaire, Verlaine and Rimbaud, and in the mid-1920s, this interest extended to younger authors such as Paul Morand, Francis Carco, Blaise Cendrars and Pierre MacOrlan. Clover de Pertinez in her recollection in Edward Burra, A Painter Remembered by his Friends (1982) has also stressed the important influence which English franco-phile illustrators and novelists, such as Aubrey Beardsley, Oscar Wilde and most of all, Ronald Firbank, had upon Burra. These writers and illustrators, Firbank especially, encouraged Burra's idiosyncratic, highly theatrical and humorous approach to art and offered a distinctive attitude towards abroad - France in particular- as a liberation from the ordinary, the conventional and the tasteful.

From his time at Chelsea Polytechnic, Burra formed a circle of close friends that included William Chappell, Barbera Ker-Seymer and Clover de Pertinez with whom he shared many interests including jazz music, theatre, film, music hall and later, photography. These cosmopolitan interests provided Burra with a fertile source of ideas which were included on an equal basis in his work with suggestions drawn from his artistic training and his knowledge of British and French literary and artistic traditions. Burra's eagerness to exploit the shockingly new from urban experience was accommodated in his early paintings as a valuable part of the total lexicon of meanings. Burra's recognition of all forms of modern stimulus as enriching produced a type of painting in the early 1920s which was unusual in British Art for its eclecticism,-eclecticism both in terms of ideas and the wide range of its urban imagery.

In contrast to Burra's works on urban themes, there is a group of landscape paintings and drawings of English rural scenes, which date from 1927. These sketches, oil and watercolour paintings are related to a period of convalescence after Burra's illness at home and strongly suggest Nash's influence at this time. They focus on the intimacy of the Burra family home and its English middle-class domesticity and depict views of the Springfield gardens and its surroundings. They signal, if only briefly, a refuge from the gregarious, public scenes associated with the foreign city. These works are important in the light of Burra's later landscapes, which fall outside the scope of the thesis, and anyway they have been fully discussed by Andrew Causey in his introduction to the Complete Catalogue (1985) and in his essay on the late landscapes in the

Hayward Gallery catalogue (1985). Because they are so different in motive from the urban scenes, and have been discussed so fully by Causey in relation to a native tradition of English Romantic landscape painting, they have not been dealt with in this thesis.

Instead, my reading of Burra's work from the early 1920s up to 1936 - the height of the artist's involvement with European avant-garde developments and English Surrealist activity- seeks, through a thematic structure, to interpret Burra's paintings and reveal their extensive reference to modern European art, literature and popular culture. I believe that by placing Burra's works in such an international context their meanings can be understood most fully.

Introduction to Section One: The City and Urban Themes post-1919.

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, the subject of the city with its crowds, characters and social formations remains a dominant one in Burra's work. Whilst on the one hand, the works record modern urban culture and specific details of contemporary life in this period, on the other, Burra's image of the metropolis is also heavily indebted to a wide range of fictional and historical sources. These incorporate 'High' and 'popular' art forms and manipulate earlier traditions of urban representation, in particular, the English satirical print and Victorian and Edwardian illustration. In addition, the concept of the city in Burra's paintings is inscribed by literary fictions of urban life, its types and distinctive experience. These present the city, both at home and abroad, as a site of distinctive differences in social, political, moral and sexual manners.

In this section, which covers Burra's early formation, his Art School training at Chelsea Polytechnic from 1921-23 and at the Royal College of Art from 1923-25, his contact with Paul Nash and the crucial experience of travel abroad from 1925, I shall examine four main areas. In the works completed between 1923-26, I intend to outline how the working class street crowd of the East End of London as a symbol of the popular London 'voice' emerges as an early form of metropolitan fiction. This was indebted to representations of the city crowd in the English satirical print, in 19th Century illustration and literature. The taverna-bar as a theme is also evident at this period as a milieu of showy display and is employed in Burra's work as a metaphor for foreignness and continental

cosmopolitanism, which, whilst drawing on similar sources, offers a distinctive view of abroad against which the native crowd is contrasted.

Secondly, in works completed from 1925-26, I want to examine how such a fiction of abroad is combined with details drawn from the actual experience of foreign travel, to map out the particular geography of the Mediterranean port. I shall suggest that the references to the Southern marketplace and its crowd in these works, signal the peculiar attraction of the Mediterranean as a public culture and suggests a type of glamour elucidated in Victorian and Edwardian travel guides and novels, read prior to Burra's travels abroad. Furthermore, this view of abroad, which mixes selective fact with exotic imaginative fictions characterizes Burra's attitude towards the foreign city up to 1927. It is also particularly marked in the emergence of the figures of the prostitute and the sailor as conspicuous urban characters.

In Burra's works after 1927, this fascination with the foreign metropolis[15] continued in images which reveal the appeal of urban sub-cultural groups. In particular, it underscored the distinctive 'dandy' physiognomy, which appears at this time. I shall show how these images of Parisian chic nightclubs and bars, which suggest a thriving, elite 'beau monde', were tied geographically and historically to bohemian Montparnasse and Montmartre, to its coteries at Le Dôme and to Cocteau's Le Boeuf sur le Toit. I shall investigate how these works employ the visual data of first-hand knowledge more extensively than the earlier works and consider how

this was linked to Burra's personal experience of Paris, notably its bals-musette and café bars, and the South of France, and their wealthy, expatriate circles. Furthermore, I shall show how this dandy stereotype drew on a wider range of sources from German satire, French literature and English caricature in the late 1920s.

The subjects of the Mediterranean terrace and balcony also date from this period. They are linked to the joys of leisure without direct social responsibility and refer to 19th Century French literature and painting. In the works, I shall examine how these glamorous group images relate to Burra's first-hand experience of the Mediterranean, represent his most sophisticated manipulation of continental Neo-Classicism, and exploit a wide range of eclectic references within the conversation piece genre. The parallel with Commedia dell' Arte subjects in French painting of the 1920s will be drawn.

From September 1927, the subjects of Mediterranean sailors' bars lay claim to the portside sub-culture of the South. This was derived from Burra's knowledge of French popular literature and illustration. Such a revealing *derivation* was indebted to the contemporary fiction of a subversive and attractive sub-culture, which existed beyond the territories of everyday city life. This fictional view of 'the South' and its Mediterranean port culture was prevalent in popular novels, films and illustrations and endured throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s. It acted as a screen upon which exotic, often erotic, fantasies of abroad and illicit contact with 'low-life' could be projected. I intend to show how Burra's work made use of such

imaginative understandings at this time to emphasize the appeal of the Mediterranean in his paintings.

Thirdly, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Burra's paintings focus on the sailor and the prostitute as the city's most celebrated protagonists. Both are complex figures, who have extensive genealogies in popular culture as figures on the edge of society. The sailor as 'Jolly Jack Tar' initially elicited heroic associations in Burra's work drawn from popular English literary sources. However, after Burra's experience of Toulon and Marseilles, and exposure to a French mythology of the sailor current in novels, films and songs of the 1920s and 30s, the sailor as amoral seducer and womaniser becomes an exotic and erotic configuration around whom differences between home and abroad could be readily juxtaposed.

A different low-life mythology also informed the figure of the prostitute in Burra's work. As a recognizable type, she elaborates a sophisticated set of understandings, which similarly mix historical and contemporary sources. In Burra's work of the early 1930s, the prostitute is represented as a characterization of deviancy, who has all the fascinations of an outcast. I shall consider how Burra's early considerations of the subject employs a typology from the English satirical print and symbolism from 19th Century painting and literature to suggest moral differences. However, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Burra's work reveals a knowledge of a type common to popular French novels, films and songs. The prostitute in these paintings plays a signal role as the woman of the night, who marks the edge of the underworld zone and stands as a conspicuous indicator

of the borders of immorality and impropriety. In her distinctive physiognomy, I intend to outline how Burra's works referred directly to sources in German film and photography, French illustration and urban photo-reportage. Furthermore, I shall show how in the final consideration of this theme in works completed between 1930-31, the dangers to the prostitute of such a transgressive role and visible stance, are clearly elucidated as seemingly innocent nightlife scenes become fraught with metaphors for the violence of the city street.

Finally, in Burra's work throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, the foreign city is imaged in terms of its vibrant nightlife. Music halls, 'folies-revues' striptease shows and cabarets propose a glamorous and spectacular night-culture. This was initially tied to Paris and related to the artist's personal experience of the city. However, this notion of spectacle was also indebted to novels, to photo-reportage and popular cultural sources. I shall outline how these paintings on the theme of urban entertainment parallel contemporary interests in urban 'night-culture' and refer to meanings circulating within these sources. In addition, in the works, which chronicle visits to Barcelona, Madrid, Harlem and New York, Burra represents the distinctive popular entertainments and memorable practitioners of each city in appropriate contemporary milieus. In the case of Spanish culture, these are the flamenco dancer and the bullfighter. In Harlem, the dynamism of Negro dancers or exoticism of Hispanic performers takes centre stage. The New York striptease show alternatively suggests an Americanized commercialization of the burlesque linked to cheap thrills and the spectacle of nudity. In all of these paintings, Burra employs imagery from his own experience

of foreign travel mixed with fictions of the city drawn on earlier popular sources. I shall compare such interests with contemporary literary and popular sources, which also accentuated the distinctive appeal of the foreign city in terms of the allure of the spectacular and exotic.

I shall conclude by noting how Burra's paintings of Harlem street scenes survey the neighbourhood as a distinctive arena of 'mean streets' inhabited by criminal and deviant types. These works offer the modern metropolis as a hiding place for exotic women and deformed men, and propose the Harlem street as a stage for an extraordinary display of urban outcasts. This public face of deviancy aligns itself with the nocturnal entertainments of the city's shows, dance halls and cabarets as a spectacular expose of the culture of the modern metropolis.

The theme of the city dominates Burra's work from his period at Chelsea Polytechnic in 1921-23 and the Royal College of Art in 1923-25 and continued throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. Burra's drawings and watercolours completed prior to his arrival in London expressed an interest in idiosyncratic individuals such as thieves, gypsies and tramps, or performers and dancers, often drawn from literary sources such as Walter de La Mare's Peacock Pie (1913) in The Thief (1922) [CC.11] and popular weekly papers such as Lots o'Fun and Comic Cuts.[1] These figures, often recycled in religious or classical group compositions, are depicted in panoramic landscapes full of metaphors for travel- boats, ships and trains, such as The Three Graces (c. 1923-4) [CC.19] or The Annunciation (1922) [CC.14]

or embarking on journeys in foreign landscapes such as Walkers (1922) [CC.12].[2] Only for a brief period in 1927-8 does the city as a subject again give way to paintings of Springfield interior views such as Drawing Room at Springfield (1927) [CC.26], local landscapes such as Cedar at Springfield (1927) [CC.25], The View (1927) [CC.34] and Landscape at Springfield (1927) [CC.30], a group scene at Springfield in The Garden (1927) [CC.28] and his oil portrait of William Chappell (1928) [CC.37], when illness forced Burra to remain at home.[3]

However, the early illustrational conception and caricatural mode of these drawings continued in many of Burra's works throughout the 1920s. The humorous vein consistently a feature of Burra's work was out of step with the professional attitude expounded in academic circles at this time. As John Rothenstein has noted, it was a "blend of mannerisms",[4] which was "never favoured by the establishment".[5] The Studio review of the Royal College of Art Student show in 1924 noted that such academic concerns had resulted in:"a mass of dull, uninspired work..in some measure redeemed by an occasional glimmer of original thought or evidence of a creative instinct struggling for expression..[but] too often merely dull echoes of the past".[6] When seen against the dominant forms of landscape and still-life paintings in the early 1920s influenced by Bloombury aesthetic values, Burra's fascination with the vulgar energy of the city and its popular culture recorded in an illustrational way in watercolour was distinctive both in subject and idiom.

However, Burra's inclusion in group exhibitions of the New English Art Club in 1927 and 1928 and the London Group in 1929 and 1930, suggest an appropriate, if heterogeneous English context in which to place Burra's paintings of the foreign urban scene. In their pro-French affiliations and continental subjects, Burra's work seems to have been most suitably placed in the company of Sickert and the Camden Town artists and within that tradition of late 19th Century and early 20th Century British realist painting, which developed a modern language from foreign sources to represent casual urban scenes.[7] In this respect, Roberts's portrayals of London life also paralleled Burra's interest in popular forms of leisure, but were distinctive through their focus on localized London communitites in the early 1920s.

Paul Nash was especially instrumental in providing Burra with more advanced technical and formal means of representing city subjects. Nash, who was an assistant in the School of Design at the Royal College of Art from September 1924 until July 1925 and then moved in 1925 to Iden near Rye, close to Burra's home, taught Burra wood engraving and probably helped him with oil painting technique.[8] Nash's status and contacts on the British art scene in the 1920s were important in gaining access for Burra to these contemporary English exhibition groups and in introducing Burra to the work of R.H. Wilenski, whose The Modern Movement in Art (1927) provided an uncompromising definition of a 'modern classical' artistic language.[9] It also offered an account of the progression of classical modernism in Britain, which placed English exponents such as Lewis, Spencer, Gertler and Wadsworth and above all, Nash himself, as "the leading

..artist of the modern movement in this country" within a post-War European context.'[10] In addition, Burra's knowledge of Cocteau's writings, particularly Le Retour à l'Ordre, combined with an increased exposure to contemporary French artistic debates and painting, both through first-hand experience and through magazines such as Le Crapouillot from 1926 and Cahiers d'Art from 1926, were an important stimulus in the late 1920s.

A second major influence was modern photography. Burra and Nash together studied influential foreign avant-garde periodicals such as Der Querschnitt and Variétés and experimented with photography and photographic devices drawn from their knowledge of German Neue Sachlichkeit photography and its French practitioners. The casual, but detached viewpoint central to New Photography's urban approach becomes a feature of Burra's paintings from 1928-9, applied to themes and subjects developed earlier in the 1920s. The compositional and formal rhetoric of modern city photographs becomes employed to revitalize a realist pictorial language by giving it a thoroughly modern gloss in style and approach.

An essential aspect of this pro-internationalist attitude was Burra's travels abroad, notably his periods of residence in Paris and New York, and the wealth of artistic sources available in these cities in the 1920s and 30s including exhibitions, publications, art journals and museums. In addition, their abundance of popular cultural coverage - films, literature, photography, music and popular magazines verified the richness of modern metropolitan culture as a source for his work. It also provided Burra with an endless stream of ideas and images

through which to approach modern urban experience and represent the city. It is the influence of these sources upon Burra's work in the 1920s and early 1930s that forms the central study of this section.

1. Cf., introduction C.C. p.11.
2. Cf., H.G. pp. 75-6 for discussion of early works.
3. Cf., C.C. p. 16. For a broader discussion of landscape painting see CAUSEY, Andrew. "The Late Landscapes" in H.G. pp. 52-57.
4. J.R. p. 11.
5. ROTHENSTEIN, John. Modern English Painters Vol. III: Wood to Hockney, London 1976, p. 109.
6. Studio, July-December 1924 pp. 200-3.
7. At the New English Art Club December 1927 exhibition, Burra exhibited The Patio (lost) and in June 1928, Familia Bar (also lost). Burra exhibited Grog (lost) at the 27th London Group exhibition, 1929 and Eruption of Vesuvius (1930) [CC.62] at the 28th exhibition, 1930.
8. H.G. p. 145. and CAUSEY, Andrew. Paul Nash, Oxford 1980 p. 125.
9. WILENSKI, R.H. The Modern Movement in Art, London 1927, ed 1946 p. 7.
10. WILENSKI 1946 op. cit. p. 146.

Chapter One: Fictions of the city: 'home' and 'abroad' 1923-26.

Within the period 1923-26, the predominant subject in Burra's work is the city, its crowds and landscapes. These are usually multiple figure compositions and can be divided into works such as The Crowd (1923) [CCD.4] and Casey's Court (1923-4) [pl.1], which offer fiction formed images of the East End of London, a painting such as The Taverna (1924) [CC.20], which through the subject of the foreign taverna considers the milieu as a site of difference between British and foreign, usually Mediterranean, cultures and those paintings completed after Burra's first experience of travel abroad in 1925, French Scene (1925-6) [CC.21], Fiesta (1925-6) [CC.22] and Market Day (1926) [CC.23], which mix fictional images with actual details drawn from first-hand experience of abroad.

The fiction of London's East End is the dominant subject in The Crowd and Casey's Court. In the drawing, Casey's Court, the London postal code of E9 is clearly indicated below the street sign referring to the borough of Hackney in the East End of the city. The run down Victorian terraces with their narrow alley ways and passages, represent the commonplace topography of an urban slum. According to Barbera Ker-Seymer, these early drawings were made on Burra's forays into working class parts of London at the time when Burra was attending the Royal College of Art in 1923-24.[1]

The Crowd introduces the subject of the wandering street crowd in a similar urban working class neighbourhood and the figures of the

sailor, the prostitute and the thief. The sailor both as British Jack Tar in bell-bottomed drills and foreign tourist with New York cap, the prostitute in outrageous dress and carrying flowers and the robber engaged in a mugging behind the trees, are represented. Street display accompanied by violence and vice are the most important aspects of this urban experience. It carries all the hallmarks of the shockingly promiscuous street, a place where women clutch their babies protectively close to them, where street brawls are common and the thoroughfare becomes: "a refuge for the desperado, the thief, the cadger and the prostitute."[2]

Such an adoption of the dynamic East End crowd theme and the use of the street as a stage for conflict, thieving and prostitution are revealing selections. They both have long imaginative traditions in British literature and visual culture, and were oft used metaphors in English 18th and 19th Century satirical prints and novels for a national collective stereotype. In particular, in 18th Century literature, the crowd standing as a symbol for the popular voice tied to the London mob, articulated a distinctive attitude.[3] As Raymond Williams in The Country and the City (1973) has commented, London in the literature of Fielding, Defoe and Gay was:"a darker reality ... [in] the ambivalent low-life vigour of Gay's Beggar's Opera or Defoe's Moll Flanders, the sense of actuality of London is at the opposite pole from the ideal of civilised order. The 'insolent rabble', 'the insolence of the mob', 'the idle, profligate and debauched workmen' are commonplaces of middle-class observation."[4]

This model of the London crowd as a spectacle of disreputable types in Burra's works makes reference to that English satirical print tradition represented by Hogarth, Ramberg, Gillray and Rowlandson. Illustrations of their work were contained in Thomas Wright's A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art (1865) as well as in collections of prints or individual studies such as Eliot Anstruther's William Hogarth (1902) kept in the Springfield Library.[5] This linking of the London crowd with vice and immorality is prevalent in Hogarth's Gin Lane (1751) [pl.2] and J.H.Ramberg's The Humours of St. Giles (1788) [pl.3], which visualize the city street transformed by the mob into a market place for "whoredom and drunkenness" and "haven for every sort of misfit".[6] The view of the urban throughfare as an enticing and corrupt theatre in which: "vice has spread her temptations and pleasure her seductions", is central to Hogarth's Morning (1738) [pl.4] or The Harlot's Progress (1731-2) [pl.5]. It is an illicit fiction shared by Burra's The Crowd in which the street is proposed as an endless source of fascination and the crowd as a collective identity for the 'low' and the 'popular'.[7]

Hogarth's work also presented precedents for situations relevant to modern moral subjects - or 'comic history paintings' as Fielding was to call Hogarth's scenes - and imaged the stereotypes of the prostitute and the womaniser, which were later developed by Burra.[8] In Hogarth's Morning, these are linked to the all-night taverns and brothels of Covent Garden. Whilst in The Harlot's Progress, the manoeuvres of procurement and distinctive features of the prostitute, are visualized. Hogarth's work was also

important in providing a type of subject matter in which comedy and irony, and English low life scenes and characters were combined.[9] Burra's interest in dramatic narrative, its sexual overtones and absurd, often flippant, humour frequently overrides the more rigorous moral aspects of Hogarthian satire and account for differences in tone between these two artists' work. Burra's 'comic histories' highlight the deception of appearances and manners, the novelty of fashion and the theatre of sexual performance as a revealing commentary on the contemporary scene.

An important source in this respect, also contained in the Springfield Library, was Pierce Egan's Life in London (1821), illustrated by Robert and George Cruickshank. Illustrations from Egan's work show its chief protagonists- the young adventurers Tom and Jerry - enjoying the illicit entertainments and nocturnal pleasures of city low-life, notably Midnight at a Coffee shop near the Olympic [pl.6]. Cruickshank exploits the comedy of the scene showing fighting women, drunkards cavorting and the dandies being manoeuvred by prostitutes. The deception of appearance and intention is indicated through the presence of the fashionable visitors for illicit purposes and the conscious glamour of the prostitute who is soliciting. The irony of this is readily conveyed by the paintings on the wall entitled 'innocence' and 'virtue'.[10]

As Peter Stallybrass and Allon White have noted, such milieus as "citadels of crime and vice" suggested the survival of a hidden sub-culture beneath the 'civilized' respectability of the city's

appearances and were a popular fiction of London in literature and prints of the early 19th Century. As they note: "Tom and Jerry find 'life' (i.e. drinking, dancing, swearing) in the East End of London, where "lascars, blacks, jacktars, coal hevers, women of colour, old and young and a remnant of once fine girls etc., were all jigging together".[11] This fascination with the illicit and immoral aspects of city life expressed in terms of nightlife slumming and the location of the East End of London environment, is also shared by Burra. However, it is the comedy of manners and spectacle of sexual mores, which attracts/attention. Whilst Burra's early works suggest an awareness of fictional types and figurative codes derived from such early 19th Century English sources, his figures publicly loiter in/modern streets in Crowds and Casey's Court, and conspicuously gather under a lamp in Tarts (1923) [CCD.8].

These early drawings were also indebted to 19th Century novels, which presented urban themes, to Dickens, Scott, Gissing and Harrison Ainsworth. The imaginative fiction of low-life London was most conspicuous in Dickens's novels and the Springfield Library contained a large range of his works, including illustrated editions by Cruickshank and 'Phiz'. As Burra's sister recalled, Dickens's novels were read to Burra as a child and 19th Century copies of his Great Expectations and Oliver Twist ("a favourite" according to John Rothenstein) were collected by Burra.[12]

Considering The Crowd and Casey's Court in relation to these Dickens's novels, three similarities can be noted. Firstly, the

representation of the urban scene in Burra's drawings retains a strongly narrative conception, which is geographically tied to London. In Casey's Court, recognizable names and identifiable slum architecture fix the location as London's East End. This view of London compares with Dickens's descriptions in Nicholas Nickleby (1839) and Oliver Twist (1837-9), where the scrutiny of the city concentrates on realistic detail to document the labrynthine East End of London with its "maze of close, narrow and muddy streets". In Sketches by Boz (1839), Dickens offers a description of its "squalid misery":"The filthy and miserable appearance of this part of London can hardly be imagined by those (and there are many such) who have not witnessed it. Wretched houses with broken windows patched with rags and papers...filth everywhere- a gutter before the houses and a drain behind- clothes drying and slops emptying from the windows...men and women in every variety of scanty and dirty apparel, lounging, scolding, drinking, smoking, squabbling, fighting and swearing".[13] This parallels the decrepitude of Burra's Casey Court.

Also, the way in which Burra uses incident to link parts of the composition together suggests Dickens's method of moving from incident to incident to dramatize narrative. For example in The Crowd, its winding form leads attention from the distant street with its brawl, to the courting couples and sexual encounters in the foreground, to the woman protecting her child from the sights of the street, to the lamp-post and its posed prostitute and illicit negotiations and on to the violent attack in the bushes.

Secondly, underlining Burra's attitude towards the city and its types, there is a fiction-fed rather than experienced approach to the working classes. The poor in Burra's early works have all the Pickwickian charm of Dickens's Sketches by Boz (1836) and Pickwick Papers (1836-7). Burra like Dickens, focuses on the city's variety of types and their social mores, but highlights the comic extravagances and absurdities of human behaviour. These works employ recognizable stereotypes by means of distinctive physiognomy, standardized facial features and characteristic details - for example, in The Crowd, the prostitute is obvious by her posed stance, her flower-patterned dress and heavily made-up appearance; the sailor is pinpointed because of his Jack Tar costume and hat; the city gent is identified by his lounge suit, his wide-brimmed hat, cane and cigar and the criminal's presence is noted lurking in the shadows with his knife at the ready. But they also display a special attention to the individualized comic and often, absurdly idiosyncratic, aspects of characters. The crowd has a quaintness and picturesque quality about it, and the street as a meeting place for incongruous types is a site of curiosity and entertainment, rather than scientific analysis. In this sense, The Crowd and Casey's Court share more with Dickens's earlier melodramatic and often humorous accounts of London life such as Sketches by Boz or Oliver Twist, than with that more documentary vein of 19th Century literature represented by late Dickens or writers such as Gissing.[14]

For example, in Sketches by Boz, Dickens describes a scene at Seven Dials :

"where there is such a maze of streets, courts, lanes and alleys..as will see enough around him to keep his curiosity and attention awake for no inconsiderable time..On one side a little crowd has collected around a couple of ladies, who having imbibed the contents of various 'three-outs' of gin and bitters in the length of the morning, have differed on some point of domestic arrangement and are on the eve of settling the quarrel satisfactorily, by an appeal of blows, greatly to the interest of the other ladies...The scuffle became general.."[15]

This suggests the London crowd as novelty, rather than the reality of: "London as a place of squalid misery and terror."[16] Similarly, in The Crowd, for example, it is a sense of the enjoyment of the more theatrical aspects of working class life and its comic street melodrama, - the distant brawl and the parade of the prostitutes - rather than the squalor of poverty which impresses.

This attitude is especially pronounced in the way that Burra's representation of the prostitute and the criminal - members of the 'dangerous classes' of 'outcast London'- are filtered through a fictionalizing process, which accentuates their eccentricity and individuality, rather than their threatening or subversive aspects. In The Crowd, the prostitute on the right, although a type has an individualized, rather odd expression as she propositions her prospective client. This suggests a romanticized approach. In a similar way, in Oliver Twist, the memorable types of Sikes, the criminal outcast; the devilish Fagin; Dodger, the juvenile pick-pocket and Nancy, the sentimentalized prostitute reveal Dickens's romanticizing tendencies. The irony of an early description of the two prostitutes, Bet and Nancy in Oliver Twist, highlights the humour of Dickens's approach:

> "The young ladies..wore a good deal of hair, not very neatly turned up behind, and were rather untidy about the shoes and

> stockings. They were not exactly pretty, perhaps; but they had a great deal of colour in their faces and looked quite stout and hearty. Being remarkably free and agreeable in their manners, Oliver thought them very nice girls indeed. As there is no doubt they were".[17]

In Oliver Twist, the gaiety and cameraderie of underworld life is accentuated with what Dickens termed "the allurements and fascinations thrown around them". The overriding impression, as Angus Wilson has noted, is Dickens as: "the master of the grand guignol".[18] Peter Keating has suggested that Dickens's distinctive qualities were: "his fun, strikingly visual chracterisation, uncanny inside knowledge of London...and the way he managed to refine away the coarser aspects of the 19th Century, while retaining an emotional sympathy for the deprived [without] the bitter satire of Hogarth".[19] Burra's urban scenes suggest such a Dickensian attitude. His immoral figures in these works of 1923-24, remain picturesque stereotypes, who 'represent' rather than 'document' vice. They participate in the crowd as part of its spectacle rather than as genuine portraits of the London poor, which criticize urban distress and degradation or satirically comment on immorality and impropriety. This adoption of Dickens's idiosyncratic, comic tone is revealing of the more light-hearted, caricatural path, which Burra's work was to take in the late 1920s.

This sharp sense of the dramatic and comic in Burra's work, and the use of facial or bodily expression and details to depict low-life character types also suggest sources in Victorian illustration. Prominent amongst these were illustrations by

Cruickshank and 'Phiz', especially their illustrations to Dickens's novels, and Doré's view of the city in London - A Pilgrimage (1872).[20] These presented a substantial reference for the theme of "outcast London" and included many of the representative figures of the street - Cruickshank's illustration to Oliver Twist represents the prostitute in The Meeting, and the criminal, Sikes in The Last Chance in an exaggerated, melodramatic way[21][pl.7]. Doré's imaginative travelogue also mixed the drama of the city's slums with the bizarre features of its criminal underworld, depicting: "a whole great world of street characters: beggars, traders, scavengers, criminals and dwellers in low lodging houses or rookeries".[22] In a similar way to Burra's representation of this hidden sub-culture, Doré's illustrations, for example The Thieves Gambling or the Bull's Eye [pl.8], glamorize the spectacle of low-life as an investigative expose of those whose:"means of existence are precarious, disreputable and dishonest..all but unknown to the rest of the people, except when their wants and delinquencies intrude them into public notice".[23] Burra's fascination is with the discovery of London's marginalized characters and their illicit haunts, rather than the documenting of their conditions.

This often has a distinctively comic aspect in Burra's work and it is one shared by Phiz's illustrations to Dickens's Pickwick Papers, showing the ridiculous antics of the drunks under the influence of the Salmon [pl.10]. Alternatively, the exaggerated poses employed to suggest the Theatrical Emotion of Mr Vincent Crummles from Nicholas Nickleby (1838-9) or the more grotesque, caricature style

of the Crowd at Astley's Theatre from The Old Curiosity Shop (1840-41) [pl.11], provide further examples of an illustrative tradition incorporating popular urban comedy, which Burra's early works and their humorous tone parallel.[24]

The urban scenes in The Crowd and Casey's Court with their sources in earlier traditions established the illustrative and narrative conception of Burra's work. They suggest a view of art as a selective editing of the appearances of ordinary life, but without the loss of distinctive details of environment and individualized features. Burra's method of working in these drawings underlined this approach. It consisted of drawing in the general design and working up minute details of the composition. In The Crowd, attention is focused on the figure's dress, stance and features with details of costume and pattern intricately represented. The background spatial organization remains largely ignored with only the contours of buildings used to suggest slum architecture. The precision of the drawing and insistence upon areas of intricate detail emphasize the authority of the narrative content. This acute attention to detail in Burra's early work was also influenced by the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, in particular, Rossetti's and Madox Brown's "modern subjects".[25] The Springfield Library held a large number of reproductions of Pre-Raphaelite work and a copy of Percy Bates' English Pre-Raphaelite Painters (1901). As The Times critic later recognized, 31 May 1932, the graphic style of Burra's work revealed the "hard and impressive reality" of "Pre-Raphaelite pictures".[26]

In addition, Burra's professional training at Chelsea Polytechnic under Henry Rushbury and at the Royal College under Randolph Schwabe, reinforced this illustrative conception. Both artists had been discussed in Albert Rutherston's Contemporary British Artists-Draughtsmen (1924) as influential draughtsmen and watercolourists.[27] Rushbury, in a 1921 Studio review, was commended for a type of painting, which displayed: "a modernity of a middle kind, full of traditional English elements [in] the fine tradition of English landscape of the kind that the New English Art Club has struggled so hard to maintain".[28] Undoubtedly, both teachers' work provided examples of a type of native modernism practised within a recognizably English graphic tradition, and it had an important position in British art in the early 1920s.

This insistence upon the priority of subject over form was also strengthened by 19th Century illustration and the type of Victorian painting represented by Frith's Paddington Station (1862) in which narrative, literary quality and realistic, documentary detail offered the art work as an image to be read rather than considered as a whole. The achievement of this genre was:"its ability to present in the clearest possible form, hieratically and emblematically, the essentials of a social situation or ritual."[29] Such an attitude to art was markedly apparent after 1870, when there was a rapid growth in narrative subjects in British painting.[30] It was just these periods and areas, which were best represented in the Springfield library collections of 19th Century literature, Victorian and Edwardian

English and foreign journals and its collections of 19th Century reproductions and British prints.[31]

In particular, Victorian engravings on the subject of the East End poor were influential in vindicating this type of illustrative approach and in suggesting compositional models and accurate details. These were taken from middle class periodicals such as The Graphic, Harper's Weekly and The Illustrated London News by graphic artists such as Luke Fildes, Hubert van Herkomer and Frank Holl. Such illustrated journalism played a crucial role in mapping out the territories and appearances of the city's poor, its outsiders and deviants, as the object of fear and fascination.[32] In addition, the means of representation, linear engraving, offered a precedent for allying figurative subjects to a method based on a linear conception. Raymond Coxon, Burra's tutor at the Royal College of Art recognized the 19th Century illustrative sources for this method and recalled that: "The works seemed like echoes of 19th Century block stuff ... they were always very like the models. Hard edged and very precise."[33]

Furthermore, these illustrations presented a number of devices - groups, often in line and composed of individualized, but contrasting types, a strong frontal emphasis, comparisons between 'respectable' and 'low-life' characters and keenly observed details - which these early drawings employ. For example, Arthur Boyd Houghton's Night Charges on their way to Court [pl.11], published in The Graphic on 11 December 1869, exhibits many of these features, which are common to Burra's drawing.[34] In The

Crowd, prostitutes, sailors, city gents and other figures are juxtaposed in a line. In Houghton's row, pick-pockets, drunks, criminals and prostitutes are escorted by the police. Also in The Crowd, the presence of a 'respectable' mother protecting her child, rather than the police in Night Charges, suggests the necessity to be shielded from such pernicious influences. These types are also filed across the foreground in a manner similar to Houghton's composition, where they are presented as if to be observed. However, whilst Burra's work contains such devices, it has none of the documentary, socially- conscious realism of Houghton's or Holl's work, nor any of the heart-rend ing, sentimentality frequently associated with Filde's paintings, such as The Doctor, reproduced in the Graphic, 2 May 1891.[35] Instead, as already suggested, it is the allure of the spectacle of urban low-life, which fascinates Burra.

The Taverna (1924) [CC.20], Burra's earliest foreign interior scene, is also a fiction-fed image of the crowd of a tavern. It was started prior to Burra's actual experience of travel on the continent and this is evident in the way the exactitude and details of topography are left undisclosed. The choice of the taverna and the representation of the crowd as an exotic collection are revealing. They accentuate the social aspect of foreign leisure. The continental taverna, - a title, which I take to refer to any foreign site of social intercourse- has a long history as an arena where the politics of cultural difference could be appropriately discussed. It was the setting for that comedy of manners common in English satirical travel-prints such

as Henry William Bunby's The Kitchen of a French Post-House (1771) [pl.12], where exaggerated types featured as fictions of national difference.[36]

Furthermore, the subject of the urban group interior was shared with the work of William Roberts, whose exhibition at the Chenil Gallery in November 1923, Burra had seen. As Clover de Pertinez recalled:"we had seen many of Roberts's works...but always one or two at a time. We were very surprised when we arrived at an exhibition with rooms full of Roberts's work".[37] The theme of urban recreation was a central one in works such as The Dance Club (1923) [pl.13] and Discussions in a Café (c.1923) [pl.14]. The Taverna in its subject is similar to Roberts's Discussions in a Café. Both depict groups of figures drinking and in conversation, and display what contemporary reviewers praised in Roberts's paintings as an "intimate knowledge of the more characteristic aspects of contemporary life".[38]

Roberts's work was influential at this time as a model for a type of contemporary figure painting, which incorporated a coherent graphic design and a strong sense of formal three dimensionality. The critical reception of Roberts's 1923 exhibition commended his paintings "powerful draughtsmanship and knowledge of form" and his work was placed within a tradition of "native", "caricaturist humour".[39] Also, Roberts's modern figurative idiom displayed features derived from an understanding of French post-cubist painting, which in Britain was identified with a modern language of 'Realism'. In the post-War debate between 'Realism' and

'Formalism' -or as an earlier polemical article had simplistically branded it "Frith or Fry -A Modern Artistic Problem"- Roberts was a major exponent of the 'Realist' school in the tradition of Frith and 19th Century urban subjects.[40] This was undoubtedly the category into which Burra's paintings on city themes would have been placed, and it is not surprising that his first group exhibition was at The New English Art Club in December 1927 with its pro-French connections and reputation as a "modern society".[41] Burra's adoption of a group leisure scene subject with popular overtones and the way The Taverna acknowledges the figurative codes displayed in Roberts's interiors, implies a conscious allegiance with this tradition.

Furthermore, Burra's choice of a foreign scene of leisure for such a figurative language is also meaningful. This distances the painting from Roberts's subject-matter, recognized as local London working class scenes, and identifies with a continental locale. This is emphatically stated in The Taverna's imagery by couples eating exotic fruits, drinking wine and the use of distinctive coffee-pots. Female figures wearing flamboyant costumes, adopt elaborate poses and are openly approached by fashionably dressed suitors. Such a view suggests abroad in a generalized sense, and the taverna in particular as a site in which: "prohibitions and restrictions are waived and unaccustomed advances are not only permitted, but smiled on."[42] Such a fiction of abroad as an indulgence, free from the conventions and responsibilities of native British society, contrasted with Roberts's works' suggestions of a socially engaged, politically conscious art.

Whilst the taverna and its related public arenas -the café, bar or inn, have an extensive genealogy in British popular art, they also carried idealized associations of the freedom offered by the foreign experience.[43]

Such a glamorous projection was frequently presented in the travelogue, a literary genre, which may have in a generalized way informed this fiction. The Springfield library contained many Victorian and Edwardian travelogues, including Richard Ford's Gatherings from Spain (1906) and W.D. Howells's Venetian Life (1883) and it also had albums of foreign postcards relating to the family's extensive travels abroad.[44] These popular cultural forms; the travel-guide, the travel novel, the topographical print, the postcard and the snapshot, in their broadest sense 'spectacularized' abroad to glamorize the act of travelling and to stress the exoticism of the foreign.[45] Importantly in The Taverna, this spectacle of difference is given a distinctively Mediterranean flavour through the exotic costumes of the clientele, the lush vegetation outside and the sombrero type hats.

French Scene (1925-6) [CC.21], Fiesta (1926) [CC.22] and Market Day (1926) [CC.23], offer the experienced view of the Mediterranean. Burra travelled to Bordighera with his mother in Spring 1925 and to Paris with William Chappell in Autumn of that year. In these works, foreign names, places and words eagerly advertize the distinctive types of knowledge and information derived from foreign travel. Details of advertisements and slogans, and the particular landscapes of the Mediterranean are

clearly displayed. In Market Day, the jumble of sights - industrial buildings, chimneys, funnels, boats, trains and electric street lights- act as data acquired from foreign travel in an accumulative, rather than selective way. In French Scene, the language proclaims an intimate knowledge; 'Mont Orion' an area near Marseilles; 'Quinon' a brand of 'vin tonique'. In Fiesta, the luscious vegetation and portside market act as an authentic backcloth against which the ritual parade of the prostitutes takes place. These details report the artist's experience of foreign travel elucidating key areas of interest and giving information about abroad. The paintings accentuate the spectacle of abroad as an enchantment with difference. This focuses on the glamour of the market place. As Burra recorded in a letter to William Chappell: "the native population are too beautiful speshly the men I saw some exotic shirts with Kubismus decorations all over them ... it's just like an enormous Berwick St[reet Market] only more so."[46]

Abroad as an enormous marketplace is a revealing metaphor. In French Scene, the locale is a flower market in the South of France. From the destination Mont Orion on the bus, it could be either the Cours Saint Louis in Marseilles or the Cours Lafayette in Toulon. However, Burra had little detailed knowledge of these locations until after 1927. It suggests a fiction-formed conception with specific details added to authenticate the impression of abroad. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that the foreground figures of the flower-seller and the flower arranger are taken from drawings of family subjects,

Burra's nanny and mother. The man bent over, on the left, is possibly another Springfield figure.[47] The rest of the scene with its gaucho-type cowboy riding past, its exotic landscape, the crowd with its various racial types and the prostitutes in the foreground, draw on fictional sources.

In Fiesta, this is even more conspicuous as the market place crowd is almost entirely of composed of women, who have been completed first. From their flower-patterned dresses, extravagant poses and heavily made up appearance, these women are discernible as prostitutes. The male figures standing and seated in a café-terrace on the right-hand side are sketched in, but remain unfinished. The prostitutes by contrast, are represented in detail. The curves and contours of their bodies, their outrageous make-up, their flamboyant hats and patterned costumes stand out against the background landscape of luscious vegetation. Its imagery of trains and boats, suggesting travel and its foreign advertisements reinforce the impression of abroad, but the over-riding theme in this work, is the public display of vice associated with the foreign crowd.

Market Day is the most extensive consideration of the theme and introduces the figure of the sailor. In the foreground, two male figures carrying their kitbags across the crowded dockside street dominate the composition. Around them, mill the high-heeled, painted women of the red-light area, and the cornucopia of fleshy fruit carried above their head indicates the superabundance of the Mediterranean city and the exotic nature of its pleasures.

The representation of the sailor as a distinctive protagonist of urban vice, a rootless user of the city, a connoisseur of impersonal relationships and the sexual fix, and the object of erotic fantasy, is entirely appropriate to the image of the foreign city as vice.

The sources for the theme of the market place as a public theatre of modern urban manners was indebted to 19th Century French literature - to Balzac's La Comédie humaine (1831-47), Hugo's Les Misérables (1862), Sue's Les Mystères de Paris (1842) and most of all, Zola's Le Ventre de Paris (1873). All of these novels were in the Springfield Library.[48] Market Day stands in that French literary tradition in which the populous marketplace is seen as an emblem of cosmopolitan culture and maps out a special collectivity: "It is a point of intersection of different cultures ... [a site] where disruption of provincial habits and local traditions by the introduction of a certain cosmopolitanism, arousing desires and excitements for exotic and strange commodities."[49] This spectacle of the market place is central to Zola's portrayal of the Parisian central markets in Le Ventre de Paris as a fascinating 'other world':

"Quand il déboucha dans la grande rue, il songea à quelque ville étrange, avec ses quartiers distincts, ses faubourgs, ses villages, ses promenades et ses routes, ses places et ses carrefours, mise tout entière sous un hanger, un jour de pluie, par quelque caprice gigantesque ... et c'était, au-dessus de la ville, jusqu'au fond des ténèbres, tout une végétation, toute une floraison ... Mais dans les grandes rues couvertes, la vie affluait ... Au milieu du va-et-vient incessant de la foule, des voitures entraient sous les voûtes, et ralentissant le trot sonnant de leurs chevaux ... Ils marchèrent dans une odeur exquise qui trainait autour d'eux et semblait les suivre. Ils étaient au milieu du marché des fleurs coupées ... tout le carnaval de l'ancien marché des Innocents se trouvait enterré, à cette heure; on en était aux Halles centrales, à ce colosse de fonte, à cette ville nouvelle, si originale. Les imbéciles avaient beau dire, toute l'époque était là."[50]

In Burra's work this exotic fiction of the marketplace as microcosm is relocated within a distinctively Mediterranean context.

This was strengthened in a generalized way by travel literature and prints, which set the foreign city as an alluring simplification, unfamiliar and scandalous to the English visitor. The foreign market or public square place in the 18th Century satirical print was a site of comic incident and mockery. In Rowlandson's Place des Victoires (1783) [pl.15], outrageous fashions and dandified manners were lampooned as an indictment on French public manners.[51] However, Burra's Mediterranean crowd is not employed as such a humorous vehicle, but rather elucidates the glamour of the crowd's public spectacle. In this, it suggests accounts in Victorian guidebook and travelogues, which extolled the fascinations of the Mediterranean ports, their multi-racial crowds and their Latin temperament. Their marketplaces allowed a fraternization, which was unacceptable at home and the opportunity of an intimacy impossible within English middle class conventions. As John Pemble has recorded, one of the attractions of the Mediterranean marketplace was the freedom of a wider social contact: "In the large cities and sea ports of the South, such intimacies were socially acceptable."[52]

In addition, the formal language Burra employs in these paintings suggests literary sources. The stress on subject matter, the emphasis upon drawing and linear design and the particular attention to detail are revealing. They relate to 19th Century traditions of narrative painting in which giving information and describing place and characters was most important. They reveal an illustrative

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conception, which was much closer to Frith or Ford Maddox Brown than to Cézanne or Roger Fry's 'Post-Impressionism'. Secondly the works acknowledge their derivation from popular illustration. They exploit the iconography of popular culture especially foreign slogans, labels and signs to document 'abroad'. These are then incorporated as validation of the actual experience of travel as a form of graphic journalism. Finally, in their imaging of the iconography of the commonplace, particularly the everyday urban scene, the works employ realism as a pictorial means of disclosing social situations and rituals.[53]

Such a method of working and its popular sources reinforce the notion of 'popular' and 'illicit' when seen within the context of artistic production in the early post-War years. They suggest Burra's attitude towards art was one which prioritized narrative and literary qualities. Such an approach was derided by certain influential sections of the British art community as "crude" and "vulgar"; precisely those qualities which were associated in these works with the attraction of the foreign city and its popular culture. Most of the arguments used by Clive Bell to show why Frith's Paddington Station (1862) was not art, and used by Roger Fry to condemn Hogarth's work, could also be applied to these paintings. Their "dull and literal matter of factness" and "vulgarly trivial" subjects, their "crude insistence upon a story" and use of "line and colour ... to recount anecdotes" was seen to display a lack of cultural sophistication and to appeal to popular taste. Such vulgarity in the language of representation strengthens the predominant view of the foreign city and urban culture in these

paintings as a site, which was anathema to the underlying notions of sensibility and tastefulness of Bloomsbury's "advanced" art in the 1920s.[54]

Furthermore, The Taverna, Market Day, Fiesta and French Scene signalled two important areas of association through their subject matter. Firstly, they referred back to that tradition of radical modernism pioneered in pre-War British painting by Vorticism in which urban themes and crowds were important, for example Wyndham Lewis's The Crowd (1914-15). This was continued after the War, as already discussed, in the painting of urban genre scenes by William Roberts.[55] Secondly, they identified an allegiance to French 'modernism' through their links with artists such as Léger, Herbin and Metzinger. In British circles, this "style francais", as Manson called it in Apollo, March 1926, stressed a cosmopolitan modernism with a 'Realist-Idealist' orientation. An exhibition of Advanced French Art at the Mayor Gallery in January 1926, included recent works by Léger, Metzinger, Herbin and Gris on loan from the Galerie de l'Effort Moderne in Paris and offered an opportunity for Burra to study such work.[56]

As Christopher Green has suggested in Cubism and its Enemies- Modern Movements and Reactions in French Art 1916-1928 (1987), this form of 'Independent' realist painting was widely promoted by art journals such as L'Art vivant in 1925-26, for displaying a commitment to a modern art both through its subjects drawn from contemporary life and its formal language, which incorporated a wide range of popular sources.[57] The work of Léger, Metzinger and Herbin encompassed

'popular art' forms and exploited 'boulevard' iconography as form of purchase on the contemporary, but in a figurative language which retained its traditional associations.[58] Paintings such as Herbin's Les Jouers aux boules (1923) [pl.16] and Metzinger's Clown à la Mandoline (1924) [pl.17], provided examples of a contemporary figure painting in which idealized appearances, monolithic poses and generalized sculptural form achieved what P.G. Konody praised, in a review of January 1926, as "almost classic composition".[59] Burra's work of 1925-26 can be placed within this type of modern painting. When Market Day was exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in 1929, critics recognized it as "impressions of the seething life of Marseilles" employing "the artistic idiom of modern Paris".[60] The popular iconography represented in Market Day strengthened its identification with contemporary French painting, and in particular, the work of Léger.

Market Day may be compared with Léger's Les Visiteurs (1924-5) [pl.18], which was exhibited at the Mayor Gallery's Advanced French Art show in 1926.[61] Leger's Les Visiteurs and the earlier drawing, Two Men in a Stairway (1924) [pl.19], like Burra's Market Day, represent two monumental male figures as formidable presences in the panoramic city. Both can be seen as examples of "animated landscapes" (paysage animé); an urban theme which implied an everyday subject on a small-scale viewed in a more intimate way and employing a less 'simultaneist' method.[62] In Léger's painting, the figures stand out against the geometric forms of the cityscape. As in Roberts's work, the figures are given a definite urban social context. In Market Day, the two sailors dressed in modern clothes

confront the viewer set against the multitudinous signs of the marketplace. The overloaded images act as a metaphor for the mass visual consumption of the modern city. In Les Visiteurs, the figures of the artist and Léonce Rosenberg as representatives of French culture, inspect the landscapes of the Italian city. Their boaters, cravats and flashy suits, walking sticks and rolled up newspapers mark them out for particular attention. They signal a contemporary social class, its fashions and popular culture.[63] In Market Day, the arriving sailors as modern-day flaneurs saunter through the market square becoming the centre of attention for the circulating prostitutes who approach. The central theme in both works is the initiation of two male figures into the urban environment.

This sense of distinction is further strengthened by the formal figurative language, which in its geometric outline, hieratic pose, idealized proportions and sheened rotundity accentuates their role as clear signifiers of the modern in that profusion of visual data which images the city. Léger's work offered a precedent for the representation of figures in a definite urban context within a type of modern French painting in which 'modern' and 'popular' were not incompatible. The iconography of the popular - dress, posters, labels, advertisements and cigarettes- and the subject of the city's popular culture were employed to signal a new urban attitude and one heavily utopian in attitude. Whilst these utopian reverberations were not central to Burra's approach, Léger's "heightened geometric order" and its architectural form proposed a means of representation in which design and compositional unity - the key areas of criticism

of Robert's work - were not sacrificed.[64] As Raymond Mortimer in the Vogue review of Léger's exhibition noted, Léger's figurative compositions were "more human and less robotic" than other forms of contemporary figure painting.[65]

In addition, the means of representation in Burra's paintings structured formal relationships according to that poetic, "heightened plasticity" associated with 'naive' sources, in particular Henri Rousseau.[66] Similar works to Rousseau's Village près d'une usine (1907-8) [pl.20], had been illustrated in Vogue in March 1925 and commended for their "engaging simplicity" and "love of small detail".[67] There was also a Rousseau exhibition at the Lefevre Gallery in October 1926, which Burra must have seen. The simplified spatial arrangement of the landscape and decorative details and lettering in Market Day suggest Rousseau's work. As Christopher Green has noted, the status of 'naif' painting in general and Rousseau's work in particular, was at a height in 1925-6 and carried popular associations of an anti-elitism and anti-class bias.[68] Such acknowledgements would have underscored an awareness of current tendencies in French figure painting and the themes of the popular. As T. W. Earp commented later in a review in The New Statesman and Nation, 18 June 1932:" One feels that Mr. Burra is not really .. naive..and that the ingenuity of his simplicity is after all, a little cold-blooded".[69]

I would suggest that the notions of 'foreign', 'popular' and 'naive' allied to the Mediterranean rather than British urban subject, acted as a form of mediation against that type of critical reaction which

attacked Roberts's urban figure compositions as "grotesque subjects from daily life" and "intellectualized robots".[70] The adoption of a modern "style francais" for a foreign theme was an entirely different matter from its use in the representation of a native cityscape. Furthermore, in these paintings the focus on urban communities abroad removed associations of the crowd to a distance. The crowd was reduced to an enticing and picturesque simplification, which edited out the specific social and political references of the urban crowd as dangerous and violent. These associations I understand as being significant at this historical moment.

From the end of the the First World War up to the General Strike in April-May 1926,- the two major historical events of the period under consideration - Britain, after its initial celebration of national survival, underwent a period of extensive political unrest at home and abroad. There were local and general strikes, high unemployment and international debt, economic decline and troubles in Ireland and India. Attempts to restore national and social unity focused on a programme of social reconstruction and the reinforcement of collectivism through legislative controls. In the early 1920s, London in particular became the centre of radical politics and working class disorder, notably in the areas of Poplar, Bethnal Green, Bermondsey and Hackney. Demonstrations, revolts and strikes were prominent, particularly in the East End up to the General Strike in 1926.[71]

Such events must have threatened the romanticized fiction of Burra's 1923-4 works, which imaged the working class London crowd as a native

'popular voice'. At a period of political turmoil with three elections in less than two years, with the threat of 'Bolshevism' at home and abroad, with a series of strikes and disputes, the imaginative appeal of the urban crowd was threatened by its immediate reality as a threatening mob. Burra's middle-class background and conservative political attitudes would have found such public outbursts alarming. Such a fear is suggested in Burra's correspondence, when he recognized the proximity of the barracks of the soldiers, who were policing the strike, to his grandmother's bourgeois residence in South Kensington. Burra wrote that: "Walham Green and its stretchers are'n't so far from Elvaston Pl[ace]". When such events were viewed from the security of abroad, Burra commented that:"At this moment, England certainly seems 'triste' and no mistake".[72]

The change in subject matter from the native to the foreign scene cannot be seen as unrelated to these events. The Mediterranean marketplace in Market Day, Fiesta and French Scene offered a less threatening and more glamorous fiction. They articulate a desire to discover an idealized and exotic social context at a moment of crisis. They assert values of community and collectivity through the limited experience of an abroad largely read about in novels and guides, visualized in postcards and briefly seen from the distance of train journeys. However, this was also under threat. During the social and political unrest in France in 1926, Burra warned a friend: "Mind you do not get entangled in a new French Revolution, which seems to be imminent."[73] The abandoning of the crowd for the more intimate sub-cultural groups portrayed in bohemian cafés,

Mediterranean terraces and sailors' bars in the period 1927-31 must be seen against this historical background.

In this consideration of the city in Burra's earliest works from 1923-26, I have argued that the themes of the city crowd, the shockingly promiscuous street, the foreign market place and the 'taverna' played a crucial role in articulating a specific type of attitude to urban experience. This was indebted to literary, artistic and popular cultural sources and historically informed traditions of representation of the city. They conspicuously exploited the city as a metaphor for popular culture, a site of the 'low' and 'difference', which could be imaged by collective groups such as the wandering East End crowd, the foreign taverna-bar sub-culture and the foreign marketplace crowd, or by representatives such as the prostitute, the criminal and the sailor. Such figures, their milieu and sub-culture were to form the major themes of the next group of works from 1927-31, which represented abroad and the foreign experience in terms of bohemian cafés, chic nightclubs, Mediterranean terraces and sailors' bars. These themes further reinforced that 'scandal of abroad', which was such an important part of the attraction of foreign travel in Burra's work in the 1920s.

1. In conversation with author. Cf., J.R. p. 13
2. NICHOLSON, Kenton, Autobiography, London 1860 referred to in STEDMAN-JONES, G. "Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London 1870-1900" in Journal of Social History VII, Summer 1974, p. 470. Cf., STALLYBRASS, Peter and WHITE, Allan, The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, London 1986, pp. 134-5.
3. For discussion of 'street', Cf., JARRETT, Derek, England in the Age of Hogarth, London 1976, pp. 15-19 and STALLYBRASS and WHITE 1986, op. cit., pp. 106-7.
4. WILLIAMS, Raymond, The City and the Country, London ed. 1975, pp. 178-9.
5. Wright's work first published London 1865 and Anstruthers, London 1902, now in Private Collection.
6. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON, English Caricature 1620 to the Present. Caricaturists and Satirists - their Art, their Purpose and their Influence, London 1984. Cf., ROGERS, Pat, Grub Street, Studies in a Sub-culture, London 1972. p. 109 and pp. 143-44.
7. LEE S, Andrew, Cities Perceived - Urban Society in European and American Thought 1820-1940, Manchester 1985, p. 35.
8. TATE GALLERY, LONDON, Hogarth, London 1971, p. 8.
9. TATE GALLERY 1971, op. cit., p. 28.
10. Burra Library. Published London 1821. Copy now in Private Collection.
11. STALLYBRASS and WHITE 1986, op. cit., p. 139.
12. The Springfield Library contained 19th century copies of all the works mentioned. Quote W.C. p. 19 and J.R. p. 13.
13. DICKENS, Charles, Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Everyday Life and Everyday People, First pub. London 1839. Ed. used Oxford 1987, p. 187.
14. For street as vice Cf., SCHORSKE, Carl, E. "The Idea of the City in European Thought from Voltaire to Spengler" in HANDLIN, O. and BURCHARD, J. The Historian and the City, Massachusetts, USA 1966. Cf., WILLIAMS 1973, op. cit., pp. 189-201.
15. DICKENS 1839, op. cit., p. 69-70.
16. Quoted from SCHWARTZBACH, F.S. Dickens and the City, London 1979. p. 213 + cf. pp. 43-5 Cf., WILLIAMS 1973, op. cit., pp. 266-8.
17. DICKENS, Charles, Oliver Twist. First ed. 1837-9, ed. used Harmondsworth 1988, p. 111.
18. Quoted in introduction to DICKENS ibid., p. 13.
19. KEATING, Peter, "Words and Pictures: Changing Images of the poor in Victorian Britain" in TREUHERZ, Julian, Hard Times - Social Realism in Victorian Art, Manchester 1987, pp. 126-30. Quote p. 127. Also in the early 1920s many 'Ideal' films remade Dickensian London for popular consumption and Burra may have seen them on his visits to Rye cinema. These included Bleak House (1920), Little Dorrit (1920), The Old Curiosity Shop (1921), The Adventures of Mr. Pickwick from Pickwick Papers (1921) and The Only Way (from a Tale of Two Cities 1925). These stressed the picturesque aspects of Dickens's London. Cf., W.C. p. 16.
20. Burra Library contained DORÉ, Gustave and JERROLD, Blanchard, London - A Pilgrimage, London 1872 and copies by Phiz - pseudo. Hablot Knight Brown and Cruickshank according to Clover de Pertinez 16. July 92.
21. DICKENS, Charles, Oliver Twist, Oxford Illustrated Dickens 1988, Cruickshank Plates opposite p. 411 and p. 453.
22. TREUHERZ 1987, op. cit., p. 29, The Street folk and Urban Poor in the 1850s and 60s.

23. MACCULLOCK, J.R. London in 1850-51, London 1851, p. 197.
24. Illustrated in BUCHANAN-BROWN, John, Phiz! - The Book Illustrations of Hablot Knight Browne, London 1978 plates nos. 4,23,37.
25. TATE GALLERY, LONDON, The Pre-Raphaelites, London 1984, pp. 22-3.
26. The Times, 31 May 1932, Review of Burra's Leicester Galleries exhibition p. 14.
27. Edited by Albert Rutherston with text by R.H. Wilenski, London 1924, pp. 14-18 for Rushbury and pp. 19-23 for Schwabe.
28. Studio, 82, July-December 1921, pp. 145-6. R.S. Schwabe's review of "Some Drawings by Henry Rushbury". For Burra's connections with New English Art Club see p. 28, p. 42 and p. 46.
29. Quoted in CLARKE, T.J. Image of the People - Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution, London ed. 1982, p. 81.
30. Cf., TREUHERZ 1987, op. cit., p. 130.
31. Confirmed in conversation Anne Ritchie, 30 November 1982.
32. Cf., TREUHERZ 1987, "The Graphic" pp. 53-64 and CASTERAS, Susan, P. "The gulf of destitution on whose brink they hang' - Images of Life on the streets in Victorian Art", ibid., pp. 131-4.
33. Raymond Coxon in interview with author, 19 November 1982.
34. Illustrated in TREUHERZ 1987, op. cit., pp. 56-7, no.42.
35. Illustrated in TREUHERZ 1987, op. cit., p. 88, no. 75.
36. Cf., VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM 1984, op. cit., pp. 68-9. Although the example is specifically French, I understand 'Taverna' to be in that satirical tradition in which the other national cultures could be contrasted by means of interior scenes in public places such as bars taverns and restaurants.
37. Clover de Pertinez in conversation with author, 8 November 1982.
38. The Times, November 1923. Press cutting from Roberts's Papers, Tate Archive. Review of Chenil Gallery exhibition.
39. P.G. KONODY in Daily Mail, 9 November 1923, Roberts's Papers, Tate Archive.
40. Vogue, late August 1920, p. 44. Review of Goupil Gallery exhibition of "Modern French Art".
41. The New English Art Club contained "nearly all French trained artists in early 1920s" and "made for itself a considerable reputation" as "modern society". Review in Vogue, late July 1921, pp. 44-5.
42. CANETTI, Elias, Crowds and Power, Harmondsworth 1984, p. 71-2.
43. For crowd as indulgence, Cf., CANETTI 1984, op. cit., pp. 71-2.
44. Now contained in Burra Collection, Tate Archive. While not offering specific sources both Howells and Ford were characterized by Pemble as authors who presented the Mediterranean as an exotic, removed fiction, Cf., PEMBLE, John, The Mediterranean Passion - Victorians and Edwardians in the South, Oxford 1987, pp. 12ff.
45. Cf., PEMBLE 1987, op. cit., pp. 1-2. Burra may also have seen a number of serial travelogue films, which considered continental towns in the early 1920s such as Paris (1924).
46. W.C. Letters p. 16. Original spelling retained in this and all other quotations from Burra's letters.
47. Contained in early sketchbooks in private collection. For other sketches of nanny see C.C. drawings no. 11. Nana Sewing (1924) and 12, The artist's nana, with a jigsaw (1924).
48. All contained in either Private Collections or Burra Collection, Tate Archive. Burra's library contained Zola's Germinal, Le Débâcle, L'Assommoir and Eugène Rougon plus 12 vols. by Balzac. Also a number of films of Zola's novels shot in the city locations of Paris and Marseilles were used as serials in the early 1920s - L'Assommoir (1920), Fièvre (1921), Nana (1926) and Thérèse Raquin (1928). Cf.,

ABEL, Richard, French Cinema - the First Wave 1915-29, New Haven 1984, pp. 94-132.

49. STALLYBRASS and WHITE, 1986, op. cit., p. 37.
50. ZOLA, Emile, Le Ventre de Paris, Paris 1873, ed. Paris 1987, pp. 55-59.
51. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON 1984, op. cit., p. 75, ill. 83.
52. PEMBLE, op. cit. p.160 / 53. C.f. earlier discussion pp.42-3
54. FRY, Roger, Transformations, London 1920, p. 35 and BELL, Clive, Art 1914. Quoted in FRASCINA, Francis and HARRISON, Charles, Modern Art and Modernism - A Critical Anthology, London 1982, pp. 71-2.
55. For discussion of Lewis and Crowds see FARRINGTON, Jane, Wyndham Lewis, Manchester 1980, pp. 68-9. For Roberts see earlier p.
56. Manson quote from HALLIDAY, Nigel, English Responses to Contemporary European Art between c.1926-c.1936 - A Study of Five Modern Galleries - Lefevre, Leicester, Tooth, Mayor and Zwemmer. Unpublished M.A. thesis, Courtauld Institute, University of London 1979, p. 9. Cf., ibid., p. 9-10 for British Reaction to Cubism. For Mayor Gallery Cf., ibid., pp. 33-35.
57. GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 203-7 and p. 213.
58. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 212-14.
59. BERLIN, GROSSE ORANGERIE IM SCHLOSS CHARLOTENBURG 1977, op. cit., p. 4/185 14. 4/118 and 4/120 no. 4/70, ill. p. 4/122. KONODY from Daily Mail, 3 January 1926 quoted in HALLIDAY 1979, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
60. Vogue unnamed critic 17 April 1929, p. 17.
61. See review "Fernand Léger - The Painter of the Machine Age" in Vogue, late September 1925, p. 79. The drawing was in the Douglas Cooper collection. According to Clover de Pertinez, Burra regularly read Vogue's art and literary criticism throughout the 1920s and it played an important part in informing Burra's taste. 8 April 1982.
62. For further discussion Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 212-3.
63. Léger visited Italy with Léonce Rosenberg in August-September 1924. See GREEN, Christopher, Léger and the Avant-Garde, London 1976, pp. 259-61.
64. GREEN 1976, op. cit., pp. 212-14. For discussion of Léger and Popular Iconography see FABRE, Gladys, C, "The Modernist Spirit in Figurative Painting - From Modernist Iconography to a Modernist Conception of plastic art" in PARIS, MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE DE LA VILLE DE PARIS, Léger et l'ésprit moderne 1918-31, Paris 1982, pp. 82-168.
65. Vogue late September 1925, p. 98.
66. Cf., FRY, Roger, Vision and Design, London 1920, p. 166.
67. "The Douanier Rousseau", Vogue late March 1925, pp. 64-5.
68. GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 145-6. For discussion see LANCHNER, Carolyn and RUBIN, William, "Henri Rousseau et le Modernisme" in PARIS, GALLERIES NATIONALES DU GRAND PALAIS, Le Douannier Rousseau, Paris 1985, pp. 37-100. Cf., discussion of Léger and Rousseau, pp. 71-4.
69. New Statesman and Nation, 18 June 1932, p. 797.
70. HIND, A.M. The Studio, 89, 1925, p. 5 and The Referee, 11 November 1923 from Roberts Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
71. Cf., TAYLOR, A.J.P. English History 1914-45, Oxford 1965, Chapters VI -1922-25and VII - 1925-29, pp. 195-261 and GREENLEAF, W.H. The British Political Tradition, Vol. 1 - The Rise of Collectivism, London 1983 and WEIGHTMAN, G. and HUMPHRIES, S. Modern London 1914-39, London 1984, pp. 146-160.
72. Letter to William Chappell, Spring 1926. W.C. Letters p. 31.
73. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, Summer 1926 in W.C. Letters p. 31. The disturbances followed the election of the Left Wing Cartel in May

1924. Cf., SOUCY, Robert, French Fascism - the First Wave 1924-33, New Haven, USA 1986, pp. 224-33.

Chapter Two: Group Images of Paris and the South of France 1927-31.

The works completed from 1927-31 address the subject of foreign cultural difference, but expressed in terms of intimate circles and group interiors- bohemian cafés and chic night clubs, Parisian dance halls, Mediterranean terraces and sailors' bars. They draw extensively upon Burra's own experience of travelling abroad to Paris and the South of France. In September 1927, Burra returned to France with William Chappell visiting Marseilles, Cassis and Toulon. He returned to England via Paris in December for an exhibition at the New English Art Club. In September 1928, Burra revisited Toulon and then, with a group of friends established himself in Paris for the rest of that year. In February 1930, Burra travelled with the Nashes to Paris and the Mediterranean. In May 1931, he returned to Paris though switching his loyalty from Montparnasse where he had previously stayed to Pigalle and St. Germain des Prés. In August of that year, Burra with a circle of friends holidayed in Toulon. This period marked the artist's most extensive contact with French culture to date and it is from these years that the images of the café, terrace and sailors' bar emerge.

Early drawings such as The Café (c. 1927) [CC0.21] and Café Scene (c.1927) [pl.21] conspicuously identify the location as French through signs and menus, advertisements and notices, types of liqueurs and revealing details such as coffee pots, anis bottles and the variety of cafe paraphernalia. They are further

distinguished by the variety of the clientele, whose facial features and fashions are carefully noted. In The Café, huddled groups involved in secret conversations and throwing suspicious glances delineate the territory of a foreign society, which fascinates the visitor. This interest overrides considerations of pictorial space and formal relationships and the work becomes a compendium of the café's groups. These drawings use line and detail to fix the appearance of the place and its figures. They employ naturalistic codes of representation to suggest a knowledge derived from first-hand experience. Yet the angled point of view, the dislocated space and the detached attitude expressed through this concern with recording exterior effects imply the view of an outsider - an arriviste - someone looking on rather than participating. Only the stare of the prostitute on the extreme right in The Café, acknowledges the presence of a new arrival and prospective customer.

The dominant impression in these early works is of the glamour of French café society represented from the point of view of the tourist who is enchanted by its appearance and spectacle, but remains an outsider. The exteriors of figures are emphatically delineated. Information about faces, clothes, postures, the holding of glasses, the interaction of body language is extensively compiled. These drawings represent the café society's sense of public display. This role had an extensive geneology in the visual arts as a milieu connected with leisure and entertainment. Café scenes by artists such as Manet, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Raffaelli and Renoir established the subject as

an example of a modern urban scene tied to leisure, public life and social intercourse. As Robert Herbert has documented, for these painters, the café was an important subject as a microcosm for urban experience: "In cafés, natives and adoptive Parisians were able to observe life while displaying themselves as worthy performers in the spectacle of the capital's culture".[1]

In addition, such notions of public self-advertisement on the part of the French café clientele were a common part of guide-book accounts of Paris in particular. As the Guide practique des Plaisirs de Paris (1867) noted, Parisian café society needed "publicity ... We like to pose, to make a spectacle of ourselves, to have a public, a gallery, witness to our lives".[2] Such areas were used to map out critical differences in English guides between 'home' and 'abroad', between London and Paris. In Burra's work, these associations are used to signal the distinctive experience of foreign travel.

However, these images of Parisian café life as an exposé of urban culture also reveal Burra's knowledge of French literary and artistic traditions. In this respect, the illustrations of Steinlen were especially important. Burra owned a copy of Steinlen's Dans la Vie (1901), which contained drawings of Parisian urban types and represented groups at leisure in cafés and bars, such as At the Ball[3] [pl.22]. The economy and precision of Steinlen's draughtsmanship as well as the Montmartre subject matter parallels Burra's early drawings such as The Café (1927). Furthermore, Steinlen's work introduced images of low-life Paris

and the types of working class Montmartre, notably the Apaché criminal and the prostitute, which were to become central characters in Burra's later paintings. As Clover de Pertinez later recalled, 23 July 1982: "If it hadn't been for Steinlen, Ed would have never become interested in low life Paris subjects ..." In Havana (1928) [CCD.24], these form the two protagonists in the foreground, and in The Café, these types mingle within the groups of customers. As the introduction to an English edition of Steinlen's drawings stressed:"This is the dark side, which the conventional conception of Paris as the gay city falsifies and conceals".[4] Similar interests were common in literary sources, in Zola's L'Assommoir and Nana, in Eugene Sue's Les Mystères de Paris (1842) and Balzac's Comédie humaine (1831-47) - all available in the Springfield library, which formed a massive backcloth of a secret 'darker' Paris.[5]

This subject of the low-life of Montmartre suggests specific sources in late 19th Century literature and popular song, both areas of interest at this time. As The Studio reviewer of Steinlen's work noted in June 1924, this is the Montmartre of Aristide Bruant's Chanson de la Rue and Jean Richépin's Chanson des Gueux as well as the novels of Zola.[6] Steinlen's posters for Zola's L'Assommoir (1900) [pl.23] and the cabaret Ambassadeurs (1894), Lautrec's illustrations for Bruant's cabaret performances, Bruant's slangy songs such as À Montmartre and À la Goutte d'Or evoked the low life mythology of Montmartre. Burra's fascination with Zola's L'Assommoir (1876) is particularly relevant to the theme of the bar.[7] Set in the Northern quarter of Paris around

Montmartre, Barbès and the Goutte d'Or, the novel documents, often with coarse humour, the squalor and promiscuity of Parisian slum life and the condition of the working classes. At the centre of the work stands the 'assommoir' - the cheapest bar- of the title, in which the tragedy of drunkenness, violence and despair unfolds.

The array of neighbourhood types which frequent the bar, the snatches of overheard conversations and the group dramas presented in L'Assommoir document a whole way of life. Zola's description of Old Colombe's Bar initially portrays it as a sordid, debauched cesspool, but later develops to acknowledge the bar's role as a place of escape and day-dreams:

"It was very hot, and the pipe smoke rose in the blinding glare of the gas-lamps, in which it billowed about like a dust cloud, smothering the drinkers in a steadily thickening fog, out of which came a deafening confused din - cracked voices, clinking glasses, oaths and fists banging on tables like detonations...By the second glass, Gervaise had forgotten all about her tormenting hunger...The rest of the world could just go hang...As she felt alright here, why ever not stay? You could have let off a cannon and she wouldn't have wanted to move now that she was nicely settled. Yes, it was fun at the 'Assommoir', with Colombe's great moon face..and the customers smoking their clay pipes, shouting and spitting, with the great gas jets lighting up the mirrors and bottles of liquor".[8]

This accommodation, which the café permits, of public and private; of fact and fantasy is accentuated in The Café (1927) as individuals and groups with different interests socialize together. The café was a strategic meeting place for Parisian society, as foreign visitors had commented:"it gossips at the café; it intrigues at the café; it plots, it dreams, it suffers, it hopes, at the café".[9] It is this view of the Montmartre bar as being at the centre of an unfolding urban mythology, which underscores Burra's The Café (c. 1927) and Le Café (1927) [CC.24].

However, the Parisian café in later works such as The Café (1928) [CCD.23]and Les Boys (1928) [CCD.29], acts as a metaphor for the representation of a different social group - those well-dressed, wealthy emigré groups, whose life abroad consisted of the conspicuous display of leisure and entertainment. The image of one member of this coterie, the emigré bohemian artist, had already been established prior to the actual experience of Parisian groups by Burra's reading of pre-war literary accounts such as Apollinaire's Le Dôme et les Dômiers (1914).[10] These fashioned an image of Montmartre and Montparnasse as places distinguished by the exhibition of distinctive mannerisms, outrageous social display and anti-bourgeois norms, namely all the hallmarks of the archetypal male avant-garde artist abroad.[11] This notion of an exuberent Parisian bohemia was reinforced by Burra's initial experience of the city in Summer 1925 with William Chappell and the Henry Rushburys. The party stayed in Montparnasse on the rue de la Grande Chaumière and attended a "wild party" in the studio of the celebrated homosexual artists Lett Haines and Cedric Morris.[12] Both artists were prominent members of Montparnasse bohemian circles, "sensationally successful" painters of "advance guard art" and regularly featured in British magazine's gossip columns as outrageous celebrities in Paris.[13] Burra wrote boastfully to Barbera Ker Seymer afterwards:"Next time I am in London my dear Let & Cedric want Billy to bring me to tea to show them my work."[14]

Such an image of Parisian café society as a mixture of 'beau monde', emigré artistic coteries and literary groups was also

indebted to contemporary reports in English 'glossies' such as Vogue and The Tatler in the early 1920s. These strengthened the notion of a post-war revival of avant-garde artistic activity in Paris. Again café society was an integral indicator of this renaissance. Burra's letters from the period self-consciously imitate the adoring tones of Vogue's "Letters from France" with their coverage of the latest theatrical news, society affairs, artistic developments, literary events and celebrity gossip.[15] For example, in a letter to Ker-Seymer from Paris, dated 19 October 1928, Burra mixes personal news, exaggerated accounts and scandal in a loquacious tone:

> "And what do you think of the latest Parisian theatrical news? Mistress de la Chapelle will be away from London for many a weary month doing galas in Monte Carlo Switzerland Milan Vienna maybe Berlin and perhaps ending up in a great flourish at the London Colisieum where Madame Ida Rubinstein & Chaffer's midgets will compete for the top of the bill My dear such a company as it is too 'We are all vairy nice, we only ave nice peoples' says La Nijinskas husband to Billy. We met Rupert Doone the other day my dear the look he gave me would have mopped up Niagra falls. The fights I have with Rupert says Fred..So I see ma chere that there will be some little tiffs before the end of the road is reached. We went to Bed and Sofa the other evening with Freddie. Its the most glorious film you've ever seen Moscow looks lovely a mass of clanging trams & terrible high lamps posts...We went to La Beaute de Paris at the Palace the other day...The last scene which represented Metals was a triumph with a set design by the famous architect Mallet Stevens and as for the costumes they were really magnificent and I'me not joking..they looked quite like a very super german film revue..Well dear I must end now or I'll never get to Vivian Gibson."[16]

This signing off was typical of the regular features from Paris in Vogue and The Tatler; magazines which presented an impression of Paris as an hedonistic playground and a place where public display was a source of endless commentary. These columns used a distinctive literary style, which Burra copied, and made knowing

references to the latest fashions and fads. A letter to Ker-Seymer from Paris, 9 October 1928, discloses Burra's addiction to outrageous Parisian glamour in a similar style:"Really you should conquer your claustrophobia and come here for the people are so chic 500 miles of lipstick 60 gallons of fleshing 40 tons of eye black and 17 miles of false lashes are used in Montparnasse alone each day I'm certain".[17]

Reports despatched to England also stressed the modernity of Paris in the arts. "Paris", wrote the Vogue reporter as early as 1925, "has the spirit of the times ... [and] is engaged in experiments and innovations such as hardly anyone in England has dreamed of attempting".[18] Set against the parochialism of much English art, the conservatism of British art criticism and the elitism of Bloomsbury's private coteries, Montparnasse appeared from England an enticing proposition. As Harold Acton later noted in his memoirs of the period: "Intellectually Paris was the capital of the world and the judgement of Paris was final ... Bloomsbury was only an extension of Montparnasse ... Our standards were increasingly Gallic ... The best of our younger critics ... were concerned with the diffusion of French criteria into England."[19]

However, a distinguishing factor of the expatriate 'haute monde' as represented in Burra's café and bar drawings such as Café (1928) and Les Boys (1928), is that it is almost exclusively composed of young people. The café becomes the select milieu of an energetic and vibrant youth culture. This draws on the artist's own experience since Burra's friends,Frederick Ashton and

William Chappell worked for the Ida Rubinstein ballet and Sophie Fedorovitch was a stage designer.[20] Through them, Burra was introduced to members of theatrical and artistic groups in Paris. Whilst in Paris, Burra did not study at any of the Paris academies or schools, but appears to judge from his letters, to have become engrossed in the city's nightlife and to have depended exclusively upon his private financial income. As Burra wrote in letters to friends, Paris was "an endless round" of bars and cafés, films, nightclubs and entertainments.[21]

Burra was a conspicuous member of that group of wealthy expatriates, who formed what Wyndham Lewis derisively called "that small, foreign world planted in the centre of the French capital ... that France, which is not France".[22] The Parisian café was a place where the kinds of appearances associated with such group membership were publicly declared and maintained. As Burra wrote to a friend in England from Paris in January 1927: "We have such an acquaintance among the haute monde here you'd never guess".[23] The drawings overriding concern with describing physical appearances and recording externalities stress the desire to document this newly found glamour and its habitats. Furthermore, in their highly mannered and stylized representation of the human figure, they suggest an image of consciously articulated appearances.

The theme of the café in Burra's work is, therefore, crucially structured in relation to the artist's own experience of wealthy, bohemian expatriate circles in Paris and indebted to earlier

sources in French literature and the visual arts. It is premised on the notion of an elite, marginalized youth sub-culture removed from their own national background and distanced from their indigenous cultural roots. The transition from the earlier image of the crowd as a popular voice and organic social formation to the 'intimate elite group' as a conflation of indulgence and pleasure is important. It marks out a claim for the intellectual authority of the group within an established foreign and avant-gardist cultural tradition.

In order to examine this café theme further, I will consider four particular sets of images, their sources and contexts and suggest areas of meaning related to particular works completed within this period. Firstly, focusing on Le Boeuf sur le Toit (1930) [CC.56], I shall argue that the representation of Cocteau's fashionable milieu was used to present a stereotype of the elite, intellectual group, which updated earlier 'High Bohemian' models and foregrounded notions of distinctive style as an indicator of membership and identity. In Café Bar (1930) [CC.58], this was particularly associated with the Mediterranean and specifically Raymond's Bar in Toulon.

Secondly, I shall examine how the café or more correctly, its modern equivalent the nightclub, which increasingly replaced the French cafe with its new 'Americanized-international' leisure-culture, was employed in Burra's work to authenticate a distinctive type of painting in which a particular social group's 'self-image' abroad at a specific historical moment was mirrored. Within

these works, the use of distinctive 'physiognomies' to construct memorable fictional types is apparent. In particular, I want to analyse the stereotype of the dandy, outline its derivation in 19th Century literature and suggest sources in contemporary literature, illustration, photography and film. I intend to suggest how the fashion for fictional biography in the late 1920s and codes of practice in photography, notably those applied by Cecil Beaton, sanctioned such strategies. I will also propose that such a knowledge drew on German satire and the work of George Grosz. I shall also comment on Burra's representation of the Parisian bal-musette as a conspicuous group image.

Thirdly, I shall explore how the representation of small groups on Mediterranean terraces in works such as Balcony Toulon (1929) [CC.43] and The Terrace (1929) [CC.53], extended this conception of group culture to display a distinctively Mediterranean aspect. The overtones of hedonistic pleasure and elite display in these works referred to historical sources in guide books and travelogues, and to contemporary fictions of 'the poetic South' as a chic site for a withdrawal. The conversation group as a central subject in these paintings offers Mediterranean 'terrasse-culture' as a modern form of 'fête champêtre' in which elite group style is displayed.

Finally, in relation to Le Café (1927) [CC.24] and Havana (1928) [CCD.24], I shall draw parallels with contemporary French popular novels and illustrations. In particular, I shall show how those writers associated with the periodical Le Crapouillot and with the

illustrators group known as L'Araignée, were instrumental in outlining how the cafe (could be used as a metaphor for low-life culture, urban vice and social marginalization. This was extended to include images of Mediterranean sailors' bars in works such as Dockside Café (1929) [CC.60] and The Café (1930) [CC.57] as a distinctive purchase on a fictionalized low-life sub-culture influenced by popular novels, songs and films. These works represent the Mediterranean cafe as a peculiarly authentic French milieu and reveal how a knowledge derived first-hand experience of Marseilles and Toulon from 1927-31, was informed by fictional mythologies current in contemporary popular cultural sources in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The central subject of Le Boeuf sur le Toit (1930) [CC.56] is a newly opened international nightclub of that name in Montmartre. As a review in Vogue, 28 January 1929, noted Le Boeuf sur le Toit was a fashionable haunt whose packed opening was yet another example of the undergoing "Renaissance of Montmartre" at the end of the 1920s.[24] Burra's image of the nightclub suggests it was a place, where dinner-suited men and bejewelled women, the 'beau monde' of Paris, mixed. In small groups, the conversations of cigar-smoking men, the postures of heavily made up women seated at tables and the manoeuvres of social interaction are depicted. A contemporary account recalled that the nightclub was a haven for foreign tourists, especially British and American, and that it was one of those exclusive milieus in Montmartre where "La danse n'était pas menée par les Français mais par des éléments étrangers

qui encadraient leur minorité".[25] It was one of those "boîtes [où] ils formaient des clans et dansaient entre eux".[26] These associations of social and cultural exclusivity were an important part of Burra's representation of the nightclub.

The nightclub as a distinctive leisure form in the 1920s was derived from American models. In Paris, 'le Bar Americain' fulfilled the function of the cocktail bar for late night drinking and cafés were transformed into café-bars and nightclubs in order to service this vogue. Burra frequented such bars with a circle of friends which included William Chappell, Frederick Ashton, Robert Medley, Rupert Doone, Sophie Fedorovitch and Barbera Ker-Seymer.[27] This taste for nightclubs was encouraged by popular films which from 1926-27, as Richard Abel has shown, offered a picturesque view of Paris nightclubs as the harbingers of a modern 'internationalized' leisure culture.[28] Films such as René Hervil's Minuit Place Pigalle (1928), Roger Lion's Une Heure au Cocktail Bar (1929) and Henry Roussel's Paris Girls (1929), imaged the Parisian nightclub and cocktail bar as the glamorous milieu of the 'nouveau riche' in large scale, modern studio spectaculars.[29] Whilst the subject was Paris and the language French, the fantasy of internationalism portrayed the decline of specifically French culture before an Americanized cultural import.[30] Stills from these films were illustrated in Burra's copy of FILM PHOTOS - wie noch nie (1929) in a section entitled 'In der Bar - Au bar - In the Bar'[31] [pl.24]. These showed the interior of a nightclub with its jazz band and mirrored cocktail-bar and the dress of its wealthy clientele in close up. Burra's use of the nightclub as a

peculiarly modern theme developed from the café, must be viewed within this historical context of the late 1920s and its changing leisure formations.

However, the painting has other connotations relevant to the representation of elite group culture. The title suggests the famous Parisian bar opened in January 1922 frequented by Cocteau and his circles in the early 1920s, which for many British artists and writers stood as the archetype of bohemian bar-subculture.[32] Harold Acton recollected it as: "a chic and comfortable Congo in the heart of Paris".[33] The bar's popularity rested almost exclusively on the patronage of Jean Cocteau and his circle, notorious for their outrageous display, homosexuality and bohemian impropriety. As André Salmon remembered, young foreign tourists, British and American in particular, headed for the bar to search for Jean Cocteau, and were mistaken by supposing that the owner of the bar was Cocteau himself: "Les Britanniques et les Americains prennent facilement Jean Cocteau pour le propriétaire du Boeuf sur le Toit et ils l'y cherchent, serviette en main. Pourtant il n'est que le client de la maison."[34] The allure of the bar then in the late 1920s was primarily its historical reputation and cachet as a place "où les jeunes gens émerveillés allaient contempler Picasso, Radiguet, Cocteau, Milhaud ... et tout l'avant-garde."[35] It was precisely these connotations of celebrity, which had been raised by Burra's first trip to Paris in 1925 and his contact with the Morris-Haines circle.

However, another experience from that trip is revealing. According to Chappell, one of the main places which Burra insisted on visiting was 'Le Dôme' café; one of the most famous artists' cafés in Montparnasse, which had been 'home' to numerous artistic and literary groups before the First World War.[36] Like Le Boeuf sur le Toit, Le Dôme was a celebrated tourist haunt. Its attraction exploited a nostalgia for pre-War bohemian Montparnasse and the pull of celebrity with the chance of sitting next to and rubbing shoulders with the Parisian Bohemian 'beau monde'.[37] Le Dôme also featured in Vogue and Tatler reports as a place to be seen, to observe elite society and to catch up on the latest gossip. A letter to Ker-Seymer, dated 4 December 1928, reveals Burra's skills as a social commentator:"..who do you suppose we saw on Sunday night as we were taking a drop in the Dôme café but Miss Lucy Norton and Jerry Reitlinger Oh he did look such a fresh pretty thing to be sure Lucy was so charming...it appears Scott Goddard is in Paris writing criticisms of the Rubinstein ballets for the Observer so keep a weather eye on the Observer & you may see some dirt."[38]

The exotic allure of such contacts underscored the enduring fiction of an artistic subculture characterized by outrageous bohemianism, dandyism and elitism. Such motivations undoubtedly underlined Brassaï's photographs of 'Le Dôme' in The Secret Paris of the 30s[39] [pl.25]. It is revealing that Le Dôme as a subject was placed next to Le Bal Nègre, that fashionable heart of the Negro cult which had throngs of white customers eager to get in

and experience a different form of exoticism, namely the erotic pleasures of jazz and Negro dancing in the centre of Paris.

The cachet of celebrity was also an essential part of the appeal of Toulon. As Burra wrote to Nash in 1931 "Toulon is full of celebrities - Gide, Maurois, Tchelitcheff, Cecile Sorel etc ... I can only regret that you are not here".[40] In Burra's letters the glamour and exoticism of the South of France is enhanced by its attraction for reconnoitring the rich and famous. He apes the adoring tones of Vogue's "Hall of Fame" biographies and the incidental snobbery of gossip columns from The Tatler. As Burra wrote to Barbera Ker-Seymer on 4 October 1927 from Cassis, "we are getting more and more artistic here quite the royal college my dear only a bit more chic".[41] The major site for such contacts was the café-bar, especially the Café de la Rade and Raymond's Bar in Toulon, which was represented by Burra in Café-Bar (1930) [CC.58]. These café-bars were frequented by Cocteau and his circle and "French intellectuals", who stayed in Toulon for the Summer.[42] The café-bar, therefore, occupied a unique position as a 'glamour place' for celebrity linked to a distinctively French physical environment, geographically related to Paris and the Mediterranean and tied to a liberal moral climate with traditions of artistic bohemianism.

Cocteau's cult position as homosexual celebrity: "Prince de la Frivolité" and archetypal French bohemian-aesthete, was sustained throughout the 1920s.[43] Burra himself recognized Cocteau as a major influence on him from the mid-1920s.[44] Initially, this was

through the wide range of Cocteau's critical writings, in particular Le Rappel à l'ordre (1926), his poems, notably Poésie 1916-1923 (1924) and novels, specifically Les Enfants Terribles (1929) - all of which Burra owned.[45] However, after coming into close contact with Cocteau and his entourage in the South of France in 1929 and 1931, this sense of flamboyant celebrity and bohemian hedonism was further strengthened. As Burra wrote to Paul Nash in Summer 1931: "Met J. Cocteau and Jean Desbordes [who] smoke opium all the time ... Barbera [Ker-Seymer] photographed J.Cocteau - now bosom friends ... the air is rarified for us commoners, we can hardly breathe."[46] Cocteau was important in offering a stereotype of the modern bohemian. This incorporated the notion of distinctive display of 'style' into a particular 'anatomy of dandyism' and posited group membership as an important part of any claim for intellectual authority. The emergence of the 'physiognomy' of the dandy as a modern male type in nightclub and café-bar settings - in works such as Le Boeuf sur le Toit [CC.56] and in drawings such as Dandies (1929-30) [CCD.36], Nightclub (1930) [pl.26] and Casino Nightclub (c. 1930) [pl.27], was undoubtedly related to this.

Furthermore, the chic style of the drawings was one which Burra had consciously adopted from Cocteau.[47] Whilst Cocteau had an exhibition at the galerie des Quatre Chemins, Paris in April 1928 of illustrations for Oedipe Roi (1928) and his Dessins d'un dormeur (later published in 1929), which Burra may have seen, the café subjects relate to the earlier collection of 129 drawings published in 1923.[48] In particular, Cocteau's Le Mauvais Lieu

(1923) [pl.28] - a reference to the subject of homosexual bars - in their clear outlines and flattened space, their chic, provocative character types and revealing attention to male fashion provide a precedent for Burra's café drawings. This influence was not lost on the Times critic in October 1930, who recognized these café designs as: "amusing and ingenious, but too much in the style of M. Cocteau to admit much originality."[49]

The representation of the male figure as dandy in Le Boeuf sur le Toit (1930) and in the drawings Dandies (1929-30), Nightclub (1930) and Casino Nightclub (c.1930) is linked to a notion of distinctive individualism. In the chic café-bar of Le Boeuf sur le Toit, the nightclub and the casino, the male figure is a cosmopolitan, whose wealth is signalled through fashionable dress and accessories. He frequents those interiors of the city, which were regularly featured in society gossip columns. The type also carries connotations of decadence through his indulgent behaviour in public. In Nightclub, the drunken figure of the dandy exposes that 'clubman type' castigated by Nancy Cunard as a "slumming toff"[50], who "treated the lower classes as a brothel" and plunged into urban entertainment for his own personal debauchery.[51] Furthermore, in Dandies, there is a sense of self-conscious awareness of the importance of shared elite subcultures. This is what Cyril Connolly referred to as the use of "style ... as something artifical, a kind of ranting or preening."[52] The drawing focuses on the cut and creases of the clothes, on distinctive details such as cuff-links, buttons and jewellery, which elaborate the visual signs of wealth through dress. In

Casino Nightclub, the attention paid to the sheen of clothes and to minute details of pose and facial features is revealing. In these works, the milieus of the café-bar, nightclub and casino are shown as the territories of a cohesive social class at leisure. The stereotype of the male dandy acts to draw attention to and reinforce the impression of elitism and wealth.

The dandy model in Burra's work alluded to popular illustration in the mid-late 1920s. This type of illustration both in its subject-matter and visual language is reminiscent of contemporary fashion-plates, notably published in Vogue, and spot illustrations published in popular magazines such as La Vie Parisienne throughout the 1920s.[53] Burra's Dandies in its simplified outlines and clear contours recognizes similar playboy types in La Vie Parisienne, whose grooming and debonnaire flair were conveyed in silhouette line drawings and simple contrasts of black and white [pl.29]. A cover from Vogue 11 July 1928 by Mourgue [pl.30] adopts such an effective line again reinforcing the fashionable, rich playboy stereotype with top hat, monocle, bow tie and dinner suit.[54] Along with Lepape, Benito and Erté. Mourgue's illustrations celebrate the stylish look of the Twenties in the smart life of Paris and New York, in a bold, stylized graphic style. Burra noted such prescriptions of glamour, often in a gentle satirical tone both in drawings such as The Café (1928) and in his letters, for example, to Ker-Seymer, 9 October 1928, Burra wrote that "Lilli D looks just like a continuous succession of Vogue drawings, covers of Harpers Bazar Vanity Fair and drawings by André Lepape."[55]

Furthermore, works such as Nightclub (1930), The Party (c.1930-1) [CCD.50] and Casino Nightclub (c.1930) conform to that genre commonly referred to as 'la Ronde de la nuit' and exemplified by the work of Sem and Masereel, in which late night, often private or clandestine, entertainments were represented in line illustrations. Burra knew both illustrators work. Sem's La Ronde de la Nuit (1923) and Masereel's L'homme et l'oeuvre (1925) provided examples of bar scenes, dancings and parties which correspond to Burra's work.[56] Sem's drawings of dancing couples in Parisian boites from Les Possédeés [pl.31] and Masereel's nightclub interiors [pl.32] frequented by fashionable couples and incorporating a wide array of urban types suggest precedents for Burra's works on Parisian nightlife.[57]

These subjects- the dandy model especially, were also linked to the cult of caricature, which David Mellor has recognized: "In late Twenties London, there was a definite fashion in society, a 'fad' which was being reported as 'The Craze for Caricature' ... and even suggested as a desirable social accomplishment."[58] As examples of this genre, the illustrations of Miguel Covarrubias and Antony Wysard, known to Burra, were reproduced in society magazines as witty commentaries on the social scene. Covarrubias's Personages of Paris were reproduced in Vogue in December 1927[59] [pl.33] and Wysard caricatured the socialites Lord and Lady Castlerosse Entering the Embassy [Club] in The Tatler 1929[60] [pl.34]. Many drawings by Burra in the period 1928-30 feature this caricatural style of figure drawing in observations of domestic manners. It is applied to the parties and soirées of

London society, for example in Jazz Fans (1929-30) [CCD.46] or The Party (c1930) [CCD.49], or to poke fun at the frivolous nature of middle class social conventions in The Rye Tea Party (1929) [CCD.31]. It was a graphic language, which attracted attention at Burra's 1929 Leicester Galleries exhibition as "altogether cosmopolitan and up to date, a witty synthesis", "amusing and ingenious".[61] Whilst Burra never worked for these magazines, the similarity of his drawings and their caricatural tone to such illustrations was noted by contemporaries. In a letter to Ker-Seymer, 4 December 1928, Burra wrote:"[Lucy Norton said] Someone asked me for a list of the best English illustrators so I gave your name in. I know you haven't done any illustrations but you can send some of your drawings & pretend they belong to books."[62]

These drawings also exploited historical precedents in the English satirical print and in late 19th Century English and French caricature. Early reviewers of Burra's work in 1929 recognized this convergence. The Vogue critic noted that Burra used 'significant line' "to record Hogarthian observation and satire"[63]. His work was placed in that graphic tradition exemplified by Hogarth and Cruickshank's satires on the social scene such as Cruickshank's Inconveniances of a Crowded Drawing Room (1818) [pl.35], which mocked social convention and manners.[64] The dandy as a type carrying associations of extravagant individualism also had an historical precedent in English popular satire, for example George Cruickshank's The Monstrosities of 1822 (1822) [pl.36], a tradition which Burra knew extensively.[65]

Others referred to Burra as "a modern Beardsley" comparing his figures specifically with Beardsley's highly flamboyant individualism[66] (for example, the illustration of The Abbé in Under The Hill (ed.1904)[67] [pl.37]. In this, the physiognomy of the dandy relates to the literature of late 19th Century Anglophile authors such as Beardsley, Wilde and Machan and their contemporary followers Ronald Firbank, Evelyn Waugh and Aldous Huxley, which Burra read.[68] A letter dated 9 December 1927 expressed Burra's early interest in Firbank's The Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli (1926).[69] Firbank was a leading exponent of 'dandyism' in literature and the figure of the outrageously louche Pirelli presented an influential fictional model of the 'dandified beau'.[70] Beardsley's Under the Hill (ed.1904) and Ben Johnson his Volpone (1898) were also known to Burra.[71] Nightclub (c.1928-29) [pl.26] in its black and white graphic style and types suggests Beardsley's illustrations of fin-de-siécle London life. Dandyism in such authors, as in the English satirical print tradition, was frequently identified with cosmopolitan (often French) culture. Furthermore in Beardsley, Wilde et al, it was allied to that French literary tradition associated with "l'éternelle supériorité du dandy" and with what David Mellor has called "an artificial snobbery which lauded the aristocracy, erudite learning and up-held an aesthete-connossieur taste."[72]

Furthermore, as Mario Praz has commented in The Romantic Agony (1930), this stereotype of the foreign dandy as the 'epitomé of the Southern races' in Firbank, Wilde and Beardsley, allied foreign masculinity to extravagant dress, theatrical performance

and to a distinctive strain of exhibitionist, with often franco-phil.e and homeo-erotic overtones.[73] Such qualities mapped out a territory of 'un-Englishness' in terms of decadence and exoticism, which were summarized by Edith Sitwell in a review of Firbank's book as "absurd, illogical, beautiful and faintly malicious ... entirely heartless and exceedingly decadent"[74], and by Brian Howard as the hallmarks of "a triumph of indecent sophistication."[75] The choice of the male dandy as an archetypal member of café-nightclub society was therefore, a conspicuous identification with 'decadent' culture of the late 19th Century at a time when its "uncoventionality" and "spirit of revolt" was, as John Rothenstein noted in 1928, unpopular in England.[76]

Alternatively, John Armstrong in a later review in The Weekend Review, 4 June 1932 of Burra's second Leicester Galleries show, recognized a different context for Burra's work. He wrote that:"In the babel of noise coming through his megaphone of red and blue, I distinguish the accents of George Grosz."[77] Café society as a milieu for the public display of wealth and immorality was a central subject in Grosz's satire and a site of extensive social and political commentary. Its emergence in Burra's work within a caricatural mode coincides with his knowledge of Grosz's work from c. 1926-27. Grosz's A Berlin Street and The Evening Walk had been exhibited at a multi-national exhibition at the New Chenil Galleries in London in 1926, but more important were publications in 1926-27.[78] Leon Bazalgette's George Grosz: L'homme et l'oeuvre published in Paris in 1926, the Crès George Grosz in the popular 'Painters and Sculptors' series

published with an introduction by Marcel Ray in Paris in 1927, and various illustrations of Grosz's work in the periodicals Der Querschnitt and Variétés from 1928-9, provided the source material for a more comprehensive access to Grosz's work.[79] Burra may also have known Grosz's illustrations to the English edition of Ernst Toller's Brokenbow-A Tragedy (1926) and to Pierre MacOrlan's Porte d'eaux mortes (1926).[80] The accompanying texts in Bazalgette and Ray, also provided contexts for the examination of Grosz's work in relation to popular graphic traditions, bestiary caricature and the grotesque.

Grosz's work presented an important precedent for a graphic language, which was rooted in a popular tradition of caricatural illustration applied to urban social and leisure subjects. Marcel Ray's introduction to the Crès edition stressed that Grosz's simplified linear style was "un style tranchant et pointe de couteau" and represented "la tradition la plus directe [de] prolétarisation".[81] Its main precursors, according to Ray, were Hogarth and Daumier.[82] Burra's extensive knowledge of Hogarth and an important Daumier exhibition in London in 1927, may have strengthened his growing interest in Grosz.[83] The simplified figure drawing style informed by Grosz's work, extended the graphic method of the "ordered line" learned at the Royal College of Art from Schwabe, as early examples such as Drawing (c.1928) [pl.38] and Theatre bar (c.1928) [pl.39] show. In Drawing, the subject of the preparations for a night on the town with men applying lotions and aftershave and women putting on make up, is represented in a graphic language of strict outlines. The

linearism almost exclusively defines appearances in a cartographic way. There is a reduced sense of spatial depth with figures overlappping and little background detail into which to place the context of the group's actions. Instead, details of clothes and accessories, bodily gestures and distinctive facial types suggest meanings.

Furthermore, Burra's knowledge of Grosz's method of working and his pictorial devices may have been indebted to a lecture given by Dr. Hans Cürlis at the London Film Society on 13th November 1927 on the techniques of artists working in Berlin. The lecture incorporated slides and short film clips and in particular, analysed Grosz's technique and drawing method. It also placed Grosz's work within the wider context of contemporary German art. It presented ideas which Cürlis had published in his study Schäffende Hande: Die maler in 1926. For the British audience, it offered a rare opportunity to view German painters at work and to see examples of recent German painting.[84]

In Burra's drawings, as in Grosz's, the male bourgeois slummer was a key component. Illustrations by Grosz incorporating this type from Ecce Homo (1923) and Über alles die Liebe (1930) were reproduced in the Bazalgette and Cres editions and also in the periodicals Der Querschnitt and Variétés.[85] In Burra's work, the debauched male figures in Nightclub (c. 1928-29), the parading males in Dandies (1929-30) and the groomed gamblers in Casino Nightclub (1930) exploited a similar typology. In both cases, the distinctive codes of caricature reworked physical appearances and

constructed particular facial types. A wealth of details transformed the traditional physiognomic types of 18th and 19th Century caricature into historically specific male 'slumming' types. In Nightclub and Dandies, this concentrates upon dress, social habits and the pathognomics of body language. The male body, almost topographically mapped by the unbroken line, is fixed by a series of sharp creases and edges of dress and the corsetted forms of dinner suits. In Nightclub (1930), the visual information of monocles, cocktail glasses, hair styles and fashions corroborate the moment of the 1920s. Such a rigorous addiction to figurative appearances rather than surroundings (an easier and conventional way of providing historical information) was, as in Nächwuchs from Ecce Homo (1923) [pl.40], a hallmark of Grosz's illustrations.

Furthermore, in Nightclub, Burra also dispenses with traditional forms of perspective. Four groups compose the narrative of a nightclub scene without the particularities of a spatially defined environment. The two dancing couples in the foreground contrast with the figures at the two tables in the upper part of the composition. These groups are piled up without any recognition of differences in scale or spatial relationships. Such a device was frequently used by Grosz, as for example in Ach, knallige Welt, du seliges Abnormitätenkabinett (1916) from Ecce Homo (1923) [pl.41], where the programmatic images, perspective faceting and lack of unified space accentuate the sense of a compendium of images of urban vice.[86] These include two figures seated at a café table set against a city landscape of beggars and criminals, whose forms

dramatically overlap. In another work by Burra, Theatre Bar [pl.39], these characteristics are even more pronounced as the delineating line ruptures all sense of spatial integrity. Outlines overlap and spatial distinctions are compressed as the acute attention to line's illustrational role predominates above all other concerns. It was not surprising that Burra's interest in wood engraving dated from this period 1928-30; it was a medium into which this graphism could be readily transcribed.[87]

The adoption of types, especially facial types, was also common to both Burra's and Grosz's work. However, whilst Burra's slumming male figures exhibit similarities to Grosz's heads, especially in the details of the monocle and moustache, they avoid Grosz's concern with establishing a 'national' type or developing caricature types derived from a grotesque bestiary tradition. Bazalgette's study included illustrations of three Teutonic heads taken from Grosz's Das Gesichte der herrschenden Klasse (1921) [pl.42] and Ecce Homo (1923), which offered important examples of these interests. The illustration Es riecht hier nach Pöbel from Das Gesichte der herrschenden Klasse represented the facial type of the German aristocracy as part of the development of distinctive German male type. In the second drawing Deutsches Erzeugnis (1921, also entitled Den macht uns keiner nach) [pl.43], Grosz's facial simplification appears to draw on bestiary traditions which ally social and moral degeneracy to animalistic features and to a kind of grotesque conception.[88]

These associations were emphasized by Marcel Ray in his introduction to Grosz's work. Ray noted how the grotesque tradition in the visual arts was extremely appropriate to modern satirical subjects on urban moral manners and linked to established traditions in German and Anglo-Saxon culture. Ray wrote that: "Le grotesque ... offre aux Allemands et aux Anglo-Saxons une source inépuisable de jouissance morose et foisonnée dans leur littérature et leur art". He continued: "L'art grotesque associe, avec préméditation, le haut et le bas dans le même objet, juxtapose les contraires."[89] Burra knew this tradition specifically through Thomas Wright's A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art (1865).[90] He also owned a copy of La Bruyère's study of social types, Caractères (1688), which would have strengthened the preference for such grotesque facial models.[91]

Yet Burra's facial types never exploit these bestial associations and never achieve the bitingly radical aesthetic of Grosz's faces. Nor, unlike Grosz, are these types employed as part of a comprehensive social critique and political project. Only rarely in drawings such as The Party (1930-31 recto) [CCD.50] or in Smart Figures (c1930) [pl.44], is High Society wealth and decadence dramatically contrasted with poverty. In The Party, a one-legged cripple, begging cap in hand, is shown in the background as the fashionably dressed couple enter the private party. In Smart Figures, this antithesis is more pronounced by the direct juxtaposition of the wealthy couple against the destitute figure who, with sallow features and ragged clothes, walks past with head

down and hands in pocket. The gestures of the couple - the woman turns to avoid looking and clasps her chest in horror whilst the man reaches into his pocket - suggest archetypal attitudes and responses to social injustice. In Grosz's work, such issues form a central imperative in which graphic satire is allied to specific political objects. In Burra's work, this is reduced more to an aesthetic 'style' which incorporates Grosz's figurative types and details devoid of their specifically German political ram ifications and meanings.

Alternatively, Burra's drawings such as Nightclub (c.1928-9) [pl.26] and Casino Nightclub (1930) [pl.27], reveal an indebtedness to contemporary illustration and to a form of popular caricature on society subjects, which was regularly published in middle-class journals - for example, The Tatler and more internationalist fashion periodicals such as Vogue. In Nightclub, the simplification and exaggeration highlights distinctively fashionable forms of contemporary dress, up-to-the-minute hairstyles and trimmed moustaches. In Casino Nightclub, attention is drawn to the well-manicured appearance of the male gamblers, the cut of their suits, the tie of bow-ties and the details of jewellery. This graphic language of dandyism was allied more to the caricature illustrations produced by Grosz for Simplicissimus, which presented Berlin's social and cultural elites in an ironic mode. For example, Wohltatigkeits-Empfang for Über alles die Liebe (1930) was published in Simplicissimus and in Variétés in November 1929.[92] This graphic idiom was common to other Simplicissimus illustrators such as Edward Thony, Jeanne Mammen,

Theodore Heine and Karl Arnold although it is doubtful if Burra would have known such sources extensively at this time.[93]

In Britain, the satirical attacks on London's literary bohemia by Wyndham Lewis in The Apes of God (1930) for what Lewis termed its 'obligation of culture', form a literary equivalent to this subject and approach. Burra owned a copy of Lewis's polemical Satire and Fiction (1930), which included 'Notes on the Satire of Apes of God' and outlined how Lewis's "external" approach was rooted in an English literary tradition of moral satire incorporating Hogarth, Rowlandson, Pope and Swift.[94] Considering the style of Apes of God (1930), Lewis wrote that: "no book has ever been written that has paid more attention to the outside of people. In it, their shells, or pelts, or the language of their bodily movements comes first not last."[95] He concluded that such an approach "can make a healthy and attractive companion of the grotesque."[96] As a literary companion to Grosz's graphic vocabulary, Lewis's conception of satire as an "externalist" art offered an important background to Burra's work and artistic practice.

Such a concern with a "dandy style" was fashionable in the late 1920s. In the writings of Firbank, Eliot, Wilde and Huxley, in popular literature by Noel Coward and Paul Morand, and in the taste for fictional biographies, the celebration of outrageous behaviour and spectacular display was, as Cyril Connolly has commented, a "preoccupation..with the moment."[97] It was also characteristic of an emergent 'Anatomy of

Dandyism' in modern vernacular literature. In society magazines such as The Tatler and Vogue, gossip columns from the mid-1920s documented a particular attitude to 'bon viveurs' and socialites, providing 'personality profiles' to guide the uninitiated through the circles of the 'Bright Young Things'. Accounts in The Bystander of the latest balls and fancy dress parties itemized incidents of scandal and indiscretion as 'insider' revelations.[98] Burra's letters in their tone copied such journalism and acknowledged their indebtedness to "Jennifer's Diary" from the Tatler or Vogue's "How one lives from Day to Day". In a letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, 14 October 1927, Burra apologized "I'me sorry I'me not as good as the Tatler..I'm sorry it didn't give J. a sophisticated thrill like reading Aldous Huxley to read my letters."[99]

This extended into contemporary journalism-photography with photographs by Cecil Beaton amongst others, being featured as an additional 'insider view' of the High Society social scene. Burra's friend Barbera Ker-Seymer was a society photographer in the late 1920s and Burra moved in photographic circles at this time. The society spectacle of Beaton's Cooling Galleries November 1927 exhibition and its extensive press coverage was noted by Burra in a letter of 9 December 1927: "Have you seen the December Vogue? its Cecil Beaton Baba Beaton Annie Beaton Mrs Beaton Father Beaton Lizzie Beaton Beaton Beaton and even one of those amusing drawings of Cecil Beaton of Cecil Beaton impersonating a fragrant old staffordshire piece representing Apollo."[100] The letter sarcastically notes the publicity

surrounding Beaton's arrival as a media celebrity described in The Tatler as "the latest addition to the ranks of Society photographers."[101]

The regular appearance of Beaton's portrait photographs in The Tatler, Vogue, The Sphere, The Sketch, The Graphic and The Bystander with their novel effects and witty theatricality, sanctioned a number of thematic genres in Burra's work at the end of the 1920s. These included for example, the representation of 'group charade-type masquerades' in a classical mode in Arcadia (1928-9) [CC.38], the modern 'conversation piece' social group as in Balcony Toulon (1929) [CC.43] and the double portrait of celebrities, especially sisters, in 'tableau vivant' featured in The Two Sisters (1929)[102] [CC.54]. Burra's Two Sisters, whilst including portraits of the entertainers, the Dolly Sisters, also displays that self-conscious artistry and theatrical allusion central to Beaton's society portraits, for example, Mrs. Ronald Armstrong-Jones as Perdita Robinson in the Pageant of Hyde Park [104](1928) [pl.46]. In Arcadia, the exaggerated posturing, mimicked by the dancing dog, the historical costumes and the allusion to fancy dress masquerades, the sheer delight in escapism and anti-naturalism with its almost comic tone, appear indebted to Beaton's costume photography and its theatricality. (An example in Beaton's work would be Cecil Beaton and a Group of Bright Young People on a Wooden Bridge (c.1928) [pl.47] acting out fêtes champêtres in fancy dress).[105]

In addition, Beaton's photography and the middle-class coverage of the European social scene afforded in magazines such as Vogue and the Tatler, focused attention on High Bohemian artistic groups and the cultured, cosmopolitan homosexual circles of leading patrons, artists and intellectuals.'[106] It was such groups which Wyndham Lewis savagely ridiculed in The Apes of God (1930) and the literary examples of Cocteau, Gide, Proust and Stein, which were attacked as responsible for: "the worst aspects of artistic patronage: intellectual snobbery, the 'obligation' of culture, refined speech and millionaire luxury." Lewis also condemned such writers for their promotion of the cult of youth, dilletantism, affectation and homosexuality.'[107]

Such characteristics were central to that 'Anatomy of Dandyism' which, I suggest, underlined the café as a milieu for sub-cultural display and leisure. The explicit references to Cocteau in both Le Boeuf sur le Toit (1930) and in Café Bar (1930) are also revealing. In Le Boeuf sur le Toit, this focused on a Montmartre nightclub, whose appeal capitalized on the Cocteau cult and the taste for new forms of leisure by wealthy expatriate circles in Paris. In Café Bar, a Mediterranean café-bar, which carried direct connotations of contact with Cocteau's group is used as a location for the representation of the intrigues of a small circle of friends. Such references would have authenticated these paintings' claim to represent a group's self-image abroad at a particular historical moment. Furthermore, in the way they mixed historical associations with peculiarly modern subjects, popular sources drawn from literature, photography and film with a

particular type of conversation group painting, these works made knowing references to contemporary artistic debates on style.

A distinctive example of Burra's interest in Parisian low-life, sub-cultural groups is Le Bal (1928) [CC.35]. Its subject is a Paris bal-musette on the rue de Lappe with its clientele of prostitutes, pimps, gangsters and sailors. It was probably the painting which Burra mentioned in a letter to Nash as "a little composition on the rue de Lappe..I'm afraid it will be too daring for the Leicester Galleries"[108]. Burra in a letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer of 19th October 1928, recorded his visit to the rue de Lappe and impressed upon her its glamorous appeal:"We went to the rue de Lappe on Sunday. me and Billy danced a beautiful tango. My dear you should have seen it...I have done a drawing on the strength of it".[109] The painting includes numerous male couples dancing on the left-hand side, which represent such an experience, although they do not appear to include portraits of Burra and Chappell.[110]

However, the painting is not just an illustration of this episode, but incorporates many levels of meaning. It accentuates the glamour of the Parisian bal-musette sub-culture through its idealized figure language, heightened use of colour and its distinctive form of glowing illumination derived from watercolour heightened with bodycolour.[111] It also shows Burra as an adept manipulator of popular cultural sources, specifically drawing details of dress, decor and milieu from popular magazines.[112] Furthermore, in its angle of vision, it suggests a viewpoint from

the raised balcony, where the band would normally have been placed (who are not shown in the painting) and one frequently exploited by photo-reportage photographers for dramatic 'behind the scene' effects.'[13] In the very choice of the bal as a subject, it parallels the popularity of the milieu in popular films and songs. Whilst these points will be discussed in detail in later chapters,'[14]Burra's achievement lies in the way Le Bal intermixes such ideas and references within a single painting of a bal-musette. What I want to specifically consider is the way the work claims a distinctive group image as representative of Burra's Paris experience.

Burra's painting contains all the characteristic features of the authentic bal-musette as described by Brassaï later:"red imitation leather banquettes, tables solidly nailed to the floor against fights, large mirrors festooned with Venetian glass globes, multi-coloured streamers festooned from the four corners of the cieling to the centre of the room where a prismed, multi-faceted ball was hanging".'[15] The members of the bal also include examples of types, which were to be found, according to contemporary accounts, in every bal-musette. A sailor is shown in profile standing at the bar, Apaché gangsters recognizable by their flat caps are included in the crowd and the prostitutes standing in their conspicuous way, dominate the foreground. Such figures were similarly featured in Germaine Krull's photograph Au bal musette de la rue de Lappe à Paris in Variétés,15 December 1928'[16] [pl.48].

In another letter of October 1928, Burra referred to the dangers associated with this area of Paris. He bravely declared his first-hand knowledge of this area known as 'la zone':"We penetrated about 40 miles into Old Montmartre (the heart of the Apache quarter you know)".[117] Whilst the rue de Lappe was not strictly part of Old Montmartre, it was an area controlled by what Brassaï called 'the Secret Gangs' and had a reputation for criminal activity and gangland activities, which magazines such as Le Crapouillot and Détective eagerly publicized at this time, in grisly photos such as 'La Zone'.[118][pl.49]

Both the bal-musette as a location and the 'zone' as an area were also part of an extensive and exotic mythology of Paris, which was promoted in popular novels, films and songs in the late 1920s.[119] Films such as Cavalcanti's Rien Que les Heures (1926) and more specifically, Georges Lacombe's La Zone (1928) provided a geography of a hidden Paris, not ordinarily revealed to the tourist.[120] Furthermore, songs such as Piaf's Entre Saint Ouen et Clignancourt claimed and made public an insider knowledge of this exclusive Paris, which photographers such as Brassaï and Krull were eager to record.[121] The sound of an accordeon and the rhythm of the java marked the 'real Paris' of the 'zone'. These according to Piaf's song uplifted tired spirits and brought back the secret memories of a special place, glamorous not in physical terms, but by experience and intuition:

> "Entre Saint Ouen et Clignancourt, en rêve,
> Je vais faire un petit tour sur la zone
> Les yeux clos, je revoir mon passé....
> L'odeur des frites et des lilas, en frissonant, je retrouve
> tout ça, sur la zone."

> Entre Saint Ouen et Clignancourt, J'ai connu mes premiers amours sur la zone...ma vieille zone."

The bal-musette, as Brassaï desperately urged in The Secret Paris of the 30s, was the most authentic milieu of this Parisian sub-culture of the zone.[122] It had a unique place in the history and mythology of the city, with its own distinctive style, crowd, dress, signals and even language, which Brassaï's photographs attempted to record [pl.50]. To enter into a bal-musette was to come into contact with this secret world. It guaranteed that special thrill, which came from the contact with another class and a distinctive sub-culture. It was also tinged with that mixture of fear and admiration associated with the "vrai" Parisian underworld. Le Bal makes a claim for such an identity and shared experience, which so intrigued Burra at this time. A different type of glamour was associated with Burra's images of groups on terraces in the South of France and it is these works which I will attend to next.

In 1927-29, images of glamorous group leisure become linked to the Mediterranean. In works such as Toulon (1927) [CC.33], Balcony Toulon (1929) [CC.43], Dessert (1929) [CC.47] and The Terrace (1929) [CC.53], conversation groups involved in eating and drinking are displayed on balconies and terraces. In The Terrace, dancing and music-making on an elaborate framed terrace with fruit laden plants and exotic birds emphasize hedonistic pleasure. In Dessert, a group enact a modern fête-champêtre scene en terrasse. The groups, which indulge in the consumption of exotic foods,

fruit and wine, celebrate the abundance of the Mediterranean as one of the distinctive pleasures of abroad. This refers to the particular appeal of the Mediterranean between 1927 - 1933, as a cosmopolitan playground for wealthy European and American youth - a fashion, partly due to the patronage of this area by Cocteau and his circles and other artistic and intellectual 'beau monde' groups, of which Burra had first-hand experience.

This theme of Mediterranean leisure was initially tied to Marseilles, Toulon and Cassis, which Burra and Chappell visited in September-October 1927. Cassis was a fashionable resort- a point which Burra's letter to Ker -Seymer noted:"we are getting more and more artistic..more chic".[123] A letter dated 24 September 1927, entitled Riviera Chatter, copying Vogue's gossip columns, wittily observed that: "the chic wear here is ripping red print hankys round the neck & head white linen trews and bathing shoes in blue, white striped or rose pink everyone walks about with drawing books and canvasses the canvasses look a bit futurist."[124] Such an image suggests the Mediterranean as a fashionable site for withdrawal into a hedonistic life with bohemian overtones.

Such an imaginative fiction of the Mediterranean as an Arcadian site removed from the complexities of contemporary social and political turmoil suggests historical precedents in Victorian and Edwardian tourist guides and travelogues- sources, which were available in the Springfield library.[125] These asserted the exoticism of 'the poetic South' and, as John Tremble has suggested, set the Mediterranean South in opposition to the

familiarity of Britain and the culture of Northern Europe.[126] Quoting Norman Douglas's Siren lands(1911), Pemble urges that: "to Mediterraneanize oneself [was] to dream ... to browse at leisure" away "from the fevered North" and "the problems of the day".[127] Victorian and Edwardian travel accounts: "did not merely confirm, they recreated and enlarged the inherited idea of the South as a favoured realm of enchantment and repose."[128]

This allure of disengagement from conventional restraints and routine is central to the images of balcony leisure such as The Dessert. It is also marked in works such as The Kite (1929) [CC.49], Arcadia (1928-29) [CC.38] and Dancing Cows (1929) [CC.46], where the Mediterranean landscape becomes a theatre of fancy dress and carnival, a place of elaborate arabesques, decorative surfaces and sugary colours. In The Terrace (1929) [CC.53] for example, this sense of masquerade is carried even further. The subject of flamenco dancers and a guitar player on an elaborate, open terrace sets the scene as a Spanish one. The flag, conspicuous in the distance, emphasizes this. Yet, this must be an imaginative fiction because Burra did not visit Spain until 1933. In these works, the costumed and staged self portrayed in a Mediterranean world of charm and innocence, is a starting point for a distinctive type of painting, which incorporated modern and past references within a poetic atmosphere with incidental comic episodes.

Furthermore, these paintings also made eclectic references to 'High Art' traditions of the past. The Kite carries associations

of 18th Century French painting, in particular Watteau.[129] In The Two Sisters (1929), the Mediterranean group conversation piece mixes references to the current fashion for fêtes champêtres, fancy dress, twins and popular performers to historical sources. These include the 18th Century conversation group, the English satirical print- the two women's outrageous costumes and poses carry suggestions of the two women in Cruickshank's Monstrosities of 1822 [pl.35], the harlquin fruit-pickers charade in the background - a comic reference to the Commedia dell' Arte, the stylized still life with its allusions to Braque and Derain's compositions of the early 1920s and the strongly perspectival space, volumetric forms and clear outlines suggest an idiom indebted to Italian 'primitives'- a source which, as P.G. Konody noted in his review of Burra's Leicester Galleries exhibition in June 1932, showed all "the serenity of an Italian primitive" mixed with a knowledge of French Neo-Classicism.[130]

Cocteau's writings, notably Le Rappel à l'ordre (1926), provided an extremely relevant theoretical context into which to place these concepts.[131] In Les Enfants terribles (1929), the writer also offered a fictional example of the 'withdrawāl' life-style tied to group allegiances, which in both Burra's and Cocteau's circles were associated with elitism, wealth and leisure. At the centre of Cocteau's investigations was the critical analysis of 'style' in contemporary society and its translation into artistic form. In the visual arts, 'style's importance was as a cognitive set of values, which had emerged through a European post-Renaissance tradition and could be used as historical terms of

reference to evaluate modern developments in the arts. However, Cocteau was careful not to confuse '<u>style</u>' with a series of flagrant quotations from the art of the past. Instead, a knowledgeable series of allusions to and citations of historical sources had to be displayed, which could be understood within the terms of reference of the art work and also extended to demonstrate an awareness of contemporary intellectual and aesthetic debates. As identified in <u>A Call to Order</u>: "to have style rather than to have a style" was an 'a priori' requirement of modern art. The main distinguishing mark of '<u>style</u>' was an ability to exhibit and manipulate intellectual references in a descriminatory way.'[32]

Burra's notion of '<u>style</u>' in the period 1927-30 pregnant with its allusions to the art traditions of the past, its adoption of devices from contemporary photography and illustration, its sense of artifice and theatricality, often incorporating irony and humour, and its knowing references to English, French and German artistic sources, was undoubtedly informed by Cocteau's writings - a point which he acknowledged in a letter at this time.'[33] These Mediterranean group scenes reveal Burra's ability as a skillful handler of the language and poetry of images. Just as Cocteau had replied to the question, "What is <u>style</u>?- To cultivate one's thoughts - to learn how to shape and handle it is to cultivate one's style", so Burra appears to be cultivating a visual idiom from a sophisticated and eclectic range of sources.'[34]

An important contemporary example in this respect was Picasso, whose Mediterranean subjects, Neo-classical style and way of integrating historical references into a modern idiom seemed to epitomize that 'stylish' and intellectual eclecticism proposed by Cocteau. Picasso's classical outline drawings from the early 1920s had demonstrated such a synthesis of contemporary and traditional in personality portraits such as Serge Diahilev and Alfred Seligsberg (1919) and in Commedia dell' Arte subjects such as Pierrot and Harlequin (1918).[135] It was a linear method which Burra's contour drawings such as Actors (1929-30) and Dance Hall (1929-30) had employed. It was also an image-making procedure, which simultaneously created an exact outline and clear contours, allowed detail consideration of particular areas and yet remained ambiguously two dimensional. It was this ability to manipulate the stated and the unstated, which Cocteau so admired in his essay on Picasso in 1926. Cocteau noted how the 'totality' of the visual effect in Picasso's work was not restricted by conventions of naturalism, but aimed at a greater realism:"At times the scale between the decipherable and the undecipherable hestitate; at other times, it does not function at all."[136]

The sheer range and vitality of Picasso's inventiveness and his major role in that 'avenement classique du Cubisme' discussed by Tériade in his article in the 'Documentaire sur la jeune peinture' series later in 1929, was promoted in Cahiers d'Art in 1928-29, and in Wilhelm Uhde's Picasso et la tradition française (1928),[137] which Burra must have known. Working within a distinctively French, classical tradition, Picasso's involvement with the

metamorphosis of the human form inscribed by classical or sculptural formal languages offered an 'intellectualised' figurative idiom in which a complex series of references could be invested with what Wilenski termed "the true secret of classical architectural art".[138]

Picasso's "modern classicism" was entirely appropriate to Burra's Mediterranean group subjects with their associations of 'fêtes champêtres' and hedonistic pleasure. Burra's The Kite (1929) is recognizably within that tradition of Commedia dell' Arte subjects represented in Neo-Classical style found in works such as Severini's Two Pulcinella (1922), Derain's Pierrot and Harlequin (1924) and Picasso's Harlequin (1923).[139] Metzinger's Clown à la mandoline (1924) [pl.17] and L'embarquement de l'Arlequin (1923) also offer direct figurative parallels in their monumental form, clarity of outline, decorative colours and theatricality to The Kite.[140] As Andrew Causey has noted, Arcadia is similarly related in pose and gestures to Metzinger's Bal masqué (c. 1923-5).[141]

As Christopher Green has outlined in Cubism and its Enemies-Modern Movements and Reactions in French Art 1916-28 (1987), this type of eclectic painting, which mixed modern figurative subjects with recognizable historical references, occupied an important position in contemporary art debates in France.[142] It was often characterized by para-mythical, poetic subjects represented in a post-War cubist pictorial language.[143] Burra's increasing knowledge of and exposure to this type of French painting is particularly apparent in the works from 1928-29, through its

promotion in the French periodical Cahiers d'Art, which Burra knew from 1927. Three important sets of articles on contemporary painters in Cahiers d'Art addressed these debates and are relevant to this discussion: "Idéalisme et Naturalisme dans la peinture moderne" by Christian Zervos from 1927-28, "Documentaire sur la jeune peinture" by E. Tériade from 1929-30 and from 1927-8 a number of reviews, which attempted, as Green has noted, to "reconstruct a sort of classicism" within modern French figurative painting.[144]

However, this desire to withdraw into fictional representations of the self is also central to works with less overtly theatrical subjects. It becomes identified with locations of exclusivity such as balconies, which are concealed from the public eye. In Toulon (1927) [CC.33], the pair of figures, the man reading and the woman fanning herself, remain aloof from the Toulon streets below. The nightlife activities of the square below, whose fascinations are represented in other works such as Sailors and Fountain near the Grand Hotel, Toulon (c.1930) [pl.51], exert little interest.[145] They turn their backs and draw down the blind to reaffirm their privacy. In The Eavesdropper (1928-9), the invasion of group privacy is the main theme. The balustrade, blinds and screen are barriers, which physically protect such intimate activities. In Balcony Toulon (1929), the woman's undressed state indicates an inability to be seen from the street. The tram in the street below, which acts as a symbol for mass contact in the public arena (as for example, in The Tram 1927-29), is screened out.

These viewpoints, whilst suggestive of those commonly found in tourist guides and discussed earlier, also have precedents in 19th Century French painting. For example, in Caillebotte's The Man at the Window (1876) [pl.52], where the view from the window or balcony provides a context for a visual commentary on the goings on in the city street seen from a distance, without any threat of contact.[146] As Peter Stallybrass and Allon White have noted, the symbolic significance of this was that: "From the balcony, one could gaze, but not be touched ... Similary the bourgeoisie on their balconies could both participate in the banquets of the streets and yet remain separated."[147] Such a position was particularly appropriate to the role of the expatriate group as spectators and voyeurs; a preoccupation which was central to Burra's experience of abroad.

However, the vantage points adopted in these works suggest an observer on the upper floors of an apartment, in the cheapest rented rooms of a 'chambre de bonne' or hotel - the kinds of locations, which Burra rented in cheap hotels. In Toulon (1927), the earliest consideration of this terrace theme, the panoramic view over the harbour area presents the city as a massive spectacle, which the angle of vision and imploding space, crush together. In Balcony Toulon (1929) [CC.43], the town is seen from the upper floors of a hotel to judge from the view across the roof-tops. Such an observation point, usually from a roof-top window or small balcony, was common in contemporary French popular novels and songs. It was frequently identified with the urban lower classes, notably prostitutes and criminals who, whilst

living in the squalor of these rooms, had an advantageous look-out point allowing time for a quick exit over the rooftops. Francis Carco in his novel Perversité (1925) described the squalor of the upper floors:"au quatrième étage.. où dès la tombée de la nuit des prostitueés de tout âge montaient et descendaient avec des inconnus...Les escaliers miserables éclairés par des lampes à petrole et tout puant de l'odeur fade des plombes, les murs humides et taillades..."[148] These floors were the territory of secret goings on, illicit affairs and sordid murders.[149] Piaf's song De l'autre côté de la rue similarly describes a prostitute's room as she wistfully considers her lot:

> "Des murs qui se lézardent, un escalier étroit, une vieille mansarde et me voilà chez moi,
> Un lit qui se gondole, une table de guinbas, une lampe à pétrole et me voila chez moi.
> Mais le soir quand le cafard me pénètre et que mon coeur est pas trop malheureux,
> . . . . . .
> J'écorte les rideaux de ma fenêtre et j'écarquille les yeux.

It is from just such a vantage point on the top floor and in such cheap surroundings that the city is observed in these paintings.

This identification with Parisian low-life was paralleled in the theme of underworld bars and cafés, which emerged from 1927. Le Café (1927) [CC.24] and Havana (1928) [CCD.24] represent 'bouges'- the lowest form of underworld cafés- derived largely from popular French literature and music in the 1920s. In Le Café, the entrance of two figures into the 'El Dorado' café marks the discovery of one of these clandestine milieus. The reference in the advertisement to popular culture and its performers, accentuates the bouge's links with the 19th Century. The El Dorado was a famous Parisian café-concert, where bohemian artists

enjoyed the pleasures of a popular entertainment.[150] The homogeneity of the members' dress with their flat-caps signalling membership of 'Apaché' gangs and their gambling -a traditional reference to immorality- marks them and the café out as a private space. The new arrivals are viewed suspiciously by the figure leaving the café. Their different dress also suggests that they are outsiders, who do not understand the codes of the café and its society. They are perhaps 'slumming' the city's nightlife in order to discover the authentic 'bouges de la nuit' read about in magazines and pulp fiction, sung about in popular songs and imitated in cabarets.[151]

From 1923, Burra had been reading the works of a number of contemporary French popular novelists, who took as their subject the metropolitan underworld and its criminal sub-culture.[152] Available in cheap paperback editions, the novels of Francis Carco, Paul Morand and Pierre MacOrlan exploited an interest in urban vice and lowlife politics, employing an array of boulevard and underworld characters. This low-life literary genre was popular in the 1920s and extensively reviewed in French periodicals such as Le Crapouillot, which Burra was reading at this time. It was also discussed in British middle-class magazines such as The Tatler and Vogue, championed by Raymond Mortimer and Aldous Huxley, whose reviews regularly featured their works. According to Mortimer, Carco's L'Équipe (1919,ed.1925), Perversité (1925), Nuits de Paris (1927) and Jesus la Caille (1914,ed.1927), Morand's Ouvert la Nuit (1923) and MacOrlan's Aux Lumières de Paris (1925) were essential reading for those

"sophisticated young readers", whose "tastes were decidedly French and cosmopolitan".[153] Burra and his friends, Clover de Pertinez and Beatrice Dawson, were avid readers both of Mortimer's reviews and this brand of popular fiction.[154]

Within these novels, the sub-culture was marked by its amorality, violence and lust for money and sex. Special codes of conduct set it apart from decent morality and against the responsibilities of its largely middle-class readership. Secret signs, pass-words, slang and distinctive mannerisms were common. Its chief protagonists were recognizable types: the gangster-apache, the prostitute, the pimp, the night-club entertainer and the sailor, who recurred in almost every novel. For the anti-heroes, it was "la vie simple des bars, des bals, des cinémas..les plaisirs des femmes", for the anti-heroines, sleazy bars and hotel rooms with "ses clients du boulevard ".[155] Such marginalized figures, according to Mortimer, reiterating Baudelaire, constituted "the most perfect representations of modernity."[156]

The most frequent locations chosen for the novels were the milieu of the city's underside -its sordid streets, run-down bars and underworld cafés. In Paris, these were the poor Northern arrondissements - Belleville, Menilmontant, Pigalle and the area of the Canal Saint Martin, the quarter around Les Halles and the banks of the Seine at Grenelle. The prostitute standing on the street corner was a key sign of such a neighbourhood, as Carco noted in Perversité (1925): "On la rencontrait, boulevard de Grenelle, sous la haute funèbre galerie du métro ou Chez Jules,

rue d'Avre, dans ce bar fréquenté par des hommes de couleur qui, le samedi, l'attendaient".[157] Alternatively, it could be the brothel areas of large ports such as Le Havre, Marseilles and Toulon. These distinctive types of underworld novels with their sensational storylines and violent plots became categorized after the name of one of their most celebrated writers as 'Le MacOrlanisme'.[158]

An important milieu in many of these novels was the café-bar. It stood as a microcosm for the urban underworld. In the café, gangsters, pimps, prostitutes and sailors mixed freely. Pick ups were made and old scores settled. MacOrlan in La Tradition de Minuit (1930) describes such a place,'Le Soleil noir':

> "Le Soleil noir rayonnant entre minuit et deux heures du matin dans le bas de la rue Pigalle, dans la partie obscure de la rue Pigalle, un peu à l'écart de toutes les lumières célèbres du quartier. L'établissement ne paraissait pas fréquenté par les milliardaires internationaux. C'était une boîte de nuit franchement dédiée aux pauvres inquiets et inquietants du plaisir. Cette assemblée nocturne qui recrutait ses éléments les plus décoratifs dans les villes chéries par les aventuriers, ne manquait ni d'élégance, ni de caractères. Des femmes y venaient boire, au moment même qu'un désespoir passager les contraignait à abandonner la rue. Des hommes solitaires ou accompagnés venaient chasser dans cette mauvaise nuit trop colorée une proie quelconque ou simplement l'idée qui les mettrait sur la piste d'une proie...On discutait la vie secrète de la ville."[159]

Havana represents just such a place. The prostitutes sit at the table on the left-hand side monitoring new arrivals. The couple, in the middle of negotiations, have obviously illicit motives, which the woman's revealing dress suggests. The man is that type of 'mec' common in Carco's novels: "Grand,.. taciturne, toujours proprement habillé...une drôle de type."[160] The scene corresponds to one of those haunts frequented by prostitutes,

gangsters and other criminal types in the fictional geography of illicit metropolitan nightlife.

The intimate knowledge of such cafés described in these popular novels was also featured in popular songs such as Mistinguett's Boulevard des filles du Calvaire and Dans les bouges de la nuit and Piaf's Elle fréquentait la rue Pigalle. They, like the novels, elaborated a special attitude towards the city and authenticated a marginalized, 'insider' experience. The singers of such songs - Piaf, Mistinguett, Lucienne Boyer, Kiki de Montparnasse - like MacOrlan, Morand and Carco lay claim to a role as narrator in this exclusive domain. They set the scene and outline the main characters in a simple, uncomplicated way using the required locations and figures, standardized scenarios and plots. In Mistinguett's Boulevard des filles du Calvaire, the murder of a young prostitute in the Eastern part of Paris and the discovery of her body in a cheap hotel room is recounted by one who apparently has experience of this urban calvary:

"Boulevard des filles du Calvaire, calvaire des filles du boulevard,
Allant toujours dans la lumière froide, faite de mystères et de brouillard,
On se croirait au sanctuaire, un soir d'hiver, tard".

Such novels and songs retold the endless saga of the city as one of drama, tragedy and despair. In the case of the songs, the female singer's first person narration accentuated their authenticity as a voice articulating such a shared experience.

Alternatively, such places were the sites for slumming and vicarious liaisons. In Mistinguett's Dans les bouges de la nuit, the 'bouges' of Grenelle with their 'mauvais garçons', form the backcloth to a narrative of slumming and and illicit affairs.

"Dans les bouges, la nuit, Montparnasse à Grenelle,
Le chemin me conduit vers des amours nouvels.
Près des mauvais garçons, mon coeur est en délire,
Un air d'accordéon et mon être chavire.

In the novels, illustrations endorsed such an impression of first-hand experience of the milieu.[161] In particular, illustrations by Oberlé, Touchages, Charles Laborde, Sergé, Pascin and Dignimont - members of a group collectively known as 'L'Araignée' - were known to Burra, either through the inclusion of their work in novels by MacOrlan, Carco and Morand, in magazines such as Le Crapouillot, or on advertisements and record covers.[162] From 1924, Le Crapouillot frequently published these illustrations along with excerpts from the novels of MacOrlan, Carco and Morand. In 1926 and 1927, special editions of the magazine were devoted to 'Le salon de l'Araignée' to complement exhibitions of the artists work at the Galerie Devambez in May 1926 and June 1927.[163] Whilst these illustrations reinforced specific low-life types established by 19th Century illustrators such as Steinlen's 'apaché' and Toulouse-Lautrec's 'prostitutes', they also placed such figures within specific urban settings adding contemporary details of dress, environment, geography and social mores taken from the text to strengthen the authenticity of the novel's account.[164]

Dignimont's illustrations to Carco's Perversité (ed.1927) [pl.53] and later to Jésus la Caille (ed.1929) [pl.54] in their subject matter of low-life bars, their range of figurative types and their linearity correspond to Burra's bar interiors such as Les Boys (1928-9) [CCD.29], Dancing (1928-9) [pl.55] and Le Bal (1928)[165] [CC.35]. The clear outline of forms, clarity of facial contours, often presented in profile, attention to details of dress and pose and the compacted, flattened space, which gives the sense of an intimate milieu, are shared. The elevated viewpoint also allows a panoramic view of the bar allowing the features of each individual customer to be clearly distinguished. In Dancing, as in Dignimont's Bal musette [pl.56], there is the sense of a visual mapping out of the bal's appearances in an almost topographical way. The line obsessively holds attention on the the physical contours of the figure's bodies with only the geometry of up-turned tables breaking up the succession of overlapping outlines and profiles. In Le Bal, the use of unnaturalistic colour both to give an impression of a heavily illuminated interior and as a way of communicating a sense of meretricious glamour was a feature of Dignimont's watercolours and contemporary cover illustrations. (It will be discussed later in relation to Burra's prostitute type.) This rigorous method of drawing and its focus on figure types, was central to the work of illustrators such as Dignimont in order to provide visual information and details, which would authenticate the narrative and its claim to document an existing underworld.

The use of the café as a site associated with low-life sub-culture and as a metaphor for urban vice and social marginalization was also tied to the ports of Marseilles and Toulon. As The Britannia reviewer noted about Burra's 1929 Leicester Galleries show:

"[Burra has] succumbed with the enthusiasm of youth to the sordid glamour of the Marseilles underworld with its strange conglomeration of racial types and its thousand facets of Mediterranean life."[166] Accompanying the review was an illustration of the drawing Bar in Marseilles (c. 1928-9). This theme drew on ideas current in popular literature, music and films on the exotic mythology of the Mediterranean sub-culture of the portside cafés and bars.

Works such as Dockside Café (1929) [CC.60] and The Café (1930) [CCD.38a], make knowing reference to this fiction. In Dockside Café, the wide entrance to the café displays its proximity to the docks of Marseille's 'Vieux Port'. It lies within the territory of the red-light area and under the control of the 'Nervi' gangs. The parallel between the loading and unloading of cargo with the soliciting of the sailor at the bar by the waitress underscores the nature of the café's business. It reinforces the café's associations with immorality. This is strengthened by the references to leisure, smoking, drinking and gambling - the pin ball machine. The café as a scene of sexual liasons is set in opposition to the outside world of the street and the routine of work seen in the distance. In The Café, the distinctive nature of the waiter's and the prostitute's work is juxtaposed in a pun on the sense of 'waiting'.

Like the Parisian sub-culture of cafés and nightclubs, the Mediterranean sub-culture of sailors' bars was a prominent feature of popular French novels, songs and films throughout the 1920s and early 1930s- sources which Burra knew. In Pierre MacOrlan's Porte d'eaux mortes (1926) and Quai des brumes (1927), it was linked to vice, crime and drug smuggling. In Carco's L'homme traqué (1922), the depiction of pimps and prostitutes was set in Toulon's 'Chapeau rouge' quarter. In Albert Londres's Marseilles- port du Sud (1927), Marseilles's red-light area became the background for the novelists portrayal of murder and romance.[167] In Pierre Benard's Les bars des mauvais garçons (1933), the reader is escorted on a tour of Marseille's secret haunts,: "ces fameux bars, terreur des lecteurs de journeaux et rendez-vous de la pègre...la jungle Marseillaise".[168]

Such a territory, 'secret' Marseilles, was a permanent feature of the songs of Eugene Vibert, Henri Poupon and Sorvil -the Southern equivalents of Piaf, Mistinguett and Lucienne Boyer. It featured in Piaf's "Dans un bouge du vieux port" as a nostalgia for secret romance:

> "Quand l'accordéon pleurt dans un bouge du port.
> Dans un bouge du vieux port,
> Il se réfugie au airs de sa nostalgie de rêve d'or".

In the films En rade (1928) by Cavalcanti and So this is Marseilles (1929) by Claude Lambert, the mythology of the sea and foreign travel, *was* used to accentuate the glamour of Marseille. The films were shot on location in the city and stills were illustrated in film magazines such as Close Up in 1928-9. Cavalcanti's En rade in particular, offered an entrance into the

closed world of the sailors' cafés and the picturesque quarters of Old Port Marseilles, pervaded by the mythology of the sailor.[169]

Burra's work of 1930-31 makes explicit reference to the café topography of Toulon and Marseilles following his visit with the Nashes in February 1930. Drawings such as Street Scene (1930-31) [CCD.55] offer external views of the ports from the street. Men and Women in a Bar (1930-31) [CCD.47] records an interior scene of the café's mixed clientele. Other sketches such as Snack Bar Study (1930-31) [CCD.54] and Café with Caryatids (1930-31) [pl.57], incorporate a series of images of modern 'type-objects' - the table, the chair, the bottle, the glasses - to catalogue the Mediterranean café's appearance. They also document the layout of the bars, the paraphernalia of machines, bottles and glasses and their ornate carving. This attention to elaborate details and interior decoration authenticates a knowledge derived from first-hand experience, but it also suggests one indebted to photography.

From 1930, the earlier fictional mythology of a port-side, underworld sub-culture drawn from second-hand sources, was supplemented by documentary photographic sources. Whilst Burra collected postcard views of both cities, it was the urban reportage work of Germaine Krull and Moholy-Nagy, which was especially influential at this time and by 27 September 1931, Burra wrote to Ker-Seymer that he was taking photographs by "the Germaine Krull method" in the South of France.[170] Both Moholy-Nagy and Krull specialized in a type of modern photography, which approached the city from elevated vantage points, odd angles and

in close up. Such a modernist '_Realist_' rhetoric was, as David Mellor has shown, identified in Britain and France with German _New Objectivity_ photography in the late 1920s.'[171]

Moholy-Nagy's _Marseilles Vieux Port_ (1927) and Krull's photographs to Morand's _La Route de Paris à la Méditerranée_ (1931) were examples of this type of travel photo-journalism. The photobooks contained candid street shots of the Vieux Port, views from high level vantage points, close ups of Marseilles architecture,- particularly of the cult Pont Transbordeur - informal café interiors and images of ordinary streets reflected in shop windows or mirrors. (These last two devices were used by Burra in his works _Rossi_ (1930) and _Sailors at a Bar_ (1930) and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 in relation to the sailor theme).[172]

The modernity of this approach was strengthened by Franz Roh's _Foto-auge_ (1929), - owned by Burra- which asserted that for photography: "new possibilities take rise, not so much for draughtsman as for photographer-reporters ...whosoever in 1800 on a long jouney wrote a diary of 300 pages, would in the present time, take home 100 metres of leika-film-band that contain more complete memories than the word, being charged with contemplation.[and].. making use of the international language of the outer environment.."[173] These photographs were illustrated in _Der Querschnitt_ and _Variétés_, which both Burra and Nash were collecting at this time, in Nash's copy of _Photographie-Arts et Métiers Graphiques_ (1930) and in _Modern Photography_, published in

London in 1931. They also appeared in reportage-magazines such as Détective, Paris-Magazine and Vu in the late 1920s, sources which Burra knew.[174]

Whilst the exact nature of these influences upon Burra's work will be examined in relation to specific themes in chapters 3, 4 and 5, the parallel with the writings of Morand and MacOrlan was recognized in Morand's text accompanying Krull's photographs in La route de Paris à la Méditerranée (1931) and MacOrlan in his preface to Krull's edition in "Les Photographes Nouveaux" series in 1931. MacOrlan noted that the mythology of the modern city was a central part of Krull's work and declared that: "Le Paris de Krull, c'est le Paris de Carco, quelquefois, car il n'est pas sans s'épanouir dans la tendresse des regrets, mais aussi le Paris des fantômes, des apparitions de faits divers, et des androïds de la prostitution".[175] Krull had clearly taken up Franz Roh's challenge in Foto Auge (1929), to use New Vision Photography to reveal that: "the world is also exciting, cruel and weird" and it was a fascination shared by Burra at this period.[176]

A not unrelated predilection for the equivocal and dubious is evident in works such as Café bar (1930) [CC.58] and The Hand (1931) [CC.71], where the café-bar is used as a framework within which to site ambiguous and humorous narratives. In Café Bar (1930), the location of Raymond's Bar in Toulon and the Place Puget with its Fontaine de Trois Dauphins (1782) by Pierre Puget, is the background to the bar's intrigues.[177] The diagramatic representation of the tables and Thonet's bentwood café-chairs,

contrasts with the geographically precise record of exterior details to call into question the validity of the café as anything other than a place of artifice and illusion. The objects are denied their functional meaning and stand as decorative motifs within the milieu of the café. The interior becomes almost a collage of ordinary café-objects and a witty kind of 'comedy of errors'. The café is distinguished as a private space in which the relationship of fact to fiction is never completely declared. This reference to the deception of appearances is repeated in the images of the hairdressers opposite the café-bar with its display of 'false' hair-pieces and wigs and in the fountain, whose 'natural' vegetation has been, in fact, calcified. The tarpaulin-covered stage to the right of the square and the illuminated curtain, which restricts the view into the café, also intimate these associations of concealment and secrecy.

In The Hand (1931), this use of the café as a metaphor for hidden understandings and meanings is tied to a 'still-life' of modern type-objects derived from two main sources. Firstly, from the Mediterranean and its café sub-culture by means of the travel poster (referring to the trans-Atlantic boat traffic from Marseilles), the bottle (possibly making through its label 'NEGO'- a reference to the Hotel du Port et des Negociants on the Rade in Toulon where Burra stayed) and the type-objects of the café - the bottle, glasses, geometric-patterned table and the decorated screen-shutter and baluster, which had occurred in earlier works. Secondly, drawing on contemporary fictions of the American gangster in popular literature and film, the painting

represents objects related to this mythology: the Green River flick knife, the Target brand cigarette-packet, the skull ring, the dice (linked to gambling) and the newspaper's references to American popular culture (to boxing and jazz concerts by SatchMO on 45th Street.) These images operate as signs for two separate sub-cultural identifications, two geographically removed locations and two distinctive types of cultural exposure and experience (one drawing on first-hand experience supplemented by fictional sources and the second, only read about or seen in films.)

However in the work, these two distinctive sets of understandings are collapsed into a bricolage signalling sub-cultural identification. Imagery drawn from fictional knowledge and actual experience are not distinguished. The milieu of the café accommodates and mixes both sources. It is the cafe's suitability as a theme which allows this breaking down of 'reality' and 'fiction' and permits different types of cultural exposure to be presented, which is central to its importance in Burra's work. In works such as The Café (1930)[CC.57] and Oyster Bar Harlem (1934-35) [CC.118], a similar convergence of sources is compounded by the viewer's identification with a member of the milieu who is placed on the edge of the picture plane and whose participation in the scene is confirmed by the presence of a hand. Dramatic perspective and close ups pull the viewer into the company of the group and into the social space of the café and oyster bar. As in The Hand, such an involvement signals a distinctive act of identification.

To conclude, the café and its associated subjects, the café-bar, bar, bal-musette and nightclub, occupy a central position in Burra's work in this period as distinctive purchases on fictionalized and experienced subcultures. This was undoubtedly influenced by the café's and bal's imaginative roles in popular culture as sites, where urban sub-culture with all its connotations of criminality, vice and depravity, were transformed into one of the most engaging mythologies of the modern metropolis. Popular novels, illustrations, songs and films offered this fiction as one of many, which were avidly consumed by a wider audience in the late 1920s and 1930s. Burra's works not only incorporate and manipulate this fiction, but consciously draw attention to its imaginative workings. The presence of the hand in The Hand and the identification which it makes between the viewer, the world of the Mediterranean café and the American gangster is not an accidental one. It is a metaphorical grasp on that glamorous urban sub-culture and rebellious underground 'self/other', which many people in the Inter-War decades were eager to devour.

1. HERBERT, Robert, L. Impressionism - Art, Leisure and Parisian Society, London 1988, p. 65. Cf., CLARKE, T.J. The Painting of Modern Life, Paris in the Art of Manet and his followers, London 1988, p. 47. According to Clover de Pertinez and William Chappell, Burra had extensive knowledge of late 19th century French painting before going to Art School in London.
2. DELVAU, Alfred, Guide Practique des Plaisirs de Paris, Paris 1867, p. 64. Cf., HERBERT 1988, op. cit., p. 64 and CLARKE, pp. 205-7.
3. Burra Library, Private Collection. STEINLEN, T.A. Dans la Vie, Paris 1901.
4. STEINLEN, T.A. Steinlen and his Art, London 1911, u.p.
5. Burra's knowledge of these authors confirmed in conversation with Clover de Pertinez, 16 July 1982. Some of the volumes from Burra Library contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
6. STUDIO, Vol. 87, January-June 1924, p. 126 from a review of Steinlen's work by M. Valotaire which illustrated 'Les Deux Gigolos', ibid., pp. 123-6.
7. Burra's edition now in Burra Collection, Tate Gallery Archive.
8. Quoted from English translation by Leonard Tancock, Harmondsworth ed. 1987, pp. 338-9.
9. An account of 19th century tourist chronicle from KING, Edward, My Paris, French Character Sketches, Boston 1868, p. 113. Quoted in HERBERT 1988, op. cit., p. 65.
10. The library at Springfield contained a large number of pre-1914 French publications according to Pertinez in conversation with author 16 July 1982. For Burra's fascination with Le Dôme see later pp. 78-9.
11. For further discusssion of such characterization of the avant-garde bohemian artist see POGGIOLI, Renato, The Theory of the Avant-garde, London 1968, pp. 31-2.
12. W.C. Letters p. 35. William Chappell in conversation with author 14 July 1982.
13. Cf., MORPHET, Richard, Cedric Morris, Tate Gallery, London 1984, pp. 22-26.
14. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer from Springfield 1927 in W.C. Letters p. 35.
15. Cf., W.C. Letters p. 21.
16. W.C. Letters p. 45-49.
17. W.C. Letters p. 46.
18. "Paris Scene", Vogue Late August 1925, p. 55. This was stressed by Augustus John in another Vogue report "Paris and the Painter", Cf., Vogue, 27 June 1928, p. 47.
19. ACTON, Harold, Memoirs of an Aesthete, London 1948, p. 149.
20. Cf., VAUGHAN, David, Frederick Ashton and his Ballets, London 1977, p. 26-28.
21. Letter to Paul Nash from Paris, Summer 1931. Tate Archive.
22. LEWIS, Wyndham, Enemy No. 2, September 1927, p. xxiv. Cf., MEYERS, Jeffrey, The Enemy - A Biography of Wyndham Lewis, London 1980, pp. 161-163.
23. Letter to Ker-Seymer, January 1927, W.C Letters p. 33.
24. Vogue, 23 January 1929, p. 19.

25. GRAMONT, Elizabeth de, Souvenir du Monde de 1890-1940, Paris 1966 quoted in CHEVALIER, Louis, Montmartre du Plaisir et du Crime, Paris 1980, p. 321.
26. GRAMONT 1966, op. cit., p. 321.
27. C.f., Letter to Paul Nash, 26 May 1931 from Paris in Nash correspondence, Tate Archive.
28. ABEL, Richard, French Cinema and the First Wave 1915-29, Princeton 1984, pp. 205-6 and 215-6.
29. ABEL 1984, op. cit., p. 215-6.
30. Cf., ABEL 1984, op. cit., p. 206.
31. Burra Papers, Tate Archive, Filmphotos: wie noch nie, Giessen 1929, p. 154-155.
32. For discussion of earlier statues of Le Boeuf sur le Toit, Cf., WILLETT, John, The New Sobriety 1917-33 and Politics in the Weimar Period, London 1978, p. 89.
33. ACTON 1948, op. cit., pp. 154-5.
34. SALMON, André in Fantasio, 15 September 1924, quoted in BARBEDETTE, Gilles and CARASSOU, Michel, Paris Gay 1925, Paris 1981, p. 31.
35. SACHS, Maurice, Le Sabbat, Paris 1946, p. 73. Quoted in BARBEDETTE and CARASSOU 1981, op. cit., p. 30.
36. See HARTLEY, Marsden, "A propos du Dôme, etc", in Der Querschnitt, II 1922, pp. 235-8.
37. Something of this attraction was noted by Frederick Ashton who, referring to his time in Paris with Burra, recalled that "the contact with so many creative spirits was exciting." Quoted in VAUGHAN 1977, p. 28.
38. W.C. Letters p. 51.
39. BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30's, London first pub. 1976, 2nd ed., 1977. Section on Artists' Dances in Montparnasse (unpaginated) followed by Le Bal Nègre in the Rue Blomet.
40. Letter to Paul Nash, Nash Papers, Tate Archive, London.
41. W.C. Letters p. 37.
42. Cf., OXENHANDLER, N. Jean Cocteau - Scandal and Parade, New Jersey 1957, pp. 306ff.
43. BARBEDETTE and CARASSOU 1981, op. cit., p. 29.
44. Cf., CAUSEY, C.C. pp. 19-20 and p. 24 and his note 3.
45. Contained in Burra Papers in Tate Archive and Private Collection. Pertinez stated that Burra was introduced to Cocteau's writings by Beatrice Dawson at Art School in early 1920s in interview 16. July 1982.
46. Letter to Paul Nash, 26 May 1931 from Toulon, Nash Papers, Tate Archive, London.
47. CAUSEY in C.C. p. 19 refers to Burra's letter to Chappell on importance of Cocteau and Picasso's line drawings, c. 1927-8.
48. Cocteau's Oedipe Roi, Paris 1928 with 3 drawings and 25 Dessins d'une dormeur, Portraits de Jean Desbordes, Lausanne 1929. His earlier publication Dessins, Paris 1923 was contained in Burra's Library, now in private collection.
49. The Times review of Recent Tendencies in British Painting, October 1930 contained in Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
50. CUNARD, Nancy, "Harlem Reviewed" in CUNARD, Nancy, Negro, first pub. 1934, ed. New York 1984, pp. 47-54. Cf., p. 80.
51. Cf., CONNOLLY, Cyril, Enemies of Promise, London 1930, p. 46.
52. CONNOLLY 1930, op. cit., p. 12.
53. For discussion of Vogue, see PACKER, William, The Art of Vogue Covers 1909-40, London 1980, pp. 90ff. and GRAFTON, Carol

Belanger ed., Spot Illustrations of the Lively Twenties from La Vie Parisienne, New York 1986, pp. 15-25.

54. Vogue Cover, New York edition. Cf., PACKER 1980, op. cit., p.189.

55. W.C. Letters p. 46.

56. SEM, La Ronde de nuit, Paris 1923 and MASEREEL. F. Masereel, L'homme et l'oeuvre, Paris 1925. Masereel's work was illustrated in Studio, 96, 1928, pp. 45-47. Pertinez confirmed this in conversation with author 16.

57. SEM 1923, op. cit., pp. 35, 45, 46 and MASEREEL 1925, op. cit., Dessin inedit 1924. n.p.

58. MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 28. Mellor refers to an article in Woman's Life, 31 March 1928, p. 4.

59. Vogue, 28 December 1927, p. 41. Pertinez emphasized the importance of Covarrubias's work to Burra in the late 1920s, interview 14 July 82

60. Reproduced in VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, London, English Caricature 1620 to the Present - Caricaturists and Satirists, their Art, their purpose and influence, London 1984, p. 124, no. 184, ill. xxii.

61. Review by T.W. Earp of Burra's Leicester Gallery exhibition, Studio, 97, April 1929, p. 439.

62. W.C. Letters p. 51.

63. Vogue, 17 April 1929, p. 17.

64. Dated 1818, hand-coloured etching, Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University. Cf., VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM 1984, p. 98, No. 132.

65. Cf., VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM 1984, op, cit., p. 99.

66. The Times, 31 May 1932, p. 14 and Studio, 97, April 1929, p. 439.

67. Originally published in The Savoy, I, January 1896. Burra Library contained a copy of Beardsley's work from 1904.

68. Confirmed in conversation with Pertinez 16 July 82 and Chappell 15 April 82. Burra's Library included Firbank's Prancing Nigger (1924) and Inclinations (1929). Cf., T.G. pp. 11-12 and W.C. p. 73.

69. W.C. Letters p. 40.

70. Cf., CONNOLLY 1938, op. cit., p. 45 and note to Chapter 3, p. 51.

71. Both were in Burra's collection now in Burra Papers, Tate Gallery Archive and Private Collection.

72. MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 26. Cf., CONNOLLY 1938, op. cit., p. 42.

73. PRAZ, Mario, The Romantic Agony, It ed 1930, Eng first ed. 1933. Ed. used 1979, pp. 354-61. Cf., note 88, p. 422-4.

74. Review of Collected Works of Ronald Firbank in Vogue, 9 January 1929, p. 43.

75. Quoted in LANCASTER, Marie-Jacqueline. Brian Howard -Portrait of a Failure, London 1968, p. 172.

76. ROTHENSTEIN, John, The Artists of the 1890s, London 1928, p. 5.

77. The Weekend Review, 4 June 1932, p. 704.

78. Multi-National Exhibition of Works by French, British, American, German, Swiss and Mexican Artists, 1926.

79. For details, see LEWIS, Beth, E. George Grosz - Art and Politics in Weimar Germany, Wisconsin 1971, Bibliograpy section F, Books and Articles about Grosz which is a comprehensive note of all publications.

80. Toller's book, London 1926 and MacOrlan's Paris 1926.

81. RAY, Marcel, Georges Grosz, Paris 1927, p. 42.
82. Cf., RAY 1927, op. cit., p. 54-5.
83. Referred to by MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 28. Also SADLEIR, Michael, Daumier the Man and Artist, London 1924.
84. Burra was a regular attender at the Film Society and so it is likely that he went to the lecture. Cürlis's study published Werkkunst, Berlin 1926.
85. Cf., LEVIS 1971, op. cit., Bibliography section F.
86. GROSZ, George, Ecce Homo, Berlin 1923, plate XIV.
87. Cf., H.G. p. 145.
88. Reproduced in BAZALGETTE, Leon, George Grosz, L'homme et l'oeuvre, Paris 1926 as Dessins n.p.
89. RAY 1927, op. cit., pp. 54-55.
90. Published London 1896 and now in Private Collection.
91. Published in 2 vols. Paris n.d. Probably 19th century edition. Now in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
92. Variétés, November 1929. Illustrations after p.486.
93. Burra's family had connections with Dresden before the First World War, but these weren't continued afterwards. According to Anne Ritchie, 30. November 1982.
94. LEWIS, Percy Wyndham, The Apes of God, London 1930 and Satire and Fiction, London October 1930, p. 46.
95. LEWIS 1930, op. cit., p. 46.
96. LEWIS 1930, op. cit., pp. 52-53.
97. CONNOLLY 1938, op. cit., p. 46.
98. Cf., MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 10.
99. W.C. Letters p. 38.
100. W.C. Letters p. 40.
101. Tatler, 14 December 1927, p. 493. Quoted in MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p.22.
102. Cf., MELLOR 1986, op. cit., pp. 21-22 and pp. 112-3.
103. Cf., H.G. p. 85, fig. xxi.
104. Reproduced in MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 113, B.39.
105. Reproduced in MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 112, B.33.
106. Cf., MELLOR 1986, op. cit., p. 26.
107. See MEYERS, Jeffrey, The Enemy - A Biography of Wyndham Lewis, London 1980, p. 161-4.
108. Letter in Tate Archive, undated.
109. W.C. Letters p.46.
110. The drawing is lost.
111. For discussion of technique and 'classical modernism' see pp. 142-143
112. For discussion of Burra's use of popular culture sources see pp. 229-230
113. For influence of photo-reportage upon Burra's compositions see pp. 152 - 153
114. See chapters 3 pp. 194-195 and 4 pp. 266-67
115. BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30's, London 1977, unpaginated. Section entitled The Bals-musette.
116 Illustrated in section after p. 438. Burra may also have seen the important exhibition of 'New Photography' by French photographers at the Galerie de l'Époque in November 1928, which included Krull, Lotar, Kertesz, Man Ray, Abbott and Atget. For discussion of influence of Krull see pp. 193-94 ,
117. W.C. Letters p.46.
118 Referred to in Brassaï 1977 op. cit.
119. For discussion of 'zone' in film C.f. HILLARET, P.,LEBRAT,C.,and ROLLET,L. Paris Vu Par le Cinéma d'Avant-garde 1923-83, Paris 1985, pp. 60, 99 and 109.

120. C.f. discussion of tourist bals in BRASSAÏ 1977 op. cit. section on bals.
121. See discussion on 'zone' and prostitute in chapter 3. pp.191-192
122. BRASSAÏ 1977, op. cit.
123. W.C. Letters p. 37.
124. W.C. Letters p. 36.
125. Cf., earlier p.47 In particular, this fiction is evident in the work of W.D. Howells and Richard Ford, which were in the Springfield Library.
126. PEMBLE, John, The Mediterranean Passion - Victorians and Edwardians in the South, Oxford 1987, p. 7.
127. PEMBLE 1987, op. cit., p. 12.
128. PEMBLE 1987, op. cit., p. 114.
129. In particular, Watteau's leisure scenes such as The Embarkation for Cythera, 1717.
130. Quoted from review of Leicester Galleries' exhibition, The Observer, 5 June 1932, p. 14. Cf., later discussion pp144-151 Braque's Still Life paintings were illustrated in Cahiers d'Art IV, 1929, p. 451. Illustrated were Nature Morte à la Pipe (1929) and Le Gueridion (1929). For examples of Derain and Metzinger, see BERLIN, GROSSE ORANGERIE IM SCHLOSS CHARLOTTENBURG,"Neue Wirklichkeit -Surrealismus und Neue Sachlichkeit", in Tendenzen der Zwanziger Jahre, Berlin 1977, p. 4/81 and p. 4/185 nos. 4/118 and 4/119. Cf., discussion on Picasso's harlequin theme ibid. p.4/201-3.
131. Burra owned French first edition, Paris 1926, now in Private Collection and also Cocteau's Poésie 1916-20, Paris 1925 as well as Les Enfants terribles, Paris 1929.
132. Quoted from COCTEAU, Jean, A Call to Order, London 1926, p. 187. For further discussion of Cocteau and the return to order Cf., LAUDE, Jean, "Le Retour et/ou rappel à l'ordre", pp. 7-44 in SAINT-ETIENNE, UNIVERSITÉ DE SAINT-ETIENNE, Le Retour à l'ordre dans les arts plastiques et l'architecture, 1919-25, VIII, Saint-Etienne 1975.
133. See CAUSEY, introduction C.C. p. 19 and footnote 3, p. 79.
134. COCTEAU 1926, op. cit., p. 119.
135. NEW YORK, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Pablo Picasso, A Retrospective, 1980, C.f. p. 208, p. 210 and p.212.
136. COCTEAU, Jean, A Call to Order, London 1926, p.228.
137. Published Paris, 1928.
138. WILENSKI, R.H. The Modern Movement in Art, London 1927, p. 144.
139. Cf. GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 52, 55-8, p. 155.
140. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 52.
141. CAUSEY in introduction, C.C. pp. 19-22.
142. GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 187ff.
143. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 158.
144. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 37 and pp. 106-7 and p. 115. For Zervos, see Cahiers d'Art, II, 1927, pp. 293-319, pp. 329-346 and III, 1928, pp. 49-56, pp. 159-166. For Tériade, see IV, 1929, pp. 359-368, pp. 449-456, V, 1929, pp. 17-30, pp. 69-90. pp. 169-180.
145. Cf., pp140-41
146. Cf., HERBERT 1988, op. cit., pp. 19-22.
147. STALLYBRASS and WHITE 1986, op. cit., p.136.
148. Burra owned a copy of Carco's novel published in Paris in 1927. Quote pp. 1-2.

149. Piaf articulates the secret desires associated with such milieu in popular cabaret songs of the 1930s. See RIFKIN, Adrian, "Paris the Zoo" BBC Radio Broadcast, Radio 3, 13. November 1986.
150. Cf., CLARKE, T.J. The Painting of Modern Life - Paris in the Art of Manet and his followers, London 1985, p. 209-10.
151. Cf., RIFKIN 1986, op. cit.
152. Clover de Pertinez recollected Burra reading these authors at Chelsea Polytechnic. Conversation with author 16 July 1982 Cf., J.R. pp. 9-10.
153. Vogue, early December 1924, p. 71. For Huxley Cf., Vogue early March 1924, p. 63. Burra Library contained these works.
154. Conversation with author 16.7.82.
155. CARCO 1927, op. cit., p. 42 and p. 133.
156. Vogue 1924, op. cit., p.63.
157. CARCO 1927, op. cit., p. 2.
158. Referred to in Le Crapouillot, August 1927, pp. 4-5.
159. Burra owned this book, published Paris 1930. Quote p. 35.
160. CARCO 1927, op. cit., p. 2-3.
161. Cf., RIFKIN, Adrian, Paris and Popular Music of the 1930s, BBC Radio 3, 12 November 1986. Quote from song.
162. According to a retrospective of the Salon de l'Araignée by Bofa in Le Crapouillot, November 1938, the members included Dignimont, Oberlé, Touchages, Labordē, Sergé, Pascin and David.
163. They were illustrated in Le Crapouillot, 1 June 1924, 16 April 1924, 1 January 1925, 16 March 1925, 1 April 1925 and regularly after this. Special issues - May 1926 pp. 20-29, which was in Burra's Library, now in Tate Archive and June 1927 p. 28ff. Burra was in Paris around this time and could have seen both issue and exhibition at Galerie Granoff, June 1927.
164. For Steinlen, see pp.66-? For Lautrec, see pp. 227-9
165. Carco's Jésus la Caille was first published Paris 1914, but reissued with illustrations by Dignimont, Paris 1929.
166. The Brittania, 5 April 1929, p. 459.
167. All sources known to Burra. Cf., CAUSEY introduction in C.C. p. 25.
168. BENARD, Pierre, Les Bars des Mauvais Garçons, Paris 1933, p. 10.
169. For wider discussion of Marseilles culture and its mythology, Cf., BAZAL, Jean, Marseille Galante, Marseille 1980, pp. 24ff., and p. 180 and BAZAL's Marseille Entre les Deux Guerre 1919-39, Grenoble 1977. "Marseille Secret" pp. 102ff. Cavalcanti's Stills in Close Up, October 1927, p. 66, July 1928, p. 48-51.
170. Letter quoted in MELLOR, David, "London-Berlin-London: a cultural history. The Reception of the New German Photography in Britain 1927-33", pp. 113-130 in MELLOR, David (ed.) Germany - the New Photography 1927-33, London 1978. Quoted p. 125-6.
171. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 124-7 and pp. 127-9.
172. Cf., ARLES, MUSEE RÉATTU, Germaine Krull Photographie 1924-36, 1988 and particularly BOUQUERET, Christian, "Germaine Krull Photographie 1924-36", pp. 9-33. Bouqueret discusses Krull's Marseille photographs p. 16 and later pp. 21-24.
173. Burra owned ROH, Franz and TSCHICHOLD, Jan, Foto Auge, Stuttgart 1929. Roh's introdction, "The Mechanism and Expression - the Essence and value of photography" pp. 14-18. Quote p. 15.
174. For extensive bibliography see ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU 1988, op. cit., pp. 149-50 and SICHEL, Kim D. Photographs of Paris 1928-

34: Brassaï, Man Ray, Kertesz and Germaine Krull, unpublished PhD. thesis, Yale University, New Haven . 1986.

175. MACORLAN, Pierre, Germaine Krull, Paris 1931, p. 7. Quoted in ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU 1988, op. cit., p. 24.

176. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p.125 from ROH 1929, op. cit., p. 16.

177. Cf., H.G. p. 91, No. 43.

Chapter Three. City Types: The Sailor and the Prostitute.

Dominant amongst the figure-types which emerge from the representation of urban themes in Burra's work from 1927-31 are the sailor and the prostitute. Both emerge within Burra's earliest urban composition The Crowd (1923) [CCD.4]as members of the East London working-class community. In drawings such as Tarts (1923) [CCD8] and Nightclub (1925-6) [CCD19], these figures are conspicuous through their dress and their active involvement with street or nightclub culture. They frequently draw on types derived in 19th Century sources and elaborate imaginative understandings taken from contemporary popular culture, notably from literature, illustration and film. From 1927, the sailor and the prostitute were linked to Burra's experience of Paris and the South of France, in particular Toulon and Marseilles, and mix historical sources with distinctive details drawn from these geographical locations. In addition, these figures also carry associations developed from fictional mythologies of non-experienced culture. This is especially pronounced in the understandings culled from German film and photography, which were in circulation in Britain in the late 1920s. The interweaving of these differing degrees of cultural exposure offer the sailor and the prostitute as Burra's most sophisticated figurative creations, who stand at the centre of a complex nexus of meanings.

Central to both male and female types is their identification as conspicuous 'others', who exploit a variety of exotic and erotic

connotations linked to foreign travel, the experience of abroad and urban leisure. It is these associations which are emphasized in the paintings Market Day (1926) [CC.23] and Fiesta (1925-6) [CC.22]. The sailor stands out from the crowd. His Latinate features, modern dress and physical presence force attention. Moreover, the clarified contours of his body's outline and the volumetric exaggeration of his physique impress on the spectator the sailor's physicality. The prostitute is also singled out as having an exotic allure as posed and conspicuous, she vies for attention in the crowded side streets of the Mediterranean port. In later works such as Le Bal (1928) [CC.35] and Minuit Chanson (1931) [CC.73], the sailor and the prostitute are similarly shown to inhabit the same social sphere. They frequent those portside bars and Parisian 'bouges', which harboured the underworld sub-culture of the city.

In the early 1930s, the sailor and the prostitute are also portrayed separately within distinctive venues. In Rossi (1930) [CC.65] and Sailors at a Bar (1930) [CC.67], the Mediterranean sailors' bar carries connotations of an all male milieu. The sailor initiates us into an exclusive, homosexual environment. This is undeniably linked to Burra's experience of contact with Cocteau and his circle and the fashion for sailor's uniforms which he started. In addition, Burra's works employ the sailor as a figurative subject with which to enter into artistic debates on realist painting and to develop understandings drawn from a knowledge of French Surrealism in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The prostitute in works such as The Snack Bar (1930) [CC.68] and Minuit Chanson (1931) remains a public figure. In The Snack Bar, she is shown resting for a moment before continuing to loiter the alleyways and streets of the city. In Minuit Chanson. she monitors the goings on in the listening booth and outside in the street. These works use the prostitute to underwrite a complex set of tensions between private and public. Burra's work suggests that the prostitute displays a special attitude towards the modern city and it is this approach, which I want to investigate in detail, outlining sources and contexts for Burra's ideas.

1. The Sailor.

In early works such as The Crowd (1923), the sailor is initially only one figure amongst many represented in the urban crowd, but he is marked out as a conspicuous urban reveller by his dress; his seaman's cap, drill blouson and bell-bottomed flannel trousers. He is presented as one of the natural inhabitants of the city's slums. The sailor as an urban type is also differentiated by experience and in this Burra's work draws on the extensive fiction of the sailor in popular culture. As a rootless user of the city for vice and sexual liasons, as a connossieur of the sexual fix and impersonal relationships, the sailor was a glamorous metropolitan vagrant. Leaving wife and family at home, he became a by-word for opportunism and freedom from responsibilities; a womaniser and seducer on leave in the foreign port. Such

understandings, I feel, underwrite this earliest image of the sailor.

Burra's initial contact with the sailor tradition in British popular culture was as a heroic, idealized type found in the English satirical print, Victorian music hall, Edwardian boys adventure stories in cheap magazines and popular illustration. These sources mark Burra's earliest interests and were available in the Burra family library at Springfield or in his own collection.' Whilst the male type in these popular traditions is a metaphor for Englishness and a figure against which antithetical meanings of foreignness could be readily floated - it is the sailor as exotic, amoral womaniser, which Burra's work exploits. In The Crowd, he is a companion of the prostitute, cruising at ease in the city streets and knowledgeable in the social codes of the pick up.

Burra's exploitation of the promiscuous and erotic fiction of the sailor, opposes that currency of the sailor as an English heroic figure, which was central to the 18th Century English satirical print tradition. In prints such as An English Jack Tar giving Monsieur a Drubbing (c.1779) [pl.58], the British seaman as a national type and symbol of "virtue triumphant and free" is represented.[2] Alternatively, it is the freedom of easy virtue and infidelity, which Burra's sailor-type extols. In a sense, these were the characteristics often associated by satirists with dandified foreign sailor. In the print 'Monsieur', the well-dressed French sailor, has an affected elegance, alien to the ordinary British Jack-

Tar, and his thrashing is revealingly paralleled by the bull-dog savaging the poodle.

However, this use of the sailor as an anti-hero, the idealized 'Jack tar' as gallant philanderer, was as John Springhall and Penny Summerfield have documented, represented in the popular culture of the music hall as well as circulating in the imagery of popular postcards and illustration.[3] This tradition ironically and humorously manipulated the heroic sailor type:"superhuman in his bravery, his endurance and his discipline..[an] emblem of superiority".[4] Burra's postcard collection reinforced this image of the sailor as lecherous rake, showing him in suggestive poses with young women and shamelessly flaunting his good-looks and physical prowess [pl.59 and 60]. Burra also exploited the notion of the sailor as an adventurer, whose life was spent for the most part abroad. Such a standard figure was regularly represented in Edwardian boys' papers, notably Boys Own Paper, which Burra collected. The sailor's forays abroad were linked to the glamour of foreign travel, to exciting scrapes in foreign ports and the drama of exploration. These were set in marked contrast with the dullness, convention and discipline of family life at home.[5]

This use of the sailor as a metaphor for differences between home and abroad is clearly identified in Market Day (1926), although rather than the British 'Jack-Tar' as a foil for cultural comparison, Burra represents the Mediterranean sailor as one of the representative figures of the foreign crowd. Recognizable as French "gais marins" on leave in port, the two men's peculiar

distinction is initially signalled by the facial and racial characteristics of the Mediterranean male; Latinate features and tanned skin. Furthermore, the figures suggest an idealized conception. Their physical size, monumental form and pronounced muscularity signal a perfect physical type. This is strengthened by the sheened surface of their fashionable de-mobbed suits, which further marks them out for attention. Around them, the posed figures of the prostitute and the collection of bars, cinemas, nightclubs and dance halls which stand close by, act as metaphors for the distinctive pleasures of the foreign city open to the sailors. The allure of the foreign male and the particular exoticism of the Mediterranean sailor is a central part of the painting's meanings and they were an important component of the attraction of the Mediterranean for Burra. As he wrote to William Chappell after his first visit to the South of France in 1925:"the native population are too beautiful and wear such exotic garments, speshly the men."[6]

An important characteristic of this foreign sailor type is his prominence as a public figure at ease in public places and partaking of the cameraderie of the streets. This is central to Market Day and to later works such as Minuit Chanson (1931) [CC.73], which fashion an image of Marseilles and Paris as vibrant street cultures in which the sailor plays a leading role. In Minuit Chanson (1931), the sailor, shown on the extreme left listening to a record, is an adept user of the facilities of the Boulevard Clichy in Pigalle. In another work on a Parisian theme, Le Bal (1928) [CC.35], the sailor is included as a regular member

of the underworld sub-culture, which frequents the Rue de Lappe bal-musette. As part of "le vrai Paris", the sailor stands as an authentic representative of the metropolitan underworld experience. Burra wrote to Barbera Ker-Seymer 19 October 1928 of his trip to the bal musette: "as for the matelots, such buttocks ma chere and the lesbiennes, so long drawn out."[7]

This apposite use of the French sailor as a metaphor for a distinctive type of foreign urban experience was informed by contemporary French literature and popular illustration. In the fictional narratives of Carco, MacOrlan and Morand, the venues of the bal, bar and street, as already discussed, were enclaves of a dynamic urban sub-culture and often sites of violence and crime. The sailor was a frequent inhabitor of such milieus. His illicit nature was underscored in illustrations to these novels by Dignimont and Foy. Dignimont's representation of three sailors in a brothel was illustrated on the cover of Le Crapouillot, June 1927, and in his illustrations to MacOrlan's Le Chant de l'Équipage (1926), reproduced in an earlier issue of May 1926, included him as an idealized male type alongside a naked woman [pl.61]. The sailor's physique with broad shoulders, narrow hips and powerful muscles was the epitomé of the Latin 'Hercules' figure. Foy's depiction of an amorous woman throwing herself at the monumentalized figure of the sailor explicitly refers to the erotic nature of this allure [pl.62].[8]

Such a stereotype of the sailor was shared in another contemporary source, Philippe Soupault's novel Les Dernières Nuits de Paris

(1928), which Burra would have known.[9] Here the sailor represents an ambiguous figure and a paradox of male sexuality. He combines the exoticism of the traveller and the fascination of the social outcast, with a threatening masculinity and voracious sexual appetite. In the narrative, the sailor sadistically murders his victim and dismembers the corpse. Again the sailor's physique, as described by Soupault, is physically strong and imposing. The book also underlines the figure's brutality and criminality: "Il avait une tête énorme, blonde et rouge, un visage d'étrangleur aux lèvres minces et d'énormes mains brunes".[10] The sailor along with the prostitute in Les Dernières Nuits de Paris, plays a signal role in guiding the reader through that fantastic maze, which is the mythologized city of Paris in the novel. He is an intriguing, if perverse proposition, who confidently traverses the city's secret geography at night. It was precisely this amalgam of knowledge, desire and fear which marked such marginalized, unconventional figures as the sailor and the prostitute out for particular attention by surrealist authors such as Soupault in the late 1920s.

This potent cocktail of attraction and repulsion was a central part of the popular mythology of the sailor in Inter-War French popular culture, especially apparent in popular songs. In A Toulon, tous les Matelots, Alibert sings of the port's appeal in terms of its sailors and their womanizing:

"A Toulon, tous les matelots sont toujours plus beaux avec
leur béret, bien sur l'oreille,
A Toulon, les petits cols bleus sont des amoureux auprès de
Toinette ou de Mireille,
Ils peuvent déployer ailleurs leurs coeurs de braises,
Ils reviennent toujours près de leur Toulonesse,

A vraiment, les joyeux marins sont bien plus entrain et plus en forme quand ils sont à Toulon."
.....
Avec sur la tête un béret en goguette,
Les marins sont beaux dans tous les ports,
Ils font mille conquêtes, mais ils paraissent plus beaux encore chez eux dans leur décor,

As Adrian Rifkin has noted in his analysis of French popular music of the period, the maverick sailor with handsome features, tatoos and "tight fitting and revealing uniform" played host to numerous illicit desires.'' He articulated the sexual longings of many members of the younger generation, both male and female, for whom the chance flirtation with a stranger, be it sailor or legionnaire, was an appealing proposition. This was the gist of songs such as Jean Murat's Les Gars de la Marine:

"Quand on est matelot, on est toujours sur l'eau,
On visite le monde, c'est le métier le plus beau,
Dans chaque petit port,
Du pole sud au pole nord,
Plus d'une fille blonde
Nous garde ses trésors

In other songs for example, Mon Marin et Moi and Les Marins, ça fait des voyages, the intimacy of contact with the sailor without ties or repercussions, stood in opposition to ideas of long-standing, familial relationships. It was exclusively confined to illicit meetings, to dance halls, bars and cheap hotels and the finalities of a quay-side farewell without repercussions. In Mon Marin et Moi, the nostalgia for such pleasures wove around the sailor a fantastic mythology, which endured long after his departure.

"Il entra dans ces yeux sombres,
Je vis la nuit.
Tout au fond de la pénombre,
Je vis le lit,

Il m'appelait sa goèlette blonde et dorée.
Il caressait doucement ma tête, les yeux fermés
Car dans sa forme, on n'attends pas
Lorsque l'amour vous tend les bras
Il me disait des mots très tendres que j'adorais.."
...J'entends encore la sirène,
...J'étais toute seule sur la dune."

The sailor as a memorable public figure was also emphatically linked to Toulon and to a lesser extent, Marseilles. This is evident in a photograph taken by Barbera Ker-Seymer of Burra in Toulon 1931, in which three French sailors, identifiable by their uniforms and pom-pom caps, stroll the alleyway in front of Raymond's Bar, Toulon [pl.63].[12] They formed part of that public culture of the Mediterranean ports, which Burra would watch from the interior or terrace of the bar. The sailor in Dockside Café (1929) [CC.60] and Sailors at a Bar (c.1929) [CC.67]initiates the viewer into this territory of the foreign port. In Chinese Lanterns (c.1929) [pl.64] and On the Shore (1930) [CC.50], he introduces those illicit rendez-vous and bordellos, which shows the sailor's extensive knowledge of that distinctive geography of Toulon, which was the home of the French fleet, and Marseilles, which was a thriving trans-Atlantic passenger port and had a large naval harbour at La Joliette.

In Burra's drawings such as Sailors Licking an Ice Cream on the Quay (1929-30) [pl.65] and Sailors and Fountain near the Grand Hotel, Toulon (c. 1929-30) [pl.51], the setting is identifiable as Toulon. In the first drawing, the famous Hercules statue by Puget on the quayside at Toulon is shown. The statue also featured, according to Andrew Causey in Nash's sketchbooks of their 1930

visit, where it was tied to Nash's interest in classical statuary. In the second drawing, the main Grand Place with Puget's fountain is represented. The fountain's extravagent female figures with breasts bared and the classical sea god, encourages speculation on the sailors' activities.[13] The looming presence of the Grand Hotel with some of its shutters closed, also intimate the sexual nature of the diversions required. In other works such as Dockside Café (1929) and drawings such as Woman and Two Sailors in a Bar (c.1929) and Sailors at a Bar (c.1929-30), the exact locations are more difficult to identify, although the milieu suggests Toulon or Marseilles. In Rossi (1930) [CC.65], such an understanding of the interior as a Toulon or Marseilles sailors' bar comes from the recognition of the sailor's uniform and the presence of the pom-pom caps on the hat stand.

These works of the late 1920s featuring sailors and the geographical locations of Toulon and Marseilles, related to a type of illustrative genre known as 'marin en bordée', which was popular in contemporary illustration and evident in work of the L'Araignée artists, discussed earlier.[14] Burra's drawings and watercolours similarly depicted the sailor within the red-light areas of the port, either cruising the streets, outside the doorways leading to the brothels or in the brothels themselves. This specifically sexual gloss to the leisure activities of the sailor is noted in Burra's letters and corresponds to his experience of the ports. Shopping for sailor wear in second hand shops required a foray into the red-light areas of Marseilles and Toulon, and as Burra noted was an excuse for illicit voyeurism

using the window as a mirror to monitor the pick ups. He wrote to Barbera Ker-Seymer, 24 September 1927:"my dear I stares into every window looking for a thrill...Life goes on all about the Grand Rue where we get our jolly marin wear and linen trousers. the guide book says it is a veritable ghetto of houses of ill fame."[15]

Illustrated guidebooks provided authentic documentary sources showing details of milieu. Photographs were also illustrated in contemporary periodicals along with film-stills as part of the growing interest in Marseilles and Midi culture in the late 1920s and 1930s. Variétés published an article on Marseilles Quartier Resérvé by Pierre MacOrlan in its 15 May 1929 issue and Le Crapouillot published a review of the album Mare, Marines et Marins in 1930.[16] The sailor and marine themes were fashionable ones. Germaine Krull's photographs of French sailors were also illustrated in the Variétés May 1929 issue under the cheeky title 'Bon pour la fille'.[17] [pl.49] Also the circulation of a wide range of popular postcards and hand-printed posters showing the sailor as a virile seducer of young women encouraged this fascination. Many of them were publicity material for French films such as En Rade (1927), filmed in Marseilles, and Le Capitaine Craddock (1931). Burra collected many of these postcards showing the sailor's strong, heavily tatooed arms holding his girl tightly in a passionate embrace or as a romantic, amorous figure ready for courtship. They offered generalized, rather than specific sources for the sailor figure as a distinctively Gallic anatomy of desire [pl.59 and 60].[18]

As part of this, the sailor's uniform had a special piquancy as an oufit in the early 1930s. This was tied to the contemporary fashion for sailors' uniforms related in France to Cocteau. Edouard Roditi remembered that in the 1920s: "Cocteau et son milieu étaient probablement responsable en partie de la vogue de l'uniforme de marin et de pom-pom rouge.."[19] As Gilles Barbedette and Michel Carrassou have suggested in Paris Gay 1925 (1981), the sailor was a venerated figure in homosexual circles in the mid-late 1920s and raised to the status of a 'cause célébre'.[20] This was partly indebted to Cocteau's well-publicized taste for sailors and to Cocteau's 1930 publication Le Livre Blanc, in which the sailor was a figure of homo-erotic fantasy and promiscuity.[21] Cocteau's drawings 25 dessins d'un dormeur -Portraits de Jean Desbordes (1929), explicitly declared such understandings showing his lover, dressed in a sailor's uniform, in intimate scenes [pl.67]. In his earlier collection Dessins (1924), Cocteau had represented the sailor as a memorable and tantalizing Souvenir de Toulon.[22] Furthermore, two other novels by members of Cocteau's circle, which Burra knew, Raymond Radiguet's Le Diable au Corps (1923) and Jean Desbordes's J'adore (1928), were homosexual handbooks of the period.[23] Burra stayed at the same hotel as Cocteau in Toulon in 1931 and his friend Barbera Ker-Seymer photographed both Cocteau and Desbordes. He wrote proudly to Nash that he had "met Jean Cocteau and Jean Desbordes" in May 1931.[24] Through such a knowledge of Cocteau's work and his personal contact with the homosexual, aesthete circle, which accompanied him on his trips to Toulon, Burra would have undoubtedly been

aware of the homo-erotic underpinnings placed on the sailor at this time.

In this outline of the French 'marin' as a theme in Burra's work, I have proposed that the sailor is a complex carrier of meanings. I have suggested sets of understandings, which draw on the artist's own experience of Marseilles and Toulon, refer to contemporary associations in French literature and music, acknowledge a genre common in popular illustration and manipulate evidences culled from postcards, photography and film. I have argued that as a mythologized anatomy of desire, the sailor engendered exotic and erotic connotations, which were circulating in both hetero and homo-sexual constituencies in the late 1920s.

In order to examine these points further, I intend to analyse two paintings of 1930, Rossi [CC.65] and Sailors at a Bar [CC.67], which display Burra's most sophisticated understanding of the sailor theme. I want to restrict my analysis of these works to three areas. Firstly, I shall show how the theme of the sailor was used to incorporate references to a type of modern French painting categorized as "classical modernism", which was promoted in France by the Léonce Rosenberg Gallery and in England by R.H. Wilenski. This was influenced by the works, which de Chirico produced for Léonce Rosenberg's apartment in Paris in 1928-29 on a gladiator theme. Furthermore, I shall propose that in both. subject, formal language and medium, Rossi acknowledge earlier Italian 'Primitive' sources and a type of modern Italian figure painting, which incorporated clasical subjects and traditional

techniques.

Secondly, I want to address the growing importance of photography to Burra's work and outline how Rossi demonstrates a specific knowledge of 'New Objectivity' photography. This paralleled Nash's interest in photography and reveals the generalized influence of a "cinematic vision" common to German and Russian films. Such an involvement will be placed within the context of contemporary artistic debates on realism in painting. Thirdly, in relation to Three Sailors at a Bar, I want to outline how Burra's painting reveals an interest in mirror imagery shared with Nash and Cocteau, displays Burra's knowledge of photographic devices and shows an awareness of surrealist interests in metamorphosis as a means of expanding the role of the image in painting. In this connection, the work suggests ideas current in contemporary surrealist photography and its concern with imaging the erotic encounter.

Both Rossi and Three Sailors at a Bar were completed after Burra's return from the South of France with Paul and Margaret Nash in April 1930 and after their visit to Léonce Rosenberg's l'Effort Moderne gallery in Paris, where they had seen an important exhibition of modern painting. It included works by de Chirico, Léger, Metzinger, Severini, Max Ernst and Viollier and represented an extensive view of the French avant-garde in the late 1920s.[25] As Andrew Causey has noted, the effect on Nash was that:"he was emboldened in his new paintings by his discovery that elements in

contemporary French culture endorsed themes in his own work".[26] The relevance of this experience to Burra's work in general, was the need to acknowledge more complex ideas derived from continental modernism in the formal and technical languages of his painting. It also stressed the aptness of the sailor as a modern figurative subject.

The sailor as a theme was only rarely considered in the work of modernist French painters, with the notable exception of André Lhote, whose work Matelot , was illustrated in Variétés in July 1928 [pl.68].[27] . Lhote's status as an influential teacher and painter, must have stressed the acceptability of the sailor as a subject. Furthermore, the idealized, Neo-classical language of Lhote's work confirmed Burra's belief that the Mediterranean sailor presented an appropriate figurative vehicle for modern paintings influenced by French and Italian sources. This type of figure painting - "classical modernism"- was promoted in France by the Rosenberg's Galerie de l'Effort Moderne and by the influential art periodical Cahiers d'Art in the late 1920s and early 30s. In 1930, Tériade in an article in the art journal entitled "Documentaire sur la jeune peinture III: La Conséquence du cubisme" featured the work of Lhote, Metzinger, Léger and Herbin as painters who had successfully developed a neo-classical figurative language. Lhote, declared Tériade was the leader of "une école néo-classique où l'art de peinture est enseignée selon les règles et les moyens plastique nouveaux". [28]

Rossi employs a neo-classical figure language in its treatment of the sailors. The scale of the figures sitting at the table is strengthened by their position against the geometric patterns of the wallpaper, through the use of a dramatic, inclined perspective and their sculptural modelling. Within the enclosed environment of the sailors' cafe, they appear as monumental figures distinguished by sharp outlines and their hieratic poses. The exaggerated forms of their chest, shoulders and hands, contrast against the small size of the glasses and plates.

Rossi can also be seen within the conventions of a type of monumental male figure painting exemplified by Tchelitchew's Adam (1928) [pl.69] and de Chirico's Gladiator series (1929) [pl.70 and 71] in which individual or groups of male figures, often nude and 'au repos', were represented in intimate interiors.[29] This type of "classical modernist" painting was widely publicized at the time of Burra and Nash's trip to Paris because of the completion of de Chirico's Hall of Gladiator decorations for Léonce Rosenberg's rue de Longchamp appartment. Rosenberg's 'Maison dorée' was extensively reviewed in articles by Paul Fierens in Variétés 15 July 1929, by Waldemar George in Formes, Jauary 1930, and it was included in Maurice Thireau's recently published study of L'Art moderne et la Graphie in 1930. Photographs of the scheme were also illustrated in the October 1929 issue of Vogue - a source, which Burra knew.[30] In both subject and formal idiom, Burra's Rossi and Three Sailors at a Bar can be compared with de Chirico's Deux Gladiators (1929) [pl.70] and L'école des Gladiators (1929) [pl.71], which were taken from these panels.

They represented group compositions in a formal language of monumental figures, inflected planes and idealized, sculptural form.[31]

Furthermore, in Burra's press-cuttings a page of illustrations from an unidentifiable German source from the early 1930s, possibly Flechtheim's Almanach, contained Chirico's Gladiator cross-sectioned against photographs, illustrations, portraits and sculptures of famous athletes, earlier classical scenes featuring the fight between Hercules and Antheus by Mabuse and importantly, a monumental figure study by John Banting If I unfold my Arms (c.1930), later exhibited at the Wertheim Gallery in April 1931. Banting's painting in the late 1920s and early 1930s suggest similarities in both their male nude subjects and realist style to Burra's work [pl.72].[32] As David Mellor has noted, they particularly attempted to imitate the surface values and dramatic three-dimensionality found in German Neue Sachlichkeit photography.[33] This page sets Banting's and de Chirico's paintings against a broad range of figurative models, which celebrated the physical prowess and spectacle of the well-defined male torso.

De Chirico was seen in Britain as the major exponent of a type of painting, which reconciled classical and literary subjects with traditional sources. As P.G. Konody noted in a catalogue introduction of December 1929: "Chirico is the leading exponent of a new direction in modern art which tends to return to classic form...He has brought painting back to the serenity, the noble breadth, the monumental dignity of classic and early Renaissance

Art."[34] Such a decisive role was also acknowledged by Nash, who saw de Chirico as "one of the four great influences on pictorial art".[35] R.H. Wilenski,- a key influence upon Nash's thinking at this time- in his pioneering publication, The Modern Movement in Art (1927), recognized the signal role played by the artist in the return to an intellectual art based on architectural form.[36]

Burra's admiration for key exponents of this type of painting was expressed in a letter from Paris in 1930, where he declared his enthusiasm for the Rosenberg exhibition: "such a show my dear of Metzinger, de Chirico, Gino Severini, Herbin and others...I've never seen such a beautiful show for years."[37]

Furthermore, a number of exhibitions of contemporary painting in London between 1928-30, widened Burra's experience of this type of "classical modernism". Exhibitions by de Chirico at Tooths in October 1928, Léger at the Leicester Galleries in 1929, Derain at the Lefevre in 1930, Lurçat at Reid and Lefevre, in 1930 and Viollier at the Lefevre, again in 1930, as well as group shows of modern French painting, notably the Leicester Galleries Contemporary French Art and Tooth's Modern French Painting, opened up further critical discussion about the development of an English art influenced by continental modernism.[38] In Apollo, October 1928, Frank Rutter acknowledged de Chirico's leading role in incorporating into his painting: "a remote if aesthetically intellectual appeal to the historical imagination. It is this philosophic content of his work which gives him a place apart amongst even the most vital of contemporary artists."[39]

This assessment must be seen against the increasing awareness of European developments in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and the emergence in the work of British painters such as Wadsworth, Armstrong, Hillier and Nash of a type of modern metaphysical painting, which acknowledged French and Italian sources in terms of thematic motifs, more complex symbolism, eclectic historical references and post-cubist formal languages.[40] Burra's later still-life paintings such as The Ham (1931) [CC.70] and The Green Fig (c.1933) [CC.99] along with Wadsworth's marine and Hillier's domestic still life subjects, acknowledge the influence of metaphysical object groups by de Chirico and Pierre Roy and the modernist structural form of Lurçat. As Wilenski noted in a review of Wadsworth's still life paintings at Tooths in May-June 1929: "these fantastic juxtapositions are rendered credible by the mysterious logic of design [and]..by basic architectural laws".[41] Such comments were also applicable to Burra's works at this period.

Rossi makes historical references in two specific ways. Firstly, in its formal simplicity and clarity, its architectural spatial organization and sculptural modelling, it refers to Italian 'Primitive' painting, which interested Nash and Burra. Both painters had first-hand experience of early Italian Renaissance art, Nash through his 1925 visit to Northern Italy, when he had studied Pisan art and the frescoes at Campo Santo,[42] and Burra in April 1926, had visited Florence, Siena and Valambroso and studied Renaissance painting at the Uffizi. Furthermore, in 1930, there was the Royal Academy of Arts exhibition Italian Art 1200-1900,

which as Adolfo Venturi noted in his catalogue introduction stressed one of the achievements of the Early Italian painters as their placing of the human figure in "a new architecture [where it] becomes itself the subject of a new scene."[43] It was this which Wilenski recognized had been so influential "in the modern reconstruction of classical art"[44]

Secondly, in the traditional technique of the work - tempera, Rossi constituted a conspicuous change in the artist's practice and one which must have been influenced by the contemporary interest in Italian tempera painting and its increasing popularity in Britain in the late 1920s and early 1930s. (Wadsworth, for example, held a well-publicized exhibition of Tempera Paintings at Tooths in May-June 1929).[45] The technique had Renaissance origins and also produced distinctive formal results, which would have been appropriate to to the subject matter. It increased the clarity of contours, heightened the sense of sculptural modelling, stressed surface qualities and produced luminous colours which, as T. W. Earp noted in his review of Burra's 1932 show, "glow splendidly."[46] Such an historically informed practice and formal language was relevant to a figurative subject with Mediterranean and classical overtones. Furthermore, these sources were identified by P. G. Konody, and Burra's work commended for having "the serenity of an Italian primitive".[47]

Set against these historical associations, Rossi also offers one of the most specific examples of the influence of modern photography on Burra's work up to this time. Paul Nash writing in

a later review of the English edition of Karl Blossfeldt's Art Forms in Nature, in The Listener, 27 July 1932, used Burra's work as an example of the way in which modern German photography had informed British painting. Nash categorically stated that Burra's work was indebted to:

> "his keen appreciation of the aesthetic of modern photography. In his passion for solid individual shapes, rounded and stippled to a high degree of finish with intense concentration upon highlights, in a particular insistence upon isolated objects such as the furniture of cafés or upon bottles, baskets and napkins or such foods as fruit or hams to which he gives such unusual prominence, articulating their forms with the keenest appreciation of their surface properties or again, in his use of foreshortening or other dramas of perspective; in the sum of these characteristics, he seems to have employed with persuasive intelligence suggestions which photography may well have supplied....These practices are common enough on the continent where the expansion of the realm of art is natural and continuous and receives every encouragement even for unlikely experiment."[48]

The reference to "bottles, baskets and napkins" is undoubtedly to Rossi and the café, to Burra's Mediterranean subjects in general. The importance of modern photography to Burra's work was also noted by The Times reviewer of the second Leicester Galleries show in 31 May 1932, who saw in Burra's paintings "accurate photographic likeness" of "the hard material world", which impress upon the viewer the "material and substantial reality of objects."[49]

Rossi employs ideas suggested by photography in two distinctive ways. Firstly, it adopts the close-up device as a way of initiating the viewer into secretive milieus in a kind of 'behind the scene' way. In the painting, the proximity of the bottle and napkin, and the angle of the table suggest an intimate space. The composition parallels the viewpoint of a concealed camera shot,

which was essential to the authenticity of a 'secret-eye' photograph. This method of investigative reportage was a fashionable one in contemporary photography, especially practiced by Germaine Krull -whose work Burra copied-as a method of gaining access to the popular culture of low life bars and cafés. Krull's Caboulot, Paris (1928) [pl.73], although a Parisian rather than a Mediterranean subject, illustrates this method in operation with the table hiding the concealed camera.[50] Informal groups, close ups of urban types and snap-shots of chance events were caught on film revealing what she called "l'oeil photographique du journaliste". Such photo-reportage devices were featured extensively in her 100X Paris (1929) and Visages de Paris (1930) photobooks, which Burra could have known.[51]

Secondly, Rossi represents one of those distinctive type objects - in this case the wine bottle- which were oft photographed by New Objectivity practitioners, notably Emmanuel Sougez or Florence Henri. Henri's work was introduced by Oswell Blakeston to Nash, and also her Viandox bottle, a perfect example of this kind of work, was illustrated in Variétés, 15 April 1930 issue [pl.74].[53] The enormous presence of the bottle dominates the picture plane in a manner similar to Burra's use of the Rossi bottle. Furthermore, in its attention to surface properties and clarity of outline, to the powerful sense of the objects monumentality, and to the modern typography of the label, Rossi displays features, which characterized the sophisticated visual language of German 'sachfotografie'.[54] Both devices clearly exhibited Burra's

awareness of the modernist rhetoric of contemporary New Objectivity photography.

The sources of Burra's knowledge on modern photography, as Nash correctly suggested, were continental periodicals and photobooks, which featured German 'New Objectivity' photography. Variétés and Der Querschnitt were especially important as sources for Burra and Nash, introducing photographic illustrations within each issue as part of a 'cross-sectioning' of modern painting, illustrations and popular art forms. This cross-section device itself was employed as a direct reference to New Objectivity style. It was also a feature of German 'sachlich' films, notably Ruttman's Berlin: Die Symphonie eines Grosstadt (1928), which was premiered at the London Film Society in January 1929.[55] As Barbera Ker-Seymer recalled, the essentially visual nature of this exposure mitigated against major language barriers and second-hand contact: "We were passionately interested in everything German - the films and the photobooks. We also had Querschnitt and, even though we couldn't read German, this really was no problem."[56]

The breakthrough of New German photography to London 1927 - 33, its channels of diffusion and the impact of continental photobooks on British artists, photographers and film-makers has been admirably documented by David Mellor in his essay "London - Berlin - London: a cultural history. The reception and influence of the New German Photography in Britain 1927 - 33". In particular, Mellor recognized Burra as a "major collector of German photobooks, purchasing the Fototek books, Foto-Eye, and others

from Zwemmers during 1930",[57] and indicated the powerful influence of Neue Sachlichkeit photography, notably Renger-Patzsch's Die Welt ist Schön (1928), Karl Blossfeldt's Urformen der Kunst (1928) and Moholy-Nagy's Fototek 1 (1930), on both Burra and Nash's work and its instrumental role in the adoption of the practices of photography, collage and photomontage.[58]

Burra's adoption of thematic and formal characteristics from what Mellor terms German photography's "New Objectivity Constructivism"[59] was part of a broader use of the camera to supplement 'New Vision' at the end of the 1920s and early 1930s. It must also be seen against the desire to imitate features of a modern "cinematic" sensibility prevalent in German and Soviet film and fashionable in British intellectual circles.[60] Such filmic sources were increasingly accessible in Britain at this period, and this view was promoted in contemporary film journals such as Close Up from July 1927 and later, Film Art from Spring 1933, both of which Burra knew.[61] As Oswell Blakeston declared in Close Up in October 1929: "We believe that photography is an art closely allied to cinema tography."[62] Furthermore, these modernist photographic devices directly influenced Burra's friend Barbera Ker-Seymer, who employed negative printing and produced 'kollosal' close up, sharp focus portrait studies similar to German experimental photography.[63] Paul Nash, according to Andrew Causey, took photographs of the harbour at Marseilles in 1930 and attempted view-points and close-ups suggested by his knowledge of German photography and its French followers such as Florence Henri, whose work Nash knew.[64]

New Vision photography presented a formidable international challenge to British artists in the late 1920s and early 1930s, especially those like Burra and Nash, who were working in a realist idiom. However, whilst Burra's work copied photographic devices, shared similar intimate café subjects and exhibited common stylistic features in its language of realism derived from modern photography, it was not marked by a socio-critical tone or social- realist intention. The glamour of the sailor's bar and the appeal of the sailor as a Mediterranean figure were heavily indebted to understandings drawn from popular culture and literature and Burra's personal experience of the South of France. In addition, the idealized neo-classical figure language, the precedents for such male groups in modern French and Italian painting and the use of tempera, mediated against Burra's painting being seen as purely imitative of documentary photography.

This dilemma of wanting to incorporate ideas from modern photography, yet not being seen as overly imitative of it, was poignantly expressed in two cross-sectioned illustrations, one in The Graphic, 30 August 1930, which polemically set a reproduction of a maritime still-life by Edward Wadsworth against a photographic reconstruction of the work by 'modern photographers', Maurice Beck and Helen MacGregor, under the title "The Artist versus the Photographer".[55] The other, in Variétés 15 April 1930, contrasted Wadsworth's Little Western Flower (under the title Nature Morte, 1928) against a close up of vegetables entitled Bouquet de légumes by Germaine Krull.[56] The distinction between painting and other forms of visual representation, specifically

photography, was a crucial issue, which preoccupied Burra and Nash, like many other British artists at this time. The historical precedents for the subject, Burra's neo-classical style, the traditional associations of tempera and the choice of the theme of the sailor, which had popular cultural reverberations, display an understanding of these dangers and an awareness of the means of avoiding such criticism.

Sailors at a Bar [CC.67] also displays a knowledge of photographic devices, but allied to the depiction of a Mediterranean portside bar. The painting represents an intimate, all male milieu and parallels the 'candid camera' photo-reportage subjects of Germaine Krull discussed earlier.[67] However, instead of the angle suggesting a view from a table, it corresponds to a voyeuristic snap-shot taken into a slightly inclined café mirror. The mirror is declared by means of its frame shown on three of its four sides of the composition. The subject of the work is the reflection of the interior in a mirror hung on the wall opposite the bar. This sets off a complex series of visual correspondences into which the viewer is initiated and forms a labyrinth of reflected and deflected images, rather like in a hall of mirrors through which the viewer interrogates the bar and its occupants.

This use of the mirror as an interrogative device was frequently employed in New Vision photography. The mirror acted as a foil to question differences between image and reality, to disrupt traditional expectations of size and scale, and through its dislocation of relationships to raise ambiguous associations and paradoxical meanings. Burra knew this device in the photographs of Florence Henri, which were illustrated in Variétés,

15 August 1929. Her hallmark, as Oswell Blakeston noted in his review of Roh and Tschichold's Foto-auge published in Close Up, February 1930, was "her strip of mirror and crystal globes...They are all very clever.." [68]

Henri's Self-portrait (1928) [pl.75] was reproduced in Foto-auge (1929) as an example of the category referred to by Roh in his introduction as a 'reality-photograph' in which "the old [is] seen anew.."[69] The wall mirror strategically aligned with the grooves of the wooden table and its surface marked by the two ball bearings, is simultaneously an apparent extension of the table's geometry and, as the angle of both mirror and wall emphasize, a startling disruption. The photographer's appearance reflected in sharp focus in the mirror and staring out towards the viewer is dramatic and ambiguous. This uncertainty is accentuated by the de-centring of the subject and the cropped angle of the photograph. As David Mellor has commented, Henri's work represented: "a New Objectivity Constructivism qualified by an edge of surrealist speculation about reflections and objects". The human figure like the objects, is encased in disturbing vistas with complex reflections.[70] Furthermore, the human figure in Henri's 'modern still lives' was de-humanized by the hyper-realist, almost clinical 'objectivity' of the approach. This was particularly pronounced in compositions such as Portrait (1927), where multiple mirrors displaced the image of the sitter and presented only a fragmentary, dismembered view.[71]

Window reflections were another device employed according to Roh to modernize the language of photography and to highlight "differences in degree of intensifying plasticity...today everything is brought out clearly. Yet herein, recipes are not admitted and occasionally the

palpably plastic may be put next to the optically flowing, whereby new effects are gained..."[72] Examples of this technique were Germaine Krull's series of Paris shop-windows entitled Vitrines (1930) [pl.76], and Florence Henri's self-conscious up-dates of Atget's window-reflections, Les Services Vitrines (c.1930-5).[73] Their fascination with the accidents of street life seen in shop-windows and the interpenetration of dummies, reflections and panes of glass were indebted to Atget's photographs of shop windows such as Vitrine de Coiffeur (u.d.). [pl.77] These caught the city's transitory moments- "the impermanent, the moments which flash up and are gone" when the commonplace window reflection became fraught with speculation.[74]

Both methods of achieving experimental photographs were part of Roh's advocacy of a modern photography, which displayed amateurish ingenuity and profited from chance and accident. Roh's exhortation to the layman to challenge "the narrow intellect of the professional"[75] was taken up by Burra, who, as Barbera Ker-Seymer recalled, tried to take photographs of window reflections imitating both Krull and Atget in the South of France:"We all had tiny 'Baby Box' cameras, German costing 12/6d. I don't think they had a lens, so they just took tiny photographs, which were always in focus. We tried to take photographs like Atget, of reflections in shop windows, like the avant-garde photographers".[76] Whilst none of these photographs survive, the mirror device and features of the realist, yet ambiguous New Objectivity visual rhetoric, are evident in Burra's Three Sailors at a Bar.

The painting combines a Neo-classical modernist style, discussed previously, with a realism influenced by photography.[77] This stressed

formal clarity and precision, the textures of external surfaces and the 'thingness' of objects and the human body. In Three Sailors at a Bar, attention is focused on the sailor's uniform, which highlights the curvature of limbs and muscles and accentuates the body's shape, notably buttocks and thighs. The clarity of outlines, the metallic sheen of cloth and skin, and the pronounced solidity of the modelling draw attention to the male body, dramatically illuminated by the bars array of lights reflected in the mirror. Underlying all these characteristics is the sense of the male body being transformed into an imposing and monumental object-presence.

Furthermore, such an approach accentuated the need for an impassive scrutiny of appearances and urged photographers "not to superimpose one's personality, to stand back and analyse clearly why a thing is what it is".[78] In Burra's work, this is both a feature of the style and the content. There is no suggestion of individualized identities. The sailors' uniforms and even the berets, which traditionally indicate the name of the ship to which they are assigned, are uninformative. This anonymity is further emphasized by the view from the back. Their faces are not visible, except for the profile of the sailor on the left hand-side and the face of the barman, whose features are dramatically bisected by the architectural column. In the mirror on the opposite wall, one of the sailors is reflected, but he is also partially hidden by the bottles stacked in front. The only part of the sailors' anatomies clearly displayed are their bodies. It was precisely these features, which Nash in his later review, "Photography and Art" in The Listener, 27 July 1932, selected as influenced by the aesthetic of modern photography.[79]

This interest in mirrors and reflected imagery as marking a distinctive site of examination was influenced by Cocteau's writings and paralleled in Nash's work at this time.[80] For Cocteau, the provocative power of the mirror was its ability to capture the multiplicity of visual correspondances which went past. The mirrored image was a reflection of the world of appearances inscribed by the illus_ary and by the ambiguous.[81] Rossi makes reference to this through the decorative qualities of the apparently floating table and the two dimensional chair, and the comic effect of the column cutting the face of the barman in two. As discussed earlier in relation to The Café [CC.57], this use of type objects and the concentration upon the elaborate ornamentation of the coffee machine with its bird motif was an acknowledgement of Cocteau's witty and humorous notion of style.[82] Furthermore, the angle of the mirror and the position of another mirror opposite, redraws the whole appearance of the bar presenting it as ambiguous.

The mirror for Cocteau was also a poetic device, which encouraged narcissistic self-examination and voyeuristic speculation. The act of looking into the mirror, according to Cocteau, represented the expression of a desire to be changed and to enter a world beyond reality.[83] Burra's painting makes direct reference to this concept through the transformation of the viewer into the sailor. The image of the sailor presented in the partially seen mirror in the upper left-hand side of the work identifies with the viewpoint of the viewer, who looking into the first mirror is re-imaged in the second one on the other wall. This notion that the act of looking initiated a process of metamorphosis was an important function of Cocteau's mirror and it is one acknowledged in

Burra's Sailors at a Bar by the viewer being transformed into the reflected identity of a sailor.[84]

In addition, as Andrew Causey has noted, the mirror and reflected image had a particular importance in Nash's works completed either in the South of France in 1930 or upon his return to England after the trip.[85] Nash's sketch-books recorded "a series of café drawings, which continued throughout the trip",[86] and included details such as bar-mirrors and reflected images drawn in hotel and restaurants. Harbour and Room (1931) [pl.78] and Forest and Room (1930) [pl.79] developed these iconographic and formal motifs to address the phenomenon of the interpenetration of image and reflection. The resulting mirrored image - what Nash termed the "fused image"- recorded the interconnection of different levels of reality. Causey relates Nash's interest in mirrors to the theme of death and to "the release of the dream". He recognizes the influence of Cocteau in offering the mirror as a device which symbolically reconstructs "the threshold between life and death" in Nash's works of 1930-31.[87]

The linking of the mirror to the theme of metamorphosis paralleled Burra's interest, although for Nash it formed part of a wider formal interest in a modern 'metaphysical' idiom in which "symbolic images [were placed] into a firmer architectural framework".[88] Nash's work Harbour and Room (1932-6) [pl.80] originated from the Toulon visit and took as its subject the interpenetration of exterior with interior landscapes:"the idea resulting from the reflection of one of the ships in the very large mirror which hung in front of our bed", which were recorded in drawings in Nash's sketch book.[89] The importance of these experiments for Nash was the strengthening of "the substantial reality of architecture" and the

move towards greater symbolism-"a likeness rather than an equivalent"- through what Nash termed later, "the extension of the liberty of the subject".[90] Works such as Metamorphosis (1930-8) [pl.82] and Harbour and Room (1931) [pl.79] marked this important development in Nash's conceptual thinking tied to the theme of metamorphosis in 1930-31.[91]

Both Burra's and Nash's involvement with mirror imagery as part of a reconsideration of the role of the image and the theme of metamorphosis at this particular historical moment is important. Metamorphosis as a theme was central to avant-garde French painting and especially surrealist investigations in the 1920s. As Christopher Green has argued, it played a crucial conceptual role in attacking and undermining traditional notions of accepted meaning by releasing the image from fixed levels of association:"It separated the sign from any fixed meaning and thus, made it available either for aesthetically directed manipulation, free from the obligation of specific denotational meaning (in Cubism) or the imaginative infusions and transformations of meaning (in Surrealism)".[92] Nash's and Burra's involvement with this theme as part of their contact with European modernism suggests an awareness of these debates. It is within the context of surrealist investigations into urban themes that I want to consider Sailors at a Bar.

The sailor's' bar as a site of ambiguity and chance reflections was a place of endless speculation and illicit pleasure. It corresponded to one of those sites -the arcades, cafés and marketplaces- revered by the surrealists as "magical spaces conducive to a non-objective vision of the world".[93] Their mixture of mystery and modernity held a special appeal similar in many respects to the arcade in Aragon's Le Paysan de Paris

(1926) or the street in Soupault's Les Derniers Nuits de Paris (1928). Louis Aragon acknowledged the role of mirrors in cafés and bars as essential to their allure. In Le Paysan de Paris, he declared that the presence of mirrors in French cafés acted "to provoke looks and glances"[94] and to promote speculation on the actions of the interior. In the streets, the highly polished shop-windows assumed a similar role, as Atget documented, transforming dreary window shopping into a speculative narrative of casual incidents and accidents [pl.77]. Mirrors, glass windows and highly polished surfaces transformed the habitats of the city into mysterious and magical places - Aragon called them "human aquariums" because of their special "underwater light"- where "the sentimental stroller feels himself sufficiently removed to give full reins to his fantasies."[95]

Sailors at a Bar represents such a site and also through its complex spatial and composition structure offers a maze of speculation, in a manner similar to Aragon's 'aquaria'. It is a place of ambiguous sensations and unsure meanings aided by mirrors and glass surfaces. Furthermore, it was a milieu in which chance meetings were commonplace. The comings and goings of the sailor's bar provided a constantly changing series of possibilities. In this respect, Burra's work parallels surrealist interests in encounter as an erotically inscribed experience, and I want to consider Burra's understanding of such ideas in relation to surrealist photography and as presented in the Surrealist periodical La Révolution Surréaliste, which although published in the mid-1920s, was being re-considered by Burra in the late 1920s and early 1930. In particular, the photographs of Atget and Brassaï appear relevant to Burra's work,

although the prostitute rather than the sailor is the central protagonist in the highly-charged sexual encounter.

In La Révolution Surréaliste, No 7, 15 June 1926, one of Atget's photographs of a French prostitute [pl.83] had appeared to accompany René Crevel's article entitled "Le Pont de la Mort".[96] The photograph takes as its subject the sudden discovery of a coquettish prostitute in a shadowy doorway. The theme of Crevel's article and Atget's photograph, is the moment of sexual encounter. This is located in the docks of a port, a milieu, according to Crevel, pregnant with a sense of mystery and expectation.[97] Docks were also included as subjects in Brassaï's later photographs published as Nuits parisiennes (1935). The deserted quay and portside street were:"places of flux, constantly changing spaces of possibility ... open to the invitation of circumstance ..."[98] Brassaï's photographs, as Dawn Ades has noted, transformed the ordinary dark side street into an unpredictable arena of speculation.[99] The camera's lens, like the shop window or the bar-mirror, caught these moments, but as permanent records on film.

Atget's photograph reveals the prostitute emerging from the shadowy entrance of a Versaille's brothel in broad daylight. She is an engaging and illicit vision offering an unexpected liason. As Rosalind Krauss has argued, the poignancy of much Surrealist photography lay in its reference to a sexual or erotic object, which consciously manipulated the seen against the unseen; the visible against the concealed, the real against the unreal.[100] As Krauss commented in L'Amour Fou, in this sense, surrealist photography: "explored the possibility of a sexuality that is not grounded in an idea of human nature or the natural, but

instead woven of fantasy and representation is fabricated."[101] Atget's photograph of a street-prostitute emerging from a door-way visualizes the erotic encounter heavily inscribed by paradox and ambiguity. Its visual codes reinforce the belief that "le marveilleux, c'est la contradiction qui apparait dans le réel."[102]

The parallel between Brassaï's docks, Aragon's arcades and Burra's sailor s' bar as sites of constant intrigue, speculation and anticipation is, I think, a clear one. Burra's painting Three Sailors in a Bar depicts such a chance encounter as the central experience of the Mediterranean sailor's bar. The painting represents a moment of visual interrogation like those frequently imaged in the work of reportage photographers such as Krull or Brassaï. It proposes the members of the sailor's bar as an intriguing proposition, characters who inhabited secret haunts of the portside milieu and the seedy quarters of the city. Like the prostitute with whom he often shared such places, the sailor offered the prospect of an illicit encounter linked to the chance meeting, the highly charged erotic experience and a sudden departure.

However, the sailor's bar in Sailors at a Bar is an exclusively male territory. Popular mythology wove around the sailor homo- and hetero-erotic connotations. The sailor's bar was a private space and a milieu worthy of a 'behind the scenes' shot. Germaine Krull and Brassaï both photographed homosexual bars, bals and dancings. They were habitats, which attracted and engaged public fascination as part of a 'secret world', whose codes and activities were not easily divulged to outsiders. The complicated mirror image used in Sailors at a Bar suggests this voyeuristic approach and creates a sense of intrigue though its visual

labyrinth. In the shifting projection of reflected and deflected images represented in the painting, a series of ambiguous meanings are floated and the sovreignty of appearances and intentions questioned. At this moment, a new identity is suggested in the mirror behind the bar - the viewer is metamorphosized into the anatomy of the Mediterranean sailor. Such a glamorous disguise allowed access to the secret world of the sailor's bars and to that illicit geography of the Mediterranean ports, which was such an intriguing and exotic proposition to Burra and others, in the Inter-War years.

2. The Prostitute.

The prostitute in Burra's work occupies a central position within urban low-life and formed part of the rich vocabulary of characters culled from a fiction-fed view of the metropolitan underworld. She is consistently employed as a characterization of deviancy. Burra's early knowledge of the prostitute as an urban type was linked to representations in the English satirical print tradition and the work of Hogarth, to 19th Century English literature and imagery of the 'fallen woman' in Victorian illustrations featured in the Springfield library. Burra's early travels abroad further developed the figure, mixing ideas from 19th Century French painting and literature with details drawn from his own experience. It is this typology and these sources,

which I want to consider first. In my discussion of works after 1927, I shall outline how the prostitute became identified with two foreign locations, the South of France and Paris, and incorporated associations drawn from French popular culture, informed by contemporary photography and film. Finally, I shall examine The Snack Bar (1930), which raises particular questions about the prostitute as a public figure in London in the early 1930s.

The earliest treatment of the prostitute is in Tarts (1923) [CCD.8], where she stands as a conspicuous member of London's East End crowd. She is depicted as a particularly provocative and threatening figure complete with contorted body, confrontational stare and grimace. The figure draws upon earlier stereotypes of the East End 'dolly mop' and this is apparent in the attention seeking flower-patterned dress and distracting finger bells. Such a "swindling Sal" stereotype featured in 18th and early 19th Century satirical prints as the distinctive physiognomy of the scandalous harlot.[103] This is emphasized in Burra's preoccupation with distinctive facial characteristics, body position and dress, key areas of consideration in the satirical print. A Harlots Progress (1732) [pl.5], Morning from The Four Times of the Day (c.1736) [pl.4] and March to Finchley (1749) offered examples of Hogarth's distinctive prostitute type which accentuated their self advertisement and unashamed display of immorality.[104] Burra adopts this public and opportunist theme for his figures. For example, in Morning, Hogarth's Covent Garden prostitute flaunts herself in front of the brothel without any consideration for the

old maid walking to church.'[105] In Burra's The Crowd [CCD.23], the prostitute similarly parades openly, and in Tarts, the prostitutes theatrically vie for attention. In Hogarth's March to Finchley, the prostitutes hang out of the Kings Head tavern in order to attract and lure passing soldiers [pl.84]. Another similarity between Burra's and Hogarth's consideration of prostitution is the essentially urban nature of vice.'[106] A Harlot's Progress [pl.5] documents the corruption of an innocent victim in the city. In The Crowd, as already noted, the setting is a distinctive London one.'[107] The prostitute is a conspicuous urban dweller and reveller, who like the prostitute in A Harlot's Progress wears revealing dresses, has a haughty pose and pallid complexion.

However, Burra's early work has a less overtly satirical approach and is less condemning in its moralistic tone. It is distinguished by it attention to comedy. In this respect, Burra's copy of Thomas Wright's A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art (1865) provided examples of the prostitute physiognomy within that comic tradition of exaggeration found in Lavater and La Bruyère.'[108] The prostitute in the foreground of Tarts displays facial features, which Wright referred to as part of the comic "tradition of grotesque faces and figures":"To unrefined and uneducated minds no object conveys so perfect a notion of mirth as an ugly and distorted face"'[109] The use of masks for comic and caricatural puposes was acknowledged by Wright:"The mask was less an individualized grotesque to be laughed at for itself, than a personification of comedy...the grotesque features gave satisfaction by their mere ugliness."'[110]

Disproportionately large mouths, cross eyes and facial distortion - all present in Burra's prostitute type- were frequently employed to heighten the comic effect and suggest moral depravity in this tradition.

The type may also have been influenced by Dickens's portrayal of the prostitute as a member of the London underworld in Oliver Twist (1838), where the sentimentalized figure of Nancy is just one of the dangerous classes, who inhabit:"the shelterless midnight streets of London, the foul and drowsy dens where vice is loosely packed..the haunts of hunger and disease".[1] The Crowd and Tarts, as I have already suggested, display Burra's fascination with the spectacle of working class street culture rather than with documenting social conditions. In this respect, Burra's prostitutes are recognizable types rather than an individualized figures. This approach suggests a fiction-fed construction rather than any attempt to present genuine portraits of social distress. Instead, the prostitute is employed in Burra's work to suggest the allure of clandestine sex and the theatre of vice as an urban fiction.[2]

Such a physiognomy of harlotry is in Burra's early drawings given a distinctively modern up-date. The prostitutes in Tarts wear fashionable clothes, cloche caps, cropped hair and high-heeled shoes. They mix earlier physiognomic features with a knowledge of fashion drawn from Vogue cover illustrations in the early 1920s by Lepape and Erté. The prostitute on the right hand side flaunts her modernity. She is a flapper with tulip skirt and short hair,

who confidently smokes her cigarette in public. The central woman in an up-to-the-minute outfit and leather gloves waits for the next client to appear. The silhouette outlines of the figures, the compositional flatness and the decorative strength of the drawings suggests Lepape, Erté and Helen Dryden's influences - all Vogue illustrators in the early 1920s. As Clover de Pertinez noted:"We aspired to the smooth chic sophistication to be seen on the covers of Vogue by Erté and Georges Lepape".[113] Burra humorously applies such a High fashion gloss to the East End streetwalkers.

The prostitute as a figure representing Burra's fascination with the illicit eagerly advertized, with outrageous style, deviant manners and language -"painted, dressy women flaunting along the street"[114] - is at its most pronounced in later works such as French Scene (1925-26) [CC.21], Fiesta (1926) [CC.22] and Market Day (1926) [CC.23]. In these, the prostitute is an inhabitant of the Mediterranean marketplace and tied to notions of the foreign city as vice. In particular, her heavily made up appearance, her gaudy costume, her provocative stance and direct stare attract attention. In Fiesta, the prostitute is a hybrid figure who draws upon Burra's own experience of the Marseille's street-walker and the iconography of the flower-seller as prostitute from Victorian illustration. She carries the hallmarks of the illicit woman either through the carrying of flowers or the inclusion of flower motifs on her dress. The prostitutes carry an abundance of flowers, one provocatively biting one between her teeth, to emphasize the gross immorality of the Mediterranean ports.

Alternatively, they wear floral patterned dresses or outfits with enlarged numbers included into the patterns. This symbolism suggests a knowledge of French slang, where '<u>le gros numéro</u>' was a common reference to a brothel or '<u>maison tolerée</u>'.'[115]

This refers to that tradition of 19th Century English graphic illustration, in which the flower seller was identified with the prostitute. Her public involvement with 'trade' in the marketplace contrasted with the private, familial situation normally associated with images of Victorian motherhood. Her conspicuous presence on street corners, similar locations to those portrayed by Burra, provided a distinctive face to 19th Century deviant womanhood. Burra knew such illustrations through their publication in Victorian illustrated magazines such as <u>The Graphic</u> and the <u>Illustrated London News</u>, which were contained in the Springfield Library.[116] [pl.85] However, as mentioned earlier, whilst Burra adopts generalized aspects of this type of work and its flower symbolism, his representation of the urban poor is not marked by social realism not does it achieve any pathos for their condition.

The distinctve physiognomy, clothes and manner of the 'fallen' woman have been extensively analysed by Susan Casteras and Lynda Nead in relation to Victorian representations of the prostitute.[117] As Casteras has argued, the prostitute was frequently represented near the water's edge and this is appropriate to Burra's early Mediterranean works, where she inhabits the streets next to harbour.[118] However, unlike for example the

prostitute in Rossetti's Found (started 1854 or 59) [pl.86], Burra's prostitutes are not cowering, ashamed creatures, but unblushingly and brazenly proclaim their presence.''[9] This eager advertisement is related to Burra's knowledge of the foreign prostitute in popular sources.

The prostitute typology is from 1925-6 identified in Burra's work with the notion of the scandalous foreign woman -the 'femme cosmopolitaine' portrayed in popular postcards and given a distinctively Mediterranean context.''[20] This transference to the foreign woman of the depraved and immoral stereotype has an extensive geneology in popular imaginative culture. It projected connotations of the exotic and erotic onto a woman whose racial type, appearance, dress and manners, even langauge, were seen to signal deviancy from one's own background. This set the foreign woman as an alluring, yet morally suspicious type and linked the attractions of travel abroad to those associated with illicit sex and continental sin. It is an identification, which Burra's work in its representation of the prostitute as a conspicuous metaphor for foreign travel, clearly exploits.

This had sources in Victorian and Edwardian popular postcards, which presented the continental woman as a flirtatious, coquettish figure often classified as 'Parisienne'. She was linked to the seduction of urban entertainment, notably Paris, with its reputation for immorality. The label 'Parisienne' became a by-word for prostitute in late Victorian and Edwardian England associated with series such as Vestiales Parisiennes (1911) and

Les Bas Fonds de la Vie Parisienne (c.1910).[121] The massive growth in the popularity of postcards prior to the First World War meant the rapid expansion and growth in circulation of such postcards. Burra's works suggest such sources in a generalized sense by the way they exploit highly self-conscious poses, unnatural colouring, provocative facial expressions and gaudy make up to offer a highly artificialized glamour. Burra's prostitutes in Fiesta and Market Day carry many of the features of the teasing 'Parisiennes' presented in these cards. Furthermore, flower symbolism was often incorporated into the designs of these cards as an ironic manipulation of traditional sentimentalized, romantic imagery. (For example, roses and forget me nots become ironic symbols of true love). Burra owned a large number of these postcards and would have recognized the titillating nature of the semi-erotic subjects [pl.87].[122]

In addition, Burra's development of the continental prostitute as a type was informed by his knowledge of 19th Century French painting and literature and in particular, Manet and Degas, who similarly featured her as part of their Paris urban scenes. The prostitute in the work of graphic artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Guys and Rops, made extensive use of her as a distinctive physiognomy linked to Paris.[123] In addition, accounts in that genre of panoramic literature exemplified by Sùe's Les Mystères de Paris (1843) and Zola's Nana (1880), known to Burra, reinforced this attitude. Baudelaire's writing and poetry was also important in the way it proposed the prostitute as a key urban type linked to modernity.[124] From these sources, Burra conspicuously adopted

the public aspects of the prostitute as an urban figure- her displays on the street, her outrageous manner and her distinctive codes of dress. More intimate knowledge of her life or social conditions are ignored in favour of features, which reinforced the flamboyant fiction of a foreign female sexuality grounded in artifice and drama, and which offered to the male viewer the promise of sexual adventure easily available.

Burra's The Café (c.1927) [CCD.21] placed the prostitute, on the extreme right of the work, as a member of the café crowd and yet, distinguishable by her provocative stance, clothes and confrontational gaze. This involvement and distance suggests a knowledge of 19th Century French painting on urban themes. For Manet and Degas, the prostitute was one of those distinctive urban figures, who frequented the Parisian café, terrace and follies and formed part of the illicit nightlife scene of Paris. As Robert Herbert has documented in Impressionism- Artists, Leisure and Parisian Society, her pose, gesture and manoeuvres clearly distinguished her from the crowd. They were visual indicators for one who had a special and sophisticated knowledge of the street's relationships.'[25] The prostitutes in Degas's Women on a Café Terrace, Evening (1877) [pl.88] recognize the innuendos, which signal their clients interest. Whilst publicity - sitting in the window of a Montmartre terrace- was a necessity, these prostitutes are also attuned to the subtle codes associated with Parisian sexual traffic and wise in the ways of the clandestine pick up.'[26] This astuteness is in Manet's Nana (1877), signalled by the self assured, almost aggressive stare, which marks out one who is

accustomed to solicited approaches.[127] Such a feature is significant in Burra's imaging of the prostitute in the Café. In the face of another female figure, probably another prostitute, at the bottom right-hand side, this glare is made even more pronounced by stylized features and a concentration upon eye make up.

Burra's Havana (1928) [CCD.24] also identifies the prostitute with these milieus in his depiction of a Montmartre café. It is noticeable that Burra selectively purchases those dramatic aspects of the prostitute's appearance -her provocative dress, her unkempt appearance, her pose and her ability to handle the manoeuvres of the pick up. The overriding impression in Havana is the knowledge of such codes as part of a wider claim to the sub-culture of Montmartre. In this sense, it suggests illustrators such as Toulouse-Lautrec and Steinlen, who mapped out in greatest detail the social context of the prostitute as a marginalized character.[128] Developing earlier stereotypes adopted by urban physiognomists such as Raffaèlli and Gavarni, Toulouse-Lautrec in A Table at the Moulin Rouge [pl.89] and The Salon at the rue des Moulins (1894) and Steinlen in At the Ball [pl.22] portrayed the prostitute in the authentic locales of the Montmartre nightclub, bal-musette and brothel. The representation of prostitution is achieved by use of stereotyped facial features, significant grouping and distinctive poses, attention to details of environment, a concentration on sharp outline especially profiles, exaggerated gestures and a flattened, dramatic use of space. As already mentioned Burra owned a copy of Steinlen's Dans la Vie

(1901) and knew Lautrec's work.[129] Both Toulouse-Lautrec's and Steinlen's depiction of the prostitute must be seen within the context of Burra's fascinations with that mythology of Montmartre, examined earlier, his desire to establish himself as a painter of contemporary social scene and his illustrational conception of an art, which incorporated contemporary popular references.[130] The prostitute was an appropriate figure in which to combine these interests.

Furthermore, the subject had literary parallels. This was the territory of Zola's L'Assommoir (1872) and Nana (1880), who along with Huysmans's Marthe, the story of a Prostitute (1876) and Edmond de Gourmont's The Whore Elise (1877) considered the theme of Parisian prostitution in the late 1870s and 80s.[131] Whilst Burra knew these writers' works, Zola was the more influential in the period 1925-28. In Zola's novel Nana, the figure of Nana, brought up in an atmosphere of poverty in the Goutte d'Or district of Paris, becomes a flower-seller, runs off with an older man and eventually takes to the stage. Aware of her attractions, Nana easily turns to the life of a courtesan to earn money. Set against the vaudeville and prostitution scene of Paris in the 1870s, Zola's novel is a narrative of urban corruption and tragedy, which inevitably concludes in the early death of the prostitute from disease. However, Zola's heroine has a corrupting quality, which comes from her ability to lure men's attention and her erotic appeal. As described by one of her admirers: "She was the Golden beast..whose very odour corrupted the world..Muffat gazed in fascination, like a man possessed.."[132]

This approach to the figure of the prostitute in 19th Century urban fiction was strengthened in a generalized way by film versions of Zola's novels. Nana (1926) directed by Jean Renoir and starring a favourite of Burra's, Catherine Hessling, was shown at the London Film Society on 11 December 1927. Filmed on lavish sets which fictioned an image of 19th Century Montmartre lowlife, Hessling's Nana with her louche characterization extracted the most from the popular stereotype of the coquettish 'Parisienne'. Zola's novel reveals the prostitute as a skilled manipulator of sexual appeal through cosmetics and dress, and capable in the negotiations of illicit sex - a skill which the film clearly emphasized.'[133] This is also conveyed in Burra's Street Figures (c.1927) [pl.90], where the streetwalker on the extreme right hand side, has outrageous make up which accentuates her eyes and mouth. She sports an enormous 'kiss-curl' and flashy ear-rings. Her figure is corsetted to exaggerate its shape and her dress accentuates her breasts and crotch- features emphasized by the linear nature of the drawing and its attention to decorative detail. Furthermore, her out-stretched palm shown to the two approaching male figures, suggests one adept at soliciting and receiving payment in advance.

Such a type corresponds to ideas outlined in Huysmans's Certains (1889) and L'Art moderne (1883) through which Burra was introduced to the work of Constantin Guys and Félicien Rops.'[134] Huysmans stressed two important aspects of these artists' consideration of the prostitute. Firstly, it was the prostitute as a distinctive figure of modern bearing able to employ disguise and artifice to

Baudelaire's conception of

attract. This emphasized the prostitute as an :"image of wanton beauty".[135] Secondly, the prostitute was portrayed as a promiscuous figure with an unnatural lust for money and an innate mercenary instinct. This interpretation was at its most extreme in Rops's portrayal of the "erotic foreign woman" in his illustrations for Barbey d'Aurévilly's Les Diaboliques (1882) [pl.91], where symbolist attitudes towards the prostitute as an erotic and demonic type were presented.[136]

Important in this respect was Burra's knowledge of Baudelaire's writing and in particular, Les Fleurs du mal (1857).[137] Baudelaire venerated the prostitute as one of the undeclared heroines of the city. She was one of those "rich and poetic" figures, who thrived in the "atmosphere of the marvellous", which was the modern city.[138] A member of the metropolitan criminal class, she was a glamorous figure of allure, one of the "..Courtisanes / Et bandits, tels souvent vous offrez des plaisirs/ Que ne comprennent pas les vulgaires profanes".[139] Her dress, manner and make-up distinguished her as part of "the pageant of fashionable life and the thousands of floating existences..which drift around in the underworld of the great city".[140]

This is evident in the prostitutes in Fiesta and the one in Market Day, who approaches the sailors. The prostitute is a modern and heroic typology, which the formal language of the painting clearly accentuates. In Market Day, the flower motif, now reduced to her hat decoration, her flaunting pose and splayed legs, her heavy

make-up and direct stare distinguish her from the Mediterranean crowd. Burra's painting suggests that the prostitute's look constituted, as Baudelaire had declared, the 'beauty' of modernity itself "embellished by all the rites of artifice...and immediately obvious to the spectator's eye.."[141] Her provocative appearance and manner prescribe that 'professional beauty' outlined by Baudelaire. Burra's representation concentrates on the vulgar colours, showy fashions and brazen displays of the prostitute on the city street. These suggest an understanding of the aptness of the prostitute as a modern subject and the importance of fashion as a signifier of this modernity. As Baudelaire noted:"having the dress and bearing of the woman of today, give her dress a life and a special character which are not those of the woman of the past....[with] the bearing, the glance, the smile or the living style of one of those creatures which the dictionary of fashion has successfully classified under the coarse or playful titles of 'doxies', 'kept women', 'lorettes' or 'biches".[142]

Furthermore, Burra's typology appears to have taken up Baudelaire's proposal that the prostitute was "the perfect image of savagery that lurks in the midst of civilisation".[143] In Tarts, the woman in the foreground threatens both physically and morally. In The Café, the prostitute's hand on hip stance and provocative stare eagerly fix the viewer as if some prey. In Market Day, [CC.23] she brazenly challenges the passing sailors. This corresponds to Baudelaire's assessment of the prostitute as fiendish :

"she has discovered for herself a provocative and barbaric elegance...She has her own sort of beauty,which comes from Evil.... She directs her gaze at the horizon like a beast of prey: the same wildness, the same lazy absent-mindedness and also, at times, the same fixity of attention. She is a sort of gypsy wandering on the fringes of a regular society, and the triviality of her life, which is one of warfare and cunning, fatally grins through its envelope of show".[144]

Rops in his illustrations to Alfred Delvau's Histoire Anecdotique des Cafés et des Cabarets de Paris (1862), presents a similar prostitute type, which although Burra would not have known at first hand, was given particular mention by Huysmans. Huysmans stated in Certains (1889)

"M. Rops crée un type de femme que nous reverrons, repris et dérivé, dans son oeuvre. [une] jeune devient encore plus menaçante et plus vorace avec sa face glacée et vide, canaille et dure, avec ses yeux limpides, au regard fixe et cruel des tribades, avec sa bouche un peu grande, fendue droite, son nez régulier et court. Ce type de la loupeuse insatiable et cupide, apparaît modifié dans plusieurs de ses planches.."[145]

Such a misogynistic definition places the prostitute on the edge of depravity and lunacy, categorizing her as a deviant. This typology is present in Burra's work in the later 1920s and early 1930s in the physical features of the type. Her fixed grin, contorted body position, often with splayed legs, knowing gestures, glazed expression and the aggressive, confrontational manner, as well as her heavy made-up face, often hiding a pallid complexion and garish dress, set the prostitute out as a modern figure of vice inhabiting the city street or low-life bars.

However, Burra's extended visits to Paris and the South of France from 1927-1931, provided him with with a greater knowledge of the prostitute's activites, her milieu and life-style, and this

becomes amalgamated with earlier fiction-fed sources for the figure. In addition, these later works begin to exploit understandings of the prostitute as a distinctive urban commentator current in contemporary French popular culture. She becomes tied to two distinctive geographical locations - Marseilles and Toulon in On the Shore (1929) [CC.50] and Dockside Café (1929) [CC.60], and the Northern and Eastern quarters of Paris in Minuit Chanson (1931) [CC.73]. This was derived from two important sources -popular novels, songs and film, and modern photo-reportage photography, which addressed the subject of the Marseille's 'Quartier Réservé' and Toulon's 'Chapeau rouge' areas and the Parisian criminal sub-culture as part of a broader fascination with vice and the figures of the underworld. In particular, the theme of the prostitute's life-style was employed as a fictional narrative of modern manners set in 'authentic' geographical locations.

The largest number of works on the prostitute theme were completed in the South of France from 1927-31 and they are distinctively linked to Marseille's 'Vieux Port' and Toulon's 'Chapeau Rouge' quarters. The prostitute and her street manner and the codes of the pick-up become a metaphor for the appeal of these cities illicit street cultures. According to Barbera Ker-Seymer, the main attraction of Marseille was wandering around the 'Quartier Réservé' and voyeuristically watching the goings on:"staring at the tarts whose apartments filled only by a large bed were open like fair booths to the world - or stopping at the sailor's shops and the ships chandlers."[146] Marseilles Street (c.1929-30)

[pl.92] and Man outside a Bordello (c.1928-9) [pl.93] also represent this Vieux Port geography and both show prostitutes sitting outside their rooms waiting for customers. In Man outside a Bordello, the poses of the prostitutes on the street, the slum architecture and the portside locale are represented in a simplified, caricatural manner. Burra accentuates the humorous theatre of the prostitutes' poses, exaggerates their body shape, focuses on details such as the interiors of the rooms with their pin ups and the exterior rows of washing drying. The toothy grin of the prospective client eyeing the women reduces the pick-up to a comedy of contemporary manners. This directly parallels earlier interests in street culture as essentially a theatre of humorous display reducing prostitution, as in earlier works such as The Crowd or Tarts, to a comic entertainment with illicit appeal.

The spectacle of attention-seeking street display is also central to later drawings such as Jazz Fans (1930-31) [CCD.46] and Dance Hall (1929-30) [CCD.34]. In these drawings, the sharp outlines reveal this attention to the prostitute's pose. In Jazz Fans, the prostitute standing in the doorway with hands on hips, is obviously in a position advertising herself to the prospective client. This knowledge of facial expression, details of dress and the manoeuvres of body language in the pick up was drawn from Burra's experience of watching prostitutes in the red-light area of Marseilles mixed with photographic sources.

In Marseilles Street, the angle from above suggests that vantage point associated with candid 'snap shots' discussed earlier, and

in particular, Germaine Krull's Rue du Vieux Port à Marseilles, which was illustrated in Variétés 15 May 1929, which adopts a similar angled view [pl.94].[147] Photographs such as Le Trottoir and Dames de Maison, showing prostitutes in doorways and on the street may have provided details of pose and milieu.[148] Burra's fascination with the Vieux Port of Marseilles as a territory of transgression and his desire to record its illicit activities in photo-reportage style resulted in attempts to photograph the prostitutes "by the Germaine Krull method" in close up from unusual angles. As Barbera Ker-Seymer recalled:"Ed and I went up to the red-light district in Marseilles, where the elderly (to us) tarts sat on wooden chairs outside their bedrooms, which opened out onto the streets concealed by bead curtans. We were going to photograph them, but one saw us and rushed after us calling out in French 'You'll have to pay some money for that', but Ed and I flew down a side street and escaped. Not long after that we saw photographs in Variétés of exactly what we had seen". [149]

The article on the 'Quartier Réservé' by Pierre MacOrlan was featured in Variétés 15 May 1929 issue. Photographs by Germaine Krull were placed close to illustrations from a mock sociological "opuscule documentaire", entitled "Les rues du célèbre quartier dit réservé de Marseilles" [pl.95 and 96]. Under the humorous heading "En attendant le Batavia", photographs were accompanied by a text by the 'Vice'-President of Marseille's Art and Progress committee, which in ironic tones declared the area to be "un centre marveilleux d'Education morale". It satirically noted that the limited area of the quarter was part of the city's wish

"cantonner les Désirs et les Besoins masculins de ses Habitants ou de ses Visteurs vers un Quartier unique pour 'assainir' les autres y 'ramener' le calme".'[50]

Marseilles's 'Vieux Port' formed a triangular area, whose main limits were the Quai de la Joliette up to the Fort St Jean, the streets along the Quai du Port and the main thoroughfare of the Rue de la Republique. The area had boomed as a centre for vice in the 19th Century due to French colonial expansion and the opening of the Suez Canal and besides prostitution, was known for its contraband and drug smuggling activities. The Quartier Réservé, formed in 1863 had a strict monopoly on prostitution in the city. It was an area of less than a couple of square miles with a population of over 3000 prostitutes. Consequently slum conditions, bad hygiene and overcrowding were commonplace. By the late 1920s, the Quartier Réservé had a reputation as a tourist attraction and even supplied visitors with a guide:Guide Rose:L'annuaire des Maisons de Société. Prostitute's 'visiting cards' (cartes du tendre) were printed in several foreign languages and the area promoted as "une attraction touristique du monde". Souvenir postcards and illustrated maps of the streets were available of the type illustrated in Variétés.'[51]' Burra's work can be seen to draw on the illict voyeuristic interest in the quarter, which such publications and its photographs exploited.

However, Burra was not the only British artist to visit the area. In April 1924, Mark Gertler recorded how he had "spent the day at Marseilles.. The evening was spent differently. We went to a

brothel and saw an indecent cinema".[152] Edward Wadsworth had also drawn the area in 1924-5. Rue Bonaparte, Marseilles (1925) and Rue Fontaine de Caylus (1924) recorded the "picturesque" qualities of the narrow streets, Mediterranean architecture and decorative wrought iron work.[153] Richard Wyndham had also depicted this quarter. His paintings received critical acclaim for their "ingenious inventions of Southern architecture and the luxurious picturesqueness of Southern life.. in the clandestine quarters around the port".[154] The subject was not in itself new or unusual. However, what distinguishes Burra's approach in his works is the distinctive attention to the prostitute's activities as a form of voyeuristic entertainment and illicit popular spectacle, rather than a concern with recording as in Wadsworth's and Wyndham's work, the picturesque architecture of the 'Vieux Quartier'.

However, the designs which Burra made for the Camargo Society's production of Rio Grande in 1931 seem to combine both topographical detail with an interest in the exotic and illicit spectacle of prostitution.[155] The front cloth made explicit references to the architecture of Marseille's Quartier Réservé and depicted a facade "showing a row of houses in the brothel quarter of a Southern sea port, the shutters open to reveal in every window the most wonderfully outrageous tarts".[156] The original setting for Sacheverell Sitwell's poem Rio Grande- A Day in a Southern Port had been South America, but Burra incorporates imagery from his South of France experience to create the effect required by Constant Lambert, the composer and musical director,

and Frederick Ashton, the choreographer of evoking:" a genuinely louche and erotic atmosphere...the seamy side of life in a tropical sea port".[157] In the back-cloth [CC.75], Burra also included imagery from Toulon, amalgamating Pierre Puget's statue at the centre of the Fontaines des Trois Dauphins with the female nude and boat motif from another of Puget's sculptures in the square behind Burra's and Chappell's usual hotel in Toulon (now the Place de la Liberté)[pl.94]This statue had been depicted in the drawing, Sailors and Fountain in the Central Square near the Grand Hotel (1929-30) [pl.51] and in the original design for Arcadia (1928-9) [pl.38]. Both statues were part of Puget's commission for the port of Toulon between 1669-79. [158]

This parallel between Puget's classical sculptures and the figure of the prostitute was not an original connection on Burra's part, but again suggests a knowledge of MacOrlan's article in Variétés, 15 May 1929, where the local prostitutes were compared to Puget's 'caryatids'. It ironically referred to a photograph of a large prostitute as "un souvenir du grand sculpteur marseillais Pierre Puget, Prince des Cariatides, que nous avons respecteusement demandé à ces deux splendides Marseillaises..une seconde de pose." [pl.95].[159] A further witty gloss is given by the fact that Puget's two caryatids had the titles Le Travail and La Fatigue. These sculptures were also featured later in Paul Morand's travelogue, Route de Paris à la Meditérranée (1931), which was accompanied by photographs by Krull.[160] This association of the prostitute as a 'caryatid' raised in MacOrlan's parallel also seems relevant to Burra's paintings, Dockside Cafe (1929) [CC.60]

and On the Shore (1929) [CC.50], with its sculptural and monumental figurative language of 'classical modernism'. Such erudite references to classical sculpture would have been apt both to the subject and the notion of 'style', discussed earlier.

Furthermore, On the Shore (c. 1929) and the woodcut Fleet's In (1928-9) [pl.98] suggest the dependency of the prostitute on the ports endless stream of sailors. Contemporary commentators noted that "as the battleships steamed in and out, the corps of prostitutes waxed and waned".[161] Fleet's In shows a nude female figure, presumably a prostitute, waving to a ship in the harbour below. The subject has similarities with contemporary illustrations showing prostitutes on balconies such as Dignimont's illustration to Carco's Perversité (1927) [pl.99],[162] and indicates either the arrival of prospective customers or the departure of clients. On the Shore locates a narrative of soliciting within a single scene. The three female figures represent prostitutes in different positions. The two on the right enact common stances of prostitutes either outside their rooms on the pavement or in provocative poses in doorways with arms raised. In addition, the duplicity of the prostitute is highlighted. The nude figure on the left is shown waving goodbye to the ship and already receiving payment from the next client. The room with the curtain drawn down is typical of those photographed in Variétés and described by Ker-Seymer, and the arrival of the next ship on the horizon suggests the dependency upon the naval trade for customers. Furthermore, the still life of fish in the pan is a witty reference to 'morues'- codfish-

which was slang for fat prostitutes, fat both in physical and financial sense due to the strength of demand for their services.[163]

Dockside Café (1929) links soliciting to one of the distinctive milieus of that Marseilles bar mythology popular in novels and songs of the 1920s and early 1930s, In particular, it refers to that that genre of 'low-life walkabout' typified later by Pierre Benard's Les Bars de Mauvais Garçons (1933) and MacOrlan's Rues secrètes (1934), which Burra collected.[164] In such novels, tours of Marseille's red-light area were constructed through a series of meetings with local figures, who gave inside information on the neighbourhood and its dealings and vivid descriptions of 'secret' milieus. In Les Bars des Mauvais Garçons, Benard mentioned as one of the "pittoresque personnages" of the rue Bouterie, the blonde, who sat at the bar watching flies land and take off, waiting for customers, whilst playing with her beads and making her single drink last out.'[165] Such a type was common in this brand of popular literature. She was illustrated on the book-cover [pl.100] in a similar position with elbow resting on the bar, half-drunk aperatif in front of her carefully watching clients. Her heavy make-up, beads, distinctive dark eyes and red lips suggest Burra's figures, and although Burra's work could not have drawn specifically on Benard's description, it suggests generalized sources for the prostitute type, which were in currency in French popular culture in the early 1930s.

To re-examine Dockside Café, what upon first impression appears to be an interior café scene could be also a front for a brothel in which itinerant sailors form the customers. The sailor buying the drink is shown engaged in conversation with the two women at the bar. However, there appears to be little attempt to pour out a drink. The aperatif at the bar belongs to the woman in blue, who casually places her hand on the shoulder of the other woman. The second woman's elbows significantly rest on either side of the cash till and her engaging smile is directed straight at the young sailor. The other figure's raised eyebrow and hand firmly placed on the shoulder of the younger woman, suggest that she is in charge of negotiations. It is her hand that restrains the imminent departure of the woman. Significantly, her other hand is both close to the drink on the bar and to the approaching hand of the client, who might perhaps be giving payment. The heart shaped motif in the bar's carving, the flower decorations on the front of the bar and the 'bird on the nest' motif on the woman's broach suggest images, which are employed in Burra's work for their sexual overtones. Furthermore, the physical characteristics of the women conform to the prostitute type. Their full figures, engaging gestures, revealing dress, heavy make-up and modern jewellery, correspond to Baudelaire's modern and self-conscious beauty and their facial features -the fixed grin, glassy stare and distorted mouth - suggest that 'savagery' outlined by Baudelaire and Rops.[166]

This sophisticated mixture of fictional and documentary sources with first-hand experience in relation to the theme of the

prostitute is continued in Minuit Chanson (1931) [CC.73], but relocated in a distinctively Parisian milieu of a listening booth on the Boulevard Clichy in Pigalle. Within the array of low-life figures presented in the composition, the two female figures, one standing on the pavement in the left-hand entrance and the other seen in profile patrolling across the entrance to the booth are distinguishable as prostitutes. In particular, the prostitute in the green skirt is marked out by her position underneath a sign stating "auditions 25c" and next to an advertisement for a popular song "Prenez mon coeur. 6 francs".

This painting is important in the way its links the prostitute as a type to the specific geography of the Parisian 'zone', discussed in chapter 2, with all its connotations of corruption and criminality. It can be seen as related to the popular fiction of MacOrlan, Carco and Morand, and to illustrations by L'Araignée artists mentioned earlier.[167] For example, MacOrlan's La Tradition de Minuit (1930) linked the story of the senseless and bizarre murder of a young prostitute recently arrived in the city to the quarter and Dignimont's illustrations to Carco's Perversité (1927) showed prostitute's soliciting under the elevated section of the métro in Pigalle[168] [pl.101]. The potential for Pigalle as a fiction of sex and crime was as extensively documented in these works as Marseilles' Quartier Réservé. However, Burra's work places the prostitute firmly within a public arena, whereas many of his earlier Parisian scenes had been largely restricted to interior views of café, bar or entertainment locations. The

prostitute in Minuit Chanson is clearly given to be watched, standing in the illuminated space of the listening booth archway and approached from street level.

Burra's choice of the Northern area was also influenced by his move from Montparnasse to the cheaper area of Pigalle. He wrote to Paul Nash on 28 May 1931:

> "My new occupation is going to the Boulevard Clichy to Minuit Chanson which is glorious. You put bits in the slot and listen to the gramophone records. The clintele is enough to frighten you a bit what with listening with one ear and watching the intrigues going on elsewhere. I quite forsake Montparnasse for Place Pigalle. The people are glorious. Such tarts, all crumbling and all sexes and colours".[169]

Establishing himself near Place Pigalle, the artist was once again living in the middle of a neighbourhood of cheap bars, brothels and illicit night clubs referred to by the popular press as "le quartier réservé du monde".[170]

Burra's knowledge was again supplemented by 'documentary' accounts in an article by Pierre MacOrlan on Montmartre in Le Crapouillot's special May 1929 issue on the theme of Paris. It was according to MacOrlan, the most clandestine quarter of the city, composed of a series of squalid streets with interconnecting alleys and yards, which were almost impenetrable to the police. The area had been chosen by MacOrlan as the setting for his earlier novel Aux Lumières de Paris (1925), where he described in particular the display of street-walkers on rue Pigalle at midnight:

> "À partir de minuit, l'atmosphère de Paris se solidifit ... et le petit monde des formes secretes grouille, vit, se modifie meurt et renaît..Les goûts, des formes secrètes de la pensée concrétisée hantent la lucidité nocturne des clients de tous les établissements de nuit qui naissent sur le trottoir des rues comme des cloques. C'est le triomphe des poupées..."[171]

Burra's choice of location and time were probably influenced by the popular mythology of Pigalle at midnight, which these novels presented.

Furthermore, the identification of the Parisian prostitute as a distinctive participant in nocturnal streetlife was also shared in French cabaret songs and popular music of the 1920s and 1930s. Piaf, Mistinguett or Lucienne Boyer, taking the role of prostitute, articulated the marginalized point of view, and the despair and degradation of the woman of the night, who walked the streets of Paris's Northern and Eastern quarters soliciting. In songs such as Entre Saint Ouen et Clignancourt, Les mômes de la cloche and Elle fréquentait la rue Pigalle, the charmless existence of the street-walkers is vividly portrayed. In Piaf's Elle Fréquentait la rue Pigalle, the monotony and dangers of her occupation are vividly portrayed:

> "Elle fréquentait la rue Pigalle,
> Elle chantait, elle vit sa bon marché
> Elle était toute noire désèchée
> Avec une pauvre visage, tout pâle.."

A similar experience is articulated by the narrator, Piaf, in Les Mômes de la Cloche, who wanders the city streets in her "chemise de dix jours" and "Quand l'argent nous chauffe, on va faire quatre jours là-bas, à la tour, Les mômes de la cloche".

These darker areas of the city around the Place Pigalle and Clichy, the Canal Saint Martin and the slums of Belleville and Goutte d'Or were the threatening geography of a Paris, which could trap and snare the innocent, even murder. Germaine Krull in typical intrepid photo-journalist manner captured the Canal Saint

Martin as a threatening place [pl.102]. Francis Carco in Nuits de Paris (1927) referred to the area's melancholy made more intimidating by the "l'eau froide et grasse du Canal Saint Martin.."[172] Détective magazine ventured in with its 'candid camera' to open us these areas to the gaze of its intrigued middle-class readership, who approached them with a mixture of fear and fascination. Germaine Krull's 100X Paris(1929) similarly dared to enter the sordid territory of Pigalle and Belleville and in the photograph such Au bon coin, Paris (1929) [pl.103] monitored the pick up from a thoroughly modern angle.[173] It is in such a location, on the rue Pigalle at midnight, but from a more intimate, close up viewpoint that Burra presents his prostitute.

Secondly, Minuit Chanson offers a distinctive typology of the prostitute, which draws on a wide range of sources in popular novels, illustration, songs and photography. Burra represents both women with whitened mask-like faces, fixed expressions, inanimate poses and splayed leg positions. Such features, as George Leonard had noted in Transition, No. 7, October 1927, were the hallmarks of a type commonly referred to in contemporary accounts of the city.:

> "There was no mistaking her type nor profession. To one ever so slightly acquainted with Parisian streets,.. she was ...unmistakably stamped, labelled and classified...the brightly rouged cheeks, the pencilled eye-brows, the beaded lashes, the carmined lips, the bold appraising eyes, the ingratiating smile, the ostentatiously crossed and brazenly flaunted silk dad legs, the provocative voluptuousness of her body..."[174]

Such a contemporary classification was also reinforced in 'quasi-sociological' studies of 'zone' characters and life-style in the manner of a 19th Century 'physiognomies' such as Luc Valti's

Femmes de Cinq Heures (1934) and MacOrlan's Images Secrètes de Paris (1930). One of these, Emile Chautard's La Vie étrange de l'Argot (1931), was owned by Burra. Chautard's publication as well as outlining the latest slang names for the prostitute, was also a compendium of 124 illustrations of zone figures by Dignimont, Lotar and Krull. Lotar's photographs of Types de filles-Grands Boulevards [pl.104] and Filles au travail dans une rue de Paris (pl.105) provided particularly appropriate visual references for the prostitute capturing in close up her facial features, make-up, dress and manner of approaching prospective customers.[175]

In addition, Burra knew Brassaï's photographs of Parisian low-life in which the prostitute was a main theme. The prostitute played a signal role as the woman of the night, who displayed a sophisticated knowledge of underworld geography and its workings. The approach to such figures in Brassaï's photographs is underscored by a kind of anthropological impulse - a kind of 'mass observation' of the prostitute, almost as if an endangered species who needed to be recorded before she and her sub-culture vanished or was destroyed. This access to an 'other' and secret Paris is shared in Burra's representation of the prostitute as a public figure in her 'natural habitat'. In . . . . Paris's complex social and cultural order, her patch, as identified in Burra's Minuit Chanson and Brassaï's A Lady of the Evening near Place d'Italie in her Spring finery (c.1931), was the street and it was here that she carefully monitored events.[176]

This notion of the prostitute as an adept reader of public situations and a skilled manager of the sexual liasions displaying a sophisticated knowledge of the city street at night, forms a third feature of Burra's representation of the prostitute in Minuit Chanson. Whilst it culled meanings from a wide of contemporary French sources, already outlined, the prostitute as a grimly glad navigator of threatening territories was particularly indebted to exposure to German films at second-hand. In this respect, I want to outline how Burra's work derives understandings from filmic images of the prostitute.

In German street films of the 1920s- Grune's The Street (1923), Pabst's The Joyless Street (1925) and Rahn's The Tragedy of the Street (1928), the prostitute was a central figure amongst the marginalized types who haunted the city street at night.[177] She was typified by the ageing Asta Nielsen prostitute of The Tragedy of the Street, who was illustrated in popular film magazines, notably Close Up, May 1928, and Ciné Revue, 27 May 1927 [pl.106], - series, which Burra collected.[178] Burra's copy of Filmphotos wie noch nie (1929) also contained publicity illustrations, showing features, which are similar to the prostitute standing under the arch in Minuit Chanson- hair tied back by a head-band, thick black eye make up, glassy gaze, pallid complexion and bright red lips.[179] After seeing the film, which had been banned in London, Burra wrote to Barbera Ker-Seymer in May 1928 "We went to the street & Blackmail, which was glorious, I've never seen such a programme", and on 9 October 1928, that he had bought: "a lovely novelette film edition of the Tragedy de la Rue ... it looks

glorious. The story is nothing but about painted lips lurking in the shadows of the tortuous rue".[180] A drawing documents this source showing an Asta Nielsen type standing outside a café soliciting. The prostitute masterfully monitors the manoeuvres of the street reading in the features of the passers-by, their dress and body-language, the signs and signals of interested parties.

This ambiguity of the viewer being placed in the similar position as the prostitute was central to these films, when, at times, the camera in the role of the prostitute's eye, wandered the streets. This viewpoint offered first-hand experience of the visual interrogations related to the pick-up. This angle was also exploited by Burra in an untitled drawing [pl.107], which images two prostitutes soliciting on the street, with the closer one's face so close that it dominates a quarter of the composition. Her gaze towards the street, rather than directed at an approaching client, places the viewer in the position of someone, who is known to her, perhaps another prostitute. This complex psychological device may have been taken from stills of the film, although it has been impossible to corroborate such ideas since Burra's novelette filmbook of the Tragedy of the Street has been lost. However, in Minuit Chanson, the viewer is placed in a position unravelling the spectacle of the street. As a member of the Pigalle crowd at midnight, it is unclear if we are client, prostitute, or voyeur. The figure's do not openly acknowledge any presence. It suggests the eye of a film or reportage camera, adopting the role of a figure, who does not provoke attention. It lays claim to a knowledge of the 'zone', its classifications and types, as an experienced insider,- that knowledge, which, say, a

Parisian streetwalker would possess. The clandestine Pigalle street at night was a threatening milieu and a site of specualtion, misinformation, ambiguity and ultimately tragedy. Like the tortuous street in German films of the 1920s, it was a place of danger and unending tragedy, where the prostitute was a vulnerable victim.'[81] It is this which is central to Minuit Chanson.

Burra's The Snack Bar (1930) [CC.68] relocates the prostitute into a different red-light milieu, that of Soho in London. The painting shows a prostitute having a snack probably in 'The Continental Snack Bar' on Shaftesbury Avenue, next to the London Pavilion Cinema, which Burra regularly visited. Barbera Ker-Seymer recalled that the snack bar attracted a large number of prostitutes because:"It was very handy for ladies on the game to have a sit down and a cup of tea in their rest periods."[82] The modern streamlining of the bar with its stand-up counters and modern display cabinets, plus the neon lights of the street outside, suggest Soho and its proximity to the theatre distict confirm this since a large number of this American style snack bars were being opened in Soho in the early 1930s.'[83] This return to a native location is an important change, and one registered in the Café (1930) [CC.57], featuring a London delicatessen and urban types, but Soho as a choice would be apt as London's equivalent to Pigalle, Toulon's 'Chapeau Rouge' or Marseille's 'Quartier Réservé'.

The representation of the prostitute in the painting remains consistent with the earlier typology - heavy make up, pallid complexion, darkened eyeswith pronounced brows and solid features. Her position resting on the counter, toying with her tea and sandwich, corresponds to the subject of Dockside Café and Benard's Les Bars de Mauvais Garçons [pl.100]. The idea of a continental type is revealing since it recasts the French prostitute within the earlier tradition of 'femme cosmopolite' and yet carries relevant contemporary meanings. As Clover de Pertinez recalled:"the tart at the counter is typically French...Soho tarts were mostly French around 1930 and dressed and made up just like that."[184] This notion of the 'Parisienne' as a mark of the prostitute has reverberations, which were specific to the particular historical moment. Following legislation in France, there were a series of brothel closures from 1925, and, as Georges Duby has documented, a large number of prostitutes moved from the regions to Paris and then abroad to other European capitals.[185] This could have accounted for the apparent increase in the number of French prostitutes in Soho at this time. However, 'French style' was also itself part of that allure of illicit sexuality tied to the continental woman, mentioned earlier, and prostitutes adopted the disguise of 'the French mistress' to attract customers.[186] Such a projection of promiscuity and immorality onto the woman from abroad, was also a conveniant classification applied by the popular press to stress the pernicious influence of foreign sexual manners.[187] Many of the women working in Soho were native prostitutes, who dressed in the manner of the continental women or assumed 'Frenchness' as part of their professional

persona. Such references would have been appropriate to Burra's theme of the prostitute as a figure of display, and combined ideas of her as a modern figure with associations from earlier imaginative traditions.

The prostitute in The Snack Bar is a different type of public woman (fille publique) and one, who is independent of the Marseilles brothel system and without a pimp. Her moment of relaxation is contrasted with the figure soliciting in the street ouside, whose legs are shown in the doorway with their recognizable splayed position and ankle-chain (a common indication of a prostitute). Burra's image of the prostitute eating in public suggests that she is a 'demi-castor', one of those fugitive figures, who worked out of cheap hotels and who were forced to grab meals in snack bars and cafés. Such women, as Alain Corbin has documented in his study of the practices of prostitutution, Les Filles de Noce: Misère sexuelle et prostitution aux 19e et 20e Siècles (1978), were increasingly common. At the end of the 1920s and early 30s, there was a change in soliciting methods and prostitutes were less tied to a patch or brothel. Instead, soliciting took place in bars, hotel lounges and even, early forms of curb crawling.[188] Two of these methods are shown in the work. In the snack bar, the older man with spectacles seen eating a sandwich, is being picked up by a figure, whose prominent eye make up and pale complexion, and her semi-hidden position, suggest another prostitute. Furthermore, in the street outside, Burra shows a driver of the car looking suspiciously across towards the streetwalker, whose splayed legs and ankle chain are visible, and

who could be curb-crawling. As Corbin has noted, the traditional method of standing on the street corner came under threat at this time largely because of the dangers of violent, sexual crime and the effectiveness of police controls and legal prosecution.[189]

In addition, the Snack Bar is conspicuous in the way it represents the prostitute at a moment of relaxation. She is not involved in any obvious acts of soliciting, but is caught off guard. This could be another reference to 'behind the scenes' photo-reportage. The blazing lightbulb reinforces the idea of being caught in the glare of the public eye and dramatizes the prostitute's face and make-up. It highlights the shadows of her face and makes more prominent her pale complexion. This close up viewpoint accentuates the size of the prostitute's face and the scale of her body, a monumentality which is further emphasized by the formal language of the work and the compositional effect of placing her against a geometric background of cupboards and shelves. The surging diagonal thrust of the counter push her towards the viewer and this sense of imposing presence is further strengthened by her enormous coat, the increased scale of the cup and saucer and the position of her hand, which reaches forward. These formal devices and her proximity to the viewer offer her as an urban type to be carefully reviewed.

The barman is also a distinctive type, which Clover de Pertinez remembered as being "typical of a type Ed called 'debased Roman' and particularly admired".[190] The most striking features of this Latin physiognomy, made more prominent by the profile view in the

painting, were the high forehead, the large nose and nostrils, and protruding lower jaw. His large hands are also noted because of the act of cutting the salami and accentuated by their closeness to the picture plane. Both the prostitute and the barman are 'types', rather than individualized figures and, I suggest, were informed by Burra's interest in distinctive physiognomy, contemporary 'socio-logical' classifications of the criminal type and German photobooks of the period, which examined urban types in the language of New Objectivity photography.

In particular, Sander's Antlitz der Zeit (1929) and later, Lerski's Köpfe des Alltags (1931) seem relevant, although the earlier publication is obviously contemporary with The Snack Bar and was available through Zwemmers in 1930.[191] Nash, Ker-Seymer and Banting as well as Burra, were all interested in Sander's work around 1930-31 and Burra must have known the photobook.[192] Sander's study provided a number of images of urban types such as Charwoman, Cologne (1928) [pl.108] and Unemployed Man (1928) [pl.109] and grouped them according to profession in the manner of a 20th Century "book of trades".[193] Underlying this classification was Sander's distinct interest in analysing appearances in relation to professional and 'moral and physical beauty'. This was derived from Sander's knowledge of earlier studies of physiognomy, especially Lavater's Essays in Physiognomy (1772)[194] [pl.110]. Burra also knew this tradition through Wright's A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art (1865).[195] As Sander recorded in Antlitz der Zeit:"More than anything else, physiognomy means an understanding of human

nature...We can tell from appearance the work someone does or does not do; we can read in his face whether he is happy or troubled; for life unavoidably leaves its traces there..These are the runes of a new, but ancient language".[196] Albert Renger-Patzsch in Die Welt ist Schön (1928) also urged modern photographers to avoid the purely picturesque and aesthetically pleasing aspects of portrait photography, but instead "document what is typical of the species..to make a statement about the species over and above the single."[197] The rhetoric of realist portraiture and its concern with capturing faces in great detail was strengthened in Burra's representation of the prostitute by the figurative vocabulary of the work with its dramatic three dimensional form, the colossal size of the woman's head and the distinctive attention to surface textures, especially her skin.

The 'species' studied by Burra throughout the 1920s were the criminal classes of large cities, of which the prostitute was a major figure. Early 'picturesque' views of the criminal type were by the early 1930s being replaced by more scientific 'socio-logical' approaches incorporating medical, anthropological and psychological discourses. Contemporary accounts and articles in periodicals such as Le Crapouillot, Variétés, Der Querschnitt and Documents, all of which Burra was reading in the period 1929-31, increasingly incorporated such concepts as part of a more 'scientific' approach to urban phenomena. Using documentary photographs as corroborative evidence, they attempted to 'read' into the physical appearance of underworld members all the signs of degeneracy and deviancy.'[198] As David Mellor has

noted:"such contacts with science appeared to act as guarantees for the impartial, objective character of the photographs concerned".[99]

In such analyses, the barman is recognizable, like the prostitute, as a criminal type. Both were marked by the identifiable features and flaws associated with vice in their physical appearances. The archetypal 'flaws' present in Burra's male figure in The Snack Bar are the pronounced forehead, the large nose, the asymmetrical face, the joining eyebrows, flared nostrils, exceptionally large ears and extended jaw. Particularly conclusive characteristics were the hare lip and the enormous hands, which not only branded the "degenerate" deviant, but typified him as a strangler. For the prostitute, her heavy build with a tendency towards obesity, her pronounced eye-brows, glassy eyes plus those facial features mentioned earlier, were the conclusive marks of her profession.

In the choice of features represented, Burra's painting suggests a knowledge of Césare Lombroso's L'Uomo deliquante (1889) and Genio e Follia (1882) [pl.111], whose theories on criminal features and markings ("affranchi") and psychological delinquency, had been popularized in Le Crapouillot. Photographs of criminal types were also featured in Chautard's study, discussed earlier, and in Détective and Variétés as part of their investigation into the underworld of the Paris 'zone'. For example, Krull's photographs of 'zone' types were illustrated in Variétés's 15 July 1929 issue. Close-up photographs of grisly gang-land killing, beheadings and

sites of sex-murders accompanied by police photographs of suspects or convicted murderers were also regularly a part of Détective magazine's photo-reportage spreads at this period, when Burra was collecting them.[200]

Such an interest in the outcast, the deviant and the physically deformed was also paralleled in Documents, and notably in Georges Bataille's article on the phenomenon of malformed physical types, "Les Écarts de la Nature". The article in No. 2, 1930, which Burra knew, was accompanied by illustrations from Regnault's Les Écarts de la Nature ou Recueil des principales monstruosités que la nature produit dans le monde animal (1775).[201] It stressed the historical tradition of 'viewing' human curiosities as entertainment, their symbolic role as "présages" and ill omens and their proof as "scientific slip ups" of the infallibility of science. Furthermore, the article saw the reactions which such figures provoked as part of the wider consideration of "disquieting facts", such as the nature of fear, terror and repulsion and the themes of self mutilation and sacrificial killings, which Bataille sought to address.[202]

In this respect, the act of slicing the meat is revealing since in another article in Documents, No. 6, November 1929, Bataille's re-definition of slaughter and sacrifice was accompanied by photographs of the abattoirs at La Villette by Lotar.[203] Other photographs of the slaughterhouses appeared in Variétés, 15 April 1930 and in Le Crapouillot's May 1929 special number on Paris, with photographs of the male workers at the slaughterhouse, such

as the one by Lotar, which later appeared in Chautard[204] [pl.112]. Burra's representation of the bar-man as a criminal skilled in carving meat becomes particularly meaningful since in underworld slang "abattoir" or "meathouse" was the name for a brothel. Brassaï recorded that:"the most flourishing whorehouses..were the ones known in slang as the slaughterhouses,..the dimestores of sex".[205] Thus the bar-man as deviant type and co-member of the criminal class, as symbolic meat-carver with suggestions of a prospective client, and as possible Jack the Ripper sex-murderer opens up a series of sinister possibilities.

Burra's The Snack Bar is a complex painting, which mixes references to physiognomic studies of criminals and deviants, urban types in German photography, contemporary and historical notions of the French prostitute and reappraisals of deformation in French periodicals as well as that fascination with the Parisian underworld noted earlier. At the centre of these meanings stands the figure of the prostitute. For such a public, urban figure in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the enduring threat of violence and mutilation was a permanent and acute danger. Brassaï again noted how: "Beneath their surface gaiety, these girls lived in a permanent anxiety ... They were afraid of every stranger. What if he turned out to be a sadist, kinky, a dangerous maniac, a Jack the Ripper..?"[206] As a figure beyond the pale of moral boundaries, as a pernicious purveyor of illict sex, as a corrupting foreigner, as a deviant and delinquent figure, as a co-habitant of the criminal underworld, as a poverty stricken woman, as a stooge for the ills and frustrations of male sexuality and as

a culpable partner in any sex-murder, the prostitute was a vulnerable and exploited figure. As The Snack Bar suggests, even at a moment of relaxation, having a snack off the streets, the prostitute had to remain alert to the signs and signals of the dangers which many of her profession had ignored at their peril. This urban knowingness lies at the centre of the subject of a Soho prostitute in a London Snack Bar and it is central to any understanding of Burra's treatment of the theme of prostitution at this period.

1. Such interests were noted by William Chappell in conversation with author, 14 July 1983..
2. Cf., VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, London, English Caricature 1620 to the Present, London 1984, p. 65.
3. SPRINGHALL, John, O. "Up Guards and at them! British Imperialism and Popular Art 1880-1914, pp. 49-72 and SUMMERFIELD, Penny, "Patriotism and Empire - Music Hall Entertainment 1870-1914", pp. 17-48 in MACKENZIE, John, M. ed. Imperialism and Popular Culture, Manchester 1986.
4. SPRINGHALL 1986, op. cit., p. 84.
5. Cf., W.C. Letters, p. 13. Chappell records that Burra bought weekly comic papers such as Chips, Comic Cuts, - 100 Laughs for a Halfpenny (1870-1913) and Lots o' Fun (1906-1929). See BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM of CHILDHOOD, London, Penny Dreadfuls and Comics - English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to the Present Day, London June-October 1983.
6. W.C. Letters, p. 16.
7. W.C. Letters, p. 46. For further discussion of Le Bal, see Chapter 2, pp. 97-98
8. Dignimont, p. 22 and Foy, p. 26 from special Le Salon de l'Araignée issue of Le Crapouillet.
9. Published Paris 1928, edition Paris 1975.
10. SOUPAULT, Les Dernières Nuits de Paris, Paris 1975, pp. 22-3.
11. RIFKIN, Adrian, City of Light - Echoes of the Exotic, Radio Three, transcript of radio programme transmitted 14 November 1986, p. 1.
12. H.G. illustrated p. 62, fig. vi.
13. H.G., p. 91, no. 43 and p. 146. Causey quotes a letter to Nash of 1938 in which Burra refers to the demolition of the "Hercules in Puget style or maybe it was Puget". Burra may have known P. Auquier's publication on Puget, Pierre Puget, Paris 1928.
14. See earlier pp114-15
15. W.C. Letters, pp. 36-37.
16. Variétés, 15 May 1929, p. 32 and Le Crapouillot, April 1930 - book review which mentions this 'Album', edition Firmin Didot, Paris 1930.
17. Variétés, 15 May 1929, p. 32.
18. Example reproduced in T.G., p. 87.
19. BARBEDETTE, Gilles and CARRASSOU, Michel, Paris Gay 1925, Paris 1981. Quoted by Edouard Roditi, p. 81. Burra bought and wore a 'matelot' sweater whilst in Toulon, Cf., W.C. Letters, p. 64.
20. BARBEDETTE and CARRASSOU 1981, op. cit., pp. 81-81.
21. COCTEAU, Jean, Le Livre Blanc, Paris 1930 had 18 drawings including ones of Cocteau's lover, Pas de Chance - a young sailor in his uniform. Cocteau referred to the "attirance erotique" of sailors' uniforms.
22. Cocteau, J. Dessins, Lausanne 1929, p. 112. Cf., OXENHANDLER, N. Scandal and Parade - the Theatre of Jean Cocteau, New Jersey USA 1957, p. 359.
23. Cf., Burra's letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, 14 October 1927 in W.C. Letters, p. 38. In Desbordes's book, the preface by Cocteau declared that the sailors' uniform was erotic and "le plus charmante du monde ".
24. Letter to Paul Nash, 26 May 1931, Nash correspondence, Tate Archive.
25. Cf., T.G., pp. 87-8 and CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 188.
26. CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 25. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 188-89.

27. Variétés, 15 July 1928, illustration no. 3. Earlier considerations in the 1920s had included Auric's designs for Les Matelots (1925) and Milhaud's Le Pauvre Matelot (1927). Cosmopolitan British artists such as Wood had made designs for Le Pauvre Matelots (1927) and G.T. Nicholson had had his Le Matelot - a type study illustrated in Le Crapouillot, February 1928, p. 26. A later consideration of the theme was Alfred Courmes's Le Toucher (1936).
28. TÉRIADE, E. Vol. V, 1930, pp. 17-31. Quote from p. 20. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 183.
29. PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, Centre Georges Pompidou, Giorgio de Chirico, eds, W. Rubin, W. Schmied and J. Clair, Paris 1983, pp. 124-5.
30. Cf., DEROUET, Christian, "Un problème du baroque italien tardif à Paris", in PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE 1983, op. cit., pp. 111-135. See p. 133. Vogue article, French edition, "L'intelligence de deux époques", October 1929.
31. Illustrated in PARIS, MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE 1985, op. cit., p. 118 and p. 117.
32. From Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive. Banting exhibition No. 11.
33. MELLOR 1975, op. cit., p. 118.
34. P.G. KONODY, introduction to Modern Painting Exhibition, Paul Guillaume Gallery, London, December 1929.
35. NASH, Paul, "Giorgio de Chirico" in The Listener, 29 April 1931. Cf., HARRISON 1981, op. cit., p. 200 and quoted p. 234 and CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 149-50 and pp. 247-9.
36. Cf., WILENSKI, R.H. The Modern Movement in Art, London 1927, p. 142 and later epilogue to 1934 reissue of The Modern Movement in Art, where he emphasizes Chirico's importance even more, pp. 204-5.
37. Letter to William Chappell from Toulon, T.G. p. 87, no. 6.
38. Cf., HARRISON 1981, op. cit., p. 233 and p. 240 and HALLIDAY, Nigel, English Responses to Contemporary European Art between c.1926-c.1936. A Study of Five Modern Galleries in London - Lefevre, Leicester, Tooths, Mayor and Zwemmer Galleries, M.A. Thesis, unpublished, University of London, Courtauld Institute 1979. Cf., role of Tooths, pp. 24-30 and Lefevre Galleries pp. 21-2 and p. 66 for discussion of their importance at this time in promoting modern French Art.
39. Frank Rutter review, Apollo, Vol. VIII, July-December 1928, p. 207.
40. See HARRISON 1981, op. cit., pp. 201-2 and HAYWARD, S.P. Metaphysical Painting in England during the 1920s and 30s - the Work of Edward Wadsworth, Paul Nash, John Armstrong and Tristram Hillier, M.A. thesis, unpublished, University of London, Courtauld Institute 1982, pp. 11-13.
41. WILENSKI, R.H. Review of Wadsworth's exhibition, Brittania, 5 April 1929, pp. 548-9. Quoted from p. 549. For further discussion see CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 207-8.
42. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 160.
43. Exhibition at the Royal Academy, 1 January-8 March 1930, p. xv.
44. WILENSKI 1927, op. cit., p. 141.
45. For revival of tempera painting and Wadsworth Cf., BOYANOSKI, C.A. Edward Wadsworth, unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of London, Courtauld Institute 1981, pp. 77-8 and Wadsworth's letters to Maxfield Parrish c.1929-1933 in Wadsworth Correspondence, Tate Archive. Exhibition of tempera painting at Tooths, 23 May-8 June 1929 with catalogue introduction by Léonce Rosenberg. John Armstrong in a review of Burra's second exhibition at the Leicester

Galleries noted influence of Wadsworth's work on Burra, The Weekend Review, 4 June 1932. (Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive).

46. T.W. Earp in New Statesman and Nation, 18 June 1932, p. 797.
47. P.G. Konody in Observer, 5 June 1932, p. 14.
48. "Photography and Modern Art" in The Listener, 27 July 1932. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 24.
49. The Times, 31 May 1932, p. 14.
50. Reproduced in ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU, Germaine Krull Photographie 1924-36, 2 July-30 September 1988, plate 60.
51. See BOSQUERET, Christian, "Germaine Krull - Photographie 1924-36" in ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU 1988, op. cit., pp. 23-4.
52. Cf., PARIS, MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE DE LA VILLE DE PARIS, Léger et L'Ésprit Moderne - Une alternative d'Avant-garde a l'art non-objectif 1918-31, 1982, p. 344, p. 346 and p. 319. Barbera Ker-Seymer in conversation with author, 14 February 1983, remembered Burra doing "paintings in style of Florence Henri."
53. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 126-7. Entitled Grande Nature, Variétés, 15 April 1930.
54. See MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 120-1. Interestingly, Burra was commissioned by Crawfords to do advertising designs for motor cars, which were rejected in 1928. Crawfords was a major innovative force in the introduction of stylistic models from German photography into British advertising in the late 1920s. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 121-2.
55. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 116 and pp. 124-6. Film shown at London Film Society, 22 Programme, 4 March 1928.
56. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 124. Barbera Ker-Seymer in interview with D. Mellor, June 1977.
57. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 124.
58. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 124-7.
59. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 126.
60. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 115-7. Burra also owned a copy of Alfred KERR's Russische Filmkunst, Berlin 1927, which featured stills from Battleship Potemkin, nos. 84, 91 and 93 and Matrosen Regiment 17, showing sailors in close up. Eisenstein's film Battleship Potemkin, at London Film Society, No. 33 Programme, 10 November 1929.
61. Both contained in Burra Collection, Tate Archive and confirmed in conversation with Barbera Ker-Seymer, 14 February 1983.
62. Close Up, October 1929, p. 322. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 115.
63. Cf., WILLIAMS, Val, Women Photographers - the Other Observers, 1900 to the Present, London 1986, pp. 99-118. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 113-4.
64. CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 194 and p. 211.
65. The Graphic, p. 35.
66. Variétés, 12, 15 April 1930.
67. See pp. 118.-120
68. Close Up, February 1930. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 37. Henri's mirror photgraphs entitled Composition and Photogéaies.
69. ROH, Franz, and TSCHICHOLD, Jan, Foto Auge - Oeil et photo - Photo-Eye, Stuttgart 1929, facsimile ed. London 1974, p. 17 and illustration no. 5.
70. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 126.
71. Reproduced in STUTTGART, WURTTEMBERGISCHER KUNSTVEREIN, Film und Foto der zwanziger Jahre, May-July 1979 illustration no. 100, p. 112.

72. ROH and TSCHICHOLD 1974, op. cit., Introduction ROH, Franz, "Mechanism and expression - the essence and value of photography", pp. 14-15. Quote p. 17.
73. Cf., BOUQUERET 1988, op. cit., pp. 24-26. See illustration no. 68, p. 116 by Krull Vitrine, Paris 1930 and PARIS, MUSEE D'ART MODERNE DE LA VILLE DE PARIS, Florence Henri - Photographie 1927-38, September-November 1978. Introduction MOULDERINGS, Herbert, "Les Images Photographiques de Florence Henri". There was an exhibition of Henri's work at the Studio 28, Paris in 1930.
74. Oswell Blakeston, "The Still Camera Today" in the Architectural Review, April 1932, pp. 154-7. Quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 117.
75. ROH 1929, ibid., p. 17.
76. Barbera Ker-Seymer letter to author, 30 May 1982.
77. Cf., earlier p. 152-154
78. Walter Nurnberg, interview with David Mellor, June 1978, quoted in MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 118.
79. See footnote 48.
80. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp.199-200 and CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., pp. 24-5.
81. Particularly important was Cocteau's Orphée, Paris 1927, which was performed in London later in 1931.
82. Cf., earlier pp. 90-92
83. Cf., OXENHANDLER, Neal, Scandal and Parade - the Theatre of Jean Cocteau, London 1958, pp. 90-1. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 199-200 and Cocteau's preface to exhibition PARIS, GALERIE DES QUATRE CHEMINS, "Poésie Plastique", April 1928.
84. Cf., MCFADDEN, Laurie, Jean Cocteau and the Visual Arts up to 1930 with particular reference to Dada and Surrealism, M.A. thesis, unpublished, University of London, Courtauld Institute 1974, pp. 30-34 and PARIS, PAVILION DES ARTS, Jean Cocteau et les Arts plastiques, March-May 1984.
85. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 199-200 and H.G., pp. 91-2 and sketchbook pages illustrated in CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 191-2 from Toulon.
86. BERTRAM, Anthony, Paul Nash - The Portrait of An Artist, London 1955, p. 146-7, quoting a letter to Percy Withers.
87. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 196-7 and 199-200 and CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 79.
88. CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 145 and Cf., pp. 149-50.
89. From Margaret Nash, Memoirs, in Nash Collection, Tate Archive, p. 42. Quoted in CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 191.
90. Quoted from NASH, Paul, "Art and the English Press" in The Weekend Review, 17 June 1933 and NASH, Paul, "Giorgio de Chirico" in The Listener, 29 April 1931.
91. Illustrated in CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 212, nos. 257 and 258.
92. GREEN 1987, op. cit., pp. 259-60.
93. CARDINAL, Roger, "Soluble City - the Surrealist Perception of Paris" in ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST, Profile No. 11. Surrealism 2-3, London 1978, pp. 143-149. Quote p. 143.
94. ARAGON, Louis, Paysan de Paris, Paris 1926, ed. Paris Peasant, London 1980, p. 72.
95. Referred to by CARDINAL 1978, op. cit., p. 143 quoting ARAGON, L. Anicet, Paris 1921, p. 26 and ARAGON 1926, op. cit., p. 19.
96. La Révolution Surrealiste, facsimile ed., Paris 1975, No. 7, p. 28.
97. CREVEL, René, "Le Pont de la Mort", La Révolution Surréaliste, 7, 15 June 1926, pp. 27-8.

98. BRASSAÏ, Paris de Nuit, Paris 1933 and "Nuits Parisiennes", published in Minotaure, 7 June 1935. Illustrated p. 185, in ADES, Dawn, "Photography and the Surrealist Text", pp. 154-89 in KRAUSS, Rosalind and LIVINGSTON, Jane, L'Amour Fou - Photography and Surrealism, London 1986. Quote from CARDINAL 1978, op. cit., p. 143.
99. ADES 1986, op. cit., p. 187.
100. KRAUSS, Rosalind, "Corpus Delicti" in KRAUSS and LIVINGSTON 1986, op. cit., pp. 57-100. Cf., pp. 74-82. In my reading, I have also drawn on METZ, Christian, Psychoanalysis and the Cinema, London 1982, "A Note on Two Kinds of Voyeurism" and the role of the mirror in psychological identification in LACAN, Jacques, Ecrits - A Selection, London 1977, pp. 1-6.
101. KRAUSS 1986, op. cit., p. 95.
102. ARAGON, Louis, "Ideas" in La Révolution Surréaliste, 1, April 1925, p. 30. Quoted in KRAUSS, Rosalind, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism" in KRAUSS, Rosalind, The Originality of the Avant-garde and other modernist Myths, London 1987, pp. 87-129. Quoted p. 112, note 31.
103. Cf., JARRETT, D. England in the Age of Hogarth, London 1976, pp. 123-4 and MAYHEW, Henry, London Labour and London Poor, 2 vols. London 1851-2, pt. IV, p. 223.
104. JARRETT 1976, op. cit., p. 123 and TATE GALLERY, London, Hogarth, December 1971-February 1972, p. 31 and p. 36.
105. TATE GALLERY 1971-2, op. cit., p. 79 and Cf., JARRETT 1976, op. cit., p. 123 and p. 172.
106. See PAULSON, Ronald, "Hogarth - The Life" in TATE GALLERY 1971, op. cit., p. 8 and JARRETT 1976, op. cit., p. 172.
107. See chapter one, pp. 35-6
108. WRIGHT, Thomas, A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art, London 1865 Burra owned copy now in Private Collection. Referred to Hogarth and "modern moral subjects" and physiognomy, p. 437. For further discussion, Cf., WECHSLER, Judith, A Human Comedy - Physiognomy and Caricature in 19th Century Paris, London 1982.
109. WRIGHT 1865, op. cit., p. 144.
110. WRIGHT 1865, op. cit., pp. 144-5.
111. DICKENS, Charles, Oliver Twist, London 1835, ed. Harmondsworth 1988. Preface by Dickens, p. 35.
112. Cf. earlier pp168-170
113. W.C. p. 73. For discussion of Vogue designs, CF., PACKER, William, The Art of Vogue Covers 1909-1940, London 1981, pp. 22-23.
114. Referred to in typology of prostitute in Victorian England in WALKOWITZ, Judith R. Prostitution and Victorian Society - Women, Class and the State, Cambridge 1980, pp 14-15 and p. 26.
115. Cf., ROBERTI, Jacques, "Le Gros Numéro", Le Crapouillot, November 1937, p. 28.
116. Cf., TREUHERZ, Julian, Hard Times- Social Realism in Victorian Art, Manchester 1987, Chapter 7, The Graphic, pp. 53-64 and CASTERAS, Susan P, "The Gulf of Destitution on whose brink they hang - Images of Life on the streets in Victorian Art", ibid., pp. 131-134.
117. CASTERAS 1987, op. cit., pp. 133-4 and NEAD, Lynda, "A Definition of Deviancy, Prostitution and High Art in England c.1860" in Block, Vol. 2, 1985-6, p. 40.
118. CASTERAS 1987, op. cit., pp. 133-134.
119. Cf., CASTERAS 1987, op. cit., p. 134 and TATE GALLERY, London, The Pre-Raphaelites, London 1984. Introduction p. 23.
120. Burra owned cards dating from this period, now contained in private collections and Burra Papers, Tate Archive.

121. Cf., KYROU, Ado, L'Âge d'or de la carte postale, Paris 1966, p. 13.
122. Burra's postcard collection was very similar in taste to those illustrated by Paul Eluard in his articles, "Les plus belles Cartes Postales" in Minotaure, 1, No. 3-4, December 1933, pp. 85-100.
123. According to Clover de Pertinez, the Springfield Library contained examples of late 19th century French painting studies. In conversation with author, 18 February 1983.
124. Pertinez stressed Burra's interest in Sùe and Zola. Burra Library contained both these novels in late 19th century editions and a collection of Baudelaire's poetry, Poèmes and Fleurs du mal, Paris 1926. Interview 18 February 1983.
125. HERBERT, Robert, Impressionism - Art, Leisure and Parisian Society, London 1988, pp. 45-7 and REFF, Theodore, Degas-The Artist's Mind, New York 1976, pp. 217-20.
126. Cf., HERBERT 1988, op. cit., p. 45.
127. Cf., HERBERT 1988, op. cit., pp. 112-4.
128. For discussion of Steinlen, see pp 66-7
129. There was an exhibition of Toulouse-Lautrec's work at the Lefevre Gallery, London in December 1923 and of his lithographs at the Independent Gallery in December 1923.
130. For discussion of Montmartre subculture, see pp 66-68
131. Burra's Library contained works by Zola and Huysman, and it is likely that he knew Gourmont's work.
132. ZOLA, Emile, Nana, Paris 1880, ed. Harmondsworth 1988, p. 223.
133. Cf., Ciné Revue, 11 December 1925 and ABEL, Richard, French Cinema - The First Wave 1915-29, Princeton 1984, pp. 124-6. Cf., ZOLA 1988 ed. pp. 221-2.
134. Cf., W.C. p. 73 and confirmed in conversation with Clover de Pertinez, 13 July 1982.
135. BAUDELAIRE, Charles, "The Painter of Modern Life" from The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays, Oxford 1964 (translated J. Mayne), pp. 34-8, Women and Prostitutes, originally published in Figaro 26, 28 November and 3 December 1963. Quoted in FRASCINA, Francis and HARRISON, Charles (eds), Modern Art and Modernism - A Critical Anthology, London 1982, pp. 25-27. Quote p. 26.
136. d'AURÉVILLY, Barbey, Les Diaboliques, Paris 1883, illustration La Dêche 1882. Burra Library contained a number of works by d'Aurévilly from 1870s and 1880s, and his Oeuvres. (u.d.).
137. Contained in Burra Library, ed. Paris 1926.
138. BAUDELAIRE, Charles, "The Salon of 1846: On the Heroism of Modern Life", from Art in Paris, Oxford 1965 (translated J. Mayne), pp. 116-120. From FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., pp. 17-18. Quoted p. 17.
139. BAUDELAIRE, Charles, Epilogue to Petits poèmes en prose, quoted in PRAZ, Mario, The Romantic Agony, Oxford 1979, p. 45. For further discussion of Baudelaire and prostitute, Cf., GEORGEL:, Chantal, La Rue, Paris 1986, pp. 10-12 and p. 89.
140. BAUDELAIRE in FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., p. 18.
141. BAUDELAIRE in FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., p. 25.
142. BAUDELAIRE in FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., p. 24.
143. BAUDELAIRE in FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., p. 26.
144. BAUDELAIRE in FRASCINA and HARRISON 1982, op. cit., p. 26.
145. Quoted in HUYSMANS, J.K. L'Art Moderne - Certains, Paris ed. 1976, p. 345. According to de Pertinez, Burra knew this source, 17 July 1982. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL, Félicien Rops, London 1976-77.
146. Letter to author, 30 May 1982.
147. For discussion of Krull and photo-reportage, see pp. 152-3

148. These were reproduced later in Le Crapouillot, May 1939, p. 29 in a copy contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
149. Letter from Barbera Ker-Seymer to author 30 May 1982.
150. 15 May 1929 u.p. included avant-propos and 5 'documents' from which quote is taken.
151. Cf., BAZAL, Jean, Marseilles Galantes, Marseilles 1980 and by same author, Marseilles - Entre Deux Guerres 1919-39, Grenoble 1977.
152. Letter from Mark Gertler, April 1924, quoted in CARRINGTON, Noel.(ed) Selected Letters of Mark Gertler, London 1965.
153. From photographs contained in Wadsworth Papers, Tate Archive.
154. Michel Sevier, Studio, 105, January-June 1933, p. 109 about Wyndham's exhibition at Tooth's, March-April 1933.
155. Cf., W.C. p. 61.
156. ASHTON, Frederick, "Such Brilliant Things" in W.C. p. 61. Cf., VAUGHAN, D, Frederick Ashton and his Ballet, London 1977, p. 44.
157. LAMBERT, Constant, Music Ho, London 1934, p. 192.
158. Cf., AUQUIER, P. Pierre Puget, Paris 1928, introduction.
159. Under illustration of 2 prostitutes on Rue Figuier de Cassis.
160. MORAND, Paul, La route de Paris à la Méditerranée, Paris 1931.
161. BROWN, Frederick, Jean Cocteau - An Impersonation of Angels, London 1969, p. 322.
162. Front page of Francois Carco's Perversité, Paris 1927, illustrated by Dignimont.
163. From CHAUTARD, Emile, La Vie étrange de l'argot, Paris 1931.
164. Both contained in Burra Library, Private collections, and published Paris.
165. BENARD, Pierre, Les Bars des Mauvais garçons, Paris 1933, pp. 143-144.
166. See earlier pp. 178-179
167. See earlier pp. 99-100 for the zone and pp. 114-5 for L'Araignée.
168. MACORLAN, Pierre, La Tradition de Minuit, Paris 1930 and owned by Burra. Perversité illustrations from ed. 1927, Paris frontispiece.
169. Letter to Paul Nash, Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive.
170. MACORLAN, Pierre, "Montmartre", Le Crapouillot, May 1929, p. 32.
171. MACORLAN, Pierre, Aux Lumières de Paris, Paris 1925, pp. 55-6.
172. Illustrated in CHAUTARD 1931, op. cit., p. 168 and quote from CARCO, Francis, Nuits de Paris, Paris 1927, p. 86.
173. Illustrated in ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU 1988, op. cit., plate 66.
174. Transition, 7, October 1927, p. 2.
175. CHAUTARD 1931, op. cit., p. 377 and p. 50.
176. From section on "Ladies of the Evening" u.p. from BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30s, London ed. 1977.
177. There was a special Paris season of these Ufa Street films in 1928-29 at the Studio des Ursulines. Also Pabst's Joyless Street was shown at the London Film Society in January 1927. Pabst was also interviewed about his film in Close Up, 6, December 1927, p. 58.
178. Contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
179. Contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
180. Quoted in W.C. Letters, p. 44 and pp. 45-6.
181. For detailed considerations of Street Films (Dirnentragödie). Cf., KRACAUER, Siegfried, From Caligari to Hitler - A Psychological History of German Film, London 1947, pp. 150-9 and PARIS, CENTRE GEORGES POMPIDOU, 20 ans de cinéma allemand 1913-33, Paris, October 1978, pp. 106-7.
182. Quoted in TATE GALLERY CATOLOGUE OF ACQUISITIONS, 1978-80, London 1981, pp. 70-2.

183. Cf., WEIGHTMAN, G. and HUMPHRIES, S. The Making of Modern London 1914-39, London 1984, p. 23.
184. Quoted in TATE GALLERY CATALOGUE OF ACQUISITIONS 1981, op. cit., p. 72 from letter 28 October 1980.
185. DUBY, Georges, Histoire de la France Urbain, Vol. 4, La ville de l'Âge industriel, Paris 1983, p. 304.
186. Cf., earlier discussion pp. 173-74
187. Cf., WEEKS, Jeffrey, Sex, Politics and Society - the Regulation of Sexuality since 1800, London 1981, pp. 199-201.
188. CORBIN, Alain, Les Filles de Nöce - Misère sexuelle et prostitution aux 19e et 20e Siècles, Paris 1978, pp. 490-2.
189. CORBIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 490-2.
190. Quoted in TATE GALLERY CATALOGUE OF ACQUISITIONS 1981, op. cit., p. 71.
191. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 117-8. SANDER, August, Antlitz der Zeit - 60 Fotos Deutscher Menschen, Munich 1929 and LERSKI, Helmar, Köpfe des Alltags, Berlin 1931.
192. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 118.
193. Illustrated in SANDER, August, Photographs of an Epoch, Philadelphia, U.S.A. 1980, plates from Urban images.
194. Cf., KRAMER, Robert, Introduction for Sander's knowledge of 18th century physiognomy studies in SANDER 1980, ibid., pp. 18-19.
195. Cf., earlier discussion p. 33
196. SANDER, August, "The Nature and Development of Photography", Lecture 5, 1931, quoted in SANDER 1980 op. cit. p.40.
197. RENGER-PATSZCH,Albert, Die Welt ist schön, Munich 1928. Quote from introduction by Dr. C.G. Heine, "The world is beautiful", reprinted in RENGER-PATZSCH,A, 100 Photographs, Paris 1979, pp. 10-11.
198. Burra Archive contains two important issues of Le Crapouillot relating to this area, May 1938 "Les Crimes et les Perversions instinctives," which considered both sexuality and prostitution in relation to crime and May 1939, "Les Bas Fonds", which documented criminal types and deviant characteristics with photographs from police archives. It also includes copies of Détective magazine from 1931-4, which similarly reported violent and sadistic crimes with photographs, often voyeuristically taken inside rooms in which murders had taken place and set against photographs of murderer and victim as part of its interest in "faits divers".
199. MELLOR 1978 op. cit. pp. 119-20.
200. Both works were published in Turin and were referred to in Le Crapouillot articles to authenticate notions of a recognizable criminal type. C.f. May 1939, p.19. Also see ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Dada and Surrealism Reviewed, London 1978, p. 76, where the importance of Lombroso's studies is noted. In Britain in the late 1920s, there was an interest in the sexology studies of Magnus Herschfield and the Institut für Sexualforschung in Berlin. In Burra's circle, Banting and Brian Howard had been to Berlin and Howard been treated by Hans Prinzhorn. C.f. LANCASTER, Marie-Jacqueline, Brian Howard, Portrait of a Failure, London 1968, pp.241-2 and MELLOR 1978 op. cit. p. 119. David Mellor noted Burra's interest in these areas in conversation with the author April 1982.
201. Reprinted in BATAILLE, Georges, Documents, Paris 1968, pp. 107-111 from Documents, 2 second year, Paris 1930, pp. 79-83.
202. C.F. Dawn Ades introduction to Documents section in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1978, op. cit. pp. 232-5.

203. Documents, 6, Paris, November 1929, p. 329. Illustration photographs by Eli Lotar, Aux abattoirs de la Villette.
204. CHAUTARD 1931, op. cit. p. 226. Le Crapouillot, p. 56 with photographs entitled "Pres rue et porte de Flandres."
205. BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30s, London 1977, introduction to Houses of Illusion, unpaginated.
206. The fascination with Jack the Ripper and sex murders was shared with surrealist interest in the bizarre and sadistic, notably Bataille, and Burra's precedents for the theme were Grosz's illustration Lustmord featured in MACORLAN, Pierre, Porte d'eaux mortes, Paris 1926, p. 41 and his Sadistic Crime, Ackerstrasse, in Ecce Homo ,1923, pl. 32 and also Pabst's film Pandora's Box (1929) in which the female lead, Louise Brooks, murders her lover, becomes a prostitute and is murdered in London by Jack the Ripper.

Chapter Four: The Spectacle of Urban Leisure and Entertainment.

Burra's fascination with the spectacular nightlife of large cities dominated his interest in Paris and New York, and particularly Harlem. It was also part of the appeal of Barcelona and Madrid. The garish sensationalism and showy stage effects of the 'folies-revue,' burlesque performance or even, film scenario are described in graphic detail in his letters to friends in England, which employ a helter-skelter prose style to signal their breathless excitement. Melodramatic plots, bizarre staging and florid costumes were meticulously recorded. Burra's addiction to the meretricious, often in its most grotesque and brash form, marked a distinctive taste set firmly in opposition to conventional middle-class notions of the tasteful and the cultured. A letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer fom Paris outlines Burra's enthusiasm for a production at the Casino de Paris:

> "yesterday nite I went to the Casino de P[aris] revue glorious my dear Ive never enjoyed anything so much for years. J[osephine] Baker rose out of a gilded casket in a green evening dress to the floor trimmed with diamonte & sang King for a day in English never have I heard anything so lovely. She also appeared as a native maiden in a dramatic sketch which was glorious when she discovered her white beau was leaving for Paris she rushed at him & said Jeeem, jeeem ne partez pas emene moi avec vous Jeeem. She then flew in a rage & bit everyone then she was beaten by a slave driver & finally blown away in a hurricane just as her hut collapsed. She was saved by her pet Ape (Harry Pilcer in a doormat) she then sang J'ai deux amours mon pays & Paris, now my favorite theme song. There was also a venetian number with real doves & a boxing match between the Jackson boys my dear the voice of the chief Jackson!! Naow yew bots plai fayer cant you beaive like gentlemen. my dear I shall never rest till I go again Baker is lovely & there was a marvellous adagio team to say nothing of Miss Florence who does lovely front overs & back bends..."[1]

Burra's knowledge of such entertainment was primarily through his own first-hand experience. Whilst a drawing such as Backstage (c.1924) [pl.113] shows early evidence of Burra's interest in performers, especially music hall types and dwarves and includes one member of Burra's favourite acts, Schaeffer's midgets, - and a later drawing such as Funfair (1928-9) [CCD.27] endorses an interest in American popular leisure forms, it was Paris, which provided him with the greatest source material for many of the works on the theme of urban entertainment in the 1920s. Burra was regularly in Paris for long periods from 1927 and many drawings record his experiences both as a member of the audience and as a back-stage observer. This was due to his friendship with Chappell and Ashton, who were dancers in the Ida Rubinstein Ballet Company, which allowed him to gain access to theatrical and ballet groups in Paris at this time and to an extensive circle of friends including Sophie Fedorovitch, Cedric Morris and John Banting, who shared similar interests in popular culture. Burra's letters accentuate the impression of Paris as thriving and vital nightlife, an endless round of bars, films ,theatres, ballets and galas. In particular, Burra went to the Casino de Paris, the Bal Nègre, the Empire and Palace music halls and to the follies in Pigalle and Belleville. Such shows were frequently marked by a sexual explicitness and erotic content rare in London. As Burra wrote to Barbera Ker-Seymer, there are shows, films and revues, which "will never come to England"[2]

A similar access to the stage and theatre world marked Burra's visits to New York and in particular, Harlem in 1933-34. Burra

travelled to New York in October 1933 with Sophie Fedorovitch, the stage designer, and Olivia Wyndham, the photographer, and stayed at 1890 7th Avenue, Harlem with Edna Lloyd Thomas, the famous Black American actress and a friend of the Negro cabaret singer Jimmy Daniels. He also stayed in contact with Ashton, who was in the United States from December 1933 involved in the all-Black American production of Virgil Thompson's Four Saints in Three Acts with Gertrude Stein. After a short trip to the Aikens in Boston, Burra moved to the Lower East side of the city, where he knew Nancy Cunard and was introduced to her circle of friends. He stayed there until his return to Britain in March 1934. A letter to Chappell from 125 East 15th Street dated 3 January 1934 records one of Burra's nightly forays:

> "We went out for a jolly evening last night Ashtonette, "Sophie the Pole", myself,the duchess de Clermont Tonerre and her lady in waiting Madame Guy and Tom Howard if you can believe such a combination...we visited a few hot spots one in the village which was camp lovely my dear a monster rose up in an old red wig with a bit of spinach hanging off the back and sang "they call me red head brick top carrot tops and strawberry garden but I don't care (scream)" my favorite number then we went to the Savoy and to Hot Cha (Mrs. Cooks gone mad) where a shame making man sat down at the table and burst into La Paloma Clermont Tonerreat once asked for une veille Kentucky darkie song which flung the whole place into an uproar,then we went to an underground grave yard called the log cabin my favorite resort in which a terrifying negro midget with a mouthful of gold teeth sang a repertoire of dirty songs".[3]

His letters punctuated by caricatural drawings of performers catalogue New York's over-abundance of nightlife. As he wrote to Ker-Seymer, in October 1933, desperately trying to find a suitable parallel in London to express New York's vitality:"New York would drive you into a fit. Harlem is like Walham Green gone crazy..like a Berwick street that bursts all bounds everything

here is more so".[4] It is from these experiences that the most extensive treatment of the American urban leisure and entertainment scene are derived and whilst Burra returned to America in January 1937 and considered named female performers in larger 'portrait-studies' of 1934-35 such as Mae West, Nellie Wallace and Madame Pastoria (considered later in chapter seven). I intend to approach the theme in relation to these earlier visits from which the largest number of works are drawn.

A third consideration of this entertainment theme drew on Burra's travels to Spain. He visited Barcelona in April 1933 and Spring 1935, and Madrid in Spring-Summer 1935 and Spring 1936. Burra's letters home again revel in the variety of Spanish entertainments including the flamenco clubs, tapas bars, bull-fights and revues. The outrageousness of Barcelona's nightlife was enthusiastically recorded in a letter to Nash:"Barcelona was lovely nothing but music halls and bars and cinemas. As for the music halls everyone comes on dressed as kiddies and pulls up their dresses disclosing transparent caches-sexes".[5] Clover de Pertinez, who was in Barcelona with Burra in 1935, recalled that the city "constituted low-life Spain at its most exciting and really dangerous at night...full of transvestites and Ed was in heaven".[6] As Burra declared to Nash:"I can't resist anything Spanish and only need half an excuse to be rambling along the Ramblas".[7]

It is these three foreign cultures and periods of contact, which I want to examine in detail suggesting how Burra's works employ the theme to reinforce the glamour of life abroad, stress its

difference from British life and its freedoms from conventions. Burra's consideration of urban leisure and entertainment as a theme can also be divided into two separate, although not unrelated approaches. Firstly, there are those works which record the pleasures of wandering the city and 'playing the flaneur' in the tradition of Baudelaire's 'Painter of Modern Life'. Burra was an active participant in that cult of wandering almost as an aesthetic experience, which was outlined in Aragon's Le Paysan de Paris (1926), Breton's Nadja (1928) and Soupault's Les Dernières Nuits de Paris (1928)- all of which Burra knew. Many of Burra's paintings chronicle the city's sights and sounds as a metaphor for the spectacle of the street. In this sense, it would be possible to include many of the works, which document French 'boulevard' culture, but this is discussed as part of specific themes in other chapters. However, I intend to address this aspect of urban leisure in terms of the specific images of Harlem low-life from 1934-5, which seem to offer a distinctive purchase on metropolitan low-life as exotic show and feature Harlem society as a collection of deviant and criminal types, and a fascinating 'spectacle' to be consumed in its own right.

Secondly, there are those works which directly address subjects drawn from night-life entertainment, the music halls, circuses, follies, cinemas, dance halls and striptease theatres of Paris, Barcelona and New York. Such 'factories of pleasure' offered the show as a glamorous escape from real life into the illicit. These public entertainments form the main study in this chapter. In particular, I shall outline historical precedents for such an

approach in the work of Sickert, Toulouse-Lautrec and Seurat, and show how Burra's works paralleled interests in urban nightlife in contemporary magazines, particularly Le Crapouillot and Variétés. I shall note how many works make use of devices drawn from contemporary photo-reportage photography and refer to meanings from a wide range of popular sources, notably novels, films and songs of the period. I shall also stress that these interests were not isolated ones, but shared by large number of writers, artists and intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s as part of a wider fascination with urban popular culture and the exoticism of low-life. Firstly, I intend to deal with Burra's Paris years from 1927, and focus on specific works, namely Les Folies de Belleville (1928) [CC.36], In the Limelight, Music Hall, (c.1929) [pl.114], Honky Tonk Girl (1929) [CCD.30] and Showgirls (1929) [CC.50a], which articulate a distinctive attitude towards the spectacle of urban entertainments through the Parisian revue, cabaret and follies formats.

Secondly, I shall address Burra's representation of Spanish popular entertainment in the works Musical Comedy Barcelona (1933) [CCD.66] and Bullfight (1933) [CC.93]. This will concentrate on the figures of the flamenco dancer and the bullfighter as representatives of distinctively Spanish forms of entertainment (although this is not in the case of the bullfighter, a strictly urban phenomenon.) Finally, I shall analyse those images of New York and Harlem dating from Burra's 1934-35 visit, which authenticate the spectacular nature of New York and Harlem's entertainment scene. These include The Savoy

Ballroom (1934-35) [CC.120], Music Hall (1934) [CC.110], Striptease (1934) [CC.112], Cuban Band (1934-5) [CC.113], The Band (1934) [CC.104] and Red Peppers (1934-5) [CC.119], and paintings such as Harlem (Tate 1934) [CC.108], Harlem (Higgins, 1934) [CC.100] and Harlem Scene (1934-5) [CC.114], which offer Harlem street-culture as a 'spectacle to be observed'.

Burra's consideration of Parisian entertainment included drawings of the theatre such as Actors (1929-30) [CCD.32] and Nymphs (c.1928-9) [CCD.48], singers in The Singer (c.1930-31) [CCD.53] and dancers in Dancing Girls in Top Hats (1929-30) [CCD.35]. However, particular attention is given to female performers and subjects drawn from the 'folies revue', cabaret and music hall. Les Folies de Belleville, In the Limelight- Music Hall, Honk Tonk Girl and Showgirls represent these forms of entertainment and their performers. Showgirls and In the Limelight, depict a parade of performing female dancers and the spectacular set-piece dance routines. Showgirls represents these dancers close up focusing upon their florid costumes, details of make up, uniform posture and dress whilst waiting for the curtain to rise. Burra's fascination with props- the crooks, bows, flowers and ornamental lighting is eagerly declared. In two other untitled drawings [pk.115 and 116] from the same period, c.1928-9, the serpentine lines and cat-walk parades both common features of female dance troupe routines are captured in 'classical' line drawings where concentration on outline stressed body postures, costume and details of decor, props and make up. Burra's use of heightened

colour, often incoporating bodycolour to work uo surface textures, adds to the sense of allure. In In the Limelight, the unfinished nature of the work reveals the way Burra's watercolour is employed to emphasize figure modelling and surface sheen, to strengthen the impression of deep space and spotlighting. In its attention to details of outrageous costumes, poses and props, rather than more general features of composition, it displays their priority in Burra's method of working.

In Honky Tonk Girl, the subject of a clandestine café concert performance is represented. The female dancer involved in a high kick is caught at an outrageous moment when her breast is displayed. The apparently disinterested response of the audience suggest that such occurrences were a regular part of the performance. In Dancing Girls in Top Hats (1928) [CCD.35], which represent two dancers mid-routine, Burra notes their bizarre appearance, scanty costumes and their brazen stares at the audience using a Grosz-like drawing style. In Les Folies de Belleville [CC.36], this concern with indecent display is presented at its most shameless as the spectacle of the follies is reduced to an elaborate striptease show. Attempts to gloss the follies as an artistic performance with an Indian or Oriental theme by flashy lighting, ornamental stage decor and the accompaniment of a Buddah statue and non-European, perhaps Asian or African, male attendant are revealed as wickedly absurd since the show is blatantly a scandalous nude display.

Burra's interest in the follies as a subject was shared with Henry Rushbury, who had been his tutor at Royal College. Rushbury's The Folies Bergère, Rouen (1923) [pl.117] had been illustrated in Albert Rutherston's Contemporary British Artists: Draughtsmen (1924) and although it took as its subject the audience rather than the performers at the follies, it recognized the validity of the subject. In the accompanying text by Wilenski, Rushbury was seen as a type of artist:"who makes topographical records..studies the peculiar character of each environment, who responds to and accepts each atmosphere and records by these factors the essential features of each land and place".[8] Whilst Burra's works aim at many of these features, topographical accuracy is often sacrificed, especially in terms of architectural surrounding, to the overall dramatic effect. Wilenski's comment that Rushbury "is no pioneer"[9] referred to that tradition of representing music halls in the work of Sickert and Camden Town painters, who approached the profane music hall and its audiences from unusual viewpoints and angles. This fascination with music hall culture as a form of popular, urban entertainment with associations of the vulgar and set in opposition to the tastefulness and propriety of Victorian High Cultural leisure paralleled Burra's own attitude. Sickert had addressed the subject of the music halls from the 1880s and returned to it again in 1906 and these set an historical precedent for Burra's theme.

Developed from late 19th Century French painting, notably Degas's use of the apparently casual viewpoint of the spectator to approach the subjects of the music hall, Sickert's and Spencer

Gore's work applied this device to London's subjects and their Cockney audiences(such as Noctes Ambrosanae; The Gallery of the Old Mogul (1906) and The Balcony at the Alhambra (1911-12). Rushbury's Folies Bergère, Rouen, like Sickert's The Eldorado, Paris (1906) and La Gaieté Rochechouart (1906) view the audience from an oblique angle and contrast architectural planes and recessions in muted tones.[10] However, Gore's painting Stage Sunrise, The Alhambra (1908-9) in its frontal focus, concentration upon stage events and performance, rather than spectators and its use of post-impressionist colour to convey the gaudy backdrops, sets and costumes of the music hall seems closer to Burra's work.[11] Burra's music hall and revue subjects are conspicuously reserved for foreign milieus as an indicator of the pleasures of abroad rather than home, and only in the 1930s is this view of the audience or the audience in relation to performer consistently exploited, for example, paintings of New York's Apollo Music Hall such as Music Hall (1934) [CC.110] or Striptease (1934) [CC.112] and in Musical Comedy, Barcelona (1935) [CCD.66].

In Burra's representation of Parisian follies and cabarets, attention is directed towards two main areas. Firstly, the performers themselves as an engaging and illicit spectacle, often seen head on or from an angled viewpoint overlooking the stage, and secondly, from a more intimate angle, either as an observer backstage or as a member of the audience in a small café-cabaret, which allows particularly close access to the female performer and her proximity to the audience. In the first approach, Burra's work seems indebted to Victorian and Edwardian

illustration in which 'low' and 'vulgar' spectacles such as the music hall were frequently the subject for illustrators and cartoonists such as Charles Keene as part of their commentary on Victorian city life. These stressed the outrageous nature of performers and performances in simple, linear caricatures, which exaggerated gesture and facial expression and presented details of costumes, props and staging.[12] The Library at Springfield featured a large number of periodicals in which such subjects would have been presented. Burra also collected popular postcards of Edwardian performers such as Marie Lloyd and Little Tich.[13] These formed a generalized rather then particular source for the subjects.

Another source was the work of late 19th Century French artists, notably Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec, which offered specific similarities in Parisian subject-matter and a number of compositional devices, which Burra's works employ. Degas's café concert series from 1875, like Burra's on the theme, concentrated on women performers. Degas's capturing of the Ambassadeurs singers' poses and gestures, their movements and ways of looking at the audience in works such as La Chanson du Chien (c. 1875-8) or The Glove (c. 1878) stressed physiognomy and facial expression as an integral part of performance.[14] It is an aspect which Burra's works noted clearly as outlines of the body and details of facial position are represented in detail.

Clover de Pertinez remembered that Toulouse-Lautrec's work "attracted Ed's attention because the Library at Springfield had

books with illustrations from the 1890s and 1900s".'[5] Burra's interest in late 19th Century Montmartre nightlife has already been noted through its literary sources such as Zola's account of the vaudeville milieu in Nana (1880), musical ones, - Bruant's bawdy songs on Parisian sexual mores, and also the illustrations of Steinlen. Together with Toulouse-Lautrec's work, these formed an 'insider view' of the Montmartre 'café'concs' sub-culture. This was a point, which the Vogue reviewer of Toulouse-Lautrec's works in December 1923 eagerly stressed: "[he] shows the frequenters of the Moulin Rouge, the Moulin de la Galette, the Rat Mort and the night restaurants of Montmartre..[he is] a remorseless observer, finding ugliness and squalor...he not only records, but intensifies..".'[6] This intensification dramatized the performance into an engaging spectacle and the clientele into a fascinating mixture of classes and types, both features associated in Burra's work with Montmartre sub-culture.

The publication in 1928 of a study by Paul de Lapparent in the cheap Bodley Head 'Masters of Modern Art' series -one which Burra collected according to Barbera Ker-Seymer,- attracted critical reviews of Toulouse-Lautrec's work.'[7] In particular, T.W. Earp in The New Statesman praised the artist as "a master of realism", who had "noted down the fever and the urge of Paris in the 'nineties" and "the deities of pleasure..and frequenters of the Moulin Rouge". Earp also compared Toulouse-Lautrec's work with contemporary British artists such as Roberts and Sickert as "valuable recorders of contemporary manners" and urged;"The more younger artists who follow their example and look for a

significance of life as well as one of form with which to vitalise their work, the better".[19] The earlier Vogue reviewer had located Lautrec's works in relation to Rowlandson and Beardsley -two important sources for Burra's early work.[19] He linked his compositional arrangements to Degas and to Japanese prints, and Earp had also suggested Hogarth. Such connections and precedents would have impressed the relevance of Toulouse-Lautrec's and Degas's work on Parisian café performers upon Burra. Furthermore, they would have validated the subject as a modern one, which, whilst related to Sickert and Roberts was also different from it through its Paris rather than London subject matter and distinctive 1920s *Contert*.

Honky Tonk Girl [CCD.30] presents as its subject the café-concert performer spotlighted at a particular moment. The pen and ink drawing mobilizes the incidental and accidental to suggests the transitory nature of the act. It parallels Lautrec's La Goulou at the Moulin Rouge, or Miss Ida Heath, illustrated in Lapparent, showing dancers in mid-action, dynamic poses.[20] Unlike Toulouse-Lautrec's named dancers, Burra's remains anonymous and this suggests that she could have been one of those amateurs, who had their brief moment of fame and then returned to obscurity. This difference is reinforced by the other woman in the work having her face blacked out, This contrasts with the performer's face, which is highlighted in the full glare of publicity. The revealed breast and brazen stare- a later hallmark of the prostitute- suggest that this female performer is an experienced displayer of her body. In addition, the graphic language of the drawing

suggests illustrational sources. The hatched shadow and linear conception would have been appropriate to reproduction as an engraving or woodblock.

Showgirls [CC.50a]and In the Limelight [pl.114] represent Parisian revue performances, probably at the Folies Bergère, Empire Music Hall or Palace Music Hall, where Burra often went. In a letter to Ker-Seymer, Burra records such a visit:

> "We went to the palais aux femmes at the palace music hall with Dranem..also Harry Pilcer..such a ruin has never been seen he danced the black bottom in the middle of a fearful transformation scene in which 90 Fisher girls and the 50 ballerinas de Biagiarelli the 80 Palace beauties and the Chicago naiades whatever that may be walked about with the most awful costumes..they had about 90 grand transformation scenes entitled Broderie Anglaises', 'Montmartre Negro' & 'blossoms in the orchard' in which the chorus lay on their backs and swayed their legs about to the voluptuous strains of Bye Bye Blackbird or Barcelona ... it was so awful I enjoyed it I never can resist such scenes."[21]

In the choice of the dancing troupe and the 'transformation dance' scene, Burra's work considers a variety form with specifically 'modern' connotations. Such troupes as the Gertrude Hoffmann Girls, the Albertina Rash girls, the Plaza Tiller Girls, and the Fisher Girls regularly featured at the Folies Bergère and the Casino de Paris and attracted large audiences for their spectacular synchronized dance routines, in which their seamless and dazzling revues offered the female dancer as one anonymous part of a fantastic spectacle. Similar routines were also incorporated into popular films of the period and became later the hallmark of the Busby Berkeley American dance spectacular in films such as Gold Diggers of 1933 (1933) and Footlight Parade (1933) in the early 1930s.[22]

A precedent for the theme was Seurat's Le Chahut (1890) [pl.118], which similarly depicted the Parisian nightlife as an 'up-to-the-minute' and 'modern' subject. In Seurat's attention to the ornamental costumes of his dancers, the apparatus of the stage-the light fittings and props, the effect of strong artificial lighting on local colour and the hieratic forms of the dancer's legs and bodies, it presented a combination of minutely observed details and more emblematic devices entirely appropriate to Burra's work. The shallow picture space and the diagrammatic qualities emphasize the decorative patterns of the composition. The luminous colour also reinforces the sense of the glamorous exhibition of the show with the dancers appearing as puppet-like performers in unison. Such characterisristic were shared in Burra's Showgirls, as ornamental details, decorative aspects and garish, coloured illumination are recorded. Furthermore, the snap-shot-like steepness of the composition with its clear, diagonal axis suggests Seurat's La Chahut.[23]

Burra's reference to Seurat at this time, whilst emphasizing similarities in urban entertainment subjects, was an adept move since Seurat's status as a pioneer of the modern movement had been outlined in Wilenski's The Modern Movement in Art in 1927. Wilenski saw Seurat, along with Cézanne and Picasso, as one of the "great original artists", who had attempted "a consciously architectural technique to symbolize forms and form".[24] Illustrating both Seurat's La Poudreuse (1889-90) and The Bathers (1883-4), Wilenski's assessment placed the artist as an essential contributor to the reconstruction in England and France of a new

classical, architectural formal technique, both through his own work and as an important influence on Cubist painter's experiments.[25] Burra's painting suggests an understanding of this position of importance accredited to Seurat's role as a "significant pioneer" of modern art.

Another contemporary consideration of the theme was Sickert's The Plaza Tiller Girls (1928) [pl.119], which in its popular entertainment subject of dance troupes in action, its dramatic viewpoint and its concentration on the scene on stage parallels Burra's work. Sickert's large retrospective at the Leicester Galleries in June 1929, followed Burra's show and included works on entertainment themes. As Caroline Juler has noted, the painting drew on films stills of the Plaza Tiller Girls in the costumes they wore for the Elstree Studio production of A Little Bit of Fluff (1927) and the musical comedy Up with the Lark (1927). The scale of the figures, their imposing angle and the voyeuristic view from below reveals compositional features, which Sickert adopted from photographs in The London Illustrated News, Punch or "some paper like Judy; something the bloody critics have never heard of..."[26]

In the Limelight [pl.114] also suggests photographic sources in its attention to details of dress and lighting, and in its heightened colours. These could have drawn on postcards of the Casino de Paris stars used as a reference for costumes and props, especially their extravagent head-dresses and glittering jewellery [pl.120]. Burra's postcard collection also included many female

stage and film stars such as Josephine Baker, Mistinguett, Nita Naldi, the Dolly Sisters, Mae West, Kiki de Montparnasse and Asta Nielsen [pl.121]. His enthusiasm for postcards was recorded in a letter to Ker-Seymer, 9 October 1928: "there are a whole lot lovely new Josephine B[aker] postcards come out one by D'Ora in the nude wrestling with a bit of gold lame symbolic I suppose.."[27] Burra also mentioned in a card to Chappell of 11 March 1929, their "submarine unnatural colouring" as particular appealing.[28] The deliberate and self-conscious posing, the stylized repertoire of gestures, the outrageous costumes and often bizarre scenes, all component parts of the artificially constructed glamour of these images, were vividly caught in close up and in colour.

In addition, Burra read the theatrical newspaper Variety,[29] and numerous film magazines (from the United States - Photoplay, Picture Play and The Motion Picture Magazine, from Britain - Boys Cinema and Picturegoer, from France- Cinéa, Ciné-Revue and Pour Vous and from Spain - Nuestro Cinéma as well as the more erudite film periodicals Close Up and later Film Weekly). He saved film cuttings from these sources, which were later used in his collages, and hoarded an enormous range of publicity material, stills and lobby cards. These magazines supplied Burra with the latest gossip and current film shootings. Burra's letters and postcards in their chatty style kept his friends abreast of these events. For example, in a letter to Chappell of June 1930, Burra mixed a description of a play he had just seen in Paris with fashion and news items:

> "& what of the Roccy twins issuing out of lotusus followed by the midget golden haired ballerina & in the wind blown scene Leslies dress was by Lanvin Some of Mistinguetts clothes were

> too glorious I thought Isnt she a dream in the sketches her speaking voice is lovely she'd better go to Ammerica & appear in a talkie as Irene Bordoni's great grandmother. Isnt it sad about Mabel Normand's demise all my favourite actresses are either off the screen or else dead".[30]

The fascination marked here is one with the novelty of celebrity fashion, the shock of the star as individual and the acceptance of the stars' private life as a public and shared interest. Such an attitude towards performers and entertainers suggests the star as a special type of person, whose dress and looks were of a distinctive, highly memorable sort. Burra's attention in In the Limelight to the accessories of glamour, the bodices, the diamante garters, the overflowing hats and heart shaped decorations of these Parisian performers reinforces this impression.

Showgirls suggests photographic sources in a different way through the use of a viewpoint, which parallel the angles adopted by photo-reportage photographers in contemporary 'behind the scenes' shots. (For detailed discussion, see chapters two and three.).[31] The raised vantage point as a preliminary drawing of 1929 records flattens the perspective and collapses spatial differences. The figures pile one on top of another, partially hidden and cut-off. This device spectacularizes the relationship of the viewer to the performer, through a heightened intimacy. The costumes, faces and make up seen in large scale and close up, reveal their conscious cosmetic artistry - the deliberate effect of eye-lash thickener, the carefully drawn black eye-brow, the hair styling and the rouge. In addition, the bright lights and glowing colour emphasize the fantasy of illumination and the outlandish hats, bows and crooks proclaim the staged artifice of such

entertainments. Removed from the natural and clearly regimented in line, these performers play shepherdesses in that magical landscape, which was the Parisian folies-revue of the 1920s.

A similar view was later published by Brassaï in The Secret Paris of the 30s of a chorus line just before a performance. Approached from the wings, the photograph called The Rainbow at the Folies Bergère, captured "the dizzying views down onto the stage, new and astonishing perspectives at every moment".[32] It is an intimate angle from a position not normally available to the public's eye. Such novel approaches were a hallmark of the photo-journalist and at this moment were part of a wider cult amongst avant-garde photographers such as Moholy-Nagy, Krull, Bayer and Kertesz for high angle reappraisals of architecture or landscape, illustrated in Variétés, 15 June 1929.[33] This accentuated the "intimate, casual, particular and out of step"[34] employing a highly sophisticated realist rhetoric. Franz Roh in Foto-Auge (1929), a study which Burra knew, declared that the: "new view in the way of perspective...the audacious sight from above or below...the taking of a vertical line... obliquely, is stirring".[35] It was exemplified in the publication by Max Burchartz's Lotte (eye) [pl.122], which, in a similar way to Burra's painting of the frontal figure, dramatically cropped the female face in close up.[36]

In addition, the subject parallels that interest in circus and revue performers in action by photographers such as Umbo, which were featured in Variétés and Der Querschnitt in 1929-30. For

example Umbo's Clown Grock (1928) caught the balancing act of the famous performer in mid-action and examples such as the Two Morgans concentrated on the ingenuity of their acrobatic routines.[37] Whilst these are not specific sources for Burra's Follies works, they show that theatre and revue subjects formed an important theme within 'New Vision Photography', and one which would have strengthened the validity of such a subject and approach.

Les Folies de Belleville combines this close up approach with a Neo-classical pictorial language. The subject is one of those nude revues, which were situated in the Belleville triangle in the North Eastern part of Paris near the Boulevard de la Villette. The Folies de Belleville was not as prestigious as the more famous Folies Bergère or Casino de Paris and was a low-grade entertainment situated opposite the Belleville Palace Cinema, noted for its pornographic movies, and close to an area of cheap brothels famous as a site for bourgeois 'slumming'.[38] The painting concentrates on the sheer artifice of the performance with the consciously 'artistic' posing of the nude performers and the vulgar stage decor and lighting. The bare coloured light-bulbs in rows, the unimpressive set, probably used repeatedly, and the gaudy colours stress the low status and simple nature of its attraction. However, the formal vocabulary with its hieratic forms, its clear outlines of posed anatomy, its sculptural modelling accentuating muscularity, its attention to body surfaces and especially the tactile qualities of gauze, employs the language of 'classical modernism' to this entertainment subject.

It parallels similar treatments by artists such as Metzinger, for example, of leisure scenes in L'Écuyère (1925) or female nudes in Girl with a Bird, which was illustrated in R.H. Wilenski's The Modern Movement in Art (1927).[39] Metzinger's work was highly valued in French artistic and critical circles in the late 1920s and his influence on Burra is discussed in chapter three.[40]

This kind of erotic low-life subject was not an isolated or unusual interest on Burra's part, but formed part of a wider contemporary interest in such forms of entertainment and their practitioners, especially prevalent in French literature. Earlier examples included Paul Morand's novels, Ouvert la Nuit (1924) and Fermé la Nuit (1925), both of which Burra knew through Beatrice Dawson around 1925.[41] The tour of clandestine nightspots in foreign cities became in Morand's work a type of modern "promenade pittoresque". In Ouvert la Nuit, the hero travels abroad to search out sexual adventure, which are contrasted in terms of national difference.[42] The book is divided into chapters recalling various scenes under the titles "la nuit catalan, turque, romaine, hongroise [and] nordique". Morand's novel drew a parallel with the Grand Tour undertaken by 18th Century connossieurs visiting the classical ruins of Antiquity and notes a similar effect, namely that both are an educational and revitalizing process. However, in Morand's novel, the ports of call were no longer classical buildings, but the bars, dancings and nightclubs of the modern metropolis. In many ways Burra's accounts of the pleasures of abroad expressed a similar attitude to Morand's. They recreated the Paris tour-by-night as an

elaborate discovery of new sites and human relics. Burra referred to this in a letter to Nash:"we are having a fine time going from ruin to ruin..the people are glorious, such tarts all crumbling and all sexes and colours".[43] The Folies de Belleville would have been one of the places on such an itinerary.

Other contemporary writers also expressed an interest in the subject. Pierre MacOrlan in his novel Aux Lumiérès de Paris (1925) referred to the follies as one of the distinctive features of Paris's nightlife.[44] Burra also knew authors such as Maurice Dekobra and Paul de Kock, whose La Pucelle de Belleville (1927), was favourably reviewed in the July 1927 issue of Le Crapouillot.[45] Popular authors fictioned out of the nocturnal ramble through illicit nude revues and striptease shows -to places such as the Folies de Belleville- a rich and exotic fantasy. The blatently pornographic appeal was recorded in detail as part of the allure of a Paris advertized in nightlife magazines such as Paris Plaisir and catering for a male audience eager to know the best places to go 'slumming' or looking for disreputable adventures. Paul Eluard in Capitale de la Douleur (1926) recognized their role as engaging fictions upon which the audience projected their sexual desires:"Beauties of the night, beauties of fire, beauties of rain / With trembling hearts, hidden hands. wind-like eyes / You show me the movements of the lights... Your Dances are the fearful abyss of my dreams".[46] In contemporary articles, this type of entertainment was referred to as 'night-culture'. Les Folies de Belleville declares Burra's fascination with such places and their performers as part of the illicit

nightlife entertainment of modern Paris.

Burra's visits to Spain in April 1933 and later in 1935-36, are recorded in terms of the distinctively Spanish formats of the flamenco dance-hall and the bullfight, although initially they extend the earlier theme of the music hall examined in relation to Burra's experience of the nightlife of Barcelona. In Musical Comedy, Barcelona [CCD.66], the view of the stage is presented from the position of the spectator on the lower circle looking obliquely across the heads of the audience towards the stage. Barcelona in particular was admired by Burra for its thriving nightlife entertainment, not only music hall, but also the striptease and transvestite clubs of the Barriochino and Paralelo, mentioned earlier by Burra in a letter to Nash. Whilst few drawings exist of these milieus, Musical Comedy, Barcelona dates from this first trip and focuses attention on the types in the audience rather than the performers, who are just leaving the stage. Such a viewpoint is reminiscent of Degas and Sickert, but made distinctive by the Spanish nature of the subject. Views of theatre audiences or music hall boxes were a common subject in 19th Century illustration and Burra's drawing works within the conventions of this type of illustration, concentrating on the layout of the boxes and circle, with their decorative wrought-iron work, showing the panoramic view across the auditorium, using the framing device of the columns and upper balcony and including caricatural sketches of the appearances of the audience's types.[47]

The main representatives of popular entertainment, which are featured in Burra's Spanish paintings are the flamenco dancer and the bullfighter. They authenticate the survival of traditional formats as part of contemporary urban culture. These are tied to Burra's experience of both Barcelona and Madrid. Burra had considered the Spanish flamenco dancer as a subject before his actual experience of Spain. In The Terrace (1929) [CC.53] and Flamenco Dancer (1931) [CC.81], the dramatic appeal of the flamenco as a metaphor for Mediterranean exoticism had been employed through its features of extravagant physical display and elaborate costumes. Burra's visits to Madrid's Circo Price provided first hand experience, as Burra wrote to William Chappell from Madrid in 1935:"I have just been to a flamenco singing competition at a place called the Cirico Price realy Ive never seen anything like it I went in at at 6.30 & came out half dead at 10.30 & it was still going on."[48] The letter included a sketch of a flamenco singer in typical caricatural style concentrating on gestures, dress, facial expression and make up. In paintings of similar dancers in action such as Flamenco Group (1933-34), the leg and arm movements of the dancer, her body position and costume are carefully noted. In later paintings such as Madame Pastoria (1934-5) [CC.115]and Spanish Dancer in a White Dress (1934-5) [CC.121] such flamboyant displays are exploited in large, portrait-sized studies. These will be discussed in chapter seven with other similar types of work on the theme of female display.[49]

The bullfight as a public entertainment is the subject of The Bullfight (1933) [CC.93]and the drawing, The Bullring (1933)

[CCD.59]. These drew on Aiken's interest in bullfighting, a taste which Burra took up. As he wrote in a letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer on the following visit to Spain in 1935 in mock-Hemingway style:"I went to a bullfight last sunday my dear its gorgeous all the bulls gore everybody and do the bulls bleed yes sir and do the audience roar with laughter the costumes are lovely my favorite costume was vermillion trimmed with black lace."[50] The works on this theme focus on the ritual spectacle of the performance with the bullfighter playing the bull through his movements. The drawing concentrates on the spectator-orientated exhibition with the presence of the audience clearly noted. Burra also recorded the details of the stylized body language and gestures. In The Bullring, the kneeling position of the toreador in front of the bull is depicted. In Bullfight, the high drama at the moment of the kill is presented. This choice of the most spectacular and dramatic poses is a feature shared with the music hall performer and the flamenco dancer and underscores Burra's theme of modern urban entertainment.

Burra's interest in the flamenco dance and the bullfight were not isolated one at this time. Flamenco dancing and bullfighting were also a shared interest amongst intellectuals and writers at this period including Aiken, Lowry and Hemingway.[51] Der Querschnitt covered these areas and Pierre MacOrlan, published articles in Le Crapouillot, reviewing Spanish music hall performers, flamenco music and the Madrid and Barcelona scene for the magazine's French readership.[52] Burra also collected flamenco tunes and songs on records from the late 1930s.[53]

In addition, these themes were explored in popular American and French films, which exploited the erotic and exotic potential of the flamenco dancer in La Danseuse Espagnole (1925), Carmen (1926) and Valencia (1927), and the bullfighter in Blood and Sand (1922), Bandolero (1924), Matador (1925), Iberia (1926) and Gay Madrid (1930). Burra would have known these films or at least known stills from film magazines, notably the French Ciné Revue, which featured a large number of these as cover photographs and the Spanish series Nuestro Cinéma and Tararu!, which he started collecting from his first visit to Spain in 1933.[54] There were also examples of such figures in Burra's collection of popular postcards and photo-books. Burra's copy of Filmphotos- wie noch nie (1929) contained stills of bullfighting scenes from Blood and Sand (1922) and his postcards represented bullfighting scenes similar to Bullfight.[55] These popular reproductions offered close ups of the bullfighter's outfits worn by current bullfighter heart-throbs with their Latin good looks, muscular physique and sexual appeal [pl.123]. In the detailed attention given to the uniforms in Bullfight, such sources would have provided general reference material.

Furthermore, there was the historical precedent of Goya's Tauromaquia (1816), which depicted bullfight scenes and, in addition, Spanish literary considerations of the subject. Burra knew Goya's etchings in the British Museum and Goya's work had been exhibited as part of a Spanish Art show at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1928. The composition of Bullfight is close to plate number 30, Pedro Romero matando a toro parado, and

represents a similar viewpoint [pl.124], although from a slightly lower angle, but including the wall of the arena and the spectators.[56] It uses the shadows division of the stadium as a dramatic effect and portrays the moment when the bullfighter is about to plunge in the sword. Burra's work, however, exploits the full potential for the crowd as a collection of Latin types, noting gestures and faces in simplified caricatures, and includes several other bullfighters, either involved close to the bull or watching in the distance. These allow more figures and details of costumes to be included. Burra was also interested at this period, according to Clover de Pertinez, in the writings of José Gutierrez Solana, whose La España Negra (ed.1920), covered the bullfight as part of its subject of low-life Spain, and Pio Baroja, whose A l'Aventure -Les bas fonds de Madrid was available in French in 1930 and had been favourably reviewed in Le Crapouillot in July 1930.[57] These sources offered the bullfighter as an heroic representative of Spanish culture, linked on the one hand to low-life and on the other, participating in a dramatic public spectacle, drawn from Spanish leisure.

The works which take as their theme the entertainment industry of New York and Harlem date from Burra's first visit to the city in 1933-34. Music Hall (1934) [CC.110] and Striptease (1934) [CC.112] represent the Apollo Music Hall with its various types of performers and its mixed audience. Cuban Band (1934-5) [CC.113], Red Peppers (1934-5) [CC.119] and The Band (1934) [CC.104] offer views of predominantly male performers and bands in action approached from the viewpoint of a spectator looking down onto the

stage. In Acrobats (c.1934-5) [CCD.41] and Circus Horses (c.1934-6) [pl.125], dramatic views from a circle position looking up or directly at circus entertainers in performance are recorded. In Savoy Ballroom (1934-5) and Dance Hall (1933-4), the dynamic movements of Black American dancers at Harlem's nightspots are carefully chronicled. Such subjects drew on Burra's first-hand experience of New York's nightlife and emphasized its impressive variety and engaging spectacle. This was not only restricted to the conventional arenas of the nightclub, dance hall and circus, but the streets of Harlem are approached as part of an extension of the fascination with urban display as public entertainment. In Harlem (Tate, 1934) [CC.108], Harlem (Higgins, 1934) [CC.109] and Harlem Scene (1934-5) [CC.114], the ordinary city thoroughfare is represented as part of an infatuation with Harlem criminal and deviant types and one of the chief attractions is the Harlem Negro stroller.

This approach to the city is reinforced in Burra's letters, where the outrageous 'unreality' of New York is continually referred to. On 18 October 1933, Burra wrote to Chappell:"its more like non-stop Variety".[58] His letters are crammed with accounts of how New York was better than expected and even Club Madame's location is seen to indicate the fervour of the audience and performers - "corner of 42nd and Mad, and Mads the word".[59] The letters reveal Burra's lifestyle as an endless social whirl accompanied by a series of hangovers and "the usual daze".[60] A large number of British artists and writers travelled to New York in the late 1920s and early 1930s and many of Burra's friends had already been

or were in New York. Nash had been there in Autumn 1931 as a Carnegie Juror and Aiken had returned to America for a short period at this time. Burra travelled over with Sophie Fedorovitch and Olivia Wyndham, who, as Burra wrote in a letter to William Chappell from New York, 18 October 1933: "is such a figure in Harlem society you cant concieve she seems to know all the neighbourhood.."[61] Frederick Ashton, Nancy Cunard and John Banting were also there in the early 1930s. In addition, Burra's access to Harlem society was aided by his contact with Barbera Ker-Seymer's Black American friends, Edna and Lloyd Thomas.

The painting Savoy Ballroom (1934-5) [CC.120] and the drawing Dance Hall (1933-4) [CCD.63] depict the Savoy Dance Hall, the acknowledged home of popular dancing in Harlem and, as Jervis Anderson recalled, "a lush and colourful extravaganza".[62] It is as spectator rather than participator that Burra presents the milieu, where the dancers' movements are carefully studied. In Dance Hall, the elevated view from the balcony allows a view across the seating area and the dance floor surveying both dancers and audience. Burra's account of a visit to the Savoy Dance Hall conveys the extroverted vitality of Harlem dancers and exposes the allure of exotic types and Black American fashions:

> "We went to the Savoy dance hall the other night my dear you would go mad Ive never seen such a display an enormous floor half dark surrounded by chairs & tables and promenade on one side and the band on the other with a trailing cloud effect behind. Ive never seen such wonderful dancing they also had an initiation ceremony in which all the men had to crawl under a row of mens legs and be beaton with a stick going through and the women had to be twirled round ten times its a most extraordinary spectacle they also had amateur specialities one couple were marvellous a thin marmoset of a creature with cropped crinkle hair and baby shoes and a woolen jumper really its an experience not to be missed."[63]

This sense of New York's extravagance as an entertainment centre is evident in the way Burra selects distinctively American-style formats from New Yorks Black and Hispanic neighbourhoods as his subjects. Burra recorded the large floors of the 'Dance Palace' in Savoy Ballroom, which caused such a sensation when it was opened in 1926, the showiness of the Latin American group in Cuban Band [CC.113] with their extravagant sleeves and dramatic actions, and the large American dance band in The Band [CC.104] with their Black American musicians and feature act- a form which Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong were to popularize in Britain in the 1930s. A letter to Chappell later noted Burra's first-hand knowledge of such sensational entertainments with their stagy decors and flashy costumes: "I see the Blackbirds of 1934 are coming to the Coliseum it was a flop in N.Y. except for me who was forced to go alone against all opposishion there is the most wonderful chorus."[64] The increased scale of these works and the bright colours, recording garish outfits and stage design illuminated by spotlights stresses their appeal. In Cuban Band, the panache of the performers are noted as they passionately wave their marracas. In The Band, the comedy of the dancers at a moment of repartee is recorded. The humorous details of their outrageous costumes and the lewd decoration of the band's drum is also registered. In another untitled drawing, a Harlem male dancer is paired with a dwarf as a comedy double act and stresses Burra's fascination with the comic overtones of the odd, eccentric or unusual.[65]

(1934)(LCD.63)

Drawings such as Dance Hall, Harlem map out the architecture and topography of these milieus in clear outlines and incisively drawn contours. The organization of seating or particular architectural motifs are used to publicize a knowledge gained from first-hand experience. Details of hair-styles, expressions, finger positions, dress and fashion are also registered. In addition, the simplified figure language and selective facial features of these works suggest caricatural influences. The elongated arms and legs, the stylized anatomy, the concentration on body movements and dance positions to communicate the exuberent energy of couples dancing corresponds to representation of Negro performers as types in the work of Miguel Covarrubias, which Burra knew from the late 1920s.

Covarrubias's sketches of Harlem provided an extensive range of negro types and Burra's work employed similar figures and caricatural means of representation. Covarrubias's Negro Drawings were collectively published in 1927, but many of them date from the earlier period of 1925-6, and depict fashionable dances such as 'The Stomp' [pl.126], 'The Charleston' [pl.127] and current musical formations such as 'The Jazz Orchestra'.[66] Covarrubias's work was reviewed in Vogue in February 1925 along with his illustrations of Negro types under the title: "Enter the new Negro a Distinctive Type recently created by the Jazz Spirit of their own Invention". The review continued: "In New York, the negro now emerges as an individual ... He is a personality always, and frequently, an artist. A bright light has been turned on him ..."[67] The contemporary phenomena of Black Broadway musicals such

as Shufflin' Along and Chocolate Dandies, and Negro cabarets were seen to be part of this vogue for the Negro, which Covarrubias's caricatures exploited. Burra may also have known Covarrubias's illustrations in society magazines such as Vanity Fair and the New Yorker, or his designs for Josephine Baker's Revue Nègre in Paris. Burra's press cuttings contained a copy of Covarrubias's Couple Dancing the Stomp, and his postcard collection contained similar scenes of couples in mid-routine.[58] [pl.128].

Both Dance Hall and Savoy Ballroom include negro types close to those in Covarrubias's illustrations and concentrate on similar selective features - the movement and line of the body, distinctive facial expressions, hand and foot positions, and details of fashion. In Savoy Ballroom, the dancing male figure shown in profile on the right hand side with arms swinging in the air and knees bent, is elongated and his body narrowed to make the sense of movement more dramatic - an exaggeration employed in Covrarrubas's Charleston dancer, for example. The central male figure tapping his feet has many of the physiognomic features of Covarrubias's Negro male types displayed for example in Vaudeville Team (1927)[59] [pl.129]. These include racial distinctions as well as more individualized features, including large, heavy lidded eyes, rounded face and negroid nose, the short clipped moustache and large mouth with pearly white teeth. The woman seen in profile on the left-hand edge of the composition, in her mannered hand and leg positions follows the professional postures of Covarrubias's illustration of perfomers 'doing the stomp'. The

woman's fashionable dress, jewellery and make-up distinguish her as a thoroughly modern Harlem figure.

In the background, the extravagent arms and body movements of other Savoy Ballroom dancers are indicated, emphasizing the dance hall as a show in its own right. Furthermore, the decorative device of the window grills and blinds and the geometric pattern of the floor tiles, adding authentic details of surroundings, acts, as in earlier paintings such as Rossi, as a way of increasing the three dimensional modelling of the figures. The various body angles cut across the lines which follow the perspective and this emphasizes their dynamic force. The dominant impression in Savoy Ballroom is the exposure to the spectacle of dancing as a metaphor for the vibrant energy of Harlem's Negro night-culture with its: "exotic, colourful and sensual, pleasure loving people", so admired by John Banting in his Negro contribution "The Dancings of Harlem".[70]

Burra's conception of Harlem as a rich and exotic showcase for Negro entertainment drew on other sources in the 1920s and early 30s. Prior to his arrival, Burra knew Harlem's reputation as a haven for Black music through jazz records by Ethel Walters and Bessie Smith, (which he collected). Burra's taste in jazz as Conrad Aiken later commented was "raucous ... very jazz and negroid".[71] It was informed by films such as Strut Miss Lizzie (1927), From Dixie to Broadway (1927), Hot Chocolate (1929) and Hallelujah (1928), which was featured in Documents, issue 4, 1930 as especially praise-worthy.[72] Also important were the famous

Paris revues of Josephine Baker, notably the Revue Nègre, which Burra visited in 1925 and her film, Siren of the Tropics, which he saw in 1927, and musical theatre revues such as Blackbirds (1928), which Burra attended in October 1928. He had also seen other Black entertainments at the London Pavilion in the late 1920s.[73] These furnished Burra with a distinctive fiction-fed purchase on Black American culture as a scandalous, comic and exotic fiction. These sources also promoted the night-life and dynamic street culture as hallmarks of Harlem's "Renaissance", and were the two most important Harlem themes taken up in Burra's work. [74]

Particularly important in this respect were novels by Carl Van Vecten, Jean Lasserre and Ronald Firbank, which Burra knew and precipitated a vogue for Harlem novels.[75] These furnished an impression of Harlem as an illicit and exotic neighbourhood of engaging Negro characters and exhibitionist manners. Burra was introduced to Firbank's Prancing Nigger (1924, published in Britain as Sorrow in Sunlight) through Raymond Mortimer's reviews in Vogue, where Firbank's works were described as "elegant ... poetic and witty ... personages transposed by his imagination."[76] Cuna Cuna, the Negro metropolis featured in Prancing Nigger was a thinly disguised Harlem, which Firbank described as "one of the chief alluring cities of the world"[77] primarily because of its famous nightlife entertainments. Cuna Cuna, "the Little City of lies and perils" was a place of depravity.[78] In Prancing Nigger, the narrator chronicles the downfall of the main Negro characters as they explore the pleasures of the bars, dance halls and clubs and concludes:"City life what had it done for any of them after

all? Edna nothing more than a harlot ... and Charlie just going to pieces having joined the promenade of a notorious bar with its bright, particular galaxy of boys..."[79] In particular, Firbank includes a description of the Apollo Dance Hall famous for its dancing and: "the latest jazz, bewildering, glittering, exuberent ... a jazz throbbing, pulsating with a zim-zim, zim, a jazz all abandon and verve" as one of the most exciting and dangerous places.[80]

A similar fantastic image of Harlem is outlined in Van Vechten's Nigger Heaven (1926), which went through eight editions from October 1926-July 1928 and Burra must have known.[81] Van Vechten's Harlem is a fiction of immorality, "exotic savagery" and "obscenity".[82] In the manner of a journalistic exposé, Van Vecten guides the reader on a tour of the nightspots of Harlem recording distinctive features and underworld types in a manner reminiscent of MacOrlan and Morand, but on a Harlem theme. The "savage" qualities of the Black American are tied to artistic and creative racial powers, to an innate spontaneity and instinctive zest for life, to sexual liberalism and to the cultural achievements of the jazzclub and the dance hall. He notes how cabarets "formed an essential part of [Negro] life" and the sound of jazz symbolized the Harlem spirit:"wild music, music that moaned and lacerated one's breast with brazen claws of tone, shrieking tortured music from the depths of Hell".[83] This cliched view was also expressed in Jean Lasserre's Au près de ma Noire (1930), where the Black Americans in Harlem are characterized as noctural hedonists:"les nègres sont les hommes de la nuit",[84] who combine a sense of their

African race-memory with their modern experience of the city. The view of Harlem expressed in these novels is of a fantastic urban entertainment zone with a glut of Negro entertainments, notably dance halls, music halls and jazzclubs frequented by naturally zestful Blacks.

Burra's portrayal of Harlem's nightculture in his drawings also suggests these earlier literary sources through similarities in subject matter of energized Negro dancers in Harlem dance halls, in the attention to comic or bizarre details of dress and appearance and in the caricatural approach of the works, which makes use of Negro types represented in simplified lines. Sketches from this Harlem period particularly note facial characteristics and the position of performers' bodies in action [CCD.58f]. In this respect, Burra's attitude towards the Negro as a figure of entralling rhythm, movement and 'instinctive' style advocates a fictionalized, rather than accurate view of Harlem's inhabitants. Burra's drawings also record the locations mentioned in these novels as places in which to observe the glamour and excesses of Harlem night-culture, notably the Savoy Ballroom and Apollo Music Hall, when on the tour-by-night of Harlem's thrilling underworld. This use of literary and popular cultural sources to suggest particular areas of understanding and then incorporating details to authenticate first-hand experience corresponds to that method used earlier by Burra to emphasize cultural differences on his first visits to France and Spain. Furthermore, the flaneurist or voyeuristic fascination central to these American works was not

new either and had been evident in earlier representations of French and Spanish performers as an alluring spectacle of abroad.

The European fascination with Harlem as a distinctive kind of fiction was related historically to the interest in the Negro and his '<u>primitivism</u>' as a reflection of the non-European. Burra's view of Harlem and Black American social manners was inscribed by the fascination with racial difference in that sense which Edward Said has described as "a cultural contestant and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other ... as its contrasting image, idea, personality and experience.."[85] In pre-war and early 1920s European culture, one of the most distinctive received forms of Black American expression was jazz music. Burra had begun buying jazz records from Levy's in London from the early 1920s and had a collection of discs by Black American performers.[86] This interest was shared by John Banting, who, in a later article in <u>Negro</u>, noted that"in jazz, the vital and overwhelming exuberance of the American Negro reaches its apex".[87] Another popular form was the Negro cabaret, fashionable in London and Paris at this period. Burra had visited the <u>Bal Nègre</u> in Paris, which specialized in jazz music and bringing over to Europe Black American bands, dances and dancers suited to the Parisian taste for exotic ethnic music and dance. In his early formation of the nature of Negro society and its forms of creative expression, such experiences would have played a signal role in outlining cultural differences.

The specific fascination with Harlem as a location for such Negro exoticism was central to this preoccupation amongst European intellectuals of the celebration of the non-European in general and the Negro in particular. As Harold Acton noted, Harlem was an indulgence in the 1920s, which promoted the fantasy of Black hedonism and promiscuity: "An American heart of Darkness in the centre of New York ... the most dangerous of dreams".[88] By the time of Burra's visit in the early 1930s, interest in Harlem amongst European writers and artists was begining to decline in comparison with the 1920s.[89] In 1932, Harold Acton recorded that "Harlem is no longer in vogue" and that the 'mythical Harlem' was fading in its reputation.[90] This theme, the discrepancy between the 'myth' and the 'reality', was taken up by the Harlem newspaper, The Amsterdam News, 23 October 1929 in its editorial "Is this really Harlem?". It contrasted day scenes of unemployment queues with night-time queues of limosines bringing "White folk to the therapy of Harlem", and the rows of hunger marches with the neon dazzle of the clubs and shows.[91] Whilst Burra was in Harlem from October 1933, its social problems were acutely visible and a subject of national concern. However, the dominant image in Burra's work is of the survival of Harlem's Renaissance, and this reinforced the main approach of Burra's previous attitudes towards foreign cities as spectacular paradises for entertainments and leisure. It corresponded to that view of Harlem, which Nancy Cunard recognized in her article "Harlem Reviewed" in the Negro compilation, which"treat Harlem in the same way that 'English toffs used to talk about going slumming. The

class I'm thinking of is the club man. They want entertainment. Go to Harlem. It's sharper there."[92]

Spanish Harlem was another favoured district for ventures into New Yorks Hispanic nightlife. In a letter to Ker-Seymer, in October 1933, Burra declared that"we went and saw Pilar Arcas at the cubo-Spanish theatre down the rd. my dear old old Pilar is heaven 1 inch high and as fat as a fig she has such presence and carried on so she sweeps all before her."[93] Hispanic American performers are considered in Cuban Band [CC.113] and Red Peppers [CC.119], where the performers are probably the Lecuana Cuban boys at the Apollo Music Hall, possibly in the revue Paris in Harlem, which Burra had seen.[94] Such figures re-emphasized Burra's attraction to America's non-white ethnic groups.

Another drawing registers the view from the cheapest seats in the second balcony in the Apollo Music Hall [CCD.65], where Blacks were not segregated, but allowed to mix freely. It shows the dizzying view down to the stage. Burra's letter to Ker-Seymer from 1890 7th Avenue, New York, dated October 1933 chronicles another example of a similar vantage point:"we went to the Harlem Opera House to see moonlight and pretzels and arrived in the gallery to find one solid mass of dusky faces there were about four white as far as I could see a marvellous stage show.."[95] The excessive nature of American stage decor is particularly noted in Red Peppers, where the stage is decorated with enormous heart-shaped red peppers which surround the performers. These are both decorative and symbolic, since Burra is consciously employing

Freudian sexual symbolism to comment on the erotic spectacle of the act. (This will be examined in detail in chapter seven).[96] The spot-light picks out the features of a Hispanic musician in a way paralleling the gaze of an adoring fan. It is unusual in that it isolates a handsome member of the band rather than the main performer, who is taking a bow. Such close ups were common in photographs of performers in action, as mentioned earlier, and such decor and costumes may have drawn on similar subjects in Burra's postcard collection or press cuttings to authenticate details.

This view from the audience is also evident in The Band (1934) [CC.104] through the use of a compositional devices reminiscent of Degas and in the privileged viewpoint close to the stage. This assuming of the role of spectator is also emphasized in drawings such as Acrobats, where the snap-shot effect, extreme angle of vision and dramatic foreshortening of the acrobats seen from the upper circle suggests an Americanized, modern up-date on Degas's LaLa at the Circus Fernando, Paris (1879).[97] In addition, it may refer to the influence of rotating camera effects, which had been pioneered in earlier films on trapeze performers and music hall themes, such as Vaudeville (1925), which Burra knew and were illustrated in stills in his copy of Filmphotos-wie nöch nie (1929).[98] Circus Horses (1934-5) [pl.125] takes as its subject a bareback dancing troupe from the Barnum Circus, and again employs a cropped composition and frontal viewpoint of charging horses to dramatize the effect of the act. In the figures of the clown and attendant, it indicates the particular attraction of outlandish

costumes and make up. Burra's interest in the circus and burlesque was particularly influenced by Conrad Aiken's fascination with American forms of popular culture, and is discussed later in chapter six.[99]

This concentration on the role of the spectator and the positioning of the viewer as a member of the audience is also repeated in Music Hall [CC.110] and Striptease [CC.112], where the American equivalent, the burlesque show, is the subject and New York's parallel to Paris's Folies de Belleville, the Apollo Music Hall, is selected as the locale. In Striptease, the presence close to the composition's bottom edge and to the picture plane of half consumed drink with spoon and used sugar-cubes, places the viewer as a spectator in the striptease show, whose performer brazenly flaunts her nudity on the Apollo stage. In Music Hall, the proximity of the figures sitting in front, two of whom are seen in profile, strengthen this sense of involvement. Furthermore, in Oyster Bar, Harlem (1934-5) [CC.118]and the later Chile Con Carne (1937) [CC.30], this pictorial device used earlier for engaging the viewer's attention by means of the hand and table device, for example, in the Mediterranean café-bar in The Hand (1931) [CC.71]and in the English delicatessen in The Café (1930) [CC.57], is re-employed as a means of identifying the viewer with Harlem and Boston low-life clientele and milieus.

Another drawing of the Apollo Music Hall concentrates on the decorative architectural device over the stage, again seen from the upper circle vantage point [pl.130]. As in Sickert's The New

Bedford (1915-16) and Noctes Ambrosianae (1926), through this fascination with pilasters, swags and cartouches, as David Mellor has noted "the profane music hall and its 'low' inhabitants are elevated by association with noble symbolic values of the interior architectural decoration".[100] This interest in the architecture of American music halls and in the burlesque as peculiarly American forms of entertainment must be seen against the context of American painting in the early 1930s, which addressed such subjects and their picturesque details as part of their consideration of the distinctively American urban scene.[101] As Nash had noted after his visit to the States in 1931, there was "a great deal of talk about an American art in America. An idea has come prevalent that there may arise a school of American painting independent let us say of the École de Paris". Nash continued: "What makes the study of contemporary American Art especially interesting at the moment, is that there are a certain number of young painters agile enough to shake themselves free and stand up however stiffly. It is to these men we may look for a new phase in the history of American painting".[102] Nash in particular recommended the Daniel, Newman and Downtown Galleries in New York as centres to see American painter's work[103] and as Andrew Causey has noted, whilst Burra was in New York, there were a number of opportunities for Burra to see contemporary Realist art; an Edward Hopper show at the Museum of Modern Art, a Twentieth Century New York in Paintings and Prints exhibition at the Whitney Museum and "the Metropolitan was operating a policy of buying American scene painting urban and rural".[104]

Burra's work on American themes corresponded to contemporary American Realist painting primarily in its similarity of urban themes, but not in any specifically social realist intention. Firstly, the subject of New York at night was a shared subject with Edward Hopper, who according to the Studio was "the painter par excellence of the American scene".[105] Hopper's interest in the tawdry aspects of nocturnal New York, for example Night on the El Train (1918) especially caught as incidental from the casual oblique viewpoint, but represented in a detached way catches an attitude, which is paralleled in Burra's work. As Gail Levin has noted, such devices in Hopper's work were also influenced by Degas's paintings. Also Hopper's interest in American architecture, especially the features of music hall and cinemas (for example, Two On the Aisle (1927) [pl.131]and a kind of voyeuristic attitude towards urban life, as in Nightwindows (1928) is evident in Burra's Striptease and Music Hall.[106]

Secondly, the popular leisure theme was linked to the work of other Realist painters such as Reginald Marsh, Charles Demuth and Thomas Hart Benton. Their consideration of American entertainment scenes- burlesques, music hall and bars, provided a context for Burra's New York entertainment subjects.[107] Demuth's circus and vaudeville entertainers image the fascination with outrageous performance and elaborate costume and make up, which was a focus of attention in Burra's work.[108] Marsh's The Gaiety Burlesque (1933) [pl.132] and Two Cents a Dance (1933) offer similar subjects, which accentuated New Yorks distinctive forms of popular leisure and entertainments- the dance hall and speak-easy, as

sites in which to study contemporary sexual manners. The figurative language, like Burra's drew on caricatural and popular sources and gained him a reputation as the "American Hogarth".[109] Similarly Benton in his panoramic murals of City Activities (1930-31) [pl.133] displayed not only the city's energy, but its wealth of amusements and figure types using spatial devices derived from contemporary popular magazines. They were praised by the Studio critic for:"a perspective of American life with all the gusto, vitality, rawness and crudity ..of the American temper, as the newsreel or illustrated tabloid".[110] In addition, the work of Stuart Davies and Louis Lozowick, offered the spectacle of the dynamic metropolis in terms of distinctively modern New York subjects, for example Davies's 6th Avenue El (1931) and Lozowick's Coney Island, Luna Park (1929).[111]

Thirdly, as part of this investigation into the American urban scene, the city's ethnic groups and the geography of low-life New York also came under scrutiny by American artists such as Ben Shahn and Marsh, and the photographers, Berenice Abbott and later Weegee, whose work Burra knew.[112] Marsh's Negroes on Rockway Beach (c. 1934) showed Black Americans at leisure and Savoy Ballroom (1931), provided a distinctive account of Harlem's dance hall on the same subject as Burra's work.[113] Marsh and Shahn's consideration of the territory below the El with its collection of odd individuals and illicit dealings sanctioned those urban underworld themes, which Burra approached in the Harlem street scenes. This notion of New York as a hiding place for marginalized groups and eccentric individuals parralleled Burra's

fascination with memorable and anti-heroic metropolitan types. In all these four respects, which I have briefly outlined, Burra's consideration of New York's entertainment and leisure activities, corresponded to similar subjects and attitudes prevalent in contemporary American painting of the metropolitan scene.

Furthermore, this approach to the metropolitan mundane as exotic was also evident in American photography and film of the early 1930s. It was especially marked in the eagerness to capture "a fraction of other's reality" as an exposé of modern life in the photographs of Abbott and Weegee.''[4] Their photographs of low-life New York especially at night, featured exotic women and deformed men, murderers, beggars and criminals as the material for a showcase of urban manners, and offered a distinctively American low-life 'face of our time'. Abbott's New York at Night (1933) and later El Second and Third Avenue lines (1936) [pl.134] offered an American equivalent to Krull's and Brassaï's photographs on Parisian themes.115 This was also evident in Burra's interest in American 'exposé' magazines such as Detective,''[6] and his fascination with gangster movies. Films such as Public Enemy (1931) Scarface (1932) and Blood Money (1933) presented the gangster as a crucial part of the American scene, who inhabited mean and violent streets beyond the control of conventional morality. The gangster was also tied to an urban criminal underworld and to the locales of the speak-easy, the dance-hall and the nightclub.''[7]

Criminal types as members of the city's entertainment audiences and Harlem street scenes are included in Burra's American paintings. In particular, in Music Hall [CC.110] and Striptease [CC.112], these are represented by the male figures seen immediately in front in the audience. Their facial features portrayed in profile are similar to those of the bar-man in The Snack Bar (1930) [CC.68] and carry many of the physiognomic hallmarks of a criminal, deviant type. A letter chronicling a trip to "the theatrical grill" recorded Burra's fascination with New York low-life types and declared such places to be "better than any dive represented in films".[118] He wrote to Chappell on 18 October 1933 that:"Ive never seen such faces, the best gangster films are far outdone by the old original thing". In another letter to Paul Nash, Boston low life types are mentioned in a similar way:"I have found several congenial resorts to visit...such a collection of human debris interspersed with dwarves, gangsters, marines, hostesses fresh from the morgue. it has quite a surrealist effect.."[119] Further discussion of Burra's knowledge and use of these features has been considered in chapter three, and it is worth noting that this theme was continued in Burra's later works on American dance halls in the 1950s such as Izzy Orts (1955) [CC.234], Silver Dollar Bar (1955) [CC.235] and Tropical Bar Scene (1955) [CC.236].

It is within this context of the fascination with New York's underworld as a form of public entertainment and the approach to the Harlem street as a distinctive arena for the exposé of criminal types, which I want to discuss the paintings Harlem

(Tate, 1934) [CC.108], Harlem (Higgins, 1934) [CC.109] and Harlem Scene (1934-5) [CC.114]. These paintings of 1934-5 offer a view of Harlem as essentially a public street sub-culture. They represent groups standing on a street-corner in Harlem Scene, outside a café in Harlem (Higgins) and in front of a typical row of Brownstone tenements in Harlem (Tate). Such ordinary locations are employed by Burra to authenticate the actual experience of the neighbourhood. As Nancy Cunard recognized in Negro (1934), one of the first and dominant impressions of the area was:"the real people on the street. I mean those young men on the corner and the people sitting on the step."[120] Photographs used to illustrate Cunard's article "Harlem Reviewed" in Negro featured similar groups in photo-journalistic style for example On the Corner of 129th Street [pl.135] and 7th Avenue Harlem and Children on 7th Avenue, Harlem.[121] From pavement level, these photographs capture the panorama of 7th Avenue with its straight vista and tenement buildings, made more imposing by the angle of vision and the curving horizon due to the photographic distortion. These photographs emphasized that comparison made early in Cunard's article with other areas of urban poverty , notably London's East End, which had a similar urban topography and appearance. Harlem, Cunard noted, had the: "same long vista, same kind of little low houses with at first sight, many indeterminate things out on the pavement in front of them, same amount of blowing dust, papers, litter.."[122]

These characteristics are recorded in Burra's paintings. In Harlem Scene and Harlem (Higgins), the refuse, discarded

newspapers and broken bottles, abandoned liquor crates, girders and boxes mark the street as a depositary for urban waste. Such a landscape, stressed Cunard, was typical of Harlem "where one walks about in the dead junk and refuse-on- a grand scale left in the sudden waste lots that are typical of New York- this is Harlem."[123] Whilst this feature is conspicuously absent in Harlem (Tate), it suggests that street topography previously considered by Burra in the Northern area of Paris known as the 'Zone', where underworld types, prostitutes and down-and-outs lived in squalor.[124] This parallel is strengthened by the similarity of the presence of the elevated railroad, the El, which forms a recognizable feature to geographically particularize the area and a canopy under which prostitutes solicited and illicit dealings took place. In Burra's Harlem cityscapes, the El shown in the distance in Harlem (Tate)

passes over the ghetto-streets. As Cunard realized the anomaly of rich and poor New York was highlighted by the rapid transport system and also, the sudden change of landscapes, whilst travelling on either El or the main avenues of the city:"These avenues so grand in New York proper are in Harlem, very different. They are old, rattled some of them by the El on its iron heights, rattled them underneath by the 'sub' in its thundering grooves".[125] The subway is depicted in Harlem Scene in the distance on the left-handside of the work visible in a cutting. The streets of Harlem, by-passed by the El above and the sub below and crossed by the straight avenues of New York, also depicted in Harlem (Tate), demarcated a territory of squalor, filth and danger; what Cunard called "a different kind of wilderness".[126]

It is this zone -a common territory in Burra's urban scenes- which the Harlem paintings take as their geographical location.

In addition, it is the spectacle of this Harlem street culture which Burra's work expose in terms of conspicuously public displays of underworld male types and exotic women. In Harlem (Tate), the woman are either recognizable as exotic or marginalized types. For example, the woman in the foreground seen in profile is declared by her splayed legs, heavy make up and revealing dress to be a prostitute. Her bag of groceries suggest that she is not soliciting, but that this is her neighbourhood. The woman behind with a distinctive turban and long dress, the women gossiping in the distance at the gate post and the woman leaning out of the window with a cigarette in her mouth monitoring the street are also memorable Negro or Hispanic low-life types. With the exception of the child, shown taking a dog for a walk in Harlem (Higgins), the rest of the figures are male, either in pairs or groups talking, sitting on steps or standing in doorways. They are involved in what James Wheldon Johnson in Black Manhattan (1930) called the characteristic Harlem social activity of strolling:"Strolling is almost a lost art in New York..Strolling in Harlem doesn't mean merely walking along Lennox or Upper 7th Avenue, it means that those streets are places for socializing..to pass the time pleasantly with friends and acquaintances and most of all strangers.."[127] The Harlem stroller suggests a conspicuously Black American version of the 'flaneur', although without the connotations of wealth central to Baudelaire's typology. He is also a male parallel to the

prostitute as a public marker of the criminal zone and a witty manipulation of the idea of street-walker.

Furthermore Burra uses physiognomic features to signal the allure of Harlem street culture as the spectacle of criminal types on public display. The characteristic flaws of the criminal type evident in facial features and the enormously enlarged hands are common to all these figures. In Harlem Scene, the two strollers exhibit deviant features. The one on the left, seen in profile has a protruding jaw and snub nose and the other, a hare lip- all clear features used by Burra to designate this typology. In Harlem (Higgins), the unusual appearance of the main protagonists is registered by the child who stares up a them and the man in the café who peers out of the café door. The figure on the right has huge hands and a minute head, which was another telling mark of the criminal type. The right-hand figure is noted as a deviant type through his physical disability, with crippled legs and hunch back. (This type also appears in the distance in Harlem (Tate) Similar underworld types sit on the steps in Harlem (Tate), notably the figure with protruding chin and broken nose, and in the figure on the foreground with large hands and small head. The image which dominates Burra's view of Harlem street life is of a concentrated criminal underworld, which openly strolls the streets. It is this daylight spectacle rather an illicit night-time one- a Song of Day and Night rather than a Minuit Chanson, which distinguishes Harlem's street-culture from Paris. In addition, it is this flagrant exhibition of deviancy, which marks the particular illicit appeal of Harlem as a

neighbourhood, and offers the fiction of a sub-culture in which criminal types, exotic Negro and Hispanic figures are publicly displayed in an authentic modern milieu.

Burra's New York works offer a continuation of entertainment themes previously examined in relation to French and Spanish cultures - the music hall, the revue, the dance hall and striptease show, but within a recognizable Harlem geography. The street scenes of Harlem can be viewed within that 'flaneurist' tradition central to Minuit Chanson [CC.73] and many of the Mediterranean street scenes, which expose exotic women, prostitutes and criminals as part of the underworld of the modern metropolis. However, in their particular fascination with the 'spectacle' of the New York underworld and the development of Black and Hispanic criminal types, these paintings represent an extension of subjects examined in the 1920s and early 1930s influenced by Burra's interest in American popular culture, which fictioned out of the city street an area beyond the controls of conventional social and moral order. The image which Burra presents of Harlem in the 1930s focuses on the nocturnal entertainments and deviant sub-culture of the neighbourhood. The works mix details from Burra's first-hand experience with earlier fictions of Black hedonism and fascinations with Hispanic types to emphasize the distinctive nature of the modern city as an endless spectacle of illicit episodes and fascinating characters.

1. T.G. Quoted p. 88, no. 8.
2. W.C. Letters, pp. 33-34.
3. W.C. Letters, pp. 54-6.
4. W.C. Letters, p. 83.
5. Letter to Paul Nash, 1933 from Pension Carmona, Granada, Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive.
6. W.C. pp. 78-9.
7. Letter dated 10 April 1934 to Paul Nash. Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive.
8. WILENSKI, R.H. Contemporary British Artists - Draughtsmen, Edna Clarke, Henry Rushbury, Randolph Schwabe, Leon Underwood, (ed.) A. Rutherston, London 1924, p. 15.
9. WILENSKI 1924, op. cit., p. 18.
10. For Sickert's debt to Cezanne, see ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Sickert - Paintings, Drawings and Prints of W.R. Sickert 1860-1942, London 1977-78. Introduction by Wendy Baron, p. 11 and for music hall, p. 21. Sickert's work reproduced no. 132 in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Cityscape 1910-39, Urban Themes in American, German and British Art, London 1977-8 and Gore's reproduced in CHRISTIES, The Painters of Camden Town, 1905-20, London 1988, p. 98, no. 67.
11. Reproduced in CHRISTIES 1988, op. cit., p. 96, no. 64.
12. Cf., VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, London, English Caricature 1620 to the Present, London 1984, pp. 112-3.
13. William Chappell in conversation with author, 14 July 1983. Cf., BARBICAN ART GALLERY, London, The Edwardian Era, eds. J. Beckett and D. Cherry, 1987, pp. 42-43.
14. Reproduced in HERBERT, Robert, L. Impressionism, Art, Leisure and Parisian Society, London 1988, p. 85, pl. 84 and p. 90, pl. 88. Cf., discussion pp. 81-87.
15. In conversation with author, 8 November 1982.
16. Vogue, late December 1923, p. 86. The review of the Independent Gallery's exhibition, December 1923 noted that it contained many subjects drawn from the music hall and night life of Montmartre.
17. LAPPARENT, Paul de, Toulouse-Lautrec, in Masters of Modern Art Series, Bodley Head, London 1928.
18. Undated press cutting, Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
19. Vogue, ibid., p. 86.
20. LAPPARENT 1928, op. cit., pl. 9 and 66.
21. W.C. Letters pp. 33-84.
22. Cf., PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, Centre Georges Pompidou, Les Réalismes 1919-39, December 1980-April 1981, pp. 238-9.
23. Cf., RUSSELL, John, Seurat, London ed. 1985, pp. 234-242.
24. WILENSKI, R.H. The Modern Movement in Art, London 1927, p. 112. Quote p. 121.
25. WILENSKI, ibid., plates 6 and 14. Cf., p. 112 for Seurat's contribution to reconstruction of modern movement.
26. HAYWARD GALLERY, London, Late Sickert - Paintings 1927-1942, London November 1981-January 1982, p. 67 and p. 99, and MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Edinburgh, Sickert's High

Steppers, Edinburgh 1981. Introduction pp. 1-2 and p. 5. Quote p. 5. I am indebted to Caroline Juler for this information.

27. W.C. Letters, p. 46. Examples illustrated on p. 25 and T.G. pp. 86-7 and 90.
28. W.C. Letters, p. 56.
29. Cf., W.C. Letters, p. 70. Letter to William Chappell, August 1929.
30. W.C. Letters, p. 64.
31. Cf., pp. 152-5 and pp. 163-5 for discussion of Burra's use of photo-reportage photography.
32. BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30s, London 1977 section In the Wings of the Folies-Bergère. u.p.
33. For further discussion Cf. ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU 1988, op. cit. pp. 16-19 and PARIS, MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE DE LA VILLE DE PARIS, Bauhaus: Photographie, February-April 1984, pp. 10-11.
34. ROH, Franz, "Mechanisms and expression - the essence and value of photography" in ROH, Franz and TSCHICHOLD, Jan, Foto-Auge, Stuttgart 1929, ed. London 1974, pp. 14-18, p. 17.
35. ROH ibid., p. 17.
36. ROH and TSCHICHOLD 1974, op. cit., p. 31.
37. STUTTGART, WURTTEMBERGISCHER KUNSTVEREIN, Film and Foto der zwanzigere Jahre, May-July 1979, plates 225 and 226.
38. Referred to in Jean Galtière-Boissière, "De Menilmontant à la Villetouse" in Le Crapouillot, Special Paris number, May 1929, pp. 49-54. Cf., p.51.
39. Reproduced in WILENSKI 1927 op. cit. pl. 24.
40. See pp. 146-7
41. Clover de Pertinez in conversation with the author, 17 July 1982.
42. MORAND, Paul, Ouvert la Nuit, Paris 1924. Also published London 1925. Cf., p. 11.
43. Letter to Paul Nash from Paris c. 1929-30, in Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive, London.
44. Published Paris 1925, p. 171, where MacOrlan refers to the Hoffman girls.
45. Le Crapouillot, July 1927, p. 24.
46. ELUARD, Paul, Capitale de la Douleur, Paris 1926. Quoted in JEAN, Marcel, Autobiography of Surrealism, New York 1980, p. 171.
47. See discussion of Degas and the spectator in HERBERT 1988 op. cit. pp. 96-7. For Sickert's use of upper circle viewpoint, see ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1977-78 op. cit.p. 21.
48. W.C. Letters p. 93.
49. See pp. 446-448
50. W.C. Letters p.90.
51. C.f. HEMINGWAY, Ernest. Fiesta -the Sun also Rises, London 1927. For Aiken's use of bullfighting as a theme, see AIKEN, Conrad. Ushant, Oxford 1971, p. 358. For Lowry, see DAY, Douglas. A Biography of Malcolm Lowry, Oxford 1975, pp. 174-80 for his trip with the Aikens and Burra to Spain and for literary use in Bulls of the Resurrection, which he was writing in 1934, p. 188.

52. For MacOrlan, see Le Crapouillot, February 1929, p. 50. Also important was André Villeboeuf "Bravo Tauro", which was illustrated by photographs of bullfighting in Le Crapouillot, April 1929, p. 24.
53. List of these records found in Burra's Collection in Tate Archive.
54. These contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive. Also the covers of these magazines featured stills from Spanish theme films of bullfighters and flamenco dancers. The film Bullfight at Frejus (1928) directed by H. Lachman, was shown at the London Film Society, 10 March 1929.
55. FILMPHOTOS- wie noch nie, Giessen 1929, p. 145, now in Burra Collection in Tate Archive.
56. For Burra's interest in Goya, W.C. p. 80. From ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, London. Goya and his Times, London 1963-4, pl. 30, p. 112.
57. Cf., W.C. pp. 80-81. Solana's book now in Private Collection. Review in Le Crapouillot, July 1930, p. 8.
58. W.C. Letters p. 79.
59. Letter to William Chappell from 1870 7th Avenue, New York, October 1933. W.C. Letters p. 82.
60. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer from 125 E 15th Street, New York, 8 January 1934. W.C. Letters p. 86.
61. W.C. Letters p. 79.
62. ANDERSON, Jervis. Harlem- the Great Black Way 1900-50, London 1982, p. 140.
63. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, W.C. Letters p. 83-4.
64. W.C. Letters p. 88.
65. Contained in Private Collection.
66. COVARRUBIAS, Miguel. Negro Types, New York and London, 1927. Plates nos. 33, 7 and 40. Covarrubias's influence on Burra confirmed by Clover de Pertinez in conversation, 17 July 1982.
67. Vogue, late April 1925, pp. 62-63.
68. Now in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
69. COVARRUBIAS 1927 op. cit. pl. 28.
70. Quote from JOHNSON, James Wheldon. Black Manhattan, New York 1930, p. 160 and Banting, John. "The Dancings of Harlem" in CUNARD, Nancy. Negro- An Anthology, London 1934, p. 322. Cf., Acton's description of the Savoy Ballroom in ACTON, Harold. Memoirs of an Aesthete, London 1948, p. 239.
71. Aiken in a letter to Margaret and Robert Mackecknie from Charleston, 11 February 1937. Quoted in KILLORIN, Joseph. (ed) Selected Letters of Conrad Aiken, London 1978, p. 214.
72. Documents, pp. 237-8. See ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978 op. cit. p. 248, and Documents II, 1, 1930 p. 307 and p. 309.
73. Confirmed in conversation with Barbera Ker-Seymer, 19 December 1983. Cf., articles on 'Revue Nègre' by Georgette Camille in Variétés, 2, 15 June 1928, pp. 78-9 and by P. Van Hecke in 15 August 1929 issue p. 240.
74. For further discussion of European and White American received perception of Negro entertainers and culture see HUGGINS, Nathan Irvine. Harlem Renaissance, Oxford 1971, pp. 245-6.

75. For further discussion of Harlem in these novels cf., HUGGINS 1971 op. cit. pp. 19-90.
76. Vogue, late February 1925 p. 41. Firbank's work was promoted by the Sitwells in Britain in the '20s. Burra owned a copy of the New York 1924 edition.
77. FIRBANK, Ronald. Prancing Nigger, Harmondsworth 1982, p. 119.
78. FIRBANK, Ronald. The Complete Ronald Firbank, London 1961, p. 610.
79. FIRBANK 1982 op. cit. p. 174.
80. FIRBANK 1982 op. cit. p. 133. For further discussion of Firbank, see ROBB, William. The Dandy as Artist- An Examination of the work of Ronald Firbank and an Attempt to Define its influence on Later Writers, unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manchester 1972, pp. 93-100. For Firbank and Burra, see HAMMOND, Carol. A Return to Decadence in the 1920s: A Study of Ronald Firbank and Edward Burra, B.A. dissertation, University of Sussex 1980.
81. Published London, 1926.
82. VAN VECHTEN 1926 op. cit. p. 82.
83. VAN VECHTEN 1926 op. cit. p. 224-5. For further discussion, see KELLNER, Bruce. Carl Van Vechten and the Irreverant Decades, Oklahoma, U.S.A. 1968, p. 216 and LUEDERS, Edward. Carl van Vechten, Twayne, U.S.A. 1965, pp. 95-6.
84. LASSERRE, Jean. Au près de ma Noire, Paris 1930, p. 198.
85. SAID, Edward W. Orientalism, Harmondsworth, 1985, pp. 1-2.
86. Lists of these from Burra Collection in Tate Archive.
87. BANTING 1934 op. cit. p. 203.
88. ACTON 1948 op. cit. p. 240.
89. HUGGINS 1971 op. cit. pp. 288-9. and GLAAB, Charles and BROWN, A.T. A History of Urban America, London 1976, pp. 262ff.
90. ACTON 1948 op. cit. p. 241. Cf., CHISHOLM, Anne. Nancy Cunard, Harmondsworth 1979, pp. 239-40.
91. SCHOENER, Allon ed. Harlem On My Mind, New York, 1979, pp. 79-80.
92. CUNARD, Nancy. "Harlem Reviewed" in CUNARD, Nancy, ed. Negro- An Anthology, London 1934, p. 73.
93. W.C. Letters p. 84.
94. H.G. p. 184.
95. W.C. Letters p. 84.
96. See pp. 470-1.
97. Discussed in POTTERTON, Homan. The National Gallery, London 1977, p. 164. Cf., SCHARF, Aaron. Art and Photography, Harmondsworth 1975, pp. 185-9.
98. Stills of circus acrobats in Variétés, 4, 15 August 1928, p. 76.
99. For Aiken's interest in burlesque, see p. 368.-69
100. MELLOR, David and JEFFREY, Ian. "From Order to Apocalypse- the City in British Art 1890-1940" in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1977-78 op. cit. u.p.
101. Cf., RICCIOTTI, Dominic. The Urban Scene- Images of the City in American Painting 1890-1930, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Indiana University 1977, pp. 145-6.

102. NASH, Paul. "Modern American Painting", The Listener, 4 November 1931, p. 768.
103. Paul NASH. Letter to St. Gaudens, Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive, London.
104. Introduction, C.C. p. 54.
105. "The American Paintings of Edward Hopper", Studio, vol. 101, January-June 1931, p. 191.
106. LEVIN, Gail. Edward Hopper-the Art and the Artist, New York, 1980. p. 48, fig. 50 and see pp. 54-5.
107. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, The Modernist Spirit-American Painting 1908- 35, London, 1977. Milton W. Brown, "Realism and the American Scene", pp. 57-8 and Urban and Social Realism, pp. 67-8, and JEFFREY, Ian. "Concerning Images of the Metropolis" in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1977-78 op. cit. u.p.
108. Cf., WEINBURG, Jonathan. "Demuth and Difference" in Art in America, April 1988, pp. 188-221 and RICCOTTI 1977 op. cit. pp. 81-2.
109. C.f. BAIGELL, Mathew. The American Scene- American Painting of the 1930s, New York 1975, p. 146. Quote from RICCOTTI 1977 op. cit. p. 24 and illustrated in TOKYO, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. American Paintings, Drawings and Prints of the 20th Century, Tokyo March- May 1981.
110. BAIGELL, Mathew. Thomas Hart Benton, New York 1975 pp. 73-8. Quote from Studio, vol. 101, January-June 1931, p. 285.
111. Cf., JEFFREY 1977-8 op. cit. u.p.
112. According to Barbera Ker-Seymer, interview 16 February 1982, Burra knew Abbott's work. Weegee's The Naked City, New York 1945 and Weegee's People-A Wonderful Gallery of Manhattan from Society to Street Life, New York, 1946 from the Burra Collection contained in Tate Archive and Private Collection.
113. The author has been unable to find a reproduction of Marsh's Savoy Ballroom, but the other painting is reproduced in BROWN 1977 op. cit. p.68.
114. C.f. STOTT, William. Documentary Expression and Thirties America, New York 1973, pp. 8-9 and pp. 68-77. Quote from p. 77.
115. ABBOTT, Berenice. New York in the Thirties, originally published as Changing New York, New York 1939, reprint New York 1973, pl. 1.
116. Detective, (New York) and Exposed from 1934 contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive. Ker-Seymer in conversation with with author 16 February 1982 recalled that Burra was addicted to gangster movies and especially Paul Muni in Scarface, 1932. A similar interest in these types of magazines such as X marks the Spot was noted in Documents, vol. II, 1, 1930 p. 437.
117. Cf., KAMINSKY, Stuart M. American Film Genres- Approaches to the Critical Theory of Popular Film, New York 1974, pp. 13-4 and in KARPF, Stephen Louis. The Gangster Film-Emergence, Variation and Decay of a Genre 1930-40, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, North Western University 1973, pp. 33-35 for gangster film and alternative social codes.
118. W,C, Letters p. 79.

119. Letter to Paul Nash from 17 Elwood Street, Charleston, November 1933 in Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive, London.
120. Quoted in FORD, Hugh. Nancy Cunard, Philadelphia, 1968. pp. 115-6.
121. CUNARD, Nancy "Harlem Reviewed" in CUNARD, Nancy ed. Negro- An Anthology, reprint New York 1970, p. 53 and p. 55.
122. CUNARD 1970 op. cit. p. 47.
123. CUNARD 1970 op. cit p. 47.
124. See earlier discussion pp. 99-100
125. CUNARD 1970 op. cit. p. 47.
126. CUNARD 1970 op. cit.p. 47.
127. JOHNSON, James Wheldon. Black Manhattan, New York 1930, p. 160.

Introduction to Section Two: c.1929 - 1936.

In this section which covers the period from the production of the collages in 1929-30, Burra's close connections with Paul Nash and his involvement in the formation of a British avant-garde, his meeting and early contact with the American poet and Freudian Conrad Aiken and the writer Malcolm Lowry and his continued interest in Freudian ideas and symbolism up to 1936, I want to examine three main areas. Firstly the theme of female figuration and sexuality influenced by Freudian symbolism which developed earlier ideas on the prostitute within the particular idiom of the collage-composition. This relates directly to the works Composition Collage (1929) [CC.45], Collage (1930) [CC.59], Rough on Rats (1930) [CC.66], The Eruption of Vesuvius (1930) [CC.62], Venez avec Moi (1930) [CC.69] and Keep Your Head (1930) [CC.63].

Secondly in my analysis of works such as Revolver Dream (1931) [CC.74], Still Life with Pistol (1931) [CC.76] and Saturday Market (1931) [CC.87], I will acknowledge the continued importance of Freudian symbolism to Burra's work and place this imagery against specific texts by Freud related to theories of sexuality, violence and death. Of particular importance was Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920). I intend to consider the currency of these ideas within Britain in the period and furthermore reveal the seminal role played by Conrad Aiken's poetry in elucidating practices and subjects from which Burra's paintings drew many associations.

Thirdly when exploring the themes and images of works completed between 1930-36 on the theme of the Duenna and its associated female types-hostesses, giantesses, dancers and bird-women, I shall assess how these paintings image the female figure employing not only Freudian symbolism and ideas suggested by Aiken's work, but additionally exploited sets of meanings derived from contemporary surrealist explorations. These paintings which represent the female figure as seducer, harpy and temptress enticingly available advance a stereotype common to French literature and outlined in Mario Praz's The Romantic Agony (1930) as 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'. Such ideas were further inscribed by contemporary understandings of the 'femme fatale' in popular fiction and film mythologies. Acknowledging Burra's indebtedness to this Romantic and Decadent literary tradition, works like Mae West (1934-5) [CC.116], Madame Pastoria (1934-5) [CC.115], Nellie Wallace (1934-5) [CC.117] and ultimately Figure in a Café (1936) [CC.127], defined and advanced the image of the female performer as an erotic object. Such ideas developed the earlier subject of the dancer and prostitute into a post-Freudian context and were heavily indebted to Surrealism. They offered a more sophisticated and complex representation of the modern female star as a professional manipulator of sexual attraction and the erotic.

Furthermore in this chapter I want to analyse the iconography of works such as Composition with Figures (1933) [CC.98], News of the World (1933-4) [CC.102], Serpent's Eggs (1934) [CC.111] and Wheels (1933-4) [CC.103] and the way in which they manipulate ideas culled from Freud and Jung on ritual and totemism. These paintings advanced earlier notions of a pittura metafisica by exploiting suggestions

derived from surrealism. They also reflected both Burra and Nash's growing interest in metaphysics, alchemy, mysticism and the occult. Parallels will be drawn between Burra's work and Nash's photographic practice during this period. Additionally, these subjects will be examined in relation to themes prevalent in the painting of Wadsworth, Armstrong and Hillier. The development of the Unit One group in 1934 and the tentative formation of a British surrealist group, which ultimately crystallised around the 1936 International Surrealist exhibition in London, will also be used to provide a context for the examination of Burra's work against broader cultural developments in the period 1929-36.

The period under consideration up to 1936 was marked by Burra's most intensive interest in and contact with European modernism. This was undoubtedly linked to his experience of travel abroad firstly up to 1932 to France, later in April 1933 to Spain and finally to the United States in 1933-34.[1] However, largely because of ill health and economic controls, Burra's travels were more restricted than they had been in the previous six years. He did not travel abroad in 1932, but returned to Paris briefly in February 1933 before going on to Spain in April of that year. He returned to Spain in Spring 1935. From 1935, Burra's fascination with Spanish culture and the replacement of Paris by Madrid was not just a simple change of milieu, but an economic necessity and a tactical decision to find a safer abroad. The sterling devaluation against the franc in September 1931 and the growing political unrest in Paris marked the end of his extended residence in the city.[2] As Julian Green noted in

his Journal in 1934, this state of affairs precipitated a crisis which directly affected foreigners living in Paris, making them open to suspicion: "Paris lives in a state of latent panic with the threat of civil war, stories of communists getting arms from abroad, continual burials and 'rumeurs de guerre comme toujours".[3]

However, Burra's knowledge of continental developments was maintained through second-hand sources from France, Germany and Belgium. These included international periodicals, film magazines and photobooks, which acted to keep Burra and Nash, like many other British artists, in touch with foreign artistic changes. It also made them aware of cultural activities wider afield in Eastern Europe, Russia and North America. In particular the Belgian magazine Variétés, the German illustrated periodical Der Querschnitt, the French artistic journal Cahiers d'Art and the surrealist periodicals La Révolution Surréaliste, Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution and the early issues of Minotaure, as well as Documents, representing the diversity of surrealist interests within the movement, conveyed the complexity of debates abroad.[4]

Film was also an important source of ideas. Modern European films were available through the London Film Society and the increasing number of international film-houses in London.[5] This process was aided by pan-European film periodicals such as Close Up (published in Territet, Switzerland) and later Film Art, which encouraged and stimulated this process of internationalization.[6] In Burra's particular case, these sources were supplemented by occasional copies of magazines in which film stills and modern photography were

featured as part of a broader cultural perspective, such as Das Leben, Le Crapouillot, Transition, Exposed, Experiment and Détective.[7] In addition, Burra amassed a large collection of American and European popular film magasines which were either bought in London or were brought back from travels abroad to France, America and Spain. These offered a wide-ranging, if often unconventional view of international cultural developments and avant-garde polemics.[8]

Furthermore, the increasing number of exhibitions of continental artists' work in London and the growing opportunities for British artists to show at home and abroad provided an important impetus.[9] The opening of the Mayor Gallery in April 1933 with its German links and pro-surrealist stance gave crucial exposure to artists such as Miró, Ernst and Dalí.[10] As David Mellor has documented in "British Art in the 1930s: Some Economic, Political and Cultural Structures" (1980), this exchange resulted in British artists gaining access to a more comprehensive understanding of European modernism. Burra's work in the early 1930s, like that of Nash, Armstrong and Hillier amongst others, displays a sophistication " learned from continental vanguard sources and [he was] in the process of renovating [his] art through these contacts."[11]

Within these areas, a number of central themes emerge which are important when considering the works produced within the period, namely the collages, the female-figures and the surrealist still-lives and compositions. Firstly, these periodicals attest the continued involvement of the art practitioners of the international

avant-garde with mass media and periodical publications which involved text and illustrations as part of a broader cultural polemic. Like Burra, many of these artists were interested not only in the images of mass and popular culture, but in its techniques and methods of production. The collages and the photomontage in particular, verify this. In addition, the way in which periodicals such as Variétés and Der Querschnitt cross-sectioned all types of cultural production from film stills to 'High Art', from photographs to advertisements, testifies to shifting aesthetic categories and cultural definitions as part of an increasing involvement with mass and popular culture. Articles on literature, painting, photography and classical music were juxtaposed against reviews of the latest jazz music, dances, films and records in an unconventional way. There was an increasing tendency in such a classification towards thematic links which crossed over these boundaries and conventional cultural divisions.

Secondly, the importance of film and photography as major art forms was increasingly acknowledged within the critical discourses of these periodicals. Even the more traditional art journals such as Cahiers d'Art in France and Studio in Britain started to carry articles in the late 1920s on avant-garde film and modern photography, their practices and techniques as well as more searching critical evaluations of their types of cultural production.[12] Furthermore, this was allied to a growing interest in German, Eastern European and Russian activities as part of the growing currency of an internationalised 'New Vision' of modern culture distinctively in evidence in modern photography and film.[13]

Thirdly, the emergence of international interest in surrealism and issues generated from within the various factions of Surrealism in the early 1930s becomes apparent. Whilst the orthodox positions of these groups were presented in periodicals such as La Révolution Surréaliste, Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution and Minotaure, or in a publication like Documents, which initiated a broader surrealist enterprise, other periodicals such as Variétés and Transition produced special numbers or featured surrealism within the thematic divisions of issues. This focused attention on the wide range of surrealist activities within and outside France. Other international magazines in their reviews of exhibitions by surrealist artists, of surrealist writings and publications also expanded contemporary understandings of the movement. These texts outlined debates within surrealist circles, plotted the increasing internationalization of the movement, examined questions of surrealism and politics and, of course, highlighted the crucial areas of psychoanalysis, sexuality and myth.

Within this rich matrix of cultural stimuli, Burra, and I want to suggest, British artistic and intellectual culture in general, underwent a strategic revitalizing and internationalizing process, which contributed to producing what C.R.W. Nevinson called in 1933 "one of the most thrilling epochs of artistic exuberence".[14] In Burra's case, exposure came primarily through his friendship with Aiken and Nash, his contact with Surrealism and the ideas of Freud, his interest in photography and film, and through his experience of travel abroad. As a result, earlier themes drawn from popular culture and urban experience now formed part of a more

sophisticated exploration of imagery and symbolism in his work of the 1930s.

However, underlying this stimulus derived from contacts with European modernism was a central dilemma which Paul Nash noted in an article in The Weekend Review, 5 December 1931: "We have now just reached a point where matters of art at least are considered international. Almost at the same time we find ourselves involved in a crisis which drives us in on ourselves and accentuates our insularity." The threat of a "thorough-going nationalism" signalled by Nash marked a period of re-adjustment in British art in the early 1930s.[15] As Mellor has asserted, artists were forced to adopt new values, attitudes and formal strategies as: "the onset of economic and political crisis seemed to open onto a larger cultural crisis in which the anglicization of continental styles and values was being openly contested by a militant cultural nationalism."[16] Nash's attempts to orchestrate a British avant-garde movement initially through the Recent Developments in British Painting exhibition at Tooth's Gallery in October 1981, and the formation of the Unit One group and exhibition in 1934, can be seen as a desire to rally support for a pro-internationalist, pro-modernist position.[17]

Whilst the life-span of Unit One was short lived - it was first discussed in late 1932, announced by Nash in June 1933 and disbanded by January 1935 it did succeed in addressing a number of important issues.[18] Firstly, it focused attention on contemporary British modernism in the arts. As Waldemar George recognized, these moves towards establishing an "English contemporary group" corresponded

with the emergence of London as an important art centre with an expanding modern art scene. He noted that: "London has for many young artists a new attraction."[19] Even Paul Nash expressed surprise when from Paris in December 1933, he wrote to Ruth Clarke that: "Everyone says London is the place...Il y a un petit mouvement dans l'Angleterre n'est pas ? A polite inquisitiveness is expressed. Unit One has been heard of even in Paris."[20]

Unit One expressly sought to advertize the presence of this avant-gardist, pro-internationalist formation abroad. Its role was, as Herbert Read declared in The Architectural Review, October 1933, to: "convince a much wider public on the continent and in America that England is art conscious and has this advance guard of working artists."[21] Read's article was accompanied by an illustration of Burra's Variety (c.1932-33), which in its reference to sexual symbolism and its collage-like composition must have intimated continental and explicitly surrealist sources. This was undoubtedly meant to stress the group's "experimental tendencies" since Burra's work represented what Read referred to as "the strongest tendency towards pure phantasy".[22] Nash in his key article in The Listener, 5 July 1933, had chosen to reproduce an abstract Composition by Edward Wadsworth. Both Wadsworth's abstraction and Burra's pro-surrealism were important signifiers of the avant-garde nature of Unit One and its diversity.[23]

The inclusion of Burra in Unit One was a revealing manoeuvre on Nash's part.[24] Burra's work, as I have already suggested, was significant for its specific references to Freudian symbolism and

adept manipulation of compositional devices adapted from collage. As the Vogue critic had already recognised in his review of 17 April 1929, these were conspicuous hallmarks of a knowledge of continental modernism.[25] The works exhibited in the Mayor Gallery exhibition of April 1934: The Bullfight (1933), Serpents' Eggs (1934), Harlem (1934) and Still Life (1933) strengthened this sense of cosmopolitanism, specifically registering Burra's travels to Spain and Harlem and also suggesting an adept use of complex Freudian symbolism. Whilst for Burra, such exposure and attention was a useful and important form of publicity, for Nash it provided clear evidence of British art's relation to surrealism. However, Burra wrote complaining to Nash in April 1934 that following the opening of the Unit One Exhibition there had been "no publicity at all so far as I can see in any of the papers. The Morning P[ost] takes no notice at all of such dangerous subversive influences..."[26]

Secondly, Burra's involvement in Unit One was used to reinforce claims for a comprehensive representation of modern activity in the arts, incorporating painters, sculptors and architects in a 'Bauhaus-like' consortium. In terms of painting, this catholic range, although not totally homogenous, did, as Charles Harrison has suggested, make "proto-surrealism and abstract art appear as complimentary aspects of a developing modernism."[27] It would have been important for Burra to have been a recognized member of such an orientation. Following his participation in the Tooth Gallery's Recent Developments in British Painting in October 1931 organized by Nash and in the Mayor Gallery's Art Now show in October-November 1933 instigated by Herbert Read, Burra's presence was an integral part of

an emergent British modern art movement.[28] These exhibitions, as Charles Harrison has noted, provided "English artists with the first substantial opportunity for a decade to press their own claims in London alongside those of major continental artists."[29] Amongst such a constituency and alongside works by Armstrong, Hillier and Nash, Burra's direction was clearly seen as towards an English 'proto-surrealism-symbolism' form of painting. The Daily Express in a review of 11 April 1934 even referred to Burra as "an English surrealist."[30] Within the politics of Unit One, Burra together with Armstrong, Hillier and Nash countered the abstract faction of Nicholson, Hepworth, Bigge, Wadsworth and Moore. At a time of Nicholson's growing status and power on the British and international art scene, it must have been important for Nash to consolidate his bid to become a leading figure in the organization of the British "Younger School of Painting".[31]

Burra, however, failed to actively support Nash's leadership of Unit One both in terms of the politics of the group debates and in the practical organization of the exhibition. He consistently ignored Nash's pleas for support and grudgingly agreed to lend to the exhibition and provincial tour. Burra wrote to Nash in February-March 1934 that: "I hope I have enough pics by whenever it is, they all seem unsuitable for Unit".[32] He also went abroad to the United States at the time of the exhibition's organization.[33] Furthermore, in the preparation of the theoretical statements which were to form an integral part of Unit One's claim to being polemical and 'avant-gardist' (being modelled as they were on the French cahiers Abstraction-Création), Burra ignored the questionnaire circulated by

Read in November 1933 and refused to write any accompanying statement. These brief outlines of each artist's position were aimed at stressing their 'professionalism' and acknowledging their awareness of current theoretical debates abroad, identifying allegiances and interests. They were also a crucial part of claiming and substantiating the groups "avant-gardist" position and contributing to a revived artistic debate on modernism in Britain. Nash complained bitterly to Burra in a letter dated 8 February 1934: "As we didn't get a word out of you and I wasn't going to bother you ...Douglas and Herbert Read wrote something about you and your work....You'd better get in touch with Douglas and see a proof, I sh'd think."[34]

Apart from this introduction, Burra's catalogue section included photographs of himself, notably a close-up Hands study over a collage incorporating the word AMERI[CA] and one of his studio taken by Barbera Ker-Seymer. Burra, in a letter to Nash after the show had been organized, criticized both exhibition and complained about the Unit One publication: "Really I have never laughed so much. Barbera Hepworth is such fun... Douglas C says the show looks fine...I know it will be a sight for sore eyes especially the daring spring and early summer modes launched by Ben Nicholson. MY DEAR !!!....P.S. The picture of my studio is the oddest thing to look at one would think I painted nothing but photos of Greta Garbo and gramophone records rather out of focus."[35]

Within the context of the Mayor Gallery Unit One exhibition, Burra's contribution clearly identified with the second thrust of Nash's

argument on manifestations of "the modern spirit" in painting. The first direction, "the pursuit of form...typified by abstract art", was strongly represented by examples of work by Wadsworth (for example, Dux and Comes (1933), Nicholson (Six Circles (1933) and Bigge (Composition (1933). The second direction, exemplified by works by Nash (Landscape Composition (Landscape of the Megaliths (1934), Hillier (Pylons (c.1933) and Armstrong (Swans (c.1933), was towards what Nash called: "the pursuit of the soul, the attempt to trace the 'psyche' in its devious flight, a psychological research on the part of the artist parallel to the experiments of the great analysts. This is represented by the movement known as Surréalisme."[36] In the paintings by Nash, Hillier and Armstrong, the use of isolated symbolic objects, often natural or biomorphic forms, in a natural or metaphysical landscape suggested the theme of metamorphosis. In Nash's work, this presented 'found' fossils in a pre-historic setting. In Hillier's Pylons, isolated machine imagery was depicted on a desolate beach. In Armstrong's Swans, the heavily illuminated, interwoven bird forms appear on an empty stage. Against these works, Burra's Serpents' Eggs (1934) with its array of symbolic objects, and references to Blakean transformation set against a lyrical landscape and Serpent's Eggs (1934) with its animal-egg symbolism and duenna-figure constructions, appear relevant to the direction outlined by Nash.[37] However, Burra's two other contributions, The Bullfight (1933) and Harlem (1934) were problematical in this respect. They might have been, as already mentioned, included to make up the required number of paintings. Neither Nash's statements nor the catalogue introduction to Burra's work confronted the difficulties which these paintings posed to the overall construction offered by

Unit One and to the claims of the non-abstract faction in particular.[38]

In his introduction to Burra's section, Cooper (in whose name it eventually appeared) presented Burra's works as essentially products of a 'naive fantasiste': "His imagination is simple, rich, romantic and child-like."[39] He set Burra into that English tradition of fantastic art exemplified by Blake and continued in Tenniel's illustrations to Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland (1886). He also made wider references to the work of Goya, Bosch and Firbank and noted the influence of modern photography which had affected Burra's use of montage.[40] Cooper then extended his discussion to consider Burra's links with surrealism declaring that Burra: "relied entirely on his imagination, and has been carried into the realms of the surreal."[41] However from this point the last two paragraphs become confused with Cooper taking pains to stress Burra was "not an abstract artist" nor that his work: "should be considered in conjunction with the work of the members of that self-appointed group of French painters, the Surréalistes.." Dismissing any evidence of theoretical underpinnings in Burra's work, which he saw as proving his anti-orthodox surrealism, Cooper concluded that: "If we return to the basic thesis as expounded by Hegel, then Edward Burra as well as Paul Nash, must be admitted to be surrealist artists - that is to say concerned with the greater reality behind the reality."[42] In his attempt to distance British surrealist activity from French, Cooper, probably heavily influenced by Read, had failed to elucidate many of the connections pertinent to Burra's work at this time, emphasizing instead that Burra: "takes simple delight in day-dreams. There is no

sophistication."[43] Any informed understanding of the four works exhibited at the Unit One London showing or the other works loaned to its provincial tour - Still Life (1932), John Deth (1931), Composition [with figures] (1933) and Composition (probably Collage 1929)- was impeded by Cooper's note and compounded by the artist's lack of comment.

This was noted in the most extensive review of Burra's involvement in Unit One by Osbert Lancaster in The Architectural Review, June 1934, who taking issue with Cooper's "undergraduate little essay" declared that it was: "extremely unfair to Mr. Burra..[who] has had at least one well reported one man show at a prominent gallery, has shown his works at numerous exhibitions and has done some highly successful designs for the stage." Lancaster continued: "Mr. Burra's position in the group needs some justification, which is not going to be accomplished by bright little references to Blake and Firbank."[44]

Other critics' responses to Burra's inclusion in Unit One were mixed although they registered his awareness of artistic developments in Paris. The New English Weekly saw his work as further proof of the group's outdatedness revealing: "English flavoured variations on the Paris fashions of from 5 to 10 years previously", although "Mr. Burra displays some rather naive surrealities, but unfortunately his sub-conscious is not interesting."[45] Hugh Gordon Porteus in The Listener, 4 April '34, commended "the entertaining fantasies of Mr. Burra", The Times critic wrote that his paintings were "imaginative and entertaining and very rich in colour" and in The Daily Mail, 8 April '34, Michel Sevier drew attention to Burra's "illustrative fantasies". The Studio reviewer wrote that "All except Mr. Burra are

rather embarrassingly solemn" and "rather aggressively and self-consciously avant-gardist".[46] As Burra himself recorded in a letter to Nash in April 1934: "There is great opposition and abuse of Unit One from all sides, as far as I can see."[47]

The lack of commitment shown by Burra with regard to Unit One and his failure to promote Nash's leadership requires some consideration. Primarily this lay in the notion of modern art which Nash was self-consciously trying to promote and the group forum of Unit One incorporating "artists with common sympathies".[48] As David Mellor has noted, the aim of Unit One was essentially "an attempt to renew and consolidate the mythology of modernism; to renew a myth of progress and the future through, among other things, constructivist "Design...considered as a structural purpose".[49] Whilst these aims were not foreign to Burra's work, they were certainly not of central importance at this particular historical juncture. Nash's expressed desire to "find my way between the claims of Abstractions and pure interpretations" were alien to Burra's tradition of 'Realism' in the 1920s and his interest in the early 1930s in Freud, the erotic and imagery developed through an awareness of continental Surrealism mixed with popular cultural sources.[50] Also Burra's abhorrence of group involvement reinforced this resistance. Where Burra and Nash were in agreement however was on the need to explore the wider territories opened up by continental artistic groups in the early 1930s. For Burra, the decisive impulse was surrealism and its concerns with the unconscious, psychology, myth and the occult, and towards an international modern art re-vitalized by post-Freudian concepts and symbolism.

In the mid-1930s, the formation of a broader British surrealist imperative and the International Exhibition in London in 1936 added to the emergence in Britain of an energetic discussion of modernism and debates about the nature of modern art, precipitated by surrealism.[51] Undoubtedly whilst the 1936 exhibition acted as the culminating point of these issues, they occupied a crucial critical space throughout the early 1930s in British artistic and intellectual circles. Burra's involvement in these debates whilst often seeming tangential and removed, constituted an important position. His work played a decisive role in defining that distinctive nature of one strain of British Surrealism, which confidently manipulated images and symbolism carrying a complex series of Freudian understandings and surrealist associations in currency at this time. As Paul Nash later commented on Burra's importance to the surrealist achievement in British art in the 1930s: "without your contribution the so-called surrealists ... looked over-balanced and ineffective."[52] It is Burra's contribution which I shall evaluate in this section setting images in works produced from c.1929-36 within an expanded context derived from Aiken, Freudian symbolism and continental Surrealism.

1. See chronology pp478-9
2. Burra first visited Spain in April 1933 with Aiken and Lowry travelling to Barcelona, Granada, Seville, Ronda and Spanish Morocco returning via Gibralter and Lisbon. He returned to Spain in Spring 1935 with Clover de Pertinez visiting Barcelona and Madrid, returning in July 1935. His intention of living in Madrid from Spring 1936 was abandoned after the start of the Civil War in June. Regarding the effect of currency fluctuations on Burra, who depended on a private income, he had written earlier that "all I hope is that the £ sterling will keep up and not fall, for if it does, I shall have to clear out rapid." Letter, Spring 1925 in W.C. Letters p.30. Confirmed in conversation with Clover de Pertinez, 16 April 1982. The exchange rate in Spain was beneficial as Burra recorded in a letter to Chappell from Madrid in 1935:"You now get 40 to the 1£ note (not travellers cheques or bank cheques, but notes, dearie, notes)". W.C. Letters p. 93.
3. GREEN, Julian, Journal 1928-34, Paris 1938, p. 211.
4. All represented in the Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London. Burra and Nash had a joint subscription to Variétés in the late 1920s and Burra bought international magazines at Zwemmers, Charing Cross Road, London in the early 1930s. Confirmed in conversation with Barbera Ker-Seymer, 16. February 1982
5. Burra was a member from October 1925. For a discussion of London Film Scene in the period see MACPHERSONS, Don, ed., Traditions of Independence - British Cinema in the Thirties, London 1980, pp. 36-104.
6. Burra collected Close-Up from July 1927 and Film Art from Spring 1933.
7. All contained in the Burra Papers, Tate Archive. The copy of Transition, June 1930 included a contribution by the Cambridge group Experiment with Julian Trevelyan's text "To dream is to create", which outlined the importance of dream to artistic creation. It is unlikely that Burra was connected with the group or the Oxford 'Outlook' group.
8. Cf., p. 230
9. Cf., HALLIDAY, Nigel, English Responses to Contemporary European Art between c.1926-c.1936: A Study of Five Galleries in London, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London, Courtauld Institute of Art, 1979, pp. 33-42.
10. Miró Exhibition, June 1933; Ernst, July 1933; Dalí, Spring and Autumn 1934. The Mayor Gallery was especially active in promoting foreign art through its contacts with the Flechtheim Gallery, Berlin and the Galérie de l'Effort Moderne, Paris. It also acted as distributor for the Skira publishing house in Britain. Douglas Goldring in Studio, CVIII, 1934, p. 208 referred to it "as a kind of French window ... where one has the chance of studying

the surrealists without crossing the channel". In Studio, CIX, 1935, p. 95 it was credited with the position of "the famous stronghold of the avant-garde in Britain".[Mayor Gallery Press cuttings, Tate Archive]. Cf., HARRISON 1981, op.cit., p. 298.

11. MELLOR, David, "British Art in the 1930s: Some Economic, Political and Cultural Structures", in GLOVER-SMITH, Frank ed. Class, Culture and Social Change, Sussex, 1980, pp. 185-207. Quote pp.186-7.
12. Cf., MELLOR, David, "London - Berlin - London: a cultural history. The Reception and Influence of New Photography in Britain 1927 -33", in MELLOR, David, Germany. The New Photography 1927-33, London 1978 pp. 123-5, pp. 127-9.
13. There was an exhibition of Soviet Art at the Bloomsbury Gallery in London in 1930 and of International Film Stills at the Zwemmer Gallery in London in 1931, selected by Paul Rotha, which featured stills from Soviet films. Cf., Mellor 1978, op.cit., pp. 115-6.
14. NEVINSON, C.R.W. Art for Whose Sake, London 1933, p. 62.
15. Paul Nash, "On Nature, Art and Life" Weekend Review, 5 Dec. 1931.
16. MELLOR, 1975 op. cit. pp. 126-7.
17. Nash was asked by Ralph Keene of Tooth's Gallery to organize the Recent Developments exhibition, in a letter, 20 August 1931. Quoted in BERTRAM, Anthony, Paul Nash-The Portrait of An Artist, London 1955, p. 176. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 244.
18. Paul Nash Letter to the Times, 2 June 1933 on the formation of Unit One. Cf., HARRISON, Charles, English Art and Modernism 1900-39, London 1981, pp. 240-253 and HARRISON, Charles, Unit One, in PORTSMOUTH CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY. Unit One, May-June 1980, pp. 1-3.
19. GEORGE, Waldemar, "London Review", Apollo, XXI, 1934, p. 210.
20. NASH, Paul, Letter to Ruth Clarke, December 1933 from Paris. Nash Papers, Tate Archive.
21. READ, Herbert, "Unit One", The Architectural Review, October 1933, p. 127.
22. READ 1933, op. cit., p. 127.
23. NASH, Paul, "Unit One", The Listener, 5 July 1933, p. 14-15.
24. Letters in Nash Papers and Burra Papers, Tate Archive, document Nash's attempts to include Burra. Tristram Hillier recalled that: "Nash ... became our captain, marshalled us for meetings, arranged practical details and was generally the moving spirit". Cf., HILLIER, Tristram, Leda and the Goose. An Autobiography, London 1954, p. 129. Barbera Ker-Seymer said that Burra agreed to participate largely due to Nash's coercion. Conversation with author, 16 February 1982
25. Review of Burra's second Leicester Galleries exhibition, Vogue, 17 April 1929, p. 7.
26. Letter from Burra to Paul Nash, April 1934 from Springfield, Burra Papers Tate Archive.
27. HARRISON 1981, op. cit., p. 248

28. At Tooth's Recent Developments in British Painting exhibition, London, October 1931 Burra exhibited a painting Coffee (No 1) and 4 drawings After the Play (No 22), Cosmetics (No 30), Off to the Market (No 31), and Far West (No 32). Cf., CAUSEY 1980 op. cit., p. 244. Burra exhibited Still Life at the Mayor Gallery Survey of Contemporary Art - Art Now, October-November 1933. Burra's Composition (The Duennas 1932) was illustrated as plate no. 116 in READ, Herbert, Art Now. An Introduction to the Theory of Modern Painting and Sculpture, London 1933.
29. HARRISON 1981, op. cit., p. 240.
30. Cf., HARRISON. op. cit., pp. 241-2. Unnamed reviewer "Art and the Income Tax". The Daily Express, 11 April 1934 in Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
31. Cf., HARRISON 1981, op. cit., pp. 273-4.
32. Letter from Burra to Paul Nash, February-March 1934 from Springfield. Burra Papers, Tate Archive. Nash in a letter to Burra dated 8 February 1934 from Nice wrote: "I think we want six pictures from each number. I hope you've got some good ones." Nash Papers, Tate Archive, London.
33. Burra left for New York in October 1933 and returned in March 1934. Nash complained in a letter dated 8. February 1934 "What became of my passionate requests for Unit Dope ... I sent it to your New York address ... from that day until your letter arrived the other day, I heard nothing from you..." Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London.
34. Letter from Paul Nash to Burra dated 8 February 1934 from Nice op. cit.
35. READ, Herbert, ed., Unit One. The Modern Movement in English Architecture, Painting and Sculpture, London 1934 pp. 58-61. Plate XXV, Portrait and Hands, p.58 and plate XXVI, p.61 Studio. Letter from Burra to Paul Nash, from Springfield, 10 April 1934 Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London.
36. NASH, Paul, "Unit One", The Listener, 5 July 1933, pp. 14-15.
37. Cf., PORTSMOUTH CITY MUSEUM AND GALLERY 1980, op. cit., pp. 35-6 and HARRISON, Charles. Introduction ibid., pp. 2-3.
38. See footnote 32.
39. COOPER, Douglas, "Edward Burra. A Note", in READ 1934, op. cit., p. 59.
40. COOPER, op. cit., p. 59.
41. COOPER, op. cit., p. 59.
42. COOPER, op. cit., pp. 59-60
43. COOPER, op. cit., p. 59
44. LANCASTER, Osbert, The Architectural Review, June 1934 in Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive, London.
45. The New English Weekly, 26 April 1934. unnamed review loc. cit.
46. PORTEUS, Hugh Gordan, The Listener, 4 April 1934; The Times 12 April 1934; SEVIER, Michel, The Daily Mail, 8 April 1934; The Studio, CVII, April, 1932 p. 330. Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive, London.

47. Letter from Burra to Nash April 1934 from Springfield. Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London.
48. NASH, Paul, Letter to The Times 2 June 1933 on the formation of Unit One.
49. MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 188.
50. Paul Nash letter to Anthony Bertram dated 14 April 1933 quoted in CAUSEY, Andrew. "Paul Nash", PORTSMOUTH CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY 1980, op. cit., p. 20.
51. Cf HARRISON 1981, op. cit., pp. 298-300.
52. Letter from Paul Nash to Edward Burra, 11 September 1942, Nash Papers, Tate Archive, London.

Chapter Five: The Collages.

Between late 1929 and 1930 Burra sometimes in conjunction with Nash produced six collage-compositions: Composition Collage (1929) [CC.45], Race Course Collage (1930) [CC.59], Rough on Rats (1930), Venez Avec Moi (1930) [CC.69], Keep Your Head (1930) [CC.63] and Eruption of Vesuvius (1930) [CC.62].[1] Eruption of Vesuvius attracted particular attention being shown at the 28th London Group exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries in 1930 and reproduced in Cahiers d'Art in 1938. One of Burra's collages and probably Eruption of Vesuvius was exhibited at the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris January-February 1938 thereby finding its way into the influential French art magazine.[2] Along with paintings on the 'duenna-hostesse-giantesse-personage' theme, the collages were exhibited and publically represented as important examples of Burra's surrealist allegiance and intention. The Daily Express critic recognized this in his review of Unit One, 11 April 1934, when he declared that Burra was: "a good naïve montagist, an English surrealist."[3]

The collages in their subject matter, method of production and selection of imagery were seen to reinforce this identification. In their use of visual fragments derived from popular illustrations and in the collective nature of their production - Nash worked with Burra on Rough on Rats [CC.66] - as well as their sense of 'parlour game' fun, the collages radically broke with

both Burra and Nash's previous method of art practice. For Nash, at this time considered one of Britain's "finest living painters", the cutting-out and chance positioning of images from popular sources was, as Margaret Nash suggested, merely a casual amusement with Burra who lived nearby: "a parlour game". Andrew Causey has reinforced this by noting that: "For Nash, collage making was a pastime - he often used it to make humorous Christmas cards.."[4]

For example, a collage card sent by Nash to Burra shows figures whose heads have been replaced by flowers. It is inscribed "A Valentine for Ed from his friends at 1" (Nash's address close by) and suggests that these images were intimate and private productions with collage-making primarily an amusement carried out by Burra and Nash as part of their friendship.[5] They were not, at least for Nash, for public consumption. However as a later postcard sent by Nash to Burra dated 26 July 1935 suggests, one of these private images was soon circulating in a public sphere. Nash had had the casual montage professionally reprinted and mounted, possibly following the example of Ernst's collage-novel La Femme 100 Têtes (1929), which recycled 19th Century illustrations. In the montage [CC.64], the imagery is drawn from a still of Jean Vigo's film A Propos de Nice (1930), vegetable and seed catalogues and photographic illustrations from Variétés.[6]

Alternatively as with Eruption of Vesuvius, the collage was exhibited and reproduced as a public statement of Burra's surrealist commitment and appropriated as part of the broader discourse surrounding British Surrealism in the 1930s. For Burra,

unlike Nash, the subversive aspect of collage practice with its absence of conscious artistry, its sudden, often random image-making and its distinctive manipulation of the figurative genre became associated with surrealist intention. This relationship was stressed by means of formal and iconographic similarities to previous Dada and contemporary surrealist works. For example, in its use of an aerial photograph and its high level viewpoint, the montage adopts spacial elevations similar to Hannah Höch's From Above (photomontage, 1928) which is illustration 60 in Roh and Tschichold's: Foto-Auge (1929) in which two acrobatic performers sitting on a high wire view the landscape below and the various collection of heads, limbs, animal forms and objects collaged onto it.[7] These ideas were underscored by a later letter from Burra to his close friend Barbera Ker-Seymer dated 23 January or June 1930 in response to the receipt of two postcards from her: "thank you for the two daintie pcs they will be so useful for my new pictures. we never bother to paint in this part now we just stick things on instead. I have such a twee one started of two ladies walking along with pieces of motor engines for heads and a table at the side made of anita paiges legs with a drawn in top and a large dishful of heads reposing on it. its fascinating."[8]

The work in progress was obviously Eruption of Vesuvius in which two female figures, "ladys", are shown with machine part heads collaged onto conventionally painted female torsoes in long dresses holding fans and wearing veils. The right hand figure places her hand into the collection of cut-out heads (possibly of film stars) displayed in the dish which is standing on the side

table with "anita paiges" legs (a contemporary film star). Behind them, another figure with a machine-valve or gauge-dial head carrying a hammer and a fan peers in through the open window. Behind this figure is represented a dramatic seascape similar to Burra's earlier Mediterranean ones in which mountains and rocky shores lead to a rough, tossing sea. An erupting volcano is seen in the distance revealed by the partly drawn, billowing curtain.

The scene is obviously a familiar one in Burra's work derived from his experience of Marseilles and Toulon's prostitute areas. "Ladys" in Burra's vocabulary was almost exclusively used to signal protitutes and the interior is typical of the Mediterranean brothel as discussed earlier with a main room opening out onto the street of a portside area. The harbour is depicted in the distance. The patrolling figure outside is the prostitute who touts for customers and signals the location of the brothel. The door is shown to the left of the composition. In addition, the curtained window slightly drawn back to allow a glimpse of the brothel interior was a common sign, one which both physically and symbolically divided the public and private spheres of activity into two separate zones.[9]

This reading is strengthened by the presence of naked or semi-naked female figures on the left hand side of the work who in various stages of undress and often costumed in thin sheer fabrics parage or adopt positions upon the arrival of the two make figures: one horse-headed and the other sporting a feathered hat. This ritual parade, as Brassaï noted in his Secret Paris of the

30s, was a customary procedure in certain French brothels in the period where: "the staff were never completely undressed. Naked bodies were covered with sumptuous negligées. They were like transparent evening dresses with silk trains, decorated with bows covered with lace. They were cut low to reveal bare arms and bosoms."[10] Upon the arrival of clients at choosing time, Brassaï noted: "All the girls who weren't otherwise occupied would remove their dressing gowns ... [and]... form a tableau vivante, the shortest sometimes kneeling in front with the others standing behind them. The visitor could thus make a considered choice..."[11] Brassaï's photograph of such a choosing time offers a voyeuristic glimpse of such brothel procedures and would appear to verify the subject of Burra's collage.

However the most dramatic manipulation of the figurative language is not in the tableaux figures, but in the 'madames' of the brothel in the foreground and in the 'pimp-like' prostitute in the street who peers through the window into the brothel. In each of these figures, the heads have been replaced by machine-parts or mechanical gauge-dials. This is further contrasted against the 'naturalism' of their bodies. Such transformations mark the reduction of the individuality of these figures who are denied facial features and distinguishing characteristics. By means of the collaged insertion, the brothel women are de-humanized and de-individualized and a key area of signification in traditional portraiture or figurative painting is undermined.

Such a strategy had been one of the earliest practices of the Dada collageurs and photomontagists. In Moholy-Nagy's Malerèi, Fotografie, Film (1925, second edition 1927), which Burra knew, Höch's photomontage entitled The Multi-Millionaire [pl.137] had inserted the barrel and mechanism of a rifle into the severed head of the armaments manufacturer.'[12] The operation radically altered both the figurative image itself and the processes of image-construction inserting the ready-made photographic image of collage piece as a bold intervention. As Hannah Höch noted, the insertion of ready made images marked out: "a new purpose ... to integrate objects from the world of machines and industry into the world of art."'[13] Furthermore as in Burra's Eruption of Vesuvius, the irony of the mechanistic transmutation wittily communicates the automatism of the figures and suggests an constructed object incorporating ready-made parts. In addition, such introductions disrupted and destabilised traditional iconographic systems. They introduced images which in their systems of meaning referred directly to the 'real' world outside of the picture, to everyday reality and in its photographic nature allied itself to mass production and popular circulation, thereby clearly identifying the artist with contemporary affairs.

The earliest collage production Composition Collage (1929) [CC.45] also self-consciously promotes thematic links with earlier Dada predecessors in its theme of the urban and metropolitan. Seen through the windows are the stereotyped iconographic indicators of the modern Americanised conglomeration: skyscrapers. Whilst the subject of the collage is a conventional interior conversation-

piece similar to the earlier Balcony, Toulon (1929) [CC.43] or Dessert (1929) [CC.47], the setting is that distinctive modern apartment with elevated city-views so venerated in the work of many 'modernist' and 'futuristic' artists, photographers and film-makers. For example, a plethora of such images of the archetypal modern city - New York, much in vogue in the 1920s, had been reproduced in contemporary art magazines in the late 1920s and also predominated in a certain type of film best exemplified by the massively popular Lang's Metropolis (1926). According to the film magazine Cinéa in May- June 1929, this had caused "a rage in Paris for ... skyscraper films."[14]

Examples included Sheeler's photographs of New York published in Cahiers d'Art (Vol II No 4-5, 1927) and his New York film Manhatta which was shown at the London Film Club in November 1927.[15] Berenice Abbott's photographs of New York had appeared in a Variétés special number on "U.S.A." in August 1929 and the popular periodical Le Crapouillot had similarly printed a "Voyages" special including photographs of New York landscapes in 1927.[16] New York for many European modernists achieved a special cultural significance in the late 1920s as a potent modern urban mythology and it was one which the image of the skyscraper in particular came to be associated with. This identification was so pervasive that, I suggest, in films such as Metropolis, the ideal of the 'futuristic' city incorporated many specific aspects of Manhattan itself, notably its architecture of skyscrapers.[17]

In addition, the procedural methods of collage and its overwhelming compendium of image-effect were crucially allied to the visual experience of the modern city. Part of the attraction and power of the city was its bewildering mass of imagery and its potency as an accumulation of the modern. Cityscape collages and montages attempted to signal this. For example, Paul Citrôen's The City was used as publicity material for Ruttman's Berlin Symphony of a Great City (1927).[18] The skyscraper image which dominates Citrôen's work stood as a powerful metaphor for the modern uban and almost implicitly linked to the specific architectural modernity of the architypal American metropolis New York. Reproduced in Moholy-Nagy's Malerei, Fotografie, Film (second edition 1927), owned by Burra, The City exploited the 'larger than life' connotations of the greatly magnified or multiply reproduced, skyscraper image. As Moholy-Nagy's title suggested: "The experience of the sea of stone is here raised to gigantic proportions".[19] The colossal scale of the city's architecture was a potent indicator of the wealth and dynamism of the urban experience.

Furthermore in Composition Collage, there is a sense of an internationalist cultural awareness. In particular, this functioned in the 1920s through journalism and the circulation of international news and ideas through the press. This is explicitly signalled in the use of various international newspapers as collage fragments; the woman's arm is cut out from an English newspaper, a section of French newspaper forms the body and on the table is a piece from the Russian newspaper Pravda.

This international motif is reiterated in the use of French advertisement imagery (the 'Pétrole Hahn' hair-conditioner bottle sticker), the representation of British brand cigarettes (Players No.3) and coupons on the inclusion of Mazda light. Such images were part of the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of advertising in the 1920s and the growing wealth of advertizing imagery in an expanding international market. They suggest the growth of a consumer society which is developing a more sophisticated knowledge of an international 'language' of product advertisements and shared currency of imagery.[20]

These ideas of trans-nationalism in the market economy are further accentuated in cultural terms by the selection of the imagery for the figures who include heads from American and German celebrities: Lon Chaney, Louise Brooks and the boxer Primo Rivera.[21] Probably selected from Burra's collection of film magazines and American popular cultural periodicals, these figures formed part of that group of celebrities promoted in film, sport and popular culture as examples of a new international mass culture. This was increasingly dominated, though not exclusively by America. This leisure motif is further reinforced in the selection of images from the entertainment sphere: dice, playing cards, dominoes, games boxes, roulette markers and the cocktail glasses on the table. As discussed in relation to earlier paintings, such iconographic indicators signalled the growth of leisure and gambling as part of the social scene, another important cultural development area in the 1920s.[22]

The composition is completed by cut-outs from dress fabrics and pattern books, wallpaper design books and plant mail-order catalogues plus scraps from unrecognizable magazine illustrations. These form areas of spatial delineation, which are contrasted with specific images cut out 'intact' (such as the bottles, heads, objects, etc.) and set against those incorporating language (newspaper or advertisements areas). In the use of the plant illustrations, there is a witty play between the images as plants held by the female dancing figure and the plants as decorative patterns in the floorcovering. A similar contrast is made between the images of skyscrapers which are used in the view from the window to suggest architectural forms and in the case of the man's shirt as a pattern device. Throughout the work, the play between different levels of association, between image and word, image and pattern, photograph and drawn in material (e.g. the hands of the dancing figures) is extensively exploited. However, the central theme of the conversation piece-interior acts as a framework for the understanding of the imagery. It integrates and unites many of these diverse images and sources.[23]

The collages also reconsider themes developed in the paintings of the late 1920s related to Burra's Mediterranean experience. Venez Avec Moi (1930) [CC.69] is set in a generalised Mediterranean locale reminiscent of Arcadia (1928-9) with an imposing stair case and carrying distinctively theatrical overtones. In Racecourse Collage (1930) [CC.59], the theme of social intercourse focuses on the popular race meeting with figures becoming metaphors for public observation and spectatorship. This incorporates watching

the female figures and the members of the audience as well as the races. Common to both these collages is the theme of flaneurism; a kind of public watching of others from the position of a detached, analytical spectator. This is emphasized in the numerous acts of observation which are represented in the work and the inclusion of a large number of collaged eyes.[24]

These associations were entirely appropriate to the major theme associated with the South of France: streetwalking and prostitution. This theme also reappears in a number of collages not only in Eruption of Vesuvius, but also Keep Your Head (1930), Rough on Rats (1930) and the montage of 1930. Importantly, it fixes on the figure of the solitary streetwalker who is involved in soliciting or as mentioned earlier, the brothel parade. Mechanical and plant forms are the chief elements introduced into the female figure to disrupt the traditional figurative associations and readings. This could possibly be a pun on the reference to the streetwalker in 19th popular illustration as flower-seller, but it seems to draw more on earlier Dada and contemporary surrealist practice. Enlargement of parts of the body, disruptions of scale and the replacements of particular anatomical features notably eyes, facial features and bodies are the most common manipulations to emphasize the particular attractions of the prostitute-coquette.[25]

The theme of the coquette was an important Dada collage motif, notably in the work of Hannah Höch whose works were exhibited at the Film und Foto exhibition in Stuttgart, May - July 1929. They

were also widely reproduced in contemporary German publications, in particular Franz Roh's Foto-auge (1929) and Moholy-Nagy's Malerei, Fotografie, Film (1925, reprinted 1927) both of which Burra owned.[26] As part of the wider subject of female figuration, the dancer, the entertainer and the coquette were three recurrent types in Höch's exploration of the modern women in contemporary German society.[27] In works such as The English Dancer (1928), Cut with a Kitchen Knife (1919) and The Coquette (1923-5), the replacement of the female figure's head or face by a collaged fragment, often acting as a kind of mask insertion, was a characteristic feature of Höch's representation of such types. In Foreign Beauty (1929) [pl.138] - a particularly appropriate title for Burra's female types - the truncated body has been surmounted by a spectacled, primitive mask collaged in the place of the head. This satirically suggests that the head as the site of female intelligence is of less importance to the spectator than the revelation of the nude body.[28]

Whilst Burra's collage figures take specific quotations from Höch's sources, for example the light-bulbed figure in Racecourse Collage, pays homage to Höch's Das Schoene Madchen (1920), in more general terms, it is the thematic similarities and formal manipulations structured around the female figure as entertainer, dancer and coquette which are shared.[29] In particular, the disruptive insertion of the collage head-mask and the juxtaposition of women and machine parts was a distinctive operation in Berlin Dada photomontages by Höch and Raoul Hausmann. These also occur in Schwitter's work, for example Mz 239. Frau-Uhr (Woman Watch,

1921), where the female torso is interrupted by the insertion of a watch dial held by a male hand.[30] As John Elderfield has commented, Schwitters along with Hausmann and Höch developed the link between women-art-fashion and fashion-machine as a specific theme related to the broader Dada issue of the connection between art and the machine.[31] In Eruption of Vesuvius and Keep Your Head, the collages' complex constructions of popular imagery, the use of head masks and inclusion of pirouetting female figures display many of the hallmarks of post-Dada iconographic languages and a specific knowledge of earlier collage techniques. The use of such methods and images to revitalise the satirical impact of figurative works is indicative of the iconoclastic nature of Burra's work in the years 1929-30.

Such reworkings of Dada's radical visual language either through the practice of collage and photomontage or shared motifs were commended by Aragon in an introduction to an exhibition of collage works by surrealist artists at the Galerie Goemans entitled La peinture au défi (1930) and in an article in La Révolution Surréaliste, No 12, December 1929), entitled "Introduction à 1930".[32] Burra knew both of these texts which stressed the strategic importance of Dada's enterprise and its key role in updating and refurbishing modern artistic culture. The texts also acknowledged the extensive iconoclastic implications of Dada's innovatory types of technical production both in representational and material terms. Aragon reviewing the 1920s in La Révolution Surréaliste recognised that the real impact of Dada's revolution could only now be evaluated: "We begin to see

now what this great intellectu al convulsion really destroyed, what it rendered finally impossible and how it appeared at an instant of the modern evolution as a decisive instant of that evolution." He continued: "its contradictions had to give birth to something else. The pressures of the new elements and of ideas tending to command attention at the expense of other ideas, transfigured the modernity of the years that followed."[33]

In this re-evaluation of collage between 1929-30, Aragon sanctioned the collaged image as a key "new element" urgently taken up by contemporary surrealist artists to "create new art forms out of the remnants of a former culture."[34] In particular, the crucial importance of Berlin Dada's socio-political imperatives in collage and photomontage exemplified by Grosz and Heartfield, the 'non-Art' experiments of Schwitters 'Merz'-culture with its banal, popular images and above all, Ernst's early collage productions in Cologne were cited. Such a Dada legacy represented an impressive foundation from which the 'collageur' and 'montagist' could work. Furthermore, the recent publication of Ernst's collage-novel La Femme 100 Têtes (1929), which Burra and Nash knew, strengthened the immediacy of the project outlined by Aragon to develop a visual language "where the thing expressed is more important than than the manner of expressing it, where the object represented plays the role of a word."[35]

Aspects of this inheritance had played an important role in avant-garde film, a legacy which Burra had access to through the early screenings of 'Dada' films at the London Film Club. For example,

Chomette's A Quoi rêvent les jeunes filles (1924-5), Man Ray's Emak-Bakia (1927) Duchamp's Abstract Film (1927) and Man Ray's L'étoile de mer (1928) and Les mystères du château de Dé (1928) were shown.[36] These films reinforced those disruptive codes and image juxtapositions common to collage and photomontage through their apparently random, narrative disruptions, their inclusion of abstract forms and use of provocative, often satirical streams of images.

Another important source were the periodicals Variétés and Der Querschnitt, which were crucial to the circulation of ideas about collage and montage abroad in the period c.1927-1932. The magazines also provided precedents for the type of mask-replacement which occurred in the collages. As Andrew Causey has noted, illustrations from Variétés, 15 January 1930 and Der Querschnitt, July 1931 represented clock faces and mechanical devices in place of the human head: "... including a piece of eye testing equipment. Although it was obviously the intention of Variétés to draw attention ... to the machines visual curiosity, the picture clearly demonstrated their functions."[37]

Apart from the transformation of the physical appearance of the figure, this reference to the theme of mechanically altered vision or an 'aided way of seeing' was a critically laden term in avant-garde circles in the late 1920s. It was seen as part of surrealism's "desire for intenser seeing", and also within contemporary discourses on photography, a 'mechanical aide' effecting 'new vision', was a crucial term for the camera or film

lens. This notion of a distinctive photographic or filmic vision - a New Objectivity - was common in German photography in the late 1920s and began to spread widely throughout Western Europe and the United States gaining currency in the early 1930s.[36]

Furthermore such associations were wittily referred to in a double illustration entitled Kriegszukunft, war prospects or future work, in its July 1931 issue. Four illustrations were cross-sectioned together producing a complex interweaving of visual material against the modern vision theme. These included a Murillo Mother and Child, a photograph of German mother and child with modern gas masks and a photograph from the Parisian magazine Vu of a romantically posed couple in gas masks entitled Flirts.[37] Whilst such photographs published in 1931 could not have been seen by Burra at the time of his collage works, they indicate that there were levels of meaning, some having sexual connotations, structured around masks, female figures and the idea of 'new vision', circulating in German culture in the early 1930s, which Burra could have known. In addition, this selection suggests that these meanings were not purely restricted to French Surrealist circles, but were in extended currency. Thus, international periodicals such as Variétés and Der Querschnitt were able to exploit and manipulate them. Therefore, Burra's use of the machine-deformed female head with its suggestion of masked identity and associations of sexual encounter, marked a conspicuous reference to more widely circulating themes promoted in French surrealist publications and in contemporary German and

Belgian artistic periodicals, which were relevant to the 'new vision' promoted in contemporary photography and film.

The theme of encounter associated with these vocabularies, is central to Burra's collages of 1929-30. It was also crucial to the understnding of collage as the meeting of different types of incongruous visual material, to the notion of a dynamic modern vision confronting urban experience and to the sexual confrontation identified with street-walking or the choosing time tableau. The montage [CC.64]

isolates such a moment when Lionel the man-dog, one of the "Galerie de phénomènes" published in Variétés in its 15 July 1929 edition, confronts the figure of the flirtatious dancer against an elevated Mediterranean beach scene.[40] Notably this moment of encounter is signalled by the physical deformation of the head of the woman. She is transformed by a plant form and presented on a dais-like pedestal to the gaze of the man-dog. The sexual nature of his attentions is clearly conveyed by his own bestiality. The explicit sight of this causes the woman to flee in the opposite direction. Thus sexual encounter in this work is explicitly linked to fear and also to physical deformation and metamorphosis, two strategically important states in both Freudian and surrealist perspectives.

In Rough On Rats [CC.66], this male-female encounter carries explicit references to fear, pain and violence. The gaping mouth of the woman, the dramatically thrown back hands and her fixed eyes express the horror of the slashing penetration of the

assailant's knife. Such imagery carried associations of a 'Jack the Ripper' sex- murder, a scenario which was referred to earlier in relation to the Snack Bar. Like the threat of poison to the rat, there was a genuine fear of sadistic sexual attacks for practising street-walkers.[4] For the prostitute, like the rat, it was a kind of professional hazard, in which the outcome was almost certainly death. Furthermore, Burra makes allusions to the way in which the cutting method of collage parallels these lacerations, producing physical deformations. In addition, the very use of collage was a witty play on associations of professional activity affected by chance.

However in Burra's prostitute works, this theme of encounter does not normally refer to chance meetings, but rather carefully manoeuvred meetings and rendez-vous, involving all the guile of an experienced streetwalker or soliciting pimp. Such an operation had a specific sexual objective with requirement of financial payment. In order to avoid undue attention or suspicion, a public face or mask was required to avoid detection. The face as a marked site of meaning, needed to be recognizable to interested parties, but to remain elusive to others, notably the police. The notion of a mechanical mask begins to carry levels of meaning which appear extremely relevant to the theme of prostitution and appropriate to the nature of the prostitute's repetitive operations. Reconsidering Eruption of Vesuvius, the brothel madame's mechanical 'counting head' succintly communicates the financial necessity of volume traffic. The valves and dial heads carry then not an arbitrary meaning, but are relevant to a wider

investigation of the prostitute theme. It is these areas that I want to investigate further in order to examine what associations such a radical transformation of the female figure served to suggest.

On a wider level, the theme of prostitution in Burra's paintings is linked to the theme of transgression and to moral, sexual and social unconformity. The anonymity of prostitutes as a professional group and the clandestine nature of streetwalking restriced the prostitute as an identifiable and individualised social being. It left her open to easily and glibly applied deviant characterizations, which were easily reinforced because of her group anonymity. A female figure with a mask, a mechanical face to hide her identity and signal her anonymity, was an appropriate indicator of the prostitute's condition. Also as noted earlier in relation to Höch's Foreign Beauty (1929), the denial of the intellect by the strategic replacement of the head and the stress on the physical through nudity or semi-nakedness, was a revealing modification in the light of the prostitute's profession.[42] Furthermore, it related the subject of masks to areas under discussion in contemporary surrealist periodicals on the nature of 'primitive-ness'. It is this wider significance of the mask which I want to analyse in more detail.

In Documents, Vol 2, No2, 1930, Georges Limbour in an article entitled "Eschyle, le Carnaval et les Civilisés" considered the importance of masks in Western society. In particular, Limbour compared the sociological function of primitive and classical

masks and the use of masks as a socially levelling phenomenon in contemporary society. He noted that: "Because of religion, the cult of the dead and the festivals of Dionysus turned the mask into a sacred ritual ornament among the various ancient peoples, we too have our own religion, our own societal games and consequently our own masks. Only the standardization of the age requires that we all wear the same one."[43] Accompanying the article was a photograph of a man wearing a carnival mask by Boiffard. The photograph of the mask could be seen to verify the way in which the figure with 'papier-mâché' mask was reduced to an anonymous head object with tufted hair and vacuous, fixed expression. In this transformation, individuality and identity were erased.

Similar erasures were suggested in the photographs of masked women in Documents, Vol II, 8, 1930, to accompany a book review by Michel Leiris of Willaim Seabrook's study of voodoo. The text was entitled "Le 'caput Mortuum' ou la femme de l'alchemiste" and its meanings informed by photographs of masked women. In Masque de cuir et colliers [pl.139], the tightly bound leather mask not only reduced the female figures to unidentifiable object-figures but further carried associations with fetichism, sadism and misogyny. The reductive brutality of this transformation was elucidated in the accompanying text where it was noted: "la femme est rendue beaucoup plus inquiétante, son visage a été supprimé ... sa tête, signe de son individualité et son intelligence est insultée et niée..."[44] The effect of the putting on of the mask is revealed to have grave physical and psychological consequences. It reduced

individuality. It denied intelligence. It objectified the human body, standardized expressions and nullified responses.

Furthermore, these changes produced an aggravated sexual reaction in the spectator which, in the light of the photographs, seemed to incorporate misogyny and sadism. Even though these are not explicitly stated in the text, they are latently implied in the illustrations by rendering the female figure bound and gagged, speechless and expressionless. These reactions to the mask's operation are, as Rosalind Krauss has proposed, permeated by a latent sexual dimension: "the author watches a little girl shyly picking up a carnival mask of a bearded man and trying it on transform herself into a kind of Lolita by lasciviously running her tongue along the lips of the papier-mâché face."[45] Part of the voyeuristic pleasure of the mask was its opportunity for exploring new identities and new levels of secrecy. However for the prostitute unlike the child, the taking on of the 'Lolita' identity was a strictly enforced professional necessity and a trick of the trade. For the prostitute, there was no quick release from the role, no taking off of the mask at will. Therefore, the substitution of a dial-gauge, mechanical face for such a mask could be seen as comment on such a practised displacement of individuality.

To return to Burra's Eruption of Vesuvius with these ideas in mind, the notion of a prostitute's mask carried reverberations, which were appropriate to the mode of representation as well as to the image itself. This, as already suggested, was derived from

surrealism and notably photographic illustrations and texts in the periodical Documents. To look at a more conventional photograph of a brothel madame, for example Brassaï's brothel mistress in The Secret Paris of the '30s standing relaxed at the doorway of a "maison attentive," is to reduce prostitution to the level of entertainment. It sets it as an amusement, whose chief protagonists are memorable, matronly women.[46] Instead, as Boiffard's photographs suggested and Limbour's article categorically stated, for the prostitute, the wearing of a mask was not merely part of what Limbour termed, the "general process of standardization in the age which required that we all wear masks of some sort or another", but rather it signalled the fact that some members of society were perpetually masked.[47] Such a mask, as Burra's work suggests, is one way of signalling the membership of a socially outlawed, suppressed and persecuted minority. For such figures, whose public codes of conduct always carried the hallmarks of the masked and whose lifestyle required an underground self, the dangers of removing the mask were acute. On the one hand, this was to risk policing and persecution and on the other, abuse and ultimately murder. As Elias Canetti has noted, the mask's crucial role was in delineating the dividing line between the known and the not-known:

> "Everything behind the mask is mysterious. When the mask is taken seriously... no one must know what lies behind it. A mask expresses much, but hides even more. Above all it separates ... Charged with a menace which must not be precisely known - it comes close to the spectator, but in spite of this proximity, remains clearly separated from him. Unlike a face, there are no passing changes in it which can be interpreted and so he suspects and fears the unknown that it conceals ... No-one knows what may not burst forth from behind the mask. The tension created between its appearance and the secret it hides, can become extreme. This is the real reason for the terror the mask inspires ... The mask is clear and certain, but is loaded with the terror of uncertainty. Its

> power derives from the fact that it is itself known while what it covers is never known."[48]

It is this removing of the mask, this act of revelation and the consequences of a 'Jack the Ripper' scenario, which I take to underscore Burra's collage Rough On Rats.

However, whilst I have outlined similarities in the theme of prostitution in the collages to earlier representations of Marseilles and Paris brothels in the 1920, there are two important distinctions. Firstly, the technical means of production and its appropriateness to the theme and secondly the way in which Freudian symbolism is employed in the work. In particular, the depiction of a Freudian dream landscape to signal a sexual dimension is a crucial development in Burra's work. It is best exemplified in the later works such as Revolver Dream (1931) [CC.74] and Tomato Lady (1931) [CC.78], but is also manifested in an earlier collage work such as Eruption of Vesuvius in the form of a rough seascape, a rocky shore line with an erupting volcano in the distance and light ning. In the collage Eruption of Vesuvius, the landscape acts as a symbolic backcloth for the activities of the brothel mixing symbols of male and female arousal (the sea, the volcano, the drifting boat). In addition, the entrance to the brothel through the elegant portico or semi-curtained window repeats the genital orifice symbolism in Freud's section on dream symbolism in The Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1917).[49] The figures with horses heads suggest hybrid animal persons and similarly signal states of sexual arousal. This is further reiterated in the flowers climbing the walls, an indicator of female genitalia, and finally, the table

with female legs holding its collection of hollow receptacles, tea-pot, cup and chalice-like bowl, again all symbolically representing female genitalia according to Freud and "capable of receiving something into itself."[50]

As Freud noted, the actual means of production carries symbolic associations, which are relevant to this discussion. Freud indicated that: "Materials too are symbols for women: wood, paper and objects made from them, like tables and books."[51] Burra's knowledge of Freudian ideas and their currency will be discussed in detail later, but it should already be apparent from these preliminary points that the artist was aware of Freudian symbolism when producing the collages in 1929-30. In addition, many of the incongruous image juxtapositions, presented in a simple, almost compendium manner, are indebted to Freudian symbolism. Such a method, as Geoffrey Grigson noted in The Bookman, May 1934, was suggestive of Dalí's use of Freudian imagery: "...there is something of the Salvador Dalí about [Burra]..." and Burra undoubtedly knew Dalí's work from the early 1930s.[52] That Eruption of Vesuvius was included in international Surrealist exhibitions and passed the judicious examination of the International Exhibition Committee, is proof of their qualification as "surrealist in intention." This, I would suggest, derives not only from their collage method, but also from the recognition that the imagery carried particular Freudian overtones and acknowledged Freud's position within surrealist precursors as one of the "three great emancipators of desire."[53]

However, a subject of central importance here is the suitability of collage as a vehicle for such ideas. The actual relevance of collaged pieces of paper (a Freudian female substance) as well as the method of glue and sticking is revealing. With the exception of the earliest Composition Collage (1929), which shows the subject of an urban group interior, the main theme of Rough on Rats, Collage, Venez avec Moi, Keep Your Head and the montage is the display of female sexuality. In Eruption of Vesuvius, this is tied to prostitution. In the other collages it is linked to various other public social forms: the theatrical entertainment revue in Venez avec Moi; the chance seaside meeting in the photomontage, or in Racecourse Collage, the public arena of the racecourse.

As already suggested, this public display of the female figure is repeatedly accompanied by either references to physical danger or explicit violence. In Keep Your Head, the figure is beheaded by a masked attacker. The head, a replaced gauge, is then fed to a hybrid dog-figure waiting wide-mouthed nearby. In Rough On Rats, the exhibition of the female figure is immediately registered by the plunging thrust of a pen-knife from the male figure on the left. The knife-dagger is a typically Freudian substitution for male penetration, one of those: "objects which share with the thing they represent the characteristic of penetrating into the body and injuring; thus sharp weapons of every kind, knives, daggers, spears, sabres ..."[54] The violent disruption of the image itself is reiterated in the production process of the collages where the cutting out of the images is a violation of the integrity of the original image. Its relocation and acceptance of new associations stresses the radical role of collage, widely appreciated within surrealist circles. It

constituted that act of "dépaysement extraordinaire", which signalled the key paradigm of the collage project outlined by Max Ernst in "What is the Mechanism of Collage", and likened to: "the chance meeting, the coupling of two realities, irreconcilable in appearance upon a plane which apparently does not suit them."[55]

Collage provided a distinctly suitable medium for the exploration of the themes of encounter and metamorphosis and, furthermore, could also incorporate a type of Freudian symbolism in which the 'realistic image' relocated in a foreign seascape or landscape was not inhibited by naturalistic meaning. Rather, it could contribute to the various fields of association explored in the collages themselves. The collage compositions, therefore, document the increasing sophistication of Burra's work in the late 1920s and early 1930s and emphasize his ability to adroitly manipulate different levels of associations.

The particular historical moment of this interest is also revealing coinciding with a wider interest in the medium, the collage exhibition at the Galerie Goemans, important theoretical examinations of collage as a creative process and furthermore, Burra and Nash's growing awareness of Surrealism. As Aragon had noted: "It is significant that all painters who might be called surrealists have used collage at least momentarily. If collage for several of these painters is closer to papier collé than to collage, ... yet for most of them it plays an important part and appears as a decisive moment, a distinctive point in their evolution."[56] The linking of a 'decisive moment' to the practice of collage provided an important validation for Burra's use of the medium in 1929-30 to explore Freudian dream symbolism.

Furthermore, the interconnecting of collage with the theme of the female body was crucially underlined by Aragon's specific reference to the work of Max Ernst, whose La Femme 100 Têtes was owned by Paul Nash, and Man Ray's photographs in which the main "disruptive strategy" was the reconstruction of the female body as object. Aragon cited Man Ray's Revolving Doors (1929) as a signal work in this respect and in a footnote to the essay, Aragon argued that: "We must connect to collage, the practice invented by Man Ray of photography without a camera, rayography, whose results are unpredictable. It is a philosophical operation of the same character as collage, beyond painting and not really linked to photography."[57] Two crucial phrases appear in this statement. Firstly, "Beyond painting" was the key 'modus operandi' of the surrealist venture in the visual arts. Secondly, "photography without a camera" was both a literal and metaphorical indicator of the surrealist way of revolutionizing vision. Collage was recognized by Aragon to be an essential medium in the advancement towards the 'surrealist' revolution of seeing. For artists such as Ernst, Picasso and Dalí, it had proved a decisive step. For Burra, such an orientation marked a new direction and one in which the theme of the female sexuality could play an important, even strategic role.

A number of surrealist texts with photographs or collage illustrations provided exemplars of this reorientation. Nash in an article in The Weekend Review, 17 June 1933, selected Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes (1929) and Histoire Naturelle (1926) as especially significant and in a later article in Signature listed Man Ray's Revolving Doors (1916-17) along with Dalí's La Femme Visible (1930) and Arp's illustrations for Tzara's De Nos Oiseaux (1929) as important "recommended" surrealist works or

publications whose illustrations: "in their pictorial significance alone, you will find they have a strange moving power, a deep enchantment."[58] Burra also owned a copy of the early influential surrealist publication Les Champs magnétiques (1921) which was written by Breton and Soupault and had rayograph illustrations by Man Ray. The underlying force of the rayographs lay in their ability to suggest that peculiar 'estrangement' of the object which "added to the association of the marvellous" so venerated by Breton and Soupault.[59]

In addition, Burra's membership of the London Film Club allowed access to Man Ray's films. Emak Bakia (1927), Les Mystères du Château de Dé (1929) and L'Étoile de Mer (1928) were featured in the late 1920s. With their technically innovative image juxtapositions, disturbing interrogation of the object and 'estrangement' from environment of body-object, these films conspicuously exploited the relationship between the film and the dream. Other avant-garde films shown at the Film Society reinforced this parallel. These included Entr'acte (1924), shown in January 1926, and later, Cocteau's Le Sang d'un Poète (1930), shown in April 1933.[60] These films supplemented by the publication of stills in the film magazine Close Up and the international journals Variétés and Der Querschnitt, provided examples of the importance of film within the surrealist venture since "the film better than any other medium [could] give life to the surrealist image" and "create an autonomous reality."[61] The status of avant-garde film amongst British contemporaries was later suggested by the inclusion in the 1930 'surrealist' edition of the trans-Atlantic magazine, Transition of Artaud's scenario for La Coquille et le Clergyman (1928).[62] This was notable for its illogical sequencing and dream-like interrogation of the object-image. At a time when exhibitions of

surrealist works of art were rare in Britain, the promotion of surrealist ideas though books and periodicals and through film outlets such as the London Film Club, was vital. The journals and films in particular, played a crucial role in introducing and expanding Burra's knowledge of the early surrealist enterprise up to 1928-9 and in focusing international attention on Parisian avant-garde experiments "sous les formes des livres, de tableaux et de film."[63]

The influence of Surrealist film reached its peak with the production at the end of the decade of Dalí and Buñuel's Un Chien Andalou (1928), Man Ray's L'Étoile de Mer (1928), Dulac's La Coquille et le Clergyman (1928) and in 1930, Buñuel's, L'Âge d'Or.[64] Whilst some of these films did not reach British audiences, the ones that did arrive established the surrealist imperative in film as the exploration of the relationship between the filmic experience and the dream-unconsciousness. Central to such a project was the use of film to expose "the amalgamation of the aesthetic of surrealism with the discoveries of Freud" with the model of the dream-world communicated through narrative disjunction, image manipulation and the interrogation of ordinary objects. As P. Adams Sitney has suggested: "Le rapport entre l'expérience cinématographique et le rêve, de même que l'accès privilégié du cinéma à la représentation du travail onirique, sont des thèmes qui reviennent souvent dans les films d'avant-garde."[65]

L'Étoile de mer (1928) shown at the London Film Society on 3 February 1929 and illustrated by stills in Close Up, June 1930 was significant in this respect. It interlaced irrational sequences of image and object shots. It contrasted conventional views with anamorphic and occult

references and its strong sexual theme focused on the obsessive images of erotic love as identified in the opening titles of the film. Throughout the film, these objects are metamorphosized according to the sexual desires of the main character, raising complex questions on the nature of subjective vision and the role of the sexually vitalized object. In such a powerful transformation of experience, for example, "Les dents des femmes sont des objets si charmants qu'on ne devrait les voir qu'en rêve ou à l'instant de l'amour."[65] These transfigurations of the object in surrealist film attested the need for an urgent reconsideration of the object under the influence of Freud, and offered the symbolically functioning object as a major site for experiment. It was just such a reorientation under the sexual impulse which Breton had recognised as central to Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes (1929); the impulse towards a surreality "which depends upon our wish for a complete disorientation of everything."[67]

Ernst's work, as Nash was later to acknowledge, presented a strong argument for an expanded 'surrealist' role for the object in the visual arts. This had been clearly indicated in La Révolution Surréaliste, number 9-10, October 1927, where Ernst's work had been discussed in Breton's seminal text "Le Surréalisme et la Peinture" and La Horde (1927) used to illustrate it.[68] Furthermore, Ernst's collage-novel La Femme 100 Têtes provided Burra and Nash with not only the technical means for such experiments, but in addition iconographic precedents which had direct links to Freud's sexual theories and symbolism. This at a time when Burra, under the influence of Aiken, was investigating Freudian concepts, was of critical importance.

In order to examine this in detail, I want to show how Ernst's collage practice in general and the example of La Femme 100 Têtes (1929) in particular, offered a parallel to Burra's work. The similarities between Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes and Burra's collages, evident in the resemblance of the selected imagery, the careful method of selection and pictorial construction, the concern with imaging a dream-like world of disturbing image-compilations and the presence of a strongly sardonic humour, cannot be viewed as merely arbitrary. Furthermore, within Burra's collages, the central focus on the female figure as the key protagonist, the imaging of decapitation and anatomical dismemberment and main theme of animal-human-plants metamorphosis to suggest a collapsing of the rational order under the sexual vitalized gaze is suggestive of Ernst's work.

Like Ernst, Burra collected images from a wide range of contemporary and historical sources, notably engravings and advertisements from the selection of late 19th and early 20th Century journals and newspapers available in the Springfield family library. He also drew on his huge personal collection of contemporary popular magazines which he had accumulated throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. These included postcards from the late 19th and early 20th Century, manufacturers' catalogues, popular illustrations and photographs derived from film magazines. Together these sources provided an impressive archive of eclectic 'chosen' material available for selective use in the collages.[69] However, from the evidence of their construction, the incorporation of imagery into the collages was skilfully manoeuvred with particular attention, as in Ernst's work, paid to careful cutting and pasting. This added to the irony of the juxtapositions and to the integration of

collaged imagery with drawn in details, which was essential to the sense of estrangement in these images. As Nash wrote later of Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes: "You will marvel at the astonishing technical feat involved in the production of these illustrations ... Each is made up of many pieces or figures cut from wood engravings found in late Victorian books and magazines. These individual figures are then pasted together in a combination of irrational circumstances giving a sense of nightmare or hallucination."[70]

Burra's collages incorporate a similar range of sources. For example, Racecourse Collage employs cut out fragments taken from the Edwardian Women's Journal, The Queen, from its 26 October 1901 issue [pl.140].[71] In the figures in the crowd, the engraved illustrations of Swanbill Corsets and Winter fashion ranges were employed in the bodies of the female figures in the middle distance and also in the horse-figure hybrids. Similar fragments of illustrations were included in Rough on Rats to form the corsetted torsoes of the women on the left hand side of the main victim. The choice of corset ads, hat illustrations and fashion prints from Edwardian magazines; sources and imagery similar to Ernst's, is revealing. A similar intrusion of a section of a fashion advertisement is represented in La Femme 100 Têtes in Chapter 2, Suite, to signal a sexual provocation to the action of the boy's fighting. In Racecourse Collage, this wittily suggests the impulse for the acts of observation and the reason for the various 'aids to better vision', the binoculars and lorgnettes, and multiple eye cut-outs.

Burra's use of fashion illustrations is also significant in that the imagery carries overtones of historical tastes and modes related to an

out dated culture. In Venez avec Moi, parts of fashion plates and advertising photographs often incorporating highly melodramatic poses and theatrical spot illustrations from popular magazines, were employed in the figures dancing in the apartments seen through the window and the women descending the stairs. The partly-drawn, partly-collaged women are superimposed on a drawing of a theatrical figures in doublets. In the women in the apartment dancing, this is given a sexual, even erotic aspect by the male figure in a vest reaching down to touch one of the dancer's hair and the image to his left of a prostitute posed dramatically against a drawn back curtain. Other fashion related imagery in the work includes an enormous watch from a jeweller's catalogue repositioned as a belt on the figure staring out of the window on the right and the hat and brooch used in the central kneeling figure as part of his theatrical costume. These insertions humorously dramatize the action of the scene and suggest new levels of interpretation.

In Racecourse Collage, this use of fragments of illustrations taken fron fashion prints is reminiscent of the fashion engraving employed by Ernst in the last chapter of La Femme 100 Têtes, Le Père Éternel cherche en vain à séparer la lumière des ténèbres [pl.141], where the female figure suggests the presence of the 'femme fatale' as a motivation to the action.[72] The fashion print gives female sexuality a particular historical look and it is the componant parts of this 'look', the corsets, jewellery, hats and various accoutrements of Edwardian 'High' fashion, which Burra's collages appropriate and recycle.

The theme of woman as a site of distinctive sets of meanings which were sexually inscribed was a shared one in both Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes

and Burra's collages.[73] In Ernst's collage-novel, the potent sexual myth of the female protagonist, la femme 100 têtes, is a central theme. The appearance of Germinal, la femme 100 têtes, is explicitly accompanied by the protrusion of her breast, a provocative and erotic sign. In Burra's collages, the allure of the woman in public is marked by metaphors for observation - eyes, binoculars, lorgnettes, which reiterate the female figure's status and role as the attention of the male sexual gaze and focus of desire. These impress upon the viewer the obsessive nature of the female figure as a potent sexual symbol. This is re-emphasized by the various poses and costumes used to represent women in public, which suggest an artifice and self-consciousness tantamount to a staged performance. In Racecourse Collage and Rough on Rats, this has definite sexual undercurrents explicitly declared through the inclusion of corsets and underwear.

This erotic impulse is further indicated in both Ernst and Burra's collages by the recasting of the female anatomy as the sexual object presented in the dream-like world of the collage. This metamorphosis often takes the form of female decapitation, dissection or dismemberment or the estrangement of one particular limb or organ, which is then placed into an environment of irrational changes in scale. It can also involve nude or semi-nude displays. In Ernst's Ce singe, serait-il catholique, par hasard? [pl.143], the female figure reveals her breasts whilst adopting a heavily theatrical pose. In Stridulations des fantômes du dimanche, the nude figure attracts the attention of the crowds who voyeuristically watch her bathing. As already mentioned, the nude figures posing in Eruption of Vesuvius have an explicit sexual meaning, on display for the customers to choose.

These object intrusions and jumps in scale are also adopted by Burra, often for humorous effect. For example, in Venez avec Moi, the seated figure's head is replaced by a mechanical mounting on top of which is positioned a fragment of a car tyre advertisement. Her hand is replaced by a hoe-head. In Rough on Rats, the presence of savagely chopped off female bodies from corset advertisements, suggests previous victims of the sex murderer, as does the attack on the hen by an enormous pair of clippers. In Racecourse Collage, the figure standing in the distance has an enormous light-bulb head. Also a huge pipe-smoking airship complete with eye and captured female nude floats overhead.

An alternative strategy is the breaking down of distinctions between the animal-human-plant kingdoms and their reorganization in an irrational way. One method adopted by Burra is the introduction of plant heads such as in the kneeling figure in Venez avec Moi or the prostitute's flower face in Rough on Rats. The same figure also has a runner bean leg, a witty reference to movement. In Racecourse Collage, the figure in the foreground has a flower eye and pea-pod mouth. An alternative manoeuvre is the replacement of one part of the woman's anatomy by animal part or features. This carries with it associations of a violent, bestial sexual passion. In Racecourse Collage, a major reconstruction of the female anatomy is the horse-headed figure with corset body and horse legs. It offers an unusual manipulation of the 'satyr' theme applied to a female counterpart and involving horse rather than goat. It could also be a pun on the word 'filly /fille' as the female anatomy consists of a low-plunging neck and corsetted body.

In addition, this animal-human or plant-human reversal refers to that humorous tradition common in popular postcards and illustrations which has animals or plants enact human social rituals or transposes humans into animal-plant settings. It was a literary and pictorial convention much admired by the surrealists, notably in the work of the illustrator Grandville, which Burra knew.[74] The attack on the hen by the clippers also repeats the theme of the sex murder, and shows Burra's acknowledgement of such a comic tradition.[75] Grandville's illustrations to Les Fleurs animeés (1857) [pl.144] contains a scene in which the female figure personifying hawthorn, Aubépine, is attacked by an enormous pair of monstrous secateurs. Burra's postcard collection also contained examples of such role reversal humour. In Souvenir de Monte Carlo, animals parade as part of the rituals of the season in the South of France, or in Premièr Avril, where human babies break out from hen's eggs [pl.145].[76] In Venez avec Moi, the two collaged dogs in the foreground seem to re-enact the liason being made behind them.

These comic transpositions were common in popular postcards or illustrations, notably from the late 19th Century and early 20th Century, and were collected by the Surrealists for their humour.[77] Similar comic illustrations were featured in Documents, Vol II, No 5, 1930, accompanied by a text by Raymond Queneau examining this tradition of 'eccentric' illustration. According to Queneau, these marked "one of the earliest manifestations of the modern spirit."[78] Of specific relevance to Burra's collages as Andrew Causey has noted, were the illustrations to E.V. Lucas and G. Morrow's What a Life! (1911), which incorporated randomly placed, collaged fragments from a London department store catalogue.[79] These included human limbs and fragments of bodies as in Burra's works. Such

sources provided a relevant precedent for such reversals and bizarre dismemberment as part of the surrealist revision of popular, comic imagery. This method was also employed by Sophie Fedorovitch who in a postcard to Burra from Toulon, 1929, interrupted the view of the docks and sailors at work with an enormous cut-out female head and legs and various inserted large letters. The parts of female anatomy, probably from a photograph originally in a film magazine, were used to signal an erotic motive to the work which would have been appropriate to the subjects of the sailor and Toulon.[80]

Apart from the intrusion of human limbs, the collages similarly exploited the potential within natural imagery to produce grotesque and threatening compilations. These images of plants and flowers alienated from any reference to a 'natural' order, were re-employed to signal the construction of a changed world. For example in Composition Collage, these sources are used as patterns for wallpaper or floor covering or in Venez avec Moi as menacing plant-forms incorporating eyes and mouths. The main kneeling figure has a flower head with human eyes, a mechanical nose and slogan mouth - "Venez avec moi", a direct proposal to the wheel-headed, seated figure. On the left-hand side, the enormous cut-out plants have human eyes emphasizing a voyeuristic interest in the activities being played out. Fear in the fleeing woman in the Montage is symbolised by a gigantic plant head.

This focusing on eye imagery and the theme of sight as a reference to the new vision signalled in the collages, was shared with Ernst.[81] In La Femme 100 Têtes, Last Chapter, the severed eye is an important motif, with magical and alchemical powers of transformation. For example in

L'oeil sans yeux, la femme 100 têtes garde son secret [pl.146], the dislocated eye is a major symbol for the secrets which the new vision have introduced and a metaphor for the sexually vitalized gaze which transforms all vision. In Burra's collages, the eye is a metaphor for an illicit voyeurism, which monitors sexual liasons and courtship. In Venez avec Moi, the gigantic plant's eyes and the watchful eyes of the hidden spectators both behind the plant and on the balcony, carefully follow the actions in the foreground. Bearing in mind Burra's own fascination with the activites of the red-light areas of Marseilles and Toulon, this use of the collaged eye is especially relevant to the concept of a sexually inscribed vision.

In both Burra and Ernst's collages, these strategies -the collapse between the different human, animal and plant orders, the irrational juxtaposition of natural imagery, the metamorphosis of the human figure and the illogical nature of scale - announce the arrival of a new vision of dream-like irrationality.[82] This newly-initiated sight is independant from accepted patterns of vision and has a distinctively sexual focus. It is also underscored by a sense of insecurity of what exactly the images 'propose' to the viewer. This is poignantly referred to in Venez avec Moi where the invitation to 'come with me' simultaneously suggests a sexual rendez-vous and a departure into the fantastic world of the collage.

The parallel between the irrational world of the collage and the hallucinatory patterns of the dream was a knowing one in Burra and Ernst's collages. Underlying all these operations was the surrealist desire to produce random collage-images, which in their arbitrary and

haunting power referred more to a dream state than to the logic of external reality. The disturbing cutting and editing procedures of collage were particularly suitable for such subversive possibilities. What collage achieved was the liberation of the image from consistent codes of meaning and " the uncontrollable provocation of the image for its own sake and for the element of unpredictable perturbation and metamorphosis which it introduces into the domain of representation."[83] It was the precarious inability to 'fix' and 'control' meanings which Burra and Ernst's work particularly sought to exploit. Furthermore, the underpinnings of an ironic and ambiguous humour in these collages clearly indicated their 'surrealist' intention and effect.

An important context for the understanding of these ideas in relation to Burra's work, was the publication in the June 1929 issue of Variétés of a special number entitled "Le Surréalisme en 1929." It included an extensive survey of Surrealist activities in the arts, a selection of articles and poems and a large number of illustrations of works by surrealist artists completed by a rhetorical statement by "certain intellectuals of revolutionary inclinations" grouped in Paris. Within the issues raised in this splendid magazine covering many of the intellectual and artistic themes of Surrealism in the late 1920s and early 1930s, three main areas were specifically relevant to Burra's collages and to the historical context of their production.[84]

Firstly, there was the distinctive example of the 'cadavre exquis' as part of the Surrealist's communal attempt to by-pass learned conventions and logical meanings and to create random image compilations involving chance. Included in the illustrations were four "cadavres exquis" by

Miró, Max Morise, Man Ray and Tanguy. Secondly, the wider Surrealist investigation into dreams and the dream-state was clearly identified both through illustrations and in articles. Works by Magritte and Tanguy signalling this interest were included and a section entitled "Rétrospective Rêves" with reproductions of Courbet's Le Rêve (1864), Rousseau's Le Rêve (1910), a Helen Smith Intérieure ultramatian and photographs of Facteur Cheval's Palais Idéal. A quote by Cheval prefaced the section and set the theme for interpretation of the other illustrations: "Toutes mes idées me viennent en rêve et quand je travaille, j'ai toujours mes rêves présents à l'ésprit."[85] Thirdly, the importance of humour to the subversive attack on the role of the object which Surrealism had instigated was stressed. This was addressed in the final article listed in the 'dossier' which was Aragon's and Breton's "Le Trèsor de Jésuites." This was complimented by a Man Ray photograph, which manifested what was referred to in the text as "a joking gay spirit mixed with the love of the marvellous".[86]

It is these areas, which I want to examine in detail in relation to the collages themselves and to Burra's growing interest in ideas and developments within Surrealism. In particular, I intend to restrict my discussion to ideas raised within these two periodicals which Burra knew, namely the surrealist issue of Variétés, already mentioned, and a special issue of Transition, no. 19-20, June 1930, which had a section entitled "Dream and Myth".[87] In a similar way to the Variétés special edition, this issue of Transition focused on the parallels between artistic activity, dream symbolism and the functioning of the unconscious presenting it across a broad range of surrealist activities. It

interlaced images and texts within a sophisticated discourse, which stressed their intellectual credentials and theoretical basis.

The 'cadavres exquis' offered suggestive models of images, often with explicitly erotic overtones, produced by means of a communal game invoking chance juxtapositions. This was an attempt to explode traditional methods of image construction by involving group participation. It must have validated Burra and Nash's experiments with collage and provided a precedent for the joint-production of Rough on Rats. The background is one of Burra's Mediterranean scenes onto which various cut-out illustrations have been introduced over existing drawings or incorporated into odd image-drawing compilations. A similar method was employed by Burra in Keep Your Head, where the dog with human eye and screaming man-urn are particularly bizarre constructions. The examples of 'cadavre exquis', which were reproduced in Variétés must have strengthened the need to discover images and image-making processes which undermined traditional significations and methods of production. In the light of both Burra and Nash's knowledge of Ernst's work, collage must have appeared as a suitable example of a new method of achieving speculative imagery which provoked a humorous response and yet still retained an element of skill.[88]

A second area of interest suggested in the collages and outlined in these periodicals was dreams and dream imagery. This is reflected in the specifically sexual or violent themes central to Venez avec Moi, Rough on Rats, Eruption of Vesuvius, Racecourse Collage and the montage and the way they almost obsessively reappear in each work. The parallel between the dream as an arena for the display of sexual and erotic fantasies and

the collages as a landscape capable of representing such images was obvious.[89] For example, the repetitive nature of female imagery in Burra's collages is revealing. The dream correlation is also apparent in the jarring female image compilations and the illogical scale and relationship of such imagery within these works. These held obvious similarities with the kinds of dislocations and irrationality associated with dreams.

Ernst's collage-novel La Femme 100 Têtes had initially introduced Burra to the potential, which collage presented for imaging the psychological landscapes of the dream. Ernst's work formed part of that urgent enterprise outlined earlier by Breton in Le Surréalisme et La Peinture (1928) of exploring dream imagery and the unconscious within the work of art. As Breton declared, what was needed: "to meet the need for the complete revision of real values on which all minds today agree [was that] the plastic work must draw on a purely interior model or it will not be." He continued: "Freud has shown us that there prevails at an unfathomable depth a total absence of contradiction; a new mobility of the emotional blocks caused by repression; a timelessness and a substitution of psychic reality for external reality; all subject to the principle of pleasure alone."[90] As Charlotte Stokes has recognised, Ernst's work freely made use of Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams (1900) with its analysis of the origin of dream-images and Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (1905).[91] Whilst Burra's imagery carries many associations outlined by Freud and taken up by Ernst, these were not in any sense a systematic manipulation of Freud's theories.[92]

However, the extent of Surrealism's involvement with dreams and dream symbolism was further reinforced by the special editions of Variétés and

Transition. The former included a review of imagery contained in works on the subject of dreams by Courbet and Rousseau, an example of the interior model as imaged by the medium, Helen Smith, and the achievement of Cheval's dream-palace in the light of Freud's work and current surrealist thinking. It also included an article by Sigmund Freud on "Humour", which prefaced the whole section.[93] The latter placed works by Masson and Picasso and stills from La Coquille et le Clergyman next to Jung's essay on "Psychology and Poetry", all under the heading of "Dream and Myth." These issues formed a formidable collection of texts, statements and images, which stressed the central importance of dream and dream imagery to current developments abroad.

Furthermore, it was precisely at this historical moment of 1929-30 that the expanded framework offered by Freud, Jung, dream symbolism and new methods of creative activity encouraged English intellectual groups to become actively involved with surrealist experiments. The "Manifesto of Young England" published within the same issue of Transition, by the Cambridge Experiment group, took the form of statements by younger British writers and artists on the importance of dreams and the significance of Freud to contemporary experiments in poetry and the arts.[94] As Julian Trevelyan declared within the manifesto: "To dream is to create" and "So in dreams, the objects of everyday existence, freed from the tyranny of constitency, of unilocality, acquire a new meaning.."[95]

This interest in dream imagery also coincided with Burra's increasing awareness of the work of Salvador Dalí, whose Accommodations of Desire (1926) and Illumined Pleasures (1929) were reproduced in the twelfth and last issue of La Révolution Surréaliste, December 1929.[96] Accommodations

of Desire, in particular, appeared to suggest collage - both formally in its clustered groups of images and its repeated cut-out forms, and also in its hallucinatory effects. In addition, Dalí's snap-shot imagery with its sexual and violent motifs, particularly pronounced in Illumined Pleasures, suggested a more systematic approach to Freudian symbolism than apparent within Ernst's collages.[97]

This is especially marked in the shared images of violence in Burra's collages and Dalí's paintings, which communicate a sense of sexual anxiety linked to erotic desire. Sexual symbolism in the form of knife-cutting and stabbing, Freudian symbolic acts for male penetration and intercourse; threatening with weapons, symbols of sexual anxiety, and wild animals, linked by Freud to bestiality and sexual arousal, are included in both Dalí's Accommodations of Desire and Illumined Pleasures and in Burra's collages.[98] These provided a source of meanings which were extremely apt to the subject of an illicit, erotic encounter central to Venez avec Moi, to the theme of the sex murder in Rough On Rats, and to the brothel scenes in Eruption of Vesuvius and Keep Your Head. The idea of an obsessive nightmare narrative being represented within the collages was strengthened by the grotesque and shocking nature of these symbolic images and the recurrent image of the prostitute, which in Rough on Rats, Eruption of Vesuvius and Keep Your Head was linked to the themes of sexual anxiety and murder. Burra's collages appear to recognize like Dalí's paintings, that Freud's sexual symbolism

provided an enriched iconographic vocabulary for their work in which deeper levels of unconscious association could be exploited.

Obviously Freud's writing in the 1920s was best known in specialist circles - medicine, psychology and sexology.[99] But bowdlerised aspects of Freud's work appeared in the popular press expressed in somewhat simplistic terms. Burra may have seen popularised versions in Le Crapouillot in the late 1920s by writers such as Dr. René Allendy. However, it appears unlikely that Burra knew earlier English exponents of Freudian theory such as A.G. Tansley's The New Psychology and its Relationship to Life (1920).[100] Whilst Freud had been translated into English much earlier than into French, the period 1929-30 marked a revival of interest in Freudian theory and its particular application to the visual arts. This was primarily as a result of its promotion by the surrealists and in particular, was related to the parallels between the practice of collage and the operations of the unconscious. In collage images as in dream symbolism, what was produced, as Ernst put it, was: "an hallucinatory succession of contradictory images ... being superimposed on each other with the persistence and rapidity of amorous memories" and visions of half sleep.[101] In Freudian theory, the ordinary experiences of the conscious world became tranformed into threatening, violent symbols of an eroticized dream world. In collage, illustrated or photographed snippets of visual imagery became repositioned into shocking and frightening composites raising complex levels of sexual meaning. As Ernst noted, this was the central power of the new medium: "to transform what previously had been the banal pages

of an advertisement into dreams, which reveal my most secret desires."[102]

The significance of these precedents and ideas to Burra's collages of 1929-30 and more broadly to the paintings of the 1930-36 period was firstly, the placing of key areas of surrealist artistic activity against the more systematic background of Freudian psycho-analytical theory and dream symbolism. Secondly, the validation of the distinctive themes of female sexuality, the nature of eroticism and sexual violence in Burra's works. Finally, the sanctioning of new methods of artistic production, the most important of which were collage and montage, as being able to convey humour.

It is the central importance of humour in Burra's collages which I want to consider next and the way in which they contain a kind of scatalogical, sardonic humour. I shall argue that this was indebted to Freudian and surrealist ideas on 'humour' and informed by the theoretical underpinnings and the model presented by Freud in his essay "L'humour", which was reprinted in the special surrealist edition of Variétés in June 1929.[103]

Many of Burra's drawings and paintings of the 1920s had developed a caricatural form of humour which had its roots in earlier English satirical traditions and contemporary illustration. However, in the late 1920s, Burra began to exploit aspects of an ironic or absurd humour with obvious sexual overtones and symbolism. In Marriage à la Mode (1928-9) [CC.41], the subject of

a contemporary wedding scene had been humorously enlivened by the representation of a brace of Hogarthian putti with horn of plenty, over the bridal groups. As Andrew Causey has indicated, it was a quotation from Hogarth's Wedding of Stephen Beckingham and Mary Cox (1729-30) and suggested fertility in abundance.'[104] In The Two Sisters (1929) [CC.54], a domestic conversation piece had been subversively charged by the inclusion of two popular cultural representatives as the figures of the sisters. These were the Jewish entertainment twins the Dolly Sisters, who were posed revealing their enormous breasts to give a louche, erotic flavour to the work.'[105]

However, it was only in 1929-30 that Burra's understanding of humour was directly informed by Freud's writings and his works show an early understanding of Freudian dream symbolism. For example, in Tea Shop (1929), the depiction of naked waitresses abusing and shocking customers, transformed the conventional interior scene into a sexually charged scenario with pornographic overtones. This was accentuated by the explicit use of the staircase with its 'phallic' plant-stand to symbolically suggest a sexual interpretation since stairs according to Freud, were "the clear symbols of sexual intercourse" and the invitation to "walk up", a metaphor for prostitution. The work then wittily juxtaposes the notion of social intercourse against that of sexual intercourse.'[106]

This period of 1929-30 marked the growing awareness in Burra's work of the potentialities for ironic humour. Whilst Burra's humour was often frivolous and mocking (similar in many respects to the ironic tone of his letters), the collages in particular developed a more sophisticated type of 'humour' which manipulated meanings from Freudian symbolism and was indebted to surrealist understandings of a mocking, sarcastic black humour.[107] In Racecourse Collage, the various animal-women compilations are a witty manipulation of the themes of horse-racing and filly-watching. The crowd at the finishing line composed of famous film-stars amusingly twists the idea of those who are used to being watched, suddenly being transferred into the role of spectators. In Eruption of Vesuvius, the parallel between the madame who counts clients and the sexual act which signals death, is sarcastically signalled by the madame counting the decapitated heads of customers.

This play on Freudian symbolism is also apparent in Racecourse Collage. The use of an extendable air pump and gauge in the place of a monocle wittily suggests blown up or inflated vision; an aid to a better sight of the action and in Freudian symbolism is a clear metaphor for male arousal symbolized by an "object which is capable of being lengthened."[108] Also the presence of a Zeppelin airship escourting a nude woman, specifically refers in Freudian terms to a male erection through objects such as balloons, flying machines and airships which "rise up in defiance of gravity."[109] In Eruption of Vesuvius, the double meaning of table legs and woman's legs is made more humorous by the fact that a table in

Freud was a female sexual symbol. In Venez avec Moi, the courtship of the central figures is ironically paralleled in the presence of the two dogs, the larger one almost leering at the smaller one and being restrained by a leash. In Freud, dogs as domesticated animals could be seen as 'civilised' wild animals or symbolizing evil instincts or passions which have been partly 'tamed'.[110] This offers an amusing comment on the intentions of the male figure, whose approach, at least initially, appears so polite. The presence of a "flying" bottle above his head also suggests a sexual objective to these acts.[111] In many other cases the collage images mix Freudian symbolism and image juxtapositions for a stronger humorous effect and this was obviously as a result of Burra's knowledge of Freudian dream symbolism and its sexual meanings.

As I have already suggested, this was informed by Freud's essay on humour, which outlined the psychological model by which humour could be provoked, the relationship between humour and the pleasure principle and the precise nature of the comic as a subversive element.[112] Importantly this text was used to head a section of surrealist texts and visual imagery incorporating puns, ambiguity, word plays and jokes as part of the surrealist subversion of meanings. Such linguistic humour was also apparent in Burra's collages. For example in Rough on Rats, in the foreground the irony of the 'Lifesaver' sweets pouring out of the decapitated female body is not lost. The slogan on the poison label "The Old Reliable. Don't die in the House. Used world over for Generations" with its play on poison/kill and sex/death, on

the ancient nature of the prostitute's profession and her need to streetwalk and on the repetitive nature of sexual intercourse shows a cruel, grim humour.

Two areas of discussion in Freud's essay "L'humour" are particularly relevant to Burra's collages and their themes of prostitution and the sexual encounter. Firstly, the concern with representing the prostitute as a 'collective' type; a theme which had preoccupied Burra's work throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s. Freud commented that the psycholody of humour aimed primarily at establishing an identifiable 'type' rather than an individualized identity. This 'type' could then be used as the basis for deformation and exaggeration from which humour could arise. It corresponded in Freud's terms to the establishing of a figure of "magic allure", a figure to whom the notion of anticipation was linked and who guaranteed 'pleasure' upon the recognition of humour.''[3] This had clear parallels in the inclusion of the prostitute in the collages Rough on Rats, Keep Your Head and Eruption of Vesuvius.

Secondly, Freud linked the humorous encounter with ideas of an unexpected 'traumatic' confrontation, which was "sudden" and "explosive" when the link between the fiction and fact was resolved. This twin reaction of trauma-resolution lay at the heart of the humourous impulse and was also erotically inscribed. Freud likened this to the enigma of encounter; a state of not knowing, then recognizing.''[4] This notion was extremely pertinent to the montage where Lionel meets the woman, who seeing his man-

dog appearance and symbolically recognizing his lusty intentions, turns and flees in horror. It was also apt to Rough on Rats where the moment of realization for the prostitute of the sex attack comes too late.

Furthermore, according to Freud, this act was underscored by a sense of self-awareness. This derived from the sense of being scrutinized whilst the teller waits in anticipation of the trauma-resolution response and the ensuing humour.''[15] In the multiple images of eyes and observation contained in Racecourse Collage and Venez avec Moi, this sense of watching and being watched, of simultaneously being spectator and actor is admirably signalled. This complex chain of psychological and psycho-pathological responses Freud described as: " a series which begins with neurosis and culminates in madness and which includes intoxication, self-absorption and ecstasy."''[16] In the light of the public nature of prostitution and the classification of her as a delinquent, deviant figure, such a series of reactions involving states 'admired' by surrealism for their 'liberating potential' was a relevant one.

Finally, Freud suggested that humour had a liberating aspect, which coincided with the release from any references to external reality. It was this characteristic of humour, its sudden, rebellious freedom from the reigns of logic and reason that the surrealists admired in particular. Freud compared this to an act of profanity and blasphemy against reality and noted that it incorporated a definite sensation of 'pleasure': "Humour is not

resigned ... It signifies not only the triumph of the ego but also of the pleasure principle."[117] Freud's insistence upon the intricate relationship of humour with 'the pleasure principle' was a key part of the theory of humour. Freud stressed that not only was humour independent of the traumas of the external world, but that trauma was in fact a constituent part of the pleasure principle and: " a quite essential element of humour."[118]

In such terms, the workings of humour fulfilled many of the requirements of the surrealist notion of "convulsive beauty"; a condition which was marked by a sudden and explosive coalescence of different levels of association.[119] The radical transformation which humour precipitated, as outlined in Freud's text, suggests why humour was prized so highly in the work of the surrealist artists and writers. It also helps to explain why collage, a medium capable of creating an endless series of humorous encounter-resolution reactions, was so revered in the search for ways of representating 'convulsive beauty'. Collage was the ideal vehicle for the exploration of Freudian ideas on humour because of its sense of "subversive encounter", its "dépaysement extrordinaire" and its intrinsic nature as : "a modern analogue to magic or alchemy ... a higher revolt of the mind."[120] To practise collage-making was not to play games, but rather to participate in one of the most admired and revered artistic activities of the surrealist creative armoury. Such understandings were specifically recognized by the inclusion of Burra's collage works in major surrealist exhibitions.

In conclusion, Freud's writing offered not only a theoretical basis for this investigation and a systematic programme of sexual symbolism common to dreams, but identified a model in the workings of 'humour' which was appropriate to the technical operations of collage. Furthermore, it presented a chain reaction of responses which paralleled that of the illicit encounter with the prostitute: a shocking, erotic and often, violent affair. The nightmarish compilations of imagery, which characterized Burra's collages, also underpinned the threatening experience of the sexual moment and the threat of the sexual attack. In addition, the anxiety of image-meaning reiterated the fears of the sexual ordeal. These reverberations were precisely those embodied in Freud's notion of 'humour' as a scatological, ironic black humour and were the key characteristics so venerated by important figures such as Breton.

They were also seen to be implicitly a part of the figurative disruptions apparent in Ernst's collages. As Paul Nash later commented on La Femme 100 Têtes: "Max Ernst is a master of collage .. Turn the pages of La Femme 100 Têtes and you will admit the justice of the title. You will marvel at the astonishing technical feat involved in the production of these illustrations ... Almost all are imbued with a disturbing beauty. Sometimes it is a beauty which one would deny because of its diabolism. Sometimes it is canted or overset by a cruel blasphemous wit..."[121]

It is precisely this "cruel blasphemous wit", which characterized 'humour noir' and Freud's definitions. It is exactly this aspect which dominated Burra's collage compositions on the theme of the prostitute linked to the additional themes of voyeurism, violence and sexuality. The collages in their indebtedness to contemporary surrealist collage, in their reference to earlier Dada iconography, in their use of ideas supplied by Freud and in their imagery derived from English popular culture represent an important development in Burra's work and mark out themes which were to be examined further in the paintings completed in the 1930s on the subject of the female figure.

1. Nash is known to have participated in the co-production of Rough on Rats according to Causey, No. 66 and this was probably his only joint production.
2. 28th London Group Exhibition, New Burlington Galleries London 1930, No. 75. Reproduced in Cahiers d'Art, 1/2 1938, as Sacred and Profane Love. Exhibited in L'exposition International du Surréalisme, Galerie Beaux-Arts, Paris, January-February 1938, No. 28.
3. The Daily Express, 11 April 1934, "Art and the Income Tax". Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive, London.
4. C.C., p. 29. Mayor Gallery Paris Cuttings, Tate Archive, London.
5. Valentine Collage in Burra Papers, Tate Archive, inscribed "A Valentine" by PN and EB, u.d.
6. Postcard in Burra Collection, Tate Archive and illustrated in H.G., p. 61.
7. ROH, Franz and TSCHICHOLD, Jan, Foto-Auge, Stuttgart 1929. Facsimile edition London, 1974, plate 60.
8. Letter from Burra to Barbera Ker-Seymer from Springfield c. June 1930. T.G., p. 88, No. 7.
9. For discussion of prostitute and Marseilles Cf., pp. 182-187
10. BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 1930s, 2nd ed., London 1977. Section on Houses of Illusion, unpaginated.
11. BRASSAÏ 1977, op. cit.
12. MAHOLY-NAGY, L. Malerei, Fotografie, Film, Munich (Bauhausbücher 8) 1925. Burra owned 2nd edition, Mainz 1927, p. 106, Private Collection. Author refers to English edition, London 1986, p.106.
13. Höch quoted in VAN DEREN COKE, The Painter and the Photograph, New Mexico, U.S.A. 1972, p. 259. Quoted from ADES, Dawn, Photomontage, London, 2nd ed., 1986, p. 13.
14. Cf., YOUNG, Alan, Dada and After - Extremist Modernism and English Literature, Manchester 1981, p. 11.ff.
15. Cahiers d'Art, No. 4-5, 1927, pp. 80-82. Sheeler's Manhatta at London Film Society, 13 November 1927.
16. Variétés, 15 August 1929, pp. 240-2. Le Crapouillot, September 1927, cover photograph by Sheeler. A portfolio of Sheeler's New York City photographs appeared in Cahiers d'Art, No. 4-5, 1927, pp. 80-2.
17. For discussion of "Metropolis: The Vision of the Future", see ADES 1986, op. cit., pp. 99-101.
18. Burra had seen RUTTMAN'S Berlin Symphony of a Great City in the late 1920s as Clover de Pertinez noted in W.C., p. 73. It was shown at the London Film Society, 4 March 1928.
19. MOHOLY-NAGY 1927, op. cit., p. 107
20. Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., pp. 120-2.
21. Suggested by CAUSEY in C.C., p. 30.
22. See earlier discussions p.112
23. Cf., ADES 1986, op. cit., p. 48, and in particular, Berger's discussion of the way photomontage keeps its 'familiar' appearance.
24. This could refer to Albert Valentin's collages reproduced in Variétés, 15 August 1929, unpaginated, section, notably Les Yeux de Constance R, which incorporated similar multiple eye imagery.
25. This theme of 'coquette' in the work of Hannah Höch has been considered by LEVIN, Maud, in "Utopeanism, Mass Media and the avant-garde - The Montages of Hannah Höch and Kurt Schwitters", a

paper given at Royal Academy, London, at the German Art Symposium, December 1985.

26. ROH and TSCHICHOLD 1929, op. cit., plate 60 and MOHOLY-NAGY 1927, op. cit., p. 99 and p. 106.
27. Cf., LEVIN 1985, op. cit.
28. For further discussion, see GÖETHE INSTITUTE, London, Collages - Hannah Höch 1889-1978, 1985, with articles by ROTERS, Eberhard, "Pictorial Symbolism in Hannah Höch's Collages", pp. 64-69 and KRIEGER, Peter, "Paradox and Poetry in Hannah Höch's Collages", pp. 84-95.
29. Hoch's work was exhibited at the Film and Foto exhibition, Stuttgart, No. 153.
30. ELDERFIELD, J. Kurt Schwitters, London, 1985, p. 78.
31. ELDERFIELD 1985, op. cit., pp. 78-80.
32. PARIS, GALERIE GÖEMANS, Le Peinture Au Défi, introduction by Louis Aragon. Paris, Librairie Jose Corti, March 1930. ARAGON, Louis, "Introduction à 1930", La Révolution Surréaliste, No. 12, December 1929, pp. 57-64.
33. Quoted and translated in JEAN, Marcel, ed. The Autobiography of Surrealism, (Documents of 20th Century Art series. ed. R. Motherwell). New York, 1980, pp. 239-241. Quote from p. 240.
34. Aragon quoted in JEAN 1980, op. cit., p. 240.
35. Aragon, Le Peinture au défi, op. cit., p. 44. Quoted in ADES 1986, op. cit., p. 15.
36. Shown respectively on 20 December 1925, 16 January 1927, 11 December 1927, 3 February 1929, 26 Janaury 1930. Others included René Clair's Entr'acte shown on 17 January 1926 and Hans Richter's Filmstudie (1926), 21 October 1925 and Vormittagspuk (1921-8) 16 December 28.
37. C.C., pp. 28-29.
38. For an extended discussion Cf., MELLOR 1978, op. cit., p. 118 and NASH, Paul, "Art and Photography", The Listener, VI, 1931, pp. 868-9.
39. Der Querschnitt, VII, July 1931. unpaginated section.
40. CAUSEY in H.G., p. 61 from "Aboutissements de la mécanique", Variétés II, No. 9, January 1930 with illustration La Protection des hommes.
41. Cf., earlier chapter on the prostitute pp. 206-207
42. Cf., footnote 28. Also important here is Max Ernst's Les Pléiades (1921), which exploits similar ideas of a floating, decapitated nude female torso.
43. LIMBOUR, Georges, "Eschyle le carnaval et les civilisés", Documents, II, 1930, pp. 97-102 accompanied by Boiffard's photographs of carnival masks. Quoted in KRAUSS, R.E. "No More Play" in The Originality of the Avant-garde and other Modernist Myths, London 1987, p. 68.
44. Review of W.B. Seabrook's book on Voodoo by LEIRIS, M. "Le Caput mortuum ou la femme de l'alchimiste" in Documents, II, 8, 1930, p. 25. Photographs from ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Hayward Gallery, London exhibition catalogue. KRAUSS, Rosalind and LIVINGSTON, Jane with an essay by ADES, Dawn, L'Amour fou - Photography and Surrealism, London 1986, p. 199.
45. Quote from KRAUSS 1987, op. cit., 66.
46. Brassaï's photograph of Suzy's madame from BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30s, 1977, op. cit., unpaginated.
47. Quoted in KRAUSS 1987, op. cit., p. 68.

48. CANETTI, Elias, Crowds and Power, First ed. Hamburg, 1960. Author's edition translated from German by Carol Stewart, London, 1984, p. 435.
49. FREUD, Sigmund, Introductory Lecture on Psychoanalysis, originally published in German, Vienna, 1916-17. From Part II, Dreams (1916) and Chapter to Symbolism in Dreams (1916). Author uses the Pelican Freud Library, STRACHEY, J. and RICHARDS, A. Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, Vol. I, London, 1982 ed., pp. 182-203.
50. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 187.
51. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., pp. 189-90.
52. Review by GRIGSON, G. "Mysticism, Sculpture and Machine Guns", in The Bookman, May 1934 in Tate Archive. Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, London.
53. Quoted in ROSEMONT, F: André Breton and the First Principles of Surrealism, London, 1978, p. 12. From an interview with Claudine Chonez, 1948.
54. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p.188.
55. ERNST, Max, "What is the mechanism of collage", originally published in Cahiers d'Art, XI, 6-7, 1936, pp. 149-84.
56. Quoted from Aragon's forward to La Peinture au défi, quoted in JEAN 1980, op. cit., pp. 208-10.
57. Footnote number 8 in JEAN 1980, op. cit., p. 209. ERNST, Max, La Femme 100 Têtes, Paris, 1929. MAN RAY, Revolving Doors, 1916-17. Republished Paris 1929.
58. NASH, Paul, "Art and the English Press", The Weekend Review, 17 June 1929. Quote p. 679 and "Surrealism and the Illustrated Book", Signature, March 1937, pp. 7-8. MAN RAY 1916-17, op. cit. ERNST, Max, Histoire Naturelle, Paris 1926. DALÍ, Salvador, La Femme visible, Paris 1930.
59. Burra's Collection included BRETON, André and SOUPAULT, Philippe, Les Champs Magnétique, Paris, 1921 with rayographs by Man Ray. Now in Private Collection. Also the French series Peintres Nouveaux published a book on Man Ray, which included stills of L'Étoile de mer and was in its third edition by December 1929. Burra collected this series, according to Barbera Ker-Seymer in interview with author, 30 May 1982.
60. Dates for films shown at London Film Society. Man Ray's Emak-Bakia (1927), programme No. 12, 16 January 1927. Man Ray's Les Mystères du Château de Dé (1918), No. 36, 21 June 1930. Man Ray's L'Étoile de mer, (1928), No. 29, 3 February 1929. René Clair's, Entr'acte (1924), No. 4, 17 January 1926. Jean Cocteau's Sang d'un Poète (1930), No. 63, 2 April 1933. See London Film Society programmes from 25 October 1925 in British Film Institute Archive, London.
61. Quoted in NEW YORK, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism, ed. Barr, A.H. essays by Georges Hugnet, New York, December 1936-January 1937. Author uses reprint, Arno Press, New York 1968, p. 47.
62. Transition, XIX-XX, June 1930.
63. From BRETON, André, Le Second Manifesto du Surréalisme, Paris 1930. Quoted in VIRMAUX, Alain, "Le Film Surréaliste 1924-1932" in PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, Cinéma dadaiste et surréaliste, Paris 1976, pp. 13-23.
64. Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, Un Chien Andalou (1928 or 1929). Man Ray, L'Étoile de mer (1928). Germaine Dulac, La Coquille et le Clergyman (1928) with scenario by Artaud and shown at London

Film Society No. 39, April 1930. Buñuel, L'âge d'or (1930), scenario in collaboration with Dalí.

65. SITNEY, P. Adams, "Cinéma graphique et cinéma subjectif" in PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE 1976, op. cit., p. 11, Cf., pp. 8-12.
66. Man Ray, L'Étoile de mer, 1928. From title at start of film. Quoted in SITNEY 1976, op. cit., p. 11.
67. ERNST, Max, Beyond Painting (translated Dorothea Tanning), New York 1948, p. 16. Quoted in RAY, P.C. The Surrealist Movement in England, New York 1971, p. 48.
68. La Révolution Surréaliste, III, 9-10, 1 October 1927; BRETON, André, "Le Surréalisme et la peinture", pp. 36-43. Ernst's illustration, p. 39.
69. As far as Burra was concerned, the collection was not, I think, a conscious archive, but rather a 'hoarding' of interesting sources, often in a haphazard way. There is no evidence to suggest a classification or indexed system of selected imagery operated.
70. NASH 1937, op. cit., p. 8.
71. In Tate Archive, Burra Papers.
72. STOKES, C.V. Max Ernst - La Femme 100 Têtes, Ph. D. thesis, University of Washington, U.S.A. 1977, p. 14.
73. STOKES 1977, op. cit., pp. 22.
74. Clover de Pertinez noted Burra's interest in J-J Grandville's flower and animal illustrations, in converation with the author, 23 July 1982
75. GRANDVILLE, J-J. (psuedonym of J.I.I. GÉRARD) Les Fleurs Animées, Paris 1847, 2nd ed. 1857. Illustration from Second edition, p. 18.
76. Burra's postcard collection, Private collection.
77. Cf., Minotaure, I, No. 3-4, p. 19. ELUARD, Paul, "Les Plus Belles Cartes Postales", pp. 85-100.
78. The article by Raymond Queneau is related to Burra's work by CAUSEY in C.C., pp. 29-30. Apart from Whiteley's Department Store catalogue and advertisements, another possible source found in the Burra Archive was an illustrated catalogue for Christofe et Cié, Paris. Also Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p.237.
79. Noted by CAUSEY in C.C., p. 29-30 and reproduced p. 29.
80. Reproduced in C.C., p. 30.
81. For a wider discussion of Ernst's imagery, Cf., SPIES, Werner, "Une poétique du collage" in PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, Paul Eluard et ses amis peintres 1895-1952, Paris Centre Georges Pompidou 1982, pp. 45-68. For eye imagery in particular, see pp. 56-58.
82. Cf., BALAKIAN, Anna, Surrealism - the Road to the Absolute, London 2nd ed. 1972, p. 204.
83. ARAGON, Louis, Le Paysan de Paris, Paris 1926, English translation Paris Peasant, (ed. Simon Watson Taylor), London 1971, pp. 78-9. Quoted in BIGSBY, C.W.E. Dada and Surrealism, London 1972, p. 77. For further discussion of the role of the object in surrealist sexual polemics Cf., MATTHEWS, J.H. The Imagery of Surrealism, Syracuse U.S.A. 1977 and FINKELSTEIN, H. F. Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object, Cambridge, U.S.A. 1979, esp. pp. 77ff. "Humour and the Object".
84. Variétés, Brussels, June 1929, Special number, Le Surréalisme en 1929. Reference to ARAGON, Louis and BRETON, André, "To be followed - A Little Contribution to the Record of Certain Intellectuals with Revolutionary Tendencies", Paris 1929. Quoted in

JEAN 1980, pp. 230-1. Burra's copy of this issue now in Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London.

85. Burra's copy now in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
86. ARAGON, L. and BRETON, A. "Le Trésor de Jesuites", from Variétés, June 1929, pp. 43-61. Quoted in JEAN 1980, op. cit., p.224.
87. Transition, No. 19-20, June 1930, pp. 130-2. For discussion of Surrealism and Transition, see McMILLAN, Donald, Transition - the History of a Literary Era, London 1975. From Transition, 1930, op. cit., p. 120. Contained in Burra Papers, Tate Archive, London.
88. Skill was highly prized by Burra, especially compositional or design skills. Collage rather than cadavres exquis retained this sense of skill, according to William Chappell in conversation with the author 14 July 1982.
89. Cf., MATTHEWS, 1977, op. cit., pp. 65-83.
90. BRETON, André, Le Surréalisme et la Peintre, Paris 1928. Quoted and translated in WALDBERG, Patrick, Surrealism, London 1978, p. 83.
91. STOKES 1977, op. cit., p. 10ff. and recently researched by LEGGE, Elizabeth in Conscious Sources of the Unconscious - Ernst's Use of Psychological Themes and Imagery 1921-24, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, Courtauld 1985. Some of these were also outlined in LEGGE'S earlier unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of London, Courtauld Institute, Jungian Influences on Ernst's work in the 1920s, 1979.
92. Burra's library contained no specific Freudian texts, but through Aiken and surrealist periodicals, Burra's work developed a wide knowledge of Freudian dream imagery, its mechanisms and symbolism. Cf., p.368
93. Variétés (Surrealist special issue), June 1929, op. cit. pp.3-6
94. Transition, 19-20, June 1930, pp. 106-32.
95. TREVELYAN, Julian, "Cambridge Experiment - A Manifesto of Young England", in Transition 1930, op. cit., pp. 106-13. Quote from pp. 120-2.
96. La Révolution Surréaliste, 12, 15 December 1929. Accommodations of Desire on p. 18. An enlarged detail of this was illustrated on p. 20 and Illumined Pleasure on p. 29.
97. For a discussion of this, see ADES, Dawn, Dalí, London 1982, pp. 78-83 and pp. 85-89.
98. Cf., ADES 1982, pp. 80-81
99. Cf., WEEKS, Jeffrey, Sex, Politics and Society - The Regulation of Sex since 1800, London 1981, pp. 152ff: The Impact of Freud.
100. For popular bowdlerizations Cf., WEEKS 1981, op. cit., p. 152. For example Tansley's New Psychology 'popularized' Freudian psychology, Cf., Le Crapouillot, Janaury 1937 (ed. René Allendy), Les Conceptions moderne de la Sexualité. René Allendy also published numerous 'popular' studies of Freud in French in the 1920s, including popular versions of the work of the sexologist Magnus Hershfield. Burra's library contained works by Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis.
101. ERNST, Max from "Au-dela de la Peinture". Quoted in WALDBERG, Patrick, Surrealism, London 2nd ed. 1978, p. 97.
102. Quoted in Max Ernst in SCHARF, Aaron, Art and Photography 2nd ed. Harmondsworth 1978, p. 284. Cf., p. 371.
103. Variétés 1929, op. cit. pp 3-6
104. H.G., p. 80.
105. H.G., pp. 84-5.
106. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 191.
107. See later pp347-8 for discussion of black humour.

108. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 188.
109. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 188.
110. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 192.
111. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 188.
112. Variétés June 1929; FREUD, Sigmund, Der Humor, Vienna 1927. Edition used FREUD, Sigmund, Pelican Library, Art and Literature (Vol. 14) ed. Albert Dickson, Harmondsworth 1985, pp. 426-433. Freud's essay was an abridged version of a paper given to the Tenth International Psycho-Analytical Congress at Innsbruck, August 1927.
113. This drew on FREUD, Sigmund, Jokes and their Relationship to the Unconscious, Vienna 1905, printed in Penguin Freud Library (Vol. 6), Harmondsworth 1985, pp. 293-302. For a broader analysis of Freudian humour and the visual arts, Cf., KRIS, Ernst, Psychoanalytic Exploration in Art, London 1953, pp. 15ff. and pp. 62.ff. Psychology of Caricature, Cf., LACAN, Jacques, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis, London 1977, (ed. J.A. Miller, transl. A. Sheridan). Cf., Chapter 4, Of the Network of Signifiers, pp. 45-6.
114. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 429.
115. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 428.
116. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 429.
117. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 429.
118. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 429.
119. For wider discussion of nature of 'convulsive beauty' Cf., BRETON, André, L'Amour fou, Paris 1937. Quoted in NADEAU, Maurice, The History of Surrealism, Harmondsworth 1968, 2nd. ed. 1978, pp. 340-2.
120. André Breton quoted in RAY, P. C. The Surrealist Movement in Britain, Cornell, U.S.A. 1971, pp. 61-5. Quoted André Breton from preface BRETON, André, Anthologie de l'humour noir, Paris 1940. For discussion of collage and subversive humour Cf., MATTHEWS 1977, op. cit., p. 83.
121. NASH, Paul, "Surrealism and the Illustrated Book" in Signature, March 1937, pp. 6-7.

Chapter Six: The Painted Female Figure: Aiken, Freud and Surrealism.

In the paintings produced by Burra from 1931 until the mid 1930s, the female figure continues to be the main protagonist. In John Deth (1931) [CC.72] as the elusive Millicent, she courts John Deth's amorous attentions; in Composition Motor Cycle (1931) [CC.79] the female street-walker partially hidden behind a fan, stalks among the arcades of the city amidst motorcycles and champagne-supping night-clubbers; in Storm in a Jungle (1931) [CC.77] as an elaborately costumed prostitute, she walks beside a forest full of extraordinary, exotic plants and animals and in Opium Den (1933) [pl.147] in the form of a fantastic geisha, she wanders the opium smoker's den, an oriental fantasy set amidst the various manifestations of the pipe-smoker's sexual urges in dreams. Such works extend the earlier metaphor of the female figure as key persona in the world of male sexual desires. Her symbolism makes explicit references to a knowledge of Freudian symbolism and to the conceptual thinking outlined in Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle.'

In John Deth, this is tied to Aiken's poem of the same name and to the concept drawn from Freud of an instinctual urge towards death. In Composition Motor Cycle, the sexual adventure is linked to the pleasures of drinking and night-clubbing and to fast and foreign travel. In Storm in a Jungle, the prostitute is shown to be instinctively attuned to the forces of a procreative nature, her

exoticism mirrored in its fecundity and abundance. In Opium Den, the representation of the fantasies of the narcotic dreamers are primarily sexual and erotic, often carrying overtones of the sadistic represented through the mutilated female bodies. Such ideas were undoubtedly influenced by Burra's friendship with Aiken and Aiken's extensive knowledge of Freud, Freudian psychology, its concepts and dream symbolism.[2] It was a liaison which resulted in a rich exploration of the unconscious notably through the image of the female figure as a central erotic object and key participator in the imagery of the dream and unconscious. Within these paintings, the female figure is an important representative of unconscious desire and her body becomes a crucial site for the projections of the ideology of eroticism.[3] The linking of unconscious landscape-body-object suggests the female figure as a terrain ripe for Freudian redevelopment, especially in the light of the instinctual urges of Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle towards life and death.[4]

John Deth painted in 1931 was one of Burra's most widely reproduced and exhibited works in the 1930s, notably at the Leicester Galleries one-person show in 1932, the Art Now show in 1933, Unit One's provincial tour in 1934-5, at the 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition, London and as Hommage à Conrad Aiken at the 1938 Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme in Paris. At the Leicester Galleries in June 1932, it attracted critical attention for its "vision of dazzling colours and exotic forms", its "kaleidoscopic whirl".[5] P.G. Konody in The Observer issue of 5 June 1932 commented on its "orgy of colour" with

"fantastic creatures more akin in shape to floral growths." He continued: "Mr Burra's strange and occassionally bewildering art ... [with] its recurrent monstrousness of human features, the agonising contortions of body and limbs, the aggressive exaggeration of natural proportions could so easily become repulsive." It suggested, the reviewer noted, "erotic neurosis."[6] The Times critic, however, saw John Deth as "quite simply descriptive" and offering another example of Burra's works' "great deal of novelty."[7]

Planned as an accompaniment to Aiken's poem and indeed later seen as a homage to Aiken's powerful influence over Burra's work in the early 1930s, it marked something of an elaborate collaborative project with the American poet and Freudian. Its precise role was to "suggest meanings" rather to illustrate a particular scene from the poem. It was to have been used in an edition of Aiken's poems to be published by Cassell in the early 1930s, but the project never came to fruition.[8]

As Andrew Causey has noted, the subject is itself derived from the poem's account of a revelry scene at the Star Tree Inn described in section seven of part one of the poem:

"The girl-faced flute-player tipped his flute;
And while the rout stood chilled and mute,
Blew across it a gleeful note
Like rainy eve in blackbird's throat;
Beating the air with feet like wings:
The fiddlers struck the buzzing strings,
And sang, and nodded polished skulls,
While round them frolicked the frumps and trulls.
The bishop passed them with a caper,
Waving aloft a learned paper.
Behind them tripped the sad-eyed vicar
Who beamed on Millicent, the liquor

Seething his blood to frothy ichor."[9]

Many of these characters which were illustrated in an early drawing by Burra although in slightly changed positions, are also represented in the final painting; the youthful flute-player in the background; the violinists and orchestra ,imaged as jazz band, situated on a raised platform in the manner of a bal-musette with the drunken orgy going on below; the bishop with mitre holding paper aloft in the middle distance and the vicar shown in profile behind Deth. The setting of a cavernous interior with Gothic arches and erotic carved decorations was also retained. In the painting, the crimson coloured lighting and the translucent blues and greens add to the unearthly atmosphere as does the Gothic horror effect of the full-mooned, night sky complete with bats seen through the arches.

The main event in the scene is the confrontation between the central female figure Millicent and the figure of Deth, shown in the painting on the right hand side. Millicent "the spangled queen" is portrayed on the the extreme right as a bejewelled, almost vaudeville-like star in shimmering, low-fronted gown wearing an elaborate feathered hat-creation overflowing with roses and fruit. In its abundance of natural forms, the hat repeats the overflowing symbolism of the cornucopias of fruit and meat in the foreground. This 'horn of plenty' symbolism contrasts starkly with Deth's skeletal form and his skull-boned, ivy-leaved crown atopped by the jet black bird Petronilla.'[10]

The particular moment captured in the painting is the rejection of Deth's approaches by Millicent. It parallels the lines in the poem:

> "Come Millicent, my spangled Queen!
> Come thump your shivering tambourine-
> And dance me to the realm unseen!
> But Millicent gave his arm a shove:
> No, no, it's not the Dead I love."[11]

But this rebuke of Deth's love has more complex associations which Deth's leering skull, his clutching skeletal hands holding a scythe, his oppressive cloak and the poem's subtitle "A Metaphysical Legend" suggest. The implication is that Deth's desire to seduce Millicent is also an invitation to death. Such an interpretation was clearly identified by Aiken in a letter to Houston Peterson: "Here was the dance of Death localized and my Deth would have two complimentary figures, one of whom would symbolize (very roughly) consciousness while the other would symbolize the unconscious or the merely physical."[12] This moment then introduces into the poem two of the most important instinctual desires of Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920). This needs to be examined in detail.

Aiken was an established Freudian and acknowledged by critics as a poet who was "a persistant pioneer in the realms of the unconscious."[13] His works exploited Freudian concepts to reconstruct what he termed "the psychic fodder of experience." According to Jay Martin, Aiken's biographer, his interest in and study of Freud started from 1910. In 1915, Aiken read Freud's Interpretation of Dreams (1900) and became closely associated with a circle of leading American Freudians including G.B. Wilbur,

Grayson McCough and John Taylor.[14] As Aiken later acknowledged in a letter to F.J. Hoffman, his interest in Freud was based on his own experience of psycho-analysis since he had "grown up with and even in the psychoanalytical movement."[15] By the early 1930s, contemporary commentators recalled that Aiken was "steeped in the insights of psychoanalysis" and was even planning to visit Freud in Vienna in 1934 for consultation.[16]

It was after this extensive period of involvement with Freudian psychoanalysis that Aiken arrived in England and moved in the Summer of 1930 to Jeakes House in Rye. Shortly after moving in, Aiken met Paul Nash and it was through Nash that Aiken met Burra. In September 1930, Aiken wrote that "Paul Nash had signalled his welcome."[17] In April of 1931 he noted a new friendship "with a wild young artist" and this was Burra.[18] It was precisely at this point that Aiken was working on a revision of John Deth for a planned publication. As he wrote to Theodore Spencer: "these relics and derelicts had to be assembled together" for publication.[19]

John Deth, originally written in 1922-4, was conceived at the time when Aiken was exploring the interrelationship between understandings drawn from psychoanalysis and his own literary practice. This focused on how Freudian ideas could be incorporated into narrative poetry; a genre which Aiken felt "was better suited to the psychological 'moment' than any other form."[20] As Aiken later recorded in his biographical novel Ushant (1952):

> "Sex and art, art and sex: the twinned ambigious voices charmed harmoniously or discordantly everywhere, denied each other only to embrace each other or so naughtily mimicked each other as to be at times quite tantalisingly indistinguishable. If the dream was all sex, rooted in love, was art therefore too, nothing but an instinctive love song; a song of glory, a praise of life force in its very essence, the becomingness of sex ?"[21]

In particular, Aiken's John Deth explored the notion that the sexual impulse was a key motivating force in life along with the movement towards death. He was later aware that it was precisely these two instinctual forces which according to Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle, underpinned all unconscious activity.[22] As Aiken wrote in a letter to G.B. Wilbur: "The theme -the necessity to die - oddly paralleled Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle, which I hadn't read when I wrote it."[23] However, by the time of the poem's revision for the Cassell edition, Aiken was fully aware of these associations. These ideas would have undoubtedly affected Burra's interpretation of the work and its themes.

Furthermore, John Deth would have provided Burra with an opportunity to explore Freudian concepts and dream symbolism in direct relation to Aiken's experience. Aiken referred to this in a letter to R.P. Blackmur of 14 February 1931 when he stated that the poem was: "built on a series of dreams with the simple notion of portraying the mind in a moment of effective transition ... an adjustment symbolically to a highly painful group of memories and recognitions."[24]

These understandings were directly relevant to the moment of confrontation in John Deth between Millicent and Deth. This

crucial point with its explicit sexual/death overtones clearly imaged in terms of death symbolism, is marked by her sudden transfixion under the power of the crystal, represented in the painting by a triangular area of white light leading towards her wide open, staring eyes. Millicent (symbolizing the sexual instinct towards life or the conscious) when confronted by Deth (the symbolic representative of death and the instinct towards death) becomes mesmerised by the pyramid-crystal. She is represented being drawn into a semi-conscious state: a metaphor for a heightened state of being and one which, I suggest, corresponds to the dream state. In the painting, the presence of a spider suggests the complex web into which she has been drawn. Such a transition at a moment of "horror and lust" makes obvious references to Freud's ideas as understood by Aiken.

In Aiken's work, as in Cocteau's, the looking into a mirror or reflective surface frequently signals an act of self-recognition and revelation.[25] In Aiken's poem, Senlin (1925) for example, the moment of insight is symbolically represented by the reflected gaze of the viewer in a mirror-pyramid. This trauma of self exposure initiates the process of self analysis and signals a greater metaphysical awareness. These moments were always transitory and incomplete. Aiken commented on this in the Appendix "A Note on Values", where he stated that these acts were: "so incomplete that we are compelled if we are to discover ourselves with anything like completeness or find ourselves mirrored at full length, to gather our reflections in splintered fragments."[26] The moment imaged in John Deth is that discovery of

a "splintered fragment" in which a metaphysical image is mirrored. It seduces Millicent's attention in a parallel way to Deth's desire to seduce her physically. In addition, the moment of Millicent's self discovery could be seen as symbolic of the desire in the poem to escape from exterior reality and plunge into the image-stream of the unconscious dream world in order to "disclose the psychic mechanisms of the artist and human being - in the interest of furthering self-knowledge."[27]

This theme of the necessity to transcend individual consciousness in order to gain such insights is frequently linked in Aiken's poems to occult practices. In other works by Aiken, divination or fortune telling signals such a moment of self-awareness produced by tapping spiritual or metaphysical forces. In Earth Triumphant (1914), it takes the form of palm reading, in The Jig of Foslin (1916) and House of Dust the form of tarot-card readings.[28] All these methods of divination were widely respected in surrealist circles and featured in articles in surrealist periodicals as part of that wider consideration of spiritualism which was so potent an interest at this time. Burra's painting Fortune Tellers (1931) [CC.82] similarly exploits this theme. The central clairvoyant figure with hooked hand, grim expression and bones, ivy and chain hat is reminiscent of the figure of Deth. The bizarre bird-figure client with pet monkey awaits the outcome of the reading. The death motif is literally reiterated in the ritual of cartomancy being enacted as the clairvoyant turns up the ace of clubs, which is a traditional bad-omen and signal of death. Within both

Burra's work and Aiken's poems, the moment of self-awareness is linked to death or the signs of an ominous premonition of death.

This theme of sexual desire as a life force can also be seen in two other contemporary paintings by Burra, Composition Motor Cycle (1931) [CC.79] and Storm in a Jungle (1931) [CC.77] in their references to sexual mores and prostitution. In Composition Motor Cycle, the prostitute provocatively hidden by a large triangular fan, stands amongst a series of symbols for particular types of pleasure. The dinner-jacketted night-clubber to her left pops open a bottle of champagne, an act with obvious hedonistic overtones. The motor cycles suggest the contemporary cult for fast travel, leisure and speed sports. The prostitute ultimately signals illicit sexual pleasures. Such readings are further confirmed by the Freudian landscape filled with symbols for sexual adventure: the lasciviously grasping hands of the plant forms reaching to touch the passing female figure, the choppy sea with rocks in the distance and the arcaded avenues patrolled by bird figures. Furthermore, the motorcycle as a metaphor for riding was commonly used in Freudian terms as a symbol for the representation of sexual intercourse.[29] This would have been extremely appropriate to the subject of prostitution.

In Storm in a Jungle, the theme of an instinctual love-song with nature is represented by two elaborately dressed prostitutes whose figurative models are directly derived from the earlier collage-figures in Eruption of Vesuvius. They are shown simultaneously in active and passive roles, one resting and one actively patrolling

outside the brothel. The tranquil inaction of the external pair is in marked contrast to the obscene sexual practices being enacted inside the brothel. Contorted and fantastic female figures, presumably prostitutes, are represented servicing their customer's requirements. They are depicted cavorting in various stages of nudity involved in perverse scenarios accompanied by pet animals. These indecent acts are juxtaposed against the natural abundance of the exterior environment with its profusion of bulbous flowers, enormous fruits and host of birds and animals, similarly involved in the rituals of courtship. The difference between the natural qualities of the desire to procreate in the plant and animal kingdoms and the artifical perversions of sexual acts in the human community are distinctly marked. The monkeys with sexual parts displayed, eat ripe fruits and cavort in rituals of love making. The courting birds simultaneously trap insects and express their interest in their partners. In the case of the crimson bird in the centre, this is specifically indicated by means of a display of vivid purple tail feathers. Set against this, the perverse activities being revealed within the brothel appear obscenely unnatural sexual practices overset with ideas of the sadistic, violence and brutality.

The two prostitutes outside the brothel appear linked to the exterior world rather than the interior one. Their exotic dresses act as a foil for human display similar in many respects to the colourful displays of the animals. The figure descending the stairs, holds a triangular-shaped fan and wears a hat overflowing with flowers and fruit, two conspicuous signs of the prostitute's

dress in Burra's work. The other female figure bent over a table smoking is represented against the background of the forest's courtship. She seems to be waiting for the arrival of the next client and can be seen as the madame of the brothel.

The shaking handkerchief signals the arrival of another figure, possibly a client. The precise reason for this act is not emphatically stated, although two sets of imagery in the painting signal a sexual motive. Firstly, the sexual metaphor of the animals and plants suggest an erotic impulse and this is linked to that second important Freudian instinct, death, by means of a number of death motifs or symbols. These are the skull decorations on the pillars marking the entrance to the brothel, the two cats busy disgorging the dead mouse and the dagger with nude female handle positioned next to an overturned cup of reddish liquid suggests the spilling of blood. Additional ominous suggestions are the depiction in the distance of a stormy sea with flash of lightning and the peculiar symbolism of the face-teapot, which bizarrely appears to have had its mouth stuffed to silence it against any warning.

The threatening and violent theme of Storm in the Jungle could be linked to the act of the murder, which is about to be committed by the prostitute enticing the unseen customer to the sexual act, and in Freudian terms, to his death. This impression of violence allied to a sexual motive is suggested in the use of Freudian dream-symbolism relating to the plants, animals and objects. The forest becomes a site full of Freudian signifiers of female sexual

arousal. Fruit, in general, signals breasts; woods and bushes mean pubic hair; blossoms and flowers, womens' genitalia; gardens again common symbols of female genitalia. Even the leaves mirror the forms of the buttocks as well as the breasts imaged in the brothel vignettes. In addition, object symbols include the table, doorways, steps and receptacles (teapot, cup), all symbolically representative of female sexuality in Freudian terms. The teapot also appears to enact a comic scene of copulation. This interpretation is also confirmed by the presence of wild animals, which according to Freud in his Introductory Lectures on Psycho analysis "mean people in an excited state and further evil instincts or passion."[30]

In a later work, Serpents' Eggs (1934) [CC.111] , this parallel between the instincts towards sex and death, and bestial passion is explicitly registered through the presence of that potent Freudian symbol, the snake. The snake is recognized by Freud as "the famous representative of male genitalia."[31] The image of the snake physically penetrating to the centre of the egg is an obvious parallel for sexual intercourse with the egg being a widely known female symbol. However, this sexual interpretation is underscored by ideas relating to the death instinct. Death motifs in the form of bones, cracked egg shells and bird-like masks litter the environment and in the background, against a volcanic eruption, two elaborate duenna figures watch this act of physical and sexual mutilation. These two streams of symbolism towards sex and death, are undoubtedly indebted to a knowledge of Freud's work and understandings drawn from surrealism. However, they also

specifically refer to the influential role played by Conrad Aiken in introducing Burra to Freudian ideas and symbolism.

Aiken's understanding of Freudian principles and writings was crucially important in providing Burra with a more systematic knowledge of Freudian psychoanalysis and its theories, especially those instinctual drives outlined in Beyond the Pleasure Principle. In addition, Aiken's work validated the importance of such ideas to contemporary artistic practice. These were reinforced by Aiken's democratic views of art as incorporating both 'High' and 'low' culture and his theories on the instinctual nature of artistic creation which acted as a common link between these areas. Aiken did not distinguish between these two 'High' and 'low' bases for creativity. He attacked all elitist concepts of 'High Art' and in particular, he condemned critics: "who with a sneer dismiss the tastes of the vulgar. Those tastes are important. They give us the clearest view of the common denominator of art."[32]

Aiken's interest in mass and popular culture paralleled Burra's own and included American silent comedies and popular romances, comics and cartoons, pulp fiction and popular entertainment, especially those forms which included lewd displays, such as burlesque and striptease. As Jay Martin has noted, his poems incorporated "a series of nickelodeons, honky tonks and a variety of burlesque houses."[33] In particular, American popular culture was venerated by Aiken as a source of appropriate ideas and themes for modern art. These interests coincided with Burra's own after Burra's first visit to the United States in 1933 and also later in

1937, and his personal experience of the nightlife of New York and Boston. Vaudeville with its startling juxtapositions of sensationalism and escapism, its sordid vulgarity and cheap, erotic thrills, was a particular shared interest.[34]

Popular cultural themes with erotic associations had featured in Burra's works of the late 1920s. Earlier conversation pieces such as The Two Sisters (1929) [CC.54] and The Balcony, Toulon (1929) [CC.43] had carried ideas of the erotic through the titillating revelation of the female anatomy; protruding nipples, chance views of underwear and bare breasts in a manner possibly derived from the displays common in popular stage shows. In addition, the works on urban entertainments themes such as Les Folies de Belleville (1928) [CC.36] had exploited the pornographic aspects of female display. Undoubtedly these ideas on the sexual undertones of popular cultural forms as giving a kind of cheap sexual thrill were central to Burra's work.

However, it is only in these paintings from 1931-3 that the Freudian dimension of female display is fully represented. In Opium Den [pl.147], probably completed in Boston on Burra's first trip in 1933, the theme of eroticism is imaged in terms of an exotic floorshow entertainment; an expression of unconscious male desire. Dream imagery and an authentic opium den interior with bunks are interposed. The central oriental figure as a manifestation of the opium dreams presides over the events both in the sense of the madame, controlling physically the scene, and as a major form of sexual desire of the smokers disclosed in their

opium dreams. In the form of an eroticized object of desire, she stalks both their physical and unconsious environments. An earlier work Dr Fu Manchu (now lost, 1932) had explored a similar theme, which was recognized at its exhibition at the Leicester Galleries in June 1932 by the critic P.G. Konody. Writing in The Observer, 5 June 1932, he noted how "the opium smokers dreams are made to mix with the reality of the opium den" suggesting "some clandestine surroundings where the miasmic emanations of poisonous orchids, the heavy odour of oriental scents and an occasional gust of saline sea air mingle."[35]

Opium dens were illicit, but modish haunts in the 1920s and 1930s. Cocteau in particular, had made opium smoking fashionable amongst urbane intellectuals and bohemians in France. Barbera Key-Seymer had photographed Cocteau and a group smoking opium in Toulon in August 1931.[36] 'Studios' for opium addicts were usually situated in the immigrant, often Chinese quarters of large cities or close by the red light areas of ports. Whilst Burra may have visited Chinatown in New York, documentary evidence for such places in Paris was available through Brassaï's photographs of 'High class' opium dens taken in 1931, which Burra may have seen reproduced in magazines such as Le Crapouillot in the early 1930s. These included photographs of: "divans covered with brocades and velvets and low Chinese tables bearing trays loaded with pipes, lacquered boxes and ceramic bowls - oil lamps gave off subdued light - all the panoply of the opium den."[37] Whilst Opium Den includes many of these decorations, the overall impression is of a more mundane milieu with simple wooden bunks with palletes. The

lighting, the oriental-theme decorations, the subdued coloured glow of the Kedan lamps and the opium pipes appear to retain such authentic details.

In addition, the theme of opium smoking had specific links with that narcotic tradition of English Romanticism exemplified by de Quincy and Coleridge in which laudinium or opium extract was used as an aide-stimulus to evoke images from the unconscious. The opium den, therefore, was a modern update on this theme and such associations would have been recognised.[38] This was part of the attraction of a project involving an opium den for an operatic-theatrical production with Frederick Ashton in the early 1930s. Burra made some preliminary designs for the piece incorporating a dramatic vertical elevation of bunk stalls similar to Opium Den, but it never came to fruition.[39]

The importance of these areas outlined in Aiken's poetry and in particular in John Deth, and related to Freudian concepts and symbolism was reinforced by Burra's increasing awareness of the surrealists' interests in these themes. Following the translation of Freud's Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (1905) into French in 1927, and Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (1905) in 1930, many surrealists began to explore the broader ramifications of Freudian theory applied not only to pathological states, but also to the psychological conditions inherently a part of normal mental life. This focused on the all-pervasive nature of sexuality and the strategic importance of the sexual impulse.

It also acknowledged the key role of the erotic object as a sexual stimulus. Furthermore, it incorporated the notion of two essential instincts; the first towards a sexual motive and the second towards death.[40]

Surrealist writing in the early 1930s offered a more rigorous approach to the significance of Freud's writings to the surrealist imperative in these years.[41] Bataille's study of eroticism and the sexual impulse in Sade, Breton's Les Vases Communicants (1932) which mapped out interconnections between Freud, Marx and Surrealism, Lacan's exposition of the role of sexual motivation in crime, Dalí's essay on the psychological phenomenon of ecstasy, Caillois's analysis of violent sexual attitudes and Heine's writing on traditions of violence and sex in art, all contributed to this reassessment.[42] In particular, the surrealist notion of "convulsive beauty" offered a sophisticated understanding of these reconsiderations forced by Freud's theory of sexuality and the role of the uncanny.[43]

Burra's paintings of 1931-32, Revolver Dream (1931) [CC.74], Still Life with Pistol (1931) [CC.76], Tomato Lady (1931) [CC.78] along with the previously discussed Opium Den and the later work, Saturday Market (1932) [CC.87], addressed these subjects. They consider female roles in relation to the themes of violence and eroticism. They clearly acknowledge surrealist and Freudian investigations. Sometimes this is explicitly declared and at other times, it incorporates modified dream-symbolism. In Opium Den, the male smokers procure images of female seductresses as an

important part of the opium dream and their narcotic addiction. These figures are frequently heavily laden with luscious fruit and enormous flowers with revealed stamens - the genital parts of plants and Freudian symbols for female genitalia, which explicitly state the sexual aspect of the dream. At other times, these erotic images are linked to a scenario of threatening violence and/or violent distortion or mutilation. For example, on the left-hand side of Opium Den, a beheaded female form emerges in vivid green with scarlet nipples, lurid beads and pronounced pubic and under-arm hair from the pipe of an opium smoker. Her face is hidden by three playing cards from which emerges a pistol set amongst flames, out of which fires another nude female form. In her hand is grasped a skull-handled dagger threateningly directed towards the back of the central oriental figure. This act links the erotic theme of the female nudes to the danger of malevolent violence.

Similar symbolism linking the sexual impulse with violence occurs in Still Life with Pistol and Tomato Lady. In Still Life with Pistol, amidst a carefully arranged row of playing cards reminiscent of the procedure of fortune telling with some hidden and others revealed, the beheaded figure of a female nude, concealed behind two fans, forms from the smoke of a recently fired hand gun. There is a strong sense of some recently completed violent act, which has been underscored by a sexual motive. This derives from the mixing of symbols of sex: nude female forms with the fan accoutrements of prostitutes and the revolver with its smoke. The idea of a sexual motive is further

clued through the enormous ripe fruits, probably peaches, represented on the left and linking the female nude to female genitalia in Freudian symbolism. Furthermore, the inclusion of guns is revealing; Freudian symbols of male penetration with the capacity to 'unload' into the female body in the act of sexual intercourse, which parallel the act of shooting.

Likewise in Tomato Lady, the multi-armed, vividly coloured female nude stands amidst a compendium of Freudian symbols; figs - the most carnal of fruits; peaches - breasts; plants with stamen displayed - genitalia. In the background, columns held aloft by enormous hands and the climbing foliage have phallic connotations, which in the case of the plants is made explicit as they wind around the genitals, underarms and breasts of the tomato coloured nude.

Finally in Revolver Dream, a green man points his gun at a naked woman. She cowers from this instrument and symbol for violent male penetration. The work is again filled with Freudian references to female sexuality: house - the genital orifice; rocky water - the landscape of female sexual arousal and the genital symbolism of blossoms, fruit and flowers. In addition, a bowl of fruit on a platter held aloft by three naked figures (perhaps fates) is placed strategically next to the flowers; symbols of women's genitalia with stamens like grasping fingers. In the foreground are giant ripening bananas linking along with the revolver, sexuality to death; the two main instinctual drives of man in Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle.[44]

In all these paintings, the central subject is the dream as a distinctive sort of male sexual desire; a territory dominated by masculine sexual demands and upheld by physical, often violent menace. Whilst this could be derived from the main 'masculinized' premises of Freud's writings, which inscribed dream symbolism with peculiarly phallo-centric understandings, this continual use of the female body as a topography for the ideology of male sexual power is emphatically reproduced in these paintings.[45] However, this possession is frequently imaged in terms of an encounter or confrontation as part of the male desire to lay claim to the female body as an erotic object. This corresponds in symbolic terms to the desire of the male gaze to possess the view of the female in the voyeuristic sense of watching or dreaming, and also, the sexual urge towards physical union.[46]

Importantly, it is only in the later paintings Saturday Market (1932) [CC.87] and Figure in a Café (c.1936) [CC.127] that the female figure is represented as an active participator in the drama and imaged as an aggressor. In Saturday Market, the scantily clad prostitute, is shown with revolver raised ready to confront the muscular street trader, who symbolically fondles the bulbous peppers. In Figure in a Café, the bizarre hybrid animal-woman carries in her hand a gun in preparation for an imminent act of violence. The precise motivation is unclear, but as in Saturday Market, this carries associations of an act of defiance against male sexual dominance, possibly a revenge murder, through its mixing of the sexual and violent themes.

In all of these paintings completed between 1931-32, Burra's use of Freudian references to sexuality and violence and its links to sex and death and to dream symbolism is emphatic and extensive. In many respects, the works correspond to representations of what in Freudian terms would be designated 'anxiety' or 'punishment dreams'.[47] The texts which are relevant to this parallel are Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (Ger. 1920 and English 1922) and his essay On Sexuality: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (Ger. 1905, English 1910 and 4th Edition 1930).[48] Freud's Three Essays along with the earlier Interpretation of Dreams, are the two most important texts on the mode of functioning of the unconscious processes in dreams. Beyond the Pleasure Principle extends these ideas to include Freud's final investigations into the importance of instincts. It introduces two essential psychoanalytical concepts, namely the 'compulsion to repeat' and the theory of the death instinct. It is in this area of the relationship between the sexual and death instincts that Freud's ideas directly influenced Aiken at this historical moment. Burra's imagery contained in the paintings of 1931-32 also reveals a direct understanding of these themes.

Freud's early analysis of sexuality in On Sexuality - Three Essays had centred upon his clinical observation of hysterics in order to prove: "how far psychological investigations can throw light upon the biology of the sexual life of man."[49] It had incorporated studies of childhood and the sexual impulse in childhood. It had also analysed the conditions of fetishism, sadism and masochism in adult sexual life. His initial conclusions stated at the end of

the first essay on Sexual Aberrations were that firstly, mental forces act as a restrictive control over the sexual instinct, often through socially formed feelings of shame, repulsion and disgust. Secondly, Freud noted that the sexual instinct was a primary motivating force in the unconscious and central to all efforts to understand its function. In his summary at the end of the last essay, Freud expanded his early conclusions to note that social structures of morality and authority operating through the forces of shame, pity etc., acted from childhood to repress the sexual instinct. As a consequence of these pressures, perversion developed as the corollary of repression and neurosis in adult sexual life. Freud concluded that inhibition and disassociation were both constituent parts of the initial instinct and therefore, were manifestly associated with perversion in adult sexuality.[50]

In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud's investigations into sexual instincts centred on an exploration of the nature of traumatic neurosis. It considered in particular, trauma in dreams as a critical agency of neurosis. These types of dreams Freud designated anxiety or punishment dreams. This discovery affected Freud's earlier notion of dream as a form of wish fulfilment by adding to it, the new conception of anxiety-dream. In this, trauma/anxiety dreams were related to the negative aspects of neurosis-perversion. This crucially extended the category of the 'pleasure principle' to include those dreams which "merely replaced the forbidden wishfulfilment by the appropriate punishment for it."[51]

Furthermore, this elaboration of 'the pleasure principle' recognized the ability of such dreams to 'over-ride' the neurotic fear of the sexual experience. By this means, the 'trauma' could be dominated by the 'compulsion to repeat': "a compulsion to conjure up what has been forgotten and repressed."[52] The decisive agency in the desire to 're-live' such experiences in the form of 'trauma-anxiety' dreams, according to Freud, was the instinctual desire to extend life. He concluded that this acted in a typically instinctual way, namely as: "an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things, which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressures of external disturbing forces."[53]

Briefly then Freud put forward the concept that "trauma-anxiety" dreams were an instinctual expression of the unconscious desire to live; part of a natural will to survive. In this, the sexual instinct was directly related to the desire for self-preservation. In opposition to the 'will to life' stood death, or the 'will to death'. This formed part of a dualistic, dialectical system in which it represented an opposing process of decay and decomposition. Quoting Schopenhauer, Freud concluded that death was, in fact, the direct result of the will to life, an extention of the purpose of life, but could be set against the sexual instinct, which was the embodiment of the 'will to life'.[54]

It should be clear that this notion of the system of life and death and the important role of sexual instincts as metaphors for the 'will to life' and to death parallels Aiken's ideas in the

poem John Deth as noted earlier. Aikens's model was undoubtedly Freudian in origin. Burra's painting represents this moment of confrontation between Millicent as symbolically representing 'the will to life' and Deth, 'the death impulse'. The sexual level of this meeting with death acts as a symbolic expression of the interconnection of the sexual urge with the instinctual 'will to life'. In the scene represented by Burra, the physical menace of Deth, his overt sexual advances and the threatening presence of death indicated by means of symbolic images of death, constitute the moment of Millicent's trauma. This also coincides with Millient's captivation by the pyramid crystal; which over-rides the death threat by returning to an earlier condition, namely a dream state. The dream state as a metaphor for the expression of the 'will to life' repairs the moment of trauma. It symbolically denies Deth/death.

In addition, the scenes of debauchery and vice going on around this confrontation, signal the sexual and violent nature of the trauma acting as a screen for the projection of the source of the 'anxiety'. Thus, the painting John Deth was intended to be a visual correspondance for the 'trauma-anxiety' dream in which the confrontation between Millicent and Deth parallels the moment of conflict between the will to life and death, between the impulse to repeat and neurotic fear and between the conscious and unconscious states. These series of oppositions lay at the core of Aiken's poem and were fundamental parts of the Freudian model. The anxiety dream was a critical agency for the discussion of and

vehicle for such relationships and it is this subject, which Burra's painting knowingly suggests.

However, the importance of these themes and their theoretical underpinnings was not derived from Aiken's knowledge of Freudian theory alone. Burra's understanding of the particular relevance of these issues to modern art practice also exploited discussions and visual material encountered in contemporary magazines and in surrealist periodicals and publications. As already noted, the special surrealist issues of Variétés and Transition were influential in this respect.[55] The illustrations of Courbet's Le Sommeil (1866) and Rousseau's Le Rêve (1910) in Variétés offered visual parallels of the dream condition applied to female nude figures and sexual themes. In Courbet's work, it was allied to hallucination and underscored by lesbian overtones. In Rousseau's work, the exotic imagery of the jungle with its mysterious pipe-players lulled the figure of Yadwigha to sleep; symbolically marking the transition into a different 'primitive state'; an exotic and erotic dream world. Both could be seen in Freudian terms as representations of archetypal anxiety dreams. In addition, they form important precedents to the interpretation of Storm in a Jungle as a Rousseau-esque dream scenario and in Opium Den, for the particular conditions of opium dreaming as illicit and carnal focussed around the sleeping female figure.[56]

In addition, the dream had from the early 1920s been acknowledged as a central imperative in the surrealist endeavour to liberate the individual from social conventions and psychic repression

enforced by bourgeois society. The publication of Freud's theories on sexuality in French in the late 1920s provided a theoretical model for an interconnexion between dreams and sexuality, which surrealist artists such as Masson and Ernst had been aware of from the first half of the decade. In 1930-31, the early issues of Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution focused surrealist attention towards a more scientific approach to psychic conditions such as hysteria, delirium or paranoia.[57] This formed part of the project urged in Breton's important text, Les Vases Communicants, published initially as excerpts in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, No 3/4, December 1931, to give the examination of the relationship between waking life and dream imagery and the particular importance of the sexual encounter, a more prominent role.[58]

In Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, the 'revolutionary' writings of de Sade were foregrounded to focus attention on the interface between sexual instincts and dream states and to provide a context for the broader re-examination of Freud's writings on sex and violence. De Sade's concern with sexual fantasies and perversions in dreams provided a rich vocabulary of erotic symbols drawn from the territory of repressed sexual desires. It also strategically linked the instinct of pleasure to pain and violence. Furthermore, it established the female nude as the primary erotic object. As J.T. Soby later commented: "Through Freud, the immense eroticism of de Sade's 120 Journée de Sodome earned a scientific validity."[59]

Sade's writing proved a rich territory for surrealist investigations in the period 1930-31. His importance can be seen in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, issue number 4, December 1931, which contained "Pensées inédite de D.A.F.Sade" accompanied by a section from Breton's Les Vases communicants. An earlier issue, number 2, October 1930 had contained additional unedited letters by Sade with an introduction and notes by Maurice Heine and an article by René Char. In the following issue, number 5, May 1933, more letters and another set of notes relevant to discussions of de Sade's Justine were included. The accompanying visual material was supplied predominantly by Dalí and Man Ray (notably the Hômmage à D.A.F. Sade, (1933).[50] In addition, film stills from Bunŭel's L'Âge d'Or (1930) with its strongly anti-conventional, anti-bourgeois theme were illustrated. These were accompanied by the introductory programme to the film's first showing with a surrealist preface co-edited by Dalí and Buñuel, divided into sections which revealed an explicit knowledge of Freudian principles:

> "The Sexual Instinct and the Death Instinct,
> It is mythology that changes.
> Love and disorientation.
> Situation in Time.
> Social aspects, Subversive elements."[51]

That surrealist artists, photographers and film-makers were exploring similar avenues opened up by Freud's work, must have emphasized to Burra the strategic importance and relevance of Freud's ideas to avant-garde activities across the whole range of visual culture. John Deth, Opium Den, Storm in a Jungle, Tomato Lady, Still Life with a Pistol and Revolver Dream represent clear

evidence of the influence of Freud on Burra's work. Furthermore, when placed against Aiken's work in 1931-2 and the interests of the surrealists in the early 1930s, these paintings indicate the growing awareness and currency of Freudian psychoanalysis, dream symbolism and instinctual models incorporating the themes of sexuality, life and death in British artistic and literary circles.

1. FREUD, Sigmund, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Vienna 1920. Translated into English 1922. Edition Hogarth Press, (ed. and transl. James Strachey). London 1961.
2. Aiken arrived in Rye in August 1930, met Paul Nash slightly later, who around January 1931 introduced Burra to Aiken. Further details of letters, see KILLORIN, Joseph, Conrad Aiken - Selected Letters, New Haven 1978. In a letter dated 30 September 1930, Aiken noted "Paul Nash has signalled his welcome" and in a letter to Walter Piston from Jeakes House, Rye 25 April 1931 wrote: "Paul Nash artist is nice and ditto his wife and another wild going artist Burra is amusing.." Quoted KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 174. Detailed correspondence between Conrad Aiken and Edward Burra is contained in the Aiken Papers and Literary Manuscripts, The Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino California USA. Apart from those already published in Killorin's edition, there are c. 200 letters, which the author has seen.
3. For details of Conrad Aiken's knowledge of Freudian ideas see, MARTIN, Jay, Conrad Aiken - A Life of his Art, Princeton 1963, pp. 26ff. For Aiken's relationship with Paul Nash, see CAUSEY, Andrew, Paul Nash - A Catalogue Raisonné, Oxford 1980, pp. 195-203.
4. For further examination of the female body as a site for projections of ideology of eroticism see ADES, Dawn, "Notes on Two Women Surealist Painters - Eileen Agar and Ithell Colquhon", Oxford Art Journal, III, 1, April 1980, pp 36-42 For recent explorations see LAUSANNE. MUSÉE CANTONAL DES BEAUX ARTS, La Femme et le Surréalisme 1987, ed. BILLETER, E. and PIERRE, J. Cf., PIERRE, Jose, Le 'problème de la femme' dans le surréalisme, ibid., pp. 32-63 and Cf., PARKER, Rozsika and POLLOCK, Griselda, Old Mistresses - Women, Art and Ideology, London 1981, pp. 131-144.
5. P.G. Konody in The Observer, 5 June 1932, p.14.
6. P.G. Konody op. cit., p.14.
7. The Times, unidentified critic, 5 June 1932. Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
8. Burra Library Collection, Tate Archive. AIKEN, Conrad, John Deth, New York 1930. According to CAUSEY, A. 1980, op. cit., p. 195, the original suggestion of Nash as the illustrator in July was following Nash's refusal, suggested as Burra. Cf., CAUSEY in C.C., pp.49-51.
9. H.G., p. 96-97. Quoted from pp. 95-6. Also in Burra Papers, Tate Archive. The Times Literary Supplement review of John Deth, 5 February 1931. References to Aiken's poetry from AIKEN, Conrad, The Collected Poems of Conrad Aiken , Oxford 1970.
10. For references see AIKEN Conrad, John Deth - A Metaphysical Legend, New York 1930, op. cit., pp. 398, 406-7.
11. H.G., p. 96.
12. Letter from Aiken to Houston Peterson, 5 October 1928 in PETERSON, Houston, Melody of Chaos, Longmans Green 1931, p. 205. Quoted in MARTIN, Jay, op. cit., p. 64.
13. KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 312. Letter to Jay Martin, 12 November 1961 and quoted in Burra Papers, Tate Gallery. Times Literary Supplement review, 5 February 1931 of John Deth.
14. See MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 26, for Aiken and Freud.

15. Quoted from MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 27. See BLACKMUR, R.P. The Collected Novels of Conrad Aiken, London 1964. Introduction pp. 5-7. See also Conrad Aiken on Freud in New Verse, No 11, October 1934, "Answers to an Enquiry", p. 13. On Freud's influence, Aiken noted tht he had been affected "profoundly, but so has everybody whether they are aware of it or not. However I decided very early, I think as early as 1912 that Freud and his co-workers and rivals and followers, were making the most important contribution to the century to the understanding of man and his consciousness..." (p. 13)
16. For Aiken and Psychological Analysis, see MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 131.
17. Letter from Aiken to G.B. Wilber, 30 September 1930. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 161.
18. Letter from Aiken to Walter Piston, 25 April 1931. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 174.
19. Letter to Theodore Spencer, 31 October 1931. Quoted KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 161.
20. MARTIN 1963, op. cit., pp. 64-5. Quote from New Verse No. 11, October 1934. p. 13.
21. AIKEN, C. Ushant - An Essay, New York 1952, p. 177.
22. FREUD 1920, op. cit., pp. 43-44 and pp. 47-48. Cf., MARTIN 1963, op. cit., pp. 26-27.
23. Letter to G.B. Wilber, 2 January 1931. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 161-2.
24. Letter to Theodore Spencer, 31 October 1930. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 161.
25. For connections between Aiken and Cocteau, Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 199-203. See earlier for Burra and Cocteau and death/mirror parallels, pp. 161-2.
26. Burra Library, Tate Archive, AIKEN, Conrad, Senlin, London 1925. Inscribed 'from Conrad Aiken' 1932. AIKEN, Conrad, "An Appendix - A Note on Values". Quoted in BLANCHARD, R.A. Collected Criticism of Conrad Aiken - A Reviewers ABC, London 1961, p. 13. Vogue, late October 1925, placed Aiken in "The Hall of Fame" as "An American who lives in England and writes poetry and distinguished criticism", p. 58. It refers to Senlin. Letter from Conrad Aiken to R.P.Blackmur, January 1931. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit. at pp. 161-9.
27. Introduction to KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. xiv and ref. to letter to Jay Martin, 12 November 1961, p. 312.
28. AIKEN, Conrad 1970, op. cit., Earth Triumphant p. 18, The Joy of Forslin p. 68, House of Dust p. 131. See MARTIN 1963, op. cit., pp. 53-4.
29. FREUD 1916, op. cit., p. 190.
30. FREUD 1916, op. cit. p. 192.
31. FREUD 1916, op. cit., p. 189. Cf., AIKEN 1952, op. cit., footnote 15.
32. AIKEN 1961, op. cit., p. 64. Quoted in MARTIN 1963, op cit., p. 20. For further discussion of Aiken's attitude to popular culture Cf., BLACKMUR 1964, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
33. MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 27.
34. Aiken's attraction to sensationalism and harlotry Cf., BLACKMUR 1964, pp. 38ff.
35. P.G. Konody, The Observer 5 June 1932, p. 14.
36. Barbera Ker-Seymer in conversation with the author, 14 February 1983.

37. BRASSAÏ, Secret Paris of the 30s, London ed. 1977. Section 'Opium Dens' unpaginated.
38. Burra and Aiken in late 1930s and early 1940s 'venerated' such a tradition of English Romanticism which exploited 'supernatural'. See AIKEN, Conrad, "Poetry 1940 Model" from AIKEN 1961, op. cit., p. 102. Quoted MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 156.
39. Exhibited in SPRINGFIELD MUSEUM OF ART, Massachusetts U.S.A. 1937. Burra referred to this project in a letter to William Chappel from Springfield 1933: "I have been busy doing a few ideas for an opium ballet for Wylie Tate's Aladdin to be presented at the Empire Leeds. Paul [Nash] saw it by mistake and was horrified, so crude." W.C. Letters, p. 77.
40. Freud's work was translated into French in the following years. An Introduction to Psycholanalysis and The Psychopathology of Everyday Life 1922, Totem and Taboo 1924, The Interpretation of Dreams 1925, Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious 1930.
41. For connections between Freud hysteria and Surrealism, see La Révolution Surréaliste, 11, 15 March 1928. BRETON, A and ARAGON, L. "Le Cinquantenaire de l'Hysterie", pp. 20-22 and BRETON, A. "Entrée des Mediums" in Littérature, new series, No. 6, Paris, 1 November 1922. Aiken was particularly interested in the erotic sensationalism of day dream. Cf., MARTIN 1963, op. cit., p. 38. Freud's pioneering work in psychoanalysis, his scientific analysis of the workings of the mind, his mechanisms for tapping the unconscious and his studies of dreams were crucial to Surrealism throughout 1920s and 30s. Freud is mentioned in BRETON, A. Manifeste du Surréalisme, Paris 1924 in relation to Breton's knowledge of Freudian principles and methods of examination and Pierre Janet is listed as a recommended writer in Littérature, 11-12, October 1923. See ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Dada and Surrealism Reviewed, London 1978, pp. 182-3 Note 8.63. Also important were studies by the French psychologist CHARCOT, Jean Martin, Leçons sur les maladies du système nerveux faites à la Salpétrière, Paris 1872-73 3 vols. Summaries of Freud also appeared by Rene Allendy and Dr. R. Laforgue in Le Crapouillot in the 1930s. LAFORGUE, R. La psycho-analyse et les nervoses, Paris 1923. Cf., GREEN, Christopher, Cubism and its Enemies - Modern Movements and Reactions in French Art 1916-25, London 1987, pp. 149-50.
42. BATAILLE, G. "Dictionnaire critique: oeil" in Documents, 4, September 1929, p 216 and "Le jeu lugubre", Documents 7, Dec. 1929 [Also important BATAILLE, Georges, Histoire de l'oeil, Paris 1928. BRETON, André, Les Vases Communicants, Paris 1932. and "La beauté sera convulsive" in Minotaure, 5, May, 1934, pp. 9-16. LACAN, J. "Le problème du style et les formes paranoiaques de l'expérience" in Minotaure, 1, February 1933. pp. 68-9. DALI, Salvador, "Le Surréalisme spectrale de l'éternal féminin préraphaélite" in Minotaure, 8, 1936 pp. 16-9 and "Interpretation paranoiaque - critique de l'image obsédante 'L'Angélus' de Millet" in Minotaure, 1, February 1933 pp. 65-7. Also "Le phénomène de l'extase" in Minotaure, 3/4, 14 December 1933 pp. 76-7, and La Conquête de l'irrationel, Paris 1935. HEINE, Maurice, "Note sur un classement psycho-biologique des paresthesis sexuelles" in Minotaure, 3/4. 14 December 1933, p. 36

and "Martyres en taille-douce" in Minotaure, III, 9, October 1936 pp. 51-3 and "Regards sur l'enfer anthropoclassique" in Minotaure 8, 1936 ff. CAILLOIS, Roger, "Le mante religieuse" in Minotaure, 5, May 1934, pp. 23-6.

43. In Surrealism's dialogue with psychoanalysis, love, sex, death, hysteria and trauma were key nexus of discursive definitions and crucially underpinned a re-examination of the "whole modern conception of love". The concept of 'convulsive love' attempts to re-vivify conventional notions and cliches of historical formations of definitions of 'love'. It can be seen as an attempt to 'overhaul' the whole 'Romantic' discourse of love by exploiting Freudian underpinnings. This is the central issue and subject of BRETON, A. L'Amour fou, Paris 1937.
44. FREUD 1916, op. cit., pp. 188-90. FREUD 1925, op. cit., p.48. Importantly Burra's female nude in this painting may have been derived from KRULL, Germaine, Études de nu, Paris 1930. Cf., ARLES, MUSÉE RÉATTU, Germaine Krull Photographie 1924-36, 1988 pp. 89-92.
45. Feminist criticism has challenged the phallo-centricity of Freud's approach, and the totemic and central role of the symbolic phallus in Freud's writing. Cf., MULVEY, L. "Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema" in Screen 16, No. 3 1975 and PARKER and POLLOCK 1981, op. cit., p.138.
46. For further discussion, see METZ, Christian, Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Imaginary Signifier, London 1982. Cf., A Note on Two Kinds of Voyeurism pp. 71ff.
47. FREUD 1920, op. cit., p. 26. Cf., introduction pp. ix-x.
48. FREUD, Sigmund, On Sexuality: Three Essays on the theory of Sexuality and other works, Vienna 1905. Translated into English, London 1905. Edition used Pelican Freud Library Vol. 7, On Sexuality, Harmondsworth 1977, pp. 33-170.
49. FREUD 1920, op. cit., p.30. Summary pp. 155-163ff.
50. FREUD 1905, op. cit., p. 76.
51. FREUD 1920, op. cit., p. 26.
52. FREUD 1920, op. cit., p. 26.
53. FREUD 1920, op. cit., p. 30.
54. FREUD 1920, op. cit., pp. 43-44.
55. Variétés, II, I, June 1929. Numéro Special, "Le Surréalisme en 1929", Unpaginated. section after p.38.
56. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN, Hayward Gallery, Dada and Surrealism Reviewed, London 1978, p. 254. Also for Rousseau, Cf., SOUPAULT, Philippe, Henri Rousseau: Le Douanier, Paris 1927. For Courbet see ROYAL ACADEMY, Gustave Courbet 1819-1877, London, January-March 1978, pp. 165-7.
57. Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, 1, July 1930. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 251-263.
58. Published as BRETON, André, Les Vases communicants, Paris 1932.
59. SOBY, J.T. After Picasso, New York 1935, p. 67.
60. For discussion of de Sade Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 255-6.
61. Programme to first screenings of 'L'âge d'or' at Studio 28, Paris 1930. Different chapters of Preface. Quoted in JEAN 1980. op. cit., p. 257.

Chapter Seven: The Female Figures, Duennas, Hostesses, Giantesses and Bird Figures.

By late 1931-1932, the exploration of the bird-figure theme was emerging as a central one in Burra's artistic production as a letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer documented. Referring to the works The Duenna (1932) [CC84], Hostesses (1932) [CC.86], Two Giantesses (1932) [CC.90] and Bird Women (1932-3) [CC.90c], Burra wrote: "I do hope you will like my new fangled pictures. Im just crazy over bird-folk now and in Lyon right this moment am studying bird folk from my window. We spent 8 hours sitting in the Café Royal and Lyons corner house last night."[1] The letter on headed note paper from the Palace Hotel, Lyons, included a selection of 'bird-folk drawings' and was signed "Madame Matahari", one of Burra's pseudonyms for a fictional prostitute character. The account relates to Burra's overnight stay with Bumble Dawson who lived in the conspicuous red light area of Shepherds Market in London. The Lyons referred to in the letter was the chain of popular tea shops and corner houses which Burra frequented and from which he could voyeuristically watch the goings on, in this case the soliciting of customers by prostitutes in the market.[2] The letter makes clear the correspondence between bird-figures and prostitutes, and provides a context of encounter in which to place such figures.

The most extensive consideration of the bird-woman or beaked figure linked to the theme of sexual encounter and prostitution, appears in the paintings of 1932-34, which set such personages

into landscapes with complex symbolic associations. These include The Three (1932) [CC.89], Spanish Dance (1932) [CC.88], Surrealist Composition (1933-34) [CC.100] and News of the World (1933-34) [CC.102]. This discussion will also include an earlier work on a similar theme, The Duenna (1930) [CC.61] and works such as Composition (1933-34) [CC.101], Composition with Figure (1933) [CC.94], Wheels (1933-34) [CC.103] and Serpent's Eggs (1933-34), which incorporate bird-forms, make reference to bird symbolism or reconstruct the female form in the light of these themes.

In relation to these bird-theme works, I want to examine three main areas. Firstly, how these works recast the human figure by means of anatomical or biomorphic transformation and extended the earlier method employed in the collages of 1929-30, of disrupting the female figure by head/mask/body manipulations. This involvement with natural forms was paralleled in Nash's paintings and photographs and marked a move towards a more metaphysical type of symbolism. It was also central to the cult of natural 'found-objects', an interest shared with other British artists and writers at the period. I shall also outline how surrealist investigations into the symbolic role of the object, outlined in articles published in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution in the early 1930s and exemplified by the work of Dalí, were influential in reorientating Burra's work. The theoretical writings of Herbert Read, especially Art Now (1933), provide a useful context in which to examine these ideas and changes.

Secondly, how this theme carried associations derived from Freudian explorations of the bird image in dream symbolism as a correspondence of desire and sexuality. The development of a bird-woman in Burra's work paralleled explorations in Ernst's work at this period. In addition, I shall suggest that these bird-duenna works focus on the concept of totemism, the power of the totemic symbol and refer to that important stream of body-animal imagery outlined in Freud's Totem and Taboo (1913). This will be placed against the wider context of artists' interest in anthropomorphism in the early 1930s.

Thirdly, I intend to discuss how these paintings in their theme of metamorphosis draw on ideas related to the occult and alchemy, and to the notion of 'femme-alchimiste'. This was indebted to the surrealist model of 'acéphale'. Furthermore, it incorporated references to 'primitive' sculpture and masks- part of Burra's widening knowledge of 'primitive' art in the early 1930s, and ideas drawn from Jung's work on myth and the collective unconscious.

Following this analysis of the bird theme, I shall consider how works influenced by Burra's experience of Spanish culture and popular entertainment such as The Two Giantesses (1932) [CC.90], The Three (1932) [CC.89] and Spanish Dance (1932) [CC.80] also displayed and developed these understandings, but in relation to the themes of public ritual, entertainment and carnival. This included those paintings which employed a more 'naturalistic' language of representation such as Flamenco Dancer (1931) [CC.80]

and Spanish Dancer in a White Dress (1934-5) [CC.121]. Later in relation to Composition (1933-34) [CC.101], the role of the street carnival and the music hall as forms of transgression will be analysed. Throughout this examination, the role and the importance of continental Surrealism to Burra's devlopment will be emphasized. Finally, I shall reveal how the monumental figure compositions Mae West [CC.116], Nellie Wallace [CC.117] and Madame Pastoria [CC.115], all completed between 1934-35, exploited this carnivalesque theme further. They advanced the image of the female performer as an erotic figure and 'femme fatale'. This drew on literary sources in French and Spanish literature and was directly influenced by Praz's The Romantic Agony (1930).

The earliest Duenna painting of 1930 [CC.60] chronologically corresponds to the period after the collage compositions of 1929-30 and exploits a scene and compositional arrangement similar to that in Eruption of Vesuvius. Two figure-forms, one flamboyantly holding two fans, stand in an open interior with views of a distant seascape on the left side and a street, seen through the window casement, on the right side. An enormous flower surrounded by grasping hand-plant stamen-forms repeats references to the prostitute figure in Eruption of Vesuvius and suggests the model of a streetwalker soliciting outside the brothel window. The scene is a familiar one of a brothel interior with the smaller female figures to the left, parading for a client at choosing time. In the work, the male figure is represented by means of Freudian symbolism as a huge crab grabbing at a ripe fruit. The symbolic associations of reptile and wild animal explicitly signal bestial

state of excitement and furthermore, might suggest sadistic impulses.[3]

The figurative language of The Duenna is reminiscent of the earlier formal replacements and decapitations of the collages. However, the violence associated with the insertion of machine parts or mask heads is carried further. In this work and the later The Duennas (1932) [CC.84], the whole of the prostitute or madame's body has been disrupted by the radical re-drawing of the female anatomy as metamorphosized person age. This suggests the iconoclastic nature of early 'Dada' collages, particularly Ernst's strolling or flirtatious female figures such as Au-dessus des nuages marche la minuit (1920) and Le rossignol chinois (1920) [pl.148] composed of fans, lace and collaged human limbs. In The Duenna, the memorable accoutrements of the prostitute - fans, hats and flowing dresses, form a similar compilation of painted arabesque shapes, biological references and digramatic ciphers constructed in the recognizably staged pose of the brothel parade.[4]

This sense of the female form as a decorative object-construction is marked in the drapery figures of Spanish Dance (1932) [CC.88] and The Three (1932) [CC.89]. Their highly theatrical, swagged-forms are suggestive of drapery advertisements and photographs of show-window dressing.[5] This use of drapery to produce fantastic forms and 'figures' which stimulate the imagination and unconscious, draws a parrallel with the bizarre drapery studies published later in Minotaure, issue 5, May 1934 to accompany René Crevel's

article "La grande mannequin cherche et trouve sa peu". Burra's composition corresponds in many respects to the illustration Le Pompeux, c'est toujours du funèbre [pl.149], and parallels Brandt's photograph Le Boutique dont elle sera le plus bel ornament - visual sources which Burra would have been aware of.[6] The figures enact a chorus-like parade in an enclosed interior with two windows and fig-like fruit; significant Freudian symbols of female sexuality. This sense of artificiality is underlined in Spanish Dance, where a performance by a weird diva-like collection of objects, including elaborate cloth arabesques and bows, is set against the standard canvas backcloth and wing coulisses of a theatre-stage.

This contrast between natural and artificial states is even more marked in The Hostesses (1932) [CC.86], where a woman with piled, coiffured hair, thick make-up and heavily corsetted, hour-glass figure shown from the side, is set against a female figure placed in a landscape setting. The roots and branches of the tree act as a parallel for the stylised arabesque forms of the figure. The other costumed figure is strategically placed against the geometrical design of an architectural block, whose contours cut across the landscape. Both the woman and the block are metaphors for a separation from the natural environment and its forms. This sense of the woman-prostitute as 'unnatural' deviant makes it clear that prostitution as an unauthorized activity, is distanced from the natural.

This streetwalking prostitute theme is also repeated in The Duennas (1932) [CC.84]. The subject of the duenna suggests the foreign governess or chaperone, and is indebted to Spanish sources.[7] It is underscored by more illicit connotations of a madame in charge of girls, which might alternatively suggest a brothel madame. The very name duenna also carries the sense of dueness: a reference to mores, moral conduct and dues with associations of payment and fees, making an ironic link with prostitution. This sexual aspect is again reinforced in The Duennas (1932) through the Freudian symbolism of an insect with grabbing claws, which is represented close by. In addition, this sense of the public nature of street-walking is identified by means of duennas referring to popular entertainment and to the theatre. The Duennas were a popular dance troupe in the 1920s and Sheridan's play Duenna was revived by Nigel Playfair in the 1920s. On the one hand, this relates the duenna theme to earlier themes of urban entertainment - perhaps amusingly to Showgirls (1929) [CC.50a], and on the other, it suggests the comic intrigues and illicit affairs connected with 18th Century drama.[8]

In The Duennas (1932), the female figures patrol a Spanish square with Moorish architectural surroundings and exotic lush vegetation. Their cavernous cloaks, enormous capes, ruff-collars and elaborate head-dresses have theatrical overtones and draw attention to the prostitutes. This conspicuousness is further emphasized by their insect-like clawed feet and beaked features. The presence of an insect, possibly scorpion and an apt Freudian symbol, also suggests a low order of animal life and could propose

links between the figures and low-life society. In addition, the talon-like feet imply a predator role, which is appropriate to the streetwalker's activity. They also imply the decline of the human body into the condition of the animalistic; a provocative reference to prositution servicing bestial passions.

In The Hostesses (1932) [CC.86] and Two Giantesses (1932) [CC.90], the scale of the figures is increased to form monumental double figure compositions, which knowingly manipulate the conventions of portraiture. These enormous personages are set against landscape settings. In The Two Giantesses, the figures are set on a hill overlooking a street fair or carnival parade in some exotic abroad. In The Hostesses, a huge gnarled tree with elaborate branch and root system mirrors the form of the left-hand figure, almost incorporating it into the tree's natural forms. The branches and roots of the tree behind also have an almost camouflage effect due to their design and colouring. This carries explicit overtones of biomorphism as lines and forms pick up the natural curvature of the tree. There is a strong sense of the imminent collapse of human into plant form and the breaking down of boundaries between the human and the plant worlds. Against this, the right-hand figure as already noted is set against a man-made structure and remains apart from any sense of integration with the environment.

This biomorphic correspondence between human or object forms and the natural landscape and its biological forms, makes reference to Nash's photographic practice at the period and to his interest in

natural objects "showing character of design or pattern".[9] In his photographs, Nash drew analogies between natural and man-made forms. This exploration focused on the juxtaposition of natural and unnatural objects in a landscape setting, on the interaction between the organic and the inorganic and on the precise characteristic features of selected natural objects. For example, in his photograph, Trees and a Wooden Fence (1933) [pl.150], Nash contrasted the random distribution of trees and the natural order of roots, branch and trunk forms with the harsh, unnatural lines of the metal barbed wire and the man-made fence, which appear to detain and restrict the natural growth of the trees and impose some alien order.

Such preoccupations, as John Armstrong's review of Nash's work in Apollo, November 1932 recognized, were a mark of the painters increasingly metaphysical interests, which had resulted in a "romantic, almost anthropomorphic feeling of passion in nature."[10] As Andrew Causey has suggested, this reflected the influence of Wentworth d'Arcy Thompson, whose On Growth and Natural Form (1917) outlined the direct interrelationship between natural forms and scientific laws. Thompson noted that: "certain fundamental physical laws determine even the apparently irregular forms assumed by organic growth."[11] Furthermore, the strength of Conrad Aiken's interest at this time in the English metaphysical tradition in literature, in alchemy and dream symbolism undoubtedly played an important part in forming Nash's ideas, especially at the time of Nash's designs for Sir Thomas Browne's Urne Burial and the Garden of Cyrus (1932).[12] This will be

discussed later. Armstrong also correctly recognized the influence of continental Surrealism in making "the metaphysical context more open and deliberate" in Nash's work.[13] This was evident in Nash's desire in these designs "to penetrate further" and "to seek a meaning within the object."[14] This examination of nature and metaphysics in Nash's painting and photography specifically re-evaluated the role of the 'natural' found object- stones, fungi, tree trunks, driftwood. In photographs of roots and sculptured 'found objects' such as Marsh Personage (1934), Nash explored the imaginative investments and rights of association of the found object.[15]

The cult of the objet-trouvé and the theme of the encounter of natural forms in English landscapes marked a departure in Nash's work which was heavily influenced by surrealism.[16] For example, the painting Event on the Downs (1934) [pl.151] represented the intrusion of the man-made object, the tennis ball, into the natural rhythms of the landscape. The natural form of a fossilized tree, strategically sited and monumental, dominates the landscape echoing its curves and patterns. In these paintings, there is an imminent sense of the natural order being threatened or invaded as anxious metaphors for organic collapse and decline. Such a use of the landscape as an arena for the display of fears and anxiety has a direct parallel with dream-landscapes as Nash himself recognized:

> "In most instances, the pictures coming out of this preoccupation were concerned with stones seen solely as objects in relation to landscape as in Landscape of the Megaliths series, or as stone objects related to other objects, or groups of objects. But later, stone personages evolved, such as the stone birds in Nest of Wild Stones and the more 'abstract' forms in Encounter in the Afternoon. In

> the later, larger compositions - Circle of the Monoliths and Nocturnal Landscape, the stones have a character influenced by the conditions of Dream."[17]

This use of natural object-personages as emblems of a threatened natural order was a subject which remained separate from that theme of megaliths and the mystique of romantic prehistoric landscape which was to dominate Nash's work in the later 1930s and presented the British landscape as a seamless organic and spiritual unity and a depository for Romantic imaginings.[18] At the centre of compositions involving object-personages was the intrusion of unnatural forms which physically and symbolically jarred with the existing natural order setting up disconcerting, ambiguous relationships.

Whereas Nash restricted his investigations primarily to correspondences between objects and landscape, Burra's works consistently addressed figurative subjects although often in similar terms. Burra's strategy was to recast the natural as unnatural, the inanimate as living, and the human as animal.

For example, in Santa Maria in Aracoeli (1938-9) [CC.150], the human figure has feathered skin and the human torso is given a sculptured head. This intrusion of the sculptured head onto the monumental body is even more significant since its source was a Sun God from P. Commmelin's Nueva mitologica griega y romana (1907).[19] The human body with feathers is thus transformed into a mythological personage. In a similar way to the collage transpositions, this questioning of the correspondence between

natural and unnatural, organic and artificial, mythological and human, raises complex questions.

A similar theme of human metamorphosis, although this time into a natural landscape, is represented in Composition with Figure [CC.94] completed by Burra in 1933. Various stages of biomorphic transformation are depicted. The muscular form of the figure's torso viewed from behind on the right, parallels the gnarled form of the tree on the left hand side. These tree and root forms in their hypertrophy suggest the organic design and patterns of nature invading the human form. This signals the processes of biomorphic transmutation and growth with their associations of alchemical change and metamorphosis. In the middle, the kneeling figure-construction, is composed of a dartboard-like object surrounded by elaborate arabesque forms and patterns suggesting human anatomy. Encircled by organic plant forms, the object-personage and the two framed paintings also included in the composition, represent their antithesis. They signal unnatural rather than natural states.

The natural forms contained in Composition with Figure are similar to the 'objets trouvés' of driftwood, shells and pebbles collected by Burra from Winchelsea Beach, Camber Sands and Dungeness.[20] Some of these were exhibited under the title "decorative objects" at the Room and Book exhibition organized by Nash at the Zwemmer Gallery in June 1932.[22] This preoccupation with the surreal in nature was shared by other English Surrealists such as John Banting, Eileen Agar, Herbert Read as well as Paul Nash. The

attraction of the discovery of the 'found-object' as Read declared was: "the act of identification [which] ... makes that object as expressive of my personality as if I had actually carved the wood into that shape." Similar natural forms were incorporated as 'personages' into works by Banting and Ceri Richards to disrupt conventional notions of human physical form. In Banting's Woman Passing between Two Musicians (1937) [pl.152], the central 'woman' is composed of scroll-shaped bone or shell forms precariously balanced as if tracing some former physiognomy. Richard's Two Females (1937-38) and Costerwoman (1939) mix natural forms and billowing contours to construct in wood and metal relief similar metamorphosized figures.[23]

Such manoeuvres of 'objectivization' were a common surrealist strategy to disrupt imagery, wreck form and subvert meaning within the work of art. The introduction of alien objects, natural or otherwise, or the confusion between human-object forms opened up new levels of association, which were ambiguous and often, highly humorous. The central objective of this interpenetration of figure-object was to challenge traditional expectations about the nature of the image and the role of the object.[24] Such signs of iconographic destabilization and collapse were conspicuously identified in the early 1930s with the work of Dalí.

As already indicated, Burra's knowledge of Dalí's paintings had offered an important example of the symbolic function of the image. Burra had seen an exhibition of Dalí's work at Levy's Gallery in New York in 1932.[25] In particular, Dalí's use of the

'paranoiac' double image, which suggested the interpenetration of various states of human-animal-architectural-mineral, seems to have been taken up by Burra's in his painting Wheels (1933-34) [CC.103]. The representation of two duenna-like figures as architectural and object constructions, transforms the human anatomy into a series of sculptured objects. The figure on the left is composed of wheels and wheel shapes completed by an eye motif, swirling hat and scarlet scarf. The one to the right, has arcaded architectural forms with flamboyant, arabesque drapery and costume. The geometric forms suggest a body with a minute, simplified head. This metaphor of the female figure as body-sculpture-object-construction is carried by both formal and thematic links. For example, the arcade-window, which is the body of the central figure, acts simultaneously as an orificed, architectural form and the symbol for the Freudian sexual cavity. Behind these object-personages, there is the recognizable rough seascape with its Freudian connotations, which was a feature of the 'duenna' paintings. It was not surprising that, as the Bookman critic later noted, Burra's "use for visual symbolism" made him appear: "more alive ... there is something of the Salvador Dalí ... His idiom is up to date."[26]

In Wheels, the figures of prostitutes streetwalking are metamorphosized to produce what Dalí called "symbolically functioning objects"; symbolic object-forms which clearly signalled the erotic desire for the object. As Dalí stated in "Objets surréalistes" in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, No.3, December 1931: "These objects, which lend

themselves to a minimum of mechanical functioning, are based on phantoms and representations susceptible of being provoked by the realization of unconscious acts...these acts correspond to clearly characterized erotic fantasies and desires."[27] The ancestry of the surrealist object in Dada objects, Man Ray's photographs. Ernst's collages and collage-novels and the practice of 'cadavre exquis'- all areas which interested or influenced Burra's work, must have reinforced the importance of Dalí's symbolically functioning object and the urgency of this new surrealist direction.[28] For the prostitute-as-object to be tied to an erotic function was an extremely apt 'objectivization', which accounts, to some extent, for Wheels inclusion in the London International Surrealist exhibition in 1936.[29]

This distinctive use of the object within surrealist painting had been extensively discussed in articles in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution from its inception in July 1930. Of note were Dalí's texts on the surrealist object in issues number 3, December 1931, "Objets Surréalistes", already discussed, and 5, May 1933, "Psycho-atmospheric-anamorphic objets." These ideas were also considered in articles in the periodical by Giacometti: "Objets mobiles et muets" (No. 3, Dec 1931), Tanguy:" Poids et couleurs" (No. 3) and Duchamp: "Notes to the Large Glass" (No. 5, May 1933).[30] Also exhibitions of works by surrealist artists alongside selected objects especially the later 1936 Ratton Gallery exhibition, reinforced the strategic importance of this field of activity.[31]

The broader critical and theoretical precepts of this transformation were later outlined by Breton in his seminal text published in Cahiers d'Art Nos.1 and 2, 1936: "The Crisis of the Object." According to Breton, the symbolic role of the object was: "no longer reductive, but infinitely inductive and extensive, the object of which instead of being set on the side for once and for all, is recreated until it is lost beyond view."[32] The interpenetration of the poetic with the mathematical object lead to what Breton described as the total revolution of the object. It produced an object whose symbolism was not fixed, but instead, endlessly remade according to the subjective response of the viewer.

This project forced a reorientation in British art, which was particularly marked in the genres of landscape and still-life painting and accompanied by a move towards a more metaphysical type of symbolism incorporating ideas derived from both abstraction and Surrealism. Such a redirection, as outlined earlier in the introduction to this section, had been crucial to Unit One and to enlivening artistic debates from 1931 about the nature and practice of modern art in Britain.[33] Also the impact of exhibitions and their related catalogue-publications had been considerable in the cases of the Recent Developments in British Painting (1933), the Room and Book exhibition-publication (1932), the Art Now exhibition (1933) and its associated publication as well as the Unit One exhibition (1934) and its publication.[34]

An additional factor had been the increasing international awareness of British artists and critics. This enlivened critical commentaries by Read, Nash, Wilenski, Ede, Stokes and Armstrong and opened up a broader debate around the philosophical base for art in modern society, the role of the artist and the exact nature of the reception by the viewer of the work of art.[35] Herbert Read in particular, intensified these discussions with his theorectical publications on art: The Meaning of Art (1931), Art Now (1933), Art and Industry (1934) and his role as editor and contibutor to Unit 1: The Modern Movement in English Architecture and Painting (1934).[36]

The cosmopolitan sophistication of Read's arguments revealed sources in French aesthetic thought, German conceptual philosophy and Freudian and Jungian theories of psycho-analysis.[37] In Art Now, Read approached avant-garde art practice directly through the receptive aspect of psychological theory. He stressed the importance of individual psychology and psychological definitions of artistic personality to understanding the processes of creativity. In this, Read addressed the role of the unconscious and the significance of collective imagery in art. He acknowledged the multi-valent character of images and their inherent symbolic associations, which affected the power of their reception. Read fully acknowledged the importance to his work of theories provided by both Freud and Jung to the understanding of the mechanisms of art.[38] Read wrote that: "The psycho-analytical theories of Freud and Jung give us plenty of justification for such a possibility; the artist in short becomes a man gifted with

the capacity to project symbols, which other people might project if they had the capacity and which when projected for them, they can immediately accept."[39] Furthermore, Read advocated that the artist should turn: "Inwards to the realms of his subjective fancies, his day dreams, his preconscious images".[40]

In this emphasis on the receptive aspect, Read developed a critical model, which was structured around a dialectical opposition of organic- biomorphic form and inorganic- geometric form. As Read declared: "Reality is a unity of which the organic and inorganic forms are but polar aspects."[41] The representation of states between these two poles and the acknowledgement of the inherently symbolic function of images could therefore be imaged in terms of an opposition of natural-organic and unnatural-inorganic forms. This system, according to Read, could incorporate all types of modern art including abstraction and surrealism. It was rooted in the belief that the overall aim of modern art was to represent reality by means of visual symbols, which "represented a vague, even vast field of subjectivity."[42] Within Read's theory, the central object of art was to resolve the twin modes of experience (represented by reason and consciousness) and the psyche (linked to the unconsciousness and irrational) into a condition of new reality.[43]

The Art Now exhibition at the Mayor Gallery in October 1933 and the accompanying publication acted as a justification of Read's ideas. It displayed the international currency of Read's approach and placed important British artists' work against a comprehensive

range of major European figures from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Belgium.[44] One important reason for the exhibition was to show evidence that British art was no longer isolated or parochial, but in tune with many of the developments taking place on the continent.[45] In the exhibition, Burra's painting Wheels was shown, and in the Art Now publication,[46] The Duennas (1932) was illustrated under the title, Composition in the section dealing with Subjective Idealism, (Chapter 5).[47] This classification of Burra's work is very revealing. The section was headed by an introduction to the Method of Picasso and included analyses of The Concept of Form re-examined, Two types of Symbolism, The Function of Symbolic Art, Surréalisme and The Art of Free Fancy - Paul Klee. In the illustrations, The Duennas (No. 116) was placed between a range of works from Ernst's Couple zoomorphique en gestation (1931) up to Nash's Salomé (1931) and Picasso's Metal Sculpture (1932). In this section, British art was represented by Burra, Nash's Mansions of the Dead from Urne Buriall (1932) and Salomé (1931), Hillier's Composition (1932) and Bigge's Composition (1931). Amongst the foreign examples were works by Ernst, Miró, Dalí and Picasso, which specifically explored the theme of the female figure as a site for subjective deformation and symbolic meanings. This was undoubtedly the constituency amongst which Burra's bird theme works were to be seen and evaluated.

An alternative subversive strategy in the works of 1932-34 is the creation of a human-animal hybrid in the distinctive form of a bird-woman. The most sophisticated example of this hybrid is in

Bird Woman-Duennas (1932) [CC.90c], where three personages are shown in line, and a fourth, in the background, is represented collecting the skull from a dead body. The devastated landscape against which these figures are set, carries obvious Freudian symbolic associations, which have been outlined earlier linking sexuality to death; the red-hot lava falling out from the erupting volvano in the distance; the choppy, rocky seascape with sea-wreck and the rows of devastated houses in the background with broken steps and open doorways.[48] The first figure in the row almost comforms to the earlier duenna-type imaged in The Duennas (1932) [CC.84] with long, flowing robes, neck-ruff and claw-like hands and feet, except that the simplified facial features have been replaced by a beak and scarlet cox-comb. In the central figure, this transformation is carried further as the head and wings surmount a mineral-rock-fossil body complete with spouting volcano tail and colourful, patterned skirt. In the distance, there is another bird-headed, duenna-like figure examining a skull. The subject repeats the brothel parade theme and parallels the 'sexual act as death' symbolism discussed earlier.[49] It also employs the distinctive duenna-prostitute character although here making the bird analogy more explicit.

The ideas for such a manipulation were indebted to Ernst's use of the bird as a personal and mythical symbol, to Nash's bird symbolism influenced by Aiken and metaphysical sources, to investigations within surrealist circles into mythology and anthropology, and importantly to Freud's writings, particularly Totem and Taboo (1913). Burra's works also reveal an interest in anthropomorphism, which was shared with other British artists at this period. It is these areas which I want to

discuss in detail initially in relation to Bird Women-Duennas (1932) and later to Surrealist Composition (1933-4) [CC.100], Still Life with Figures in a Glass (1933) [CC.98] and News of the World (1933-4) [CC.102]; all of which feature the bird-woman-duenna-prostitute hybrid.

The bird was a potent personal and mythological symbol in Ernst's work. The series of Loplop bird figures in particular, expanded and manipulated the bird theme.[50] As Werner Spies has documented in Max Ernst: Loplop (1983), such symbolism in Ernst's oeuvre was drawn from an understanding of Freud's writings mixed with a personal identification and interest in the bird as a 'primitive' totemic symbol.[51] The bird-headed figure was central to Ernst's later collage-novel, Une Semaine de Bonté (1934), as the example, Fourth Book: Wednesday. Element: Blood. Example: Oedipus reveals, where bird-heads are attached to male bodies.[52] However, Ernst's earlier illustrations for Eluard's Les Malheurs des immortels (1922) had also employed such imagery, notably in Rencontre de deux sourires (1922) [pl.153], which had been illustrated in Variétés, 15 December 1929.[53] Both the bird-headed male and the moth-headed female figures exhibit animal-human transformations, which parallel Burra's Bird Women hybrids. The claw-fan and snake-serpent may have also suggested meanings from Freudian symbolism, which Burra had used earlier in relation to The Duennas (1932) and exploited later in Serpent's Eggs (1934) [CC.111].[54] A more explicit parallel of the female bird-head and clawed foot hybrid was in Ernst and Arp's 'Dada' collage: La Suisse lieu de naissance de Dada (1920) [pl.154] where the female head is surmounted by a pigeon and her legs replaced by talons.[55] Such bird-female hybrids testify to the enduring significance of natural imagery insertions and identifications in Ernst's work throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[56]

In April 1933, Ernst's bird theme works were exhibited in London at the Mayor Gallery's Recent Paintings by English, French and German Artists and later a comprehensive one-person show took place in June-July 1933, again at the Mayor Gallery. A wide range of Ernst's output from the period 1929-33 was displayed, with many of the works addressing themes of metamorphosis or representing natural imagery in various states of interpenetration, notably examples from Histoire naturelle (1926).[57] At the later exhibition, one of the 1929 series A l'intérieur de la vue-l'oeuf was shown with its large, stylized anthropomorphic bird forms enclosed in an oval frame.[58] This must have emphasized the importance of such themes and images in Burra's later works of 1933-34 such as Surrealist Composition and News of the World, which also feature bird-folk subjects.

In the critical response to Ernst's work, Nash, who saw Ernst as "prominent amongst the best artists of our time", drew attention to those images, in particular the hybrid forms, whose "subtle manipulations" evoked "profound enigmas."[59] This is revealing in that Ernst's bird symbolism in its mythical associations carried similarities to Nash's illustrations for the Cassell publication of Sir Thomas Browne's Urne Buriall and the Garden of Cyrus (1932). The theme of the text by the 17th Century antiquarian-philosopher was the discovery of the underlying spiritual order and mystical mathematics of the universe through the consideration of phenomena in the natural sciences and archeology. Nash had employed the bird symbol in The Soul visiting the Mansions of the Dead [pl.155] to signify the external soul and as an emblem of natural-spiritual forces. Set against it were architectural grid and pylon-like devices signalling the physical mansions of the dead as symbols of the inanimate and deceased.[60]

According to John Armstrong, in Apollo, November 1932, Urne Buriall had signalled the tendency in Nash's work towards an: "almost anthropomorphic feeling of passion in nature ... something instinctive and formidable." It was marked by a "metaphysical context ... more open and deliberate" in Nash's imagery.[61] The bird image can be seen as part of this investigation into mythology and metaphysics. Nash's photography had investigated similar themes drawn from myth. Woodstack and Barn, Rye (1932) [pl.156], for example, considered motifs, which were later incorporated into the watercolour Totems (1932).[62] These studies of natural forms recognized the totemic function of images or objects found in nature as collective symbols and potent carriers of spiritual forces. As Andrew Causey has noted, an accredited source for Nash's knowledge on myths was Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough - A Study in Magic and Religion (First edition 1922, regularly reprinted, notably in 1933), along with d'Arcy Thompson and Browne. This presented formidable background sources to Nash's work.[63]

Burra would have known such ideas, particularly in the light of his close connection with Nash and Aiken at this time, when the subjects of mythology, psychology and natural forms as spiritual communicators were central to their concerns. In addition, Aiken published two important works, Great Circle (1933) and Landscape West of Eden (1934) in which mythological themes mixed with biographical accounts were central subjects of consideration.[64] As Aiken later recalled about his relationship with Nash, which would also have been relevant to that with Burra, in their interest in mythology, alchemy and the occult: "a deep osmosis went on between us and for a long time, I shed into his landscapes and he into mine."[65] The period under consideration was from

Aiken's arrival in Rye in 1930 until Nash's departure for Marlborough in July 1933 following his critical illness in January of that year. This paralleled the period of Burra's interest in these subjects and coincided with the production of compositions including bird-women hybrids up to 1933-34.

Burra's work also incorporated ideas drawn from continental surrealism, notably in those areas of ethnography, mythology and anthropology, which were central to surrealist investigations at this period. From the publication of the 1930 Second Surrealist Manifesto, one key direction of surrealist experiment had been towards the "profound occultation of surrealism" and the development of a visual symbolism which operated in terms analagous to a modern mythology.[66] This focused on the distinctive power of totemic symbols. An important stimulus had been the publication in French of psychological or anthropological studies incorporating mythological themes. Of particular relevance were Freud's Totem and Taboo (1913, pub Fr. 1924), already mentioned, and Jung's writings on the collective unconscious, especially Psychology of the Unconscious (Pub Fr. 1928).[67]

Freud's Totem and Taboo outlined the enduring significance of certain animals or animal hybrids as clan motifs with which individuals identified. He also stressed the particular power of such totemic symbols within an on-going tradition of folk-lore. Freud wrote that: "The totem is as a rule an animal..and more rarely a plant or natural phenomenon..,which stands in a peculiar relation to the whole clan. In the first place, the totem is the common ancester of the clan; at the same time it is their guardian spirit... The totemic character is inherent,

not in some individual animal or entity, but in all the the individuals of a given class."[68] This held great significance for the image-making of the artist who using totemic symbolism could refer back to ancient starting points and understandings:

> "Not only could a man transform himself into anything, but he also had the power to transform others ... Thus these earliest figures are representations of the process of the transformation ... The unchanging double-figure of the totem which contains and affirms the metamorphosis from man into [animal] and from [animal] into man, is the earliest and important of all figures, their prototype."[69]

Totemic transformation thereby offered a paradigm for many of the operations and processes at work in the surrealist visual enterprise. It opened up many new areas for research by artist in the 1930s, some of which I have already discussed in relation to Max Ernst's work.[70]

Significantly Freud's essay Totem and Taboo also drew together two key strands of surrealist thinking in the areas of primitive social anthropology and the psychology of mental diseases. As Freud stated in his preface, these studies: "sought to bridge the gap between students of such subjects as social anthropology, philology and folklore on the one hand and psychoanalysts on the other."[71] The paper stressed the awareness of numerous points of agreement not only between the psychology of primitive peoples and that of neurotics, but in the inherited conditions of modern man from his primitive ancestors. According to Freud, the natural object played an important role as a repositary of mythical meanings and spiritual understandings through the concept of animism. This was a crucial part of the primitive man's philosophy of nature, in which the soul or spiritual being was invested into a natural form or phenomenon. Thus an inanimate object could be infused by or implanted with spiritual forces therefore, becoming animated.[72]

Freud analysed this point further to conclude that the main impulse underlying this belief was an instinctual desire to distance or delay "the problem of death." He wrote that: "What primitive man regarded as the natural thing was the indefinite prolongation of life-immortality."[73] The embodiment of life-forces in the object, therefore, represented a wish to prolong the moment of confrontation with death. This held obvious parallels with the sexual instinct in Beyond the Pleasure Principle. As Freud expanded his theory in Totem and Taboo, similar ideas on the instinctual desires of the Oedipus complex to deny the father, predominant in childhood, the sexual impulse against incest and the role of auto-eroticism in neurotics emerged.[74]

The central part of Freud's essay addressed the significance of 'taboo'. Taboo according to Freud, incorporated a dual definition of, on the one hand, sacred and consecrated, and the other, uncanny, dangerous, forbidden and unclean. Freud continued:

> "Thus 'taboo' has about it a sense of something unapproachable and it is principally expressed in prohibitions and restrictions ... Behind all these prohibitions, there seems to be something in the nature of a theory that they are necessary because certain persons or things are charged with a dangerous power, which can be transferred through contact with them, almost like an infection."[75]

He concluded his argument by stating that:

> "Taboo' is a primaeval prohibition (forcibly imposed by some authority) from outside and directed against the most powerful longings to which human beings are subject. The desire to violate [..] it persists in their unconscious ... The magical power that is attributed to the taboo is based on the capacity for arousing temptation and it acts like a contagion.."[76]

Basing our interpretation of Burra's Bird Women-Duennas (1932) on these ideas outlined in Freud's Totem and Taboo (1913), the brothel parade, which is the central subject of the work, takes on a new meaning. It

suggests the representation of a ritual in which bird-human hybrids as totemic symbols, participate. In this, it suggests a procreative ritual. Alternatively, it metaphorically implies the breaking of the restrictions of the Oedipal taboo. The bird-figures stand in a landscape, which images the sexual nature of this restriction; a scene of devestation packed with Freudian dream symbolism. The transgression of the taboo is explicitly linked to the sexual act, which is about to take place. Furthermore, the consequences of this are visible in the bird-figure's skull-collecting activity in the background, which accentuates the sex-death connection. Within this complex symbolism, the natural imagery of these object-animal-figure hybrids, becomes particularly significant. This is especially relevant to the third hybrid, on the right hand side in Burra's work, where the prostitute-figure is radically transformed into a bone-rock construction with orificial eye, an elaborate sketetal-pelvic body and swirling cloth skirt. This anthropomorphic transmutation stands as an elaborate reorganization of animal, vegetable and mineral forms.

Such imagery suggests Burra's interest in zoology, biology and ethnography and was probably derived from second-hand sources in the Springfield Library. In particular, Charles Waterton's Essays in Natural History (1838) may have made suggestions although actual sources in the book are not obvious.[77] Burra's postcard collection with its examples of natural imagery, especially fossils and crystals, may also have been important. It also places Burra's work within that strain of figurative anthropomorphism common in the work of John Banting, John Melville, Henry Moore and John Armstrong in the early 1930s. Banting's La Toilette (1932), Armstrong's In the Wings (1930) and Moore's Reclining Figure

Drawings (1933) or Composition (1933) similarly exploited fossil forms and entymological quotations as part of the metamorphosis of the human figure.[78] Banting was closely linked to Burra's circle of friends in the period through Barbera Ker Seymer. Also his exhibition at the Vertheim Gallery in April 1931 contained works such as Dancing Trio (c.1930-1) [pl.157] and Painting (c.1931), which employed similar fluid bone and skeletal images and constructed fossilised figurative forms, studied from sources in the Natural History Museum or the British Museum or from postcard illustrations of natural objects.[79] Burra knew Armstrong through Paul Nash and Moore's work was exhibited with Burra's in the Art Now and Unit One exhibitions.[80] Together such a direction testifies to a radical questioning of the human figure and its formal transformation under the influence of anthropomorphism within British 'surrealist' artists' work.[81]

In the works of 1932-34, four main areas emerged, which relate to this bird-woman imagery, its symbolic levels of association and to the theme of metamorphosis. I shall outline how these relate to investigations and interests within surrealist circles at this period. Firstly, in the bird-woman hybrids of Surrealist Composition (1933-34) [CC.100] and Bird Women-Duennas (1932) [CC.90c], Burra developed an animal symbolism which had an extensive religio-mystical-mythological ancestry and one which was extensively explored in contemporary surrealist periodicals in relation to the occult.

Secondly, in Still Life with Figures in a Glass (1933) [CC.98], Burra's work included explicit references to that English metaphysical tradition best represented in visual art by Blake, which incorporated the themes of

magic and alchemy. These interests were shared by Nash and Aiken at this time.

Thirdly, in News of the World (1933-34) [CC.102], Burra introduced formal reference to non-European and primitive art to elucidate wider meanings of the theme of metamorphosis. This displayed Burra's increasing interest in 'primitive' sculpture and masks and involved mixing symbols drawn from ancient and modern cultures. Paralleling Nash's work, Burra used the landscape as a metaphor for ancient, mythological and organic associations. The works also referred to ideas of a collective unconscious elucidated in the work of Jung.

Finally, there are those works which incorporated thematic links with a carnivalesque popular culture such as Composition (1933-34) [CC.101],The Two Giantesses (1932) [CC.90], The Three (1932) [CC.89] and Spanish Dance (1932) [CC.88]. Although not specifically totemic in the Freudian sense, imagery in these works refers to the survival of cultural practices which seek to assert historical or cultural freedoms. In this sense, they relate to the transgression of social restrictions or moral prohibitions, rather than to the divine or magical aspects, which Freud noted was a traditional feature of taboo. These works represent carnival figures and image carnival as a site of 'forbidden' pleasure. In their overtones of ancient ritual, these images are also relevant to this discussion.

The bird-women hybrids as totemic symbols held associations of the survival of ancient symbolic practices. In Bird Women-Duennas, the survival of the figures amidst the wreckage of destruction suggests this. The flat, frozen, freize-like appearances and hieratic order of the

figures in stylised pose and clear outline reiterates their religio-divine function as if participating in some procession of divine dignitaries. In Surrealist Composition (1933-34) [CC.100], the mixing of bird woman with plant-head in the central figure is even more imposing. The flower-like hat motif, reminiscent of the male protagonist in the collage Venez avec moi, is completed by a mop of blonde hair and beaked face. The naturalistic landscape scene in the background, directly above the figure, reinforces this contrast with the natural. These metamorphoses of the human figure with animal and plant forms, were similar to those commonly used in ancient cultures to represent divine gods or spirits. Frazer's Golden Bough lists such god-like hybrids and outlines the myths to which they were associated or the taboos they were used to enforce. In the light of Nash's interest in Frazer, whilst these hybrid-images do not represent particular 'gods', they acknowledge such traditions of animal or plant - human amalgamation.[82]

Similar animal or plant transformations analogous to these, were also illustrated and discussed in the review Documents, but associated with the subjects of magic, the occult and alchemy. The first issue of volume Ⅱ 1930, contained Georges Bataille's article: "Le bas-matérialisme et la Gnose", which outlined the particular appeal of anti-idealist materialism.[83] In the article, Bataille expressed his deep respect for sects who had opposed accepted moral codes, systematic logic, and instead, proposed alternative beliefs as an alternative to the greco-roman tradition. In particular, Bataille revered the gnostic belief in magical and occult properties. Accompanying the article was a photograph of a gnostic seal from the Cabinet des Médailles in the Louvre, showing an

acéphale god represented by a human body surmounted by two animal heads [pl.158]. [84]

In addition, as part of this interest, animal-headed seals were reproduced in contemporary publications on witchcraft, alchemy and the occult as examples of the transformations, which magic and occult practices could achieve and as secret symbolic devices. Such animal-headed images stressed the gnostic belief in non-systematic logic and suggested their currency as a symbol of occult transformation within the histories of magic, witchcraft and alchemy.[85] Related to these interests, Eliphas Levi's influential Dogma et rituel de la haut magie (1856) was reviewed in Documents in December 1929 and Grillot de Givry's Le musée des sourciers, mages et alchimistes was republished in French in 1929 and English in 1931. Givry's study was reviewed in Documents, no.2, May 1929, as part of the periodical's expanding coverage of magic and the occult.[86] Burra owned Levi's book and a copy of his Occult Philosophy (1862) and as Clover de Pertinez recalled, was fascinated by the rituals of secret societies, magic and witchcraft.[87]

The image of the bird-woman could be seen to refer to that distinctive type of acéphale figure, which was prominent in Bataille's writings in Documents. This functioned not only as a touchstone reference to gnosticism and ancient mythology, but more broadly as an emblematic device linked to the notion of transgression.[88] The hybrid form signified the role of the "femme-alchimiste." As Rosalind Krauss has suggested in her analysis of the significance of 'informe' as a concept in Bataille's thinking and Documents, the animal-headed figure signalled a specific process of transmutation, whose function was more closely linked

to alchemical and occult models than to biological or anatomical manipulations. The acéphale motif, Krauss asserted: "functioned as a kind of password by which to enter the conceptual theatre, where humanity displays the richness of its contradictory condition. For acéphale opens onto the experience of man's verticality - his elevation in both biological and moral significance - as a negation, a development towards the primitive, an ascendance downwards."[99]

To return to Surrealist Composition in the light of these remarks, the central bird-woman-prostitute figure raises a complex series of correspondences. Firstly, as a cipher for the unnatural, the bird-faced, plant-hatted personage stands as an imposing hybrid dominating the composition and confronting the viewer. The juxtaposition of animal-head and human-body with recognizable flowing dress and elaborate cape, signals a different order from that symbolically represented by the natural, rolling hill scene in the background. This is reinforced by the two distinctive sets of imagery represented to her left and right sides. On the right of the work, three similar bird-like motifs appear; in the emblematic device as an architectural decoration, (reminiscent of some heraldic decoration on a slab-like form at the bottom); as a duenna-like street-walker patrolling the streets outside the brothel and as a constructed bird-object marking the entrance to an orifice with Freudian associations, completed by the rough-seascape and floundering boat in the distance. Above the archway, a frieze -like design showing a nude male figure on horseback with sword drawn, further suggests Freudian states of male sexual arousal.

Alternatively, on the left hand side, two personages are indicated with two architectural forms. The first suggests a sharply curving avenue with contrasting square and round windows and the second, a complex construction of arches with a tomb-like interior. These are distinctly separated from the vista of the natural landscape by a vertical division. The two personages- surrealist compilations, one with flower head, frame-like body and flowing robes and the other, a series of swirling spiral lines, are problematical, but perhaps suggest patrolling streetwalkers in states or stages of metamorphosis. The lower figure has talon feet, arms and hands and simplified eyes and beak. The upper figure is a mixture of animate human and inanimate object states, with the robes of the duenna, an object body and flower-form head. By contrast with these figures, the central bird-woman appears substantial, dominant and clearly defined. Behind this figure, the imposing architecture of the building's sweeping curve- an impressive protrusion, dominates the landscape of the street and its walker. It stands as a reverse architectural form to the arcaded feature on the right hand side with its Freudian orifice symbolism.

To the right of the main bird hybrid, the landscape with its oft used Freudian sea-scape references and orifice symbolism, is employed as a setting for the figure of the streetwalker to loiter in. The motifs above and below the orifices emphasize the symbolic nature of the imagery. This is further accentuated by the presence of the bird figure marking the threshold to the passageway. On the opposite flank, the figures are represented in the process of metamorphosis. These are confusing juxtapositions of animate and inanimate states, recognizable animal-plant forms and object ciphers. In the background, the protruding architecture of the street and that of the tomb-like construction emphasizes the

inanimate theme and link it to death, thus, implying a moribund and unnatural landscape of the dead.

These groups of images suggest three levels of associations. Firstly, natural and mythological themes with the bird-woman as a crucial symbol. Secondly, a sexual theme with the Freudian symbols of sexual arousal communicated through oft-used seascape forms and dream symbolism. Thirdly, an inanimate and inorganic theme linked to images of the dead by object and architectural motifs. As already suggested, these referred to two of the most important themes of Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle, the sexual urge and the instinct towards death as the extension of life. In between these stands the natural landscape as a symbol of spiritual survival and a carrier of mythological understandings. The bird-woman also occupies such a position between these forces as a major participator in the arena of conscious and unconscious sexual desires, natural and unnatural states of being, the instinctual urges towards life and death. She is, in Bataille's sense, marked by 'informe', altered, changed. Her hybrid condition signals such a metamorphosis, especially the altered head. As Krauss has noted: "What should be the sign of her highest faculties, her mind, her spirit, has become lowly ... like ... acéphale: 'a transgressive thought of the human."[30]

Still Life with Figures in a Glass (1933) also employs complex symbolism in order to suggest sexual and metaphysical levels of meanings. The objects similarly disclose references to sexual distinctions and animate-inanimate divisions. They mix Freudian male and female object symbolism- the figs- female breasts, cups glass and receptacle- breasts, cucumber-

male, coffee pot with spout- male. Furthermore, the composition refers to notions of alchemical transformation. The two male figures in the glass represent the divorce of the soul (the green man) and the body (the red figure). The pointing hand of the alchemist/ magician directs attention towards the soul or unconscious, spiritual emblem. Such imagery makes explicit reference to the work of William Blake, from whose The Reunion of the Soul and the Body (1808) from his illustrations to Robert Blair's The Grave (1808), Burra quoted the male figure of the soul. [91] Burra also owned copies of Alexander Gilchrist's Life of Blake (1863) and Edward Young's The complaint or Night Thoughts (1797), illustrated by Blake, which provided further understanding of Blake's work.[92]

This reference to the English metaphysical tradition and the adoption of the concept of the separation of the realms of the physical and spiritual represented by both animate and inanimate symbols, is a revealing purchase. It was precisely this metaphysical aspect, this visionary quality and this concern with "le grand mystère", with the occult and spiritual forces underlying existence that marked Blake's work out for special attention for the surrealists. Blake's writing illuminated a special path which the monograph by Philippe Soupault in 1928 explicitly recognized.[93]

Still Life with Figures in a Glass included imagery with clear references to alchemy and alchemical processes. The open book of knowledge and the philosopher's eggs cut in two, were used in illustrations to alchemical treatise to indicate the "desire to penetrate the mystery of life and the formation of inanimate substances." [94] The philosophers egg, as an illustration from Givry's Witchcraft, Alchemy and Magic (1931) suggests,

was considered the key to understanding alchemical transformations.[95] It stood as a symbol of fertility, creation and transubstantiation. To split the egg was to gain access to truths and knowledges about the divine, the spiritual and the material. It was such meanings, which gave the anonymous marble broken egg, owned by Eluard, such a poignant significance in surrealist circles.[96]

It was not surprising that in the 1930s, this act of splicing the egg and the model of the philosopher's occult research stood as a paradigm for the surrealist enterprise. As Breton had declared in the Second Surrealist Manifesto (1930), surrealism searched towards the "illumination of hidden places."[97] Commenting on Ernst's work, Breton similarly recognized "a remarkable analogy to alchemists researches" and in This Quarter (1931), Breton reaffirmed that "surrealism [was] affiliated to the occult theories".[98]

Also the array of symbolic objects is placed on a platform or table towards the front of the composition, as if in preparation for some ritual. The hand points towards the figures in the glass, the heart of the experiment. In the background are vistas of a rolling pastoral landscape with the enormous foliage of a marrow plant and distant trees; symbols of the fecundity of nature and natural growth. In addition, the presence of a small bird figure on the extreme left in the distance, stands as an emblem of metamorphosis. It echoes the theme of mutation and as acephale, marks out a theatre of change. It is significant that Still Life with Figures in a Glass was exhibited in the Unit One exhibition with Nash's Landscape of the Megaliths (1934) [pl.161] and Stone Tree (1934), - both paintings which represent symbolic

natural objects in a landscape and which examine the ritual dramas of different levels of association.[99]

News of the World (1933-4) [CC.102] with its flamboyant female figure with beaked nose, opens up an important area of consideration. Whilst the central duenna-like hybrid poses amidst a collection of objects, some carrying obvious connotations of contemporary popoular culture - the News of the World newspaper, Players and Four Aces, cigarettee packets and a sports bicycle in the dense vegetation to the left, three Negroid figures peer out. They look furtively at the scene, two of them stare directly at the bird-woman. If the scene is read as containing symbols of contemporary modern culture and the tribal figures in the jungle as representatives of a different social order, then what is being represented is a confrontation between the modern and the primitive, between rational symbols and meanings and other anti-rational, hidden understandings.[100]

However, this distinction is just one of many contained within the scene. Others include the opposition of natural and unnatural (the landscape against the illustrated vista of the newspaper title which looms over the horizon, the wild vegetation of the forest in contrast with the horticulture of the cleared garden with its impenetrable boundary walls, the seed-like forms of a sprouting plant versus the manufactured forms of the bicycle and even the presence of the windmill to harness nature's forces for electricity.) This is especially obvious in the difference between

the geometric arrangement and organization of the garden and the wilderness outside. Only the plant forms to the left and the gaze of the men in the jungle, encroach upon this area of domestic landscape gardening - a private interior space. This sense of the juxtaposition of public and private reinforces the division between natural and unnatural. It stresses the contrast between symbols of modernity, allied to the man-made, and those metaphors for primitivism, which are linked to the natural.[101]

The landscape with its ambiguous collection and juxtapositions of images, challenges logical interpretation. On the one hand, there is the sense of an actual landscape with the garden in the foreground, the wilderness beyond with hills and heavy clouds and the intimation of a luxurious jungle to the right, out of which the cultivated area has been hewn. On the other hand, the floating presences of the News of the World title and the bullet in the sky and the odd collection of object-symbols in the garden, work against this. They deny any convenient interpretation of the work as a kind of new territory landscape painting. This reticence to declare explicit meanings is underscored by the central figure of the duenna-like personage. Whilst the swirling drapery of the outfit and the huge turban head-dress[102] identify the duenna - an identity, which is also suggested by the odd features of the nose-beak, the indication of a pipe, perhaps an opium clay pipe, raises different meanings. This incorporates the idea that unnatural and natural have become metaphors for the experience of the opium dream; an organic substance, which provokes artificial sensations through bringing the unconscious to

the surface. In this, the work refers to earlier compositions such as Storm in a Jungle (1931) [CC.77] and to Opium Den (1933) [pl.147]. The figure is especially reminiscent of the oriental woman in the opium dream in Opium Den. The landscape becomes a Freudian terrain in which imagery stands symbolically for sexual fantasies, Freudian impulses and erotic desires.[103]

However, News of the World mixes these associations with the concept of myth as an access to truths in nature, an idea derived from Jung. The unknown correspondence of the symbolism, the desire to discover the relationship between the main protagonist and the male figures in the jungle and the way in which the landscape is presented as an appearance of nature rather than a representation of it, suggest such understandings. Furthermore, there is a sense that this scene refers, through its use of wilderness and jungle as a metaphor for primitive nature, to an earlier state of being and previous historical social formations. This makes clear reference to the notion of atavism, to an ancient starting point, central to myth, which sees modern experience as "a reinstatement of something earlier." The scene in News of the World with its 'primitive' overtones testifies to a landscape and community indelibly marked by the spirit of ancestors and by pre-history.[104]

Burra's interest in myth and Jungian notions of myth as a personalized phenomenon related on a broader level to a collective unconscious, coincided at this historical moment with similar interest in the work of Herbert Read. Burra knew Read, although

not closely, and Read's writings on modern art were becoming influential in the early 1930s. Burra had been involved in Read's Art Now exhibition and Read had used Burra's work as part of his outline of subjective idealism in that book. In Art Now (1933), Read advocated that the modern artist should: "turn inwards to the realms of his subjective fantasies, his day dreams, his preconscious images".[105] The artist, proclaimed Read, needed to develop his/her own subjective mythology. In a review of Ernst's work, Read used Ernst as an example of the 'myth-maker' artist, whose images exploited mythical levels of meaning. He recognized that: "Certain objects though they have originated as symbols in the unconscious, have long been recognized for what they symbolize and pass from age to age as accepted counters."[106] It is this use of objects as 'mythical counters', I suggest, that underscores News of the World and contributes to the ambiguous nature of the work's symbolism.

In his preface to Art Now, Read elucidated two areas of meaning, which are relevant to Burra's work. Firstly, he noted that in modern art: "The inner world of the imagination becomes more and more significant, as if to compensate for the brutality and flatness of everyday life."[107] Reconsidering News of the World, the contrast between the spatial depth of the natural landscape and the flat, illustrational sense of the News of the World title and the bullet motif, distinguishes between these two levels of association; one acting to signal the everyday world of newspapers and advertisements of contemporary culture and the other, to open up a landscape of immeasurable depth. This suggests landscape as

a mythical depositary, which acts as a sort of field in which to place the object-symbols of the unconscious in irrational and often, disturbing juxtapositions.

Acknowledging that the landscape in the painting operates in such terms, then the collection of objects-the bicycle, walnuts, seed compilation; the cigarette, sun-dial, vine, windmill group; and the central hybrid personage, hold meanings related to the unconscious, to myth and to sexual desires. This takes up Read's second point, drawn from Jung, that imagery in art should be related simultaneously to the essential life of the individual and the collective unconscious of society.[108] However, the work articulates the lack of interaction between these two sets of understandings -the contemporary and the primitive-mythological, through the native's questioning overview of the garden and the incompatability of the illustrated 'World' with the natural one over which it looms.

This theme of the discrepancy between the traditions of the past and their relationship to contemporary culture, I understand as one of the major themes of the work. This is symbolized in News of the World by the separate territories of the walled garden and the organized vini-culture and the jungle outside. There is no point of contact save a little gateway and various ways of conveniently harnessing natural forces such as windpower. The modern appears as a confused collection of machinery, with few references to any ongoing mythological tradition. In a manner similar to the negroes peering out of the jungle, the interior

meanings of the garden and its assemblage of objects remain undeclared. This lack of interaction on a wider level, I feel, relates to the polemics of Read's Art Now, with its statement that: "even in its origins and developments the modern movement in art has had nothing whatsoever to do with sentiments external to its nature".[109]

There is one exception to this and that is the figure of the duenna, who firstly as bird-figure, is linked to the idea of transformation and to acéphale. This descent towards the low related to acéphale, could be viewed as a move in the direction of the primitive.''[110] Alternatively, in her mask-like face and the ritual actions of the opium dream, this could be interpreted as a modern equivalent of the voodoo ritual. The presence of a sophisticated sun-dial to the right of the figure with an illuminated triangle of light, reminiscent of the triangular prism in John Deth (1932) [CC.72], suggests occult or unconscious levels of association. Therefore, the bird-figure draws together the themes of magic and alchemy through the notion of voodoo, sexual desire and its associations of ecstasy, discussed earlier in relation to the prostitute, and the subject of myth, the bird-hybrid being as a figure, who stands between the modern and the primitive and transgresses conventional boundaries.

This suggestion that the painting represents a voodoo ritual needs further attention. In Burra's work, black magic is initially associated with literary sources, especially travelogue accounts of experiences of seeing black magic and the power of mythical

belief in primitive society. Burra's library contained Lafcadio Hearn's Fantaisies Créoles- Suivi de Rêveries floridiennes (ed. 1901) and his Miscellanies, published in London in 1924. These stories gave first-hand accounts of the gruesome rituals of tribal Indians and incorporated a section entitled "Notes on the utilisation of human remains".[11] As mentioned earlier, this was part of Burra's general interest in magic and the occult.[12]

Such interests were shared by many surrealists, especially those connected with Documents as part of their professed "sinister love of darkness, and monstrous taste for the obscene".[13] In Documents, photographs of voodoo objects, of "L'oracle de la mort" showing Haitian figures possessed or bewitched, illustrations of tribal initiations and photographs of ossuries full of skulls, all verified this interest. The cult of black magic, as Leiris noted, reflected the Documents' group's wider interest in: "le goût de la toilette."[14]

An interest in tribal rituals and masks was a manifestation of this. The power of their disruptive force was taken up by writers such as Michel Leiris in Documents, Vol II, no. 8,1930, in an article entitled "Le caput mortuum'où la femme de l'alchimiste". .[15] This extended the debate about magic and ritual, which had followed the publication of William B.Seabrook's L'isle magique in 1929, a journalistic study of voodoo, black magic and the zombie cult in Haiti, which Burra knew.[16] Especially impressive were its selection of illustrations of initiation ceremonies and people being possessed by evil spirits. In particular these documentary

accounts stressed the importance of the mask in such rituals as a subversive force, which indicated the figure changed. The mask, already an important component in earlier collages such as Eruption of Vesuvius, was thereby given a ritualistic significance and one inscribed by black magic. As noted earlier, Limbour's article in Documents (Vol. ii, No. 2, 1930, "Eschyle, Le Carnaval et les Civilisés", had tied the defamiliarizing effect of the mask to the operations of magic, primitive rituals and the cult of the dead.[117] Oceanic masks in particular, were seen by surrealist artists and writers as providing examples of such beliefs and powers.[118] In News of the World, the dramatic pose of the central protagonist in her flowing drapery and the theatrical nature of a performance watched by the figures in the jungle imply a ritual in progress. From the nature of the surrounding object-constructions or groups of incongruous objects, I would suggest, that this is a magical transformation, with the beaked nose and hood corresponding to a ceremonial mask.

An obvious source for such suggestions was tribal masks or a visual vocabulary derived from primitive art. Burra owned a copy of Henri Clouzot's Sculptures africaines et océaniennes- Colonies françaises et Congo belge published in Paris in 1924. The publication was a catalogue with plates of African and Oceanic sculptures to the exhibition De l'Art indigène des colonies françaises d'Afrique et d'Océanie et du Congo belge held at the Pavilion du Marsan in October 1923.[119] This exhibition drew on the extensive collection of the Trocadéro Museum, Paris. Of note amongst the selection of oceanic masks was a wooden Apouéma mask

of a war or peace messenger from New Caledonia from the Trocadéro Collections [pl.162].[120] With hooked nose, bark head and feathery body cover and train, it provided an analogy to the processes of transformation at work in the bird-figures, and authenticated bird-features as characteristic elements in tribal totem masks, American Indian and Oceanic sculpture. It also provided a visual analogy to the theoretical concepts of Freud's Totem and Taboo derived from primitive sculpture.

From the early 1930s, both Burra and Nash had shared an interest in primitive sculpture and masks.[121] A letter from Nash dated 26 May 1931, expressed the artist's particular interest in African Art. The Exposition Coloniale in Paris in 1931 and the founding of the Musée des Colonies must have drawn attention to non-European Art. In addition, in December 1933, Nash on a visit to Paris wrote to Burra of the spectacle of African Art. Nash wrote that: "the most thrilling thing has been the huge exhibition at the Ethnographical Museum of pre-historic African art - beautifully presented and endlessly interesting."[122] Burra's archive also contained a large selection of postcards of African art [pl.163], especially Benin sculptures and Jean Babélon's L'Art précolombien (1930) as well as a huge selection of periodicals in which tribal art featured including Documents, Minotaure, Der Querschnitt and Variétés.[123]

Burra's interest in 'primitive' sculpture corresponded to that of the surrealists. Primitive sculpture and carving, notably Oceanic and North American tribal art, was venerated by the surrealists

for its distinctive form, its occult significance and its sexual and cosmic levels of association.[124] It offered, as Breton later noted: "the greatest sustained effort to express the interpenetration of physical and mental and to resolve the dualism of perception and representation".[125] In particular, the periodical Minotaure focused on "ethnographie et mythologie" as part of its broader interest in spectacle and "études et observations psychoanalytiques."[126]

Of importance to this discussion is the issue number 2, June 1933 of Minotaure, which focused on the ethnographical expedition from Dakar to Djibouti (1931-33).[127] Through the large number of photographs acting as visual documents, the reader was able to follow in detail particular sites, locations and experiences of the trip and view the objects which had been seen. These tribal objects were in the accompanying texts set in the context of sociology, ethnography, psychology and religion.[128] The issue headed by P. Rivet's and G-H. Rivière's article entitled "La mission ethnographique et linguistique de Dakar-Djibouti", gave a broad account of the mission and Michel Leiris's article "Le Taureau de Seyfou Tcheyer" considered the ritual rites of an Abyssinian tribe which believed in possession by evil spirits and human sacrifice. Also in the issue, there were photographs of masked dancers from the French Sudan wearing Dogon tribal masks [pl.164]. These masks and sculpture collected during the expedition went to the Musée du Trocadéro.[129] They provided actual examples of the type of funerary masks which Leiris had previously written about in the first issue of Minotaure, in February 1933. His article on

"Danses funéraires Dogon" accompanied the publication of the first documents of the Dakar-Djibouti expedition.'[130]

Nash and Burra's knowledge of primitive sculpture, carving and masks was further expanded by the Lefevre Galleries exhibition of Primitive African Sculpture in 1933, which precipitated great interest in Britain in 'primitive' art.'[131] This interest coincided with the publication of Read's Art Now (1933), which also stressed the significance of primitive art to modern art practice. Read wrote that: "We can learn more of the the essential nature of art from its earliest manifestations in primitive man ... than from its intellectual elaborations in great periods of culture. For in its later stages, art is overlaid by modes of life which are not of its essence."'[132] What 'primitive' art offered to the modern mind, according to Read, was the expression of a system of meanings and associations, which tapped "another world" of myth, secret rital and hidden symbolism.

Burra, Nash and also Aiken's interest in primitive art, mythology and ritual was linked to these issues in the period 1932-34. In Aiken's case, it was tied to themes of cosmic consciousness, to localised myths and the broader areas of Freudian psychology. These were the major subjects of his epic poem, Landscape West of Eden (1934), which was dedicated to Paul Nash. In the poem, the themes of death and reincarnation were explored through the metaphor of the landscape, with the landscape: "being like states of mind or feelings, like apprehensions".'[133] In Nash's work similar themes, discussed earlier, were represented through the

dramas of symbolic objects set in English landscapes,which raised ambiguous, often enigmatic associations. Event on the Downs (1934) [pl.151] and Landscape of the Megaliths (1934) [pl.161] were examples of this type of painting. According to Nash, the aim was to explore the "imaginative investments" of natural or unnatural objects in relationships or surroundings which raised mythical and spiritual associations of a pre-historic past.'[34]

News of the World also represents a landscape in which groups of objects and a central bird-figure are placed. The exact meanings of the scene, its collection of objects or ritual remain undisclosed. The incongruous relationship of natural and unnatural objects, the drama of the bird-woman's performance watched by the figures in the jungle, the associations raised by the floating landscape and bullet and the natural landscape below and the precise significance of her mask-like face resist logical understanding. Ambiguity and irrationality reduce the work's images and their meanings to a spectacle to be watched, but not comprehended. The viewer like the tribal figures become engaged in a scenario, which is alien and whose sexual, mythical, magical and 'primitive' levels of association, although sensed, remain unclear.

This interest in ritual is expressed through the public arena of the carnival in Composition (1933-34) [CC.101], The Two Giantesses (1932) [CC.90], The Three (1932) [CC.89] and Spanish Dance (1932) [CC.88]. In The Two Giantesses, a street theatre scene or

carnival performance takes place in the background with hybrid personages depicted on a podium. Similarly, the giantesses flamboyant costumes, mask-like faces and enormous bodies also reiterate this theme. In The Three and Spanish Dance, the figures appear as drapery constructions in procession. The cloaks reduce the body to a robed object and the hood is reminiscent of clan hoods. These changes conceal the human figure as an elaborate disguise, hiding their identities.

The most complex work incorporating such themes is Composition (1933-34), which parallels Nash's interests in French and Spanish carnival rituals at this period. On the Nashes' trip to the South of France in late 1933-34, Margaret Nash sent Burra a postcard of herself participating in the Nice carnival. It was developed from a photograph taken by Paul Nash of her "leading the monster artichokes in the carnival procession"(13 February 1934). Other photographs taken on the trip by Nash such as Carnival Nice (1934) and Carnival Spain (1934) [pl.169] documented the Nashs' carnival experience abroad and depicted the performers in the parades.[135]

In Composition, figurative elongation is adopted as a carnivalesque metaphor. The male figure, like some enormous stilt-walker, dominates the right-hand side. The female figure on the opposite edge of the painting is seen from behind. The stance is similar to a later sketch of a Harlem dancer or performer entitled Piece of Tail (1934-5) [pl.166].[136] Behind these two protagonists, there is an archetypal Freudian landscape of sexual arousal with craggy rocks, choppy sea and fruit laden plant forms.

Above the woman, enormous fruits loom symbolizing female genitalia. Behind the man, craggy mountains symbolise male sexual arousal. In his hand, he carries a scarlet flower blossom with stamens openly revealed - a clear signal of erotic intent. This is reinforced by the shapes of the necktie, hat and body, which in Freudian terms relate elongation to male sexual interest. Also in the background, the presence of a Moorish facade with decorative screens and balconies-orificial devices, signal female sexual associations. Behind these, duenna-like figures cavort in white hoods. These draw on popular postcard illustrations of carnival performers and their costumes collected by Burra.[137] They also carry overtones of tribal dress. However, unlike in later works such as Holy Week, Seville (1939) [CC.154], there is no suggestion of religious overtones or penitential flagellation.

The sexual significance of the carnival ritual is represented in the series of tableaux presented between these main figures which explicitly signals states of sexual excitement. Their collage-like structures and inset devices were derived from a number of sources. Amongst these were popular postcards, illustrations in surrealist periodicals, rotogravure picture- sections in American newspapers and magazines, panelled compositional devices reminiscent of Magritte's work in the early 1930s (such as L'attentat (1931-2) and the "snap-shot of dream" clustering of imagery used by Dalí in Illumin ed Pleasures (1929).[138]

In these three tableaux, Burra conspicuously exploited both Freudian symbolism and earlier bird-imagery references. In the

left-hand section, the scarlet bird is surrounded by luscious fruit and dense, heart-shaped foliage set against a full-mooned, rocky seascape. The second framed tableau with its cartouche ornament, appears to open out onto a staged set reinforced by the indication of a thick wooden frame, which insets the scene. The imagery consists of two personages constructed of objects collaged together. There is a male ruffed figure to the left and a bird-headed, joker bodied figure, partially concealed, set just behind. In the distance an arched architectural form with either a tree or an erupting volcanic motif is represented. The central meaning of this scene remains elusive both in terms of reference to itself, to the other tableaux or to the exterior scene. This enigmatic aspect is further reinforced by the circular motif, which looms above these two square tableaux. This can be interpreted as either a compilation of seed-fruit forms in a still-life arrangement or, alternatively, as an object-face with eye, nose and lips.

These three sets of images prioritized by their position in the foreground, seem to relate to the wider subject of the Mediterranean or Hispanic carnival. They carry understandings developed from surrealism and Freudian associations of sexual display mixed with the theme of popular carnival. They exhibit complex sets of images, some derived from earlier bird themes and others, which make knowing reference to popular culture. By setting these tableaux in front of a conspicuously Mediterranean landscape, Burra highlights the relevance of such associations to the experience of travel and the exoticism of abroad.

The carnival theme played an important part in defining Burra's attraction to Mediterranean and Hispanic culture and in providing an appropriate context for the expression of dramatic difference. This was especially pronounced after Burra's experience of Spanish culture following his first trip to Spain in April 1933.[139] These scenes with their carnivalesque overtones draw on earlier travelogue accounts of Spain. In particular, they are similar in attitude to the view of Spain expressed in French literature by Prosper Merimée, Pierre Loùys and Théophile Gautier. They also correspond to that genre of Spanish literature, exemplified by Ramon del Valle Inclan, Ramon Gomez de la Serna and José Gutierrez Solana's La España Negra (1920) which represented the picturesque figures of low-life Spain. They also referred to that folk-loric theme of popular carnival rituals and 'tipos populares' represented by Goya's scenes for the Royal Tapestry Factory (1791-2) and Valdes Léal's drawings of rural Spain. These rich veins of Spanish picturesque literature and art formed Burra's early interest in Spanish culture in the period 1931-35 before the beginning of the Civil War.[140]

In addition, these paintings explore more complex symbolic imagery. On the one hand, this reflected Burra's interest in the fantastic scenes of Hieronymous Bosch, notably The Garden of Delights (1500-10), and Breughal's The Triumph of Death (c.1565) with their complex religio-mystical sets of images seen in Madrid.[141] On the other, it was informed by that fascination with the erotic in popular culture, strongly represented in contemporary Spanish literature by the poetry of Frederico Garcia

Lorca and Raphael Alberti.'[42] However, the strongly macabre aspects of Hispanic cultural celebrations present in other works such as Dancing Skeletons (1934) [CC.107], are absent in these works. This theme which shared Aiken and Malcolm Lowry's fascination with the Mexican 'Day of the Dead' carnival and made extensive reference to the magical and mythological aspects of public ritual, appeared in later works such as El Paso (1937) [CC.123], after Burra's trip to Mexico in May 1937.'[43]

The final groups of works which address this carnival theme, but using less overtly symbolic or 'surreal' imagery are Flamenco Dancer (1931) [CC.81] and Spanish Dancer in a White Dress (1933) [CC.121] and the later works, Madame Pastoria (1934-5) [CC.115], Nellie Wallace (1934-5) [CC.117] and Mae West (1934-5) [CC.116]. These are conspicuous by the fact that they incorporate Burra's personal experience of Spanish popular culture, music hall and American filmic culture. It is these works which I want to examine in detail in relation to the representation of the female figure.

Flamenco Dancer (1931), Spanish Dancer in a White Dress (1934-5) and Madame Pastoria (1934-5) take as their central subject the crucial role of the female entertainer in Hispanic popular culture. In Flamenco Dancer, the extraordinary contortions of the dancer in a shimmering white dress act as a focus for the male audience's gaze. The dourness and passivity of the guitarist starkly contrasts with the vitality and vigour of the female flamenco dancer. The elaborate foliage, luscious fruit and heavy

blossoms signal the erotic nature of this attention. In Spanish Dancer in a White Dress, the dramatic spotlight has a similar effect. The dancer's provocative arm and leg gestures further add to the sense of spectacle. Again large leaves and blossoms provide a symbolic sexual dimension to the scene.

Similarly in Madame Pastoria, this linking of eroticism to activity is underlined by the dancer's activity and the accompanist's inactivity. The scene draws on Burra's experience of the Circo Price in Madrid and on popular postcards and entertainment guides such as La Linterna and Estrella y Canciones [pl.167]. These were Spanish equivalents to the French popular magazines, Le Crapouillot and Détective.[144] In addition, Spanish film magazines such as Nuestro Cinéma, and the vogue for Spanish themes in French and American films, stills of which were published in Ciné Revue and Cinéa, may have provided sources.[145] Such illustrations and photographs gave details of costume, stance and gestures which contributed to the attention seeking body language of the flamenco dancer. In all of these works, there is a conspicuous exploitation of popular culture's spectacular nature and the central role of the female protagonist.

Such 'low' entertainments had undoubtedly developed the extensive repertoire of carnivalesque actions and rituals, their costumes and masquerade mannerisms. Hispanic culture, notably in the flamenco and also the bullfight, had retained many aspects which had been lost in Anglo- Saxon popular culture or reformed into institutional entertainments such as the theatre or music hall.

In Spanish society, these activities still retained their public access being enacted or performed in streets or market places as part of a lively, on-going tradition.[146] These preoccupied Burra at the time of his first trip to Spain in April 1933 with Aiken and Lowry.

Whilst individual works consider the specific themes of music hall entertainment in Barcelona, for example, Musical Comedy Barcelona (1933) [CCD.66], and the rituals of bullfighting in Bullfight (1933) [CC.93], there is a strong sense of Burra's broader fascination with the public nature of Spanish popular culture as a parallel activity to the prostitute street-walking, namely as a display of female sexuality. In Spanish Music Hall (1933) [CC.97] and The Pointing Finger (1933) [CC.96], the earlier themes of music hall and theatre are continued. Representing melodramatic female performers dressed in outrageous outfits with flamboyant gestures, the works mix theatricality with the exoticism of the Mediterranean female entertainer.

However, the presence of bird-personages in both works adds a surreal dimension to the music hall subject. This carries with it conspicuous overtones of the prostitute-duenna figure street-walking. In The Pointing Finger, the bird-woman stalks the shady arcades and alleyways. Her feathery hat, flowing gown and secretive fan, hide her identity. The urgency of the female pointing her finger out of the composition adds to the dramatic impact of the scene, suggesting the imminent arrival of a client. In Spanish Music Hall, the parallels between these two forms of

public display is clearly indicated as the trio of performers could easily be a trio of street-walkers. The complicated compositional structure with its devices of arcades, cartouched entrances and distant Freudian landscapes, its guitarists in emblematic posture with exiting line of dancers and the distant landscape makes overt references to theatricality and illusionism. It is a compilation of images of carnivalesque figures, theatrical devices and posturing performers. This is accentuated by the three main performers who, with fingers on lips, mockingly imitate some rehearsed 'tableau' grouping. They bring to the music hall, the light-hearted and fanciful nature of popular entertainment. This seems to be expressed in the work's comic tone and mocking humour, which transforms the rituals of street-walking into an entertainment.

In the 1920s and 30s, the ritual dramas of carnival, music hall and street-walking had infiltrated popular culture, notably cabaret and film, offering a stereotype of the female performer as an authentic articulator of various popular traditions and common experience.[147] She was an exotic and erotic representative, who gave a voyeuristic insight into the experiences of others. As one who could transgress social divisions and offer pleasure as a means of purchase on the contemporary, the female performer enacted her snap-shot experience of low life as part of some picturesque and overtly sexual spectacle. She participated in an on-going tradition of escapism as an unthreatening vision of carnivalesque comedy. In films, which took as their subject, the revue, the cabaret and the music hall, and in cabaret-vignettes,

the female entertainer was eagerly consumed by pleasure-seeking audiences. Mae West, Nellie Wallace and Madame Pastoria, all painted between 1934-5, adopt as their subjects such named female performers and it is these paintings with which I want to conclude my examination of Burra's representation of female figures in the period up to 1936.

Earlier drawings had represented specific female stars. Super Cinema (c.1932) [pl.168] and one of the illustrations from A.B.C. of the Theatre (1932) featured Tullulah Bankhead, possibly culled from a press photograph in Burra's press cutting collection.[148] The Two Sisters (1929) [CC.54] showed the Hungarian performers, the Dolly Sisters, possibly from a postcard or film still. Asta Nielsen provided details for the model for the prostitute in Snack Bar (1930) [CC.68].[149] However, it is in these three full-length, large scale compositions of Mae West, Madame Pastoria and Nellie Wallace that individualized female stars are explicitly portrayed. These images depict the Spanish flamenco singer Pastoria Imperio, the British music hall actress Nellie Wallace and the American film star Mae West, either in the middle of performance or off-stage. Common to all of these works is the adoption of a monumental figure language applied to female subjects and allied to the notion of spectacular performance and display. In Madame Pastoria, the flamenco performer is shown in action at the Circo Price in Madrid. In Nellie Wallace, the profiled features and contoured body of the star are viewed across the stage as the poses and gestures of performance are enacted. In Mae West, the

actress is portrayed as the experienced practitioner of display despite the fact that she is off-stage. These three paintings represent the female performer as a powerful manipulator of the codes of artifice and able to control the extravagant visual spectacle of performance.

In Mae West and Nellie Wallace, the fantastic head-dresses, the elaborate props of fans and feather boas and the fancy costumes play an important role in the attainment of the sense of glamour and the masquerade of fantasy. In Nellie Wallace, it is the simple qualities of the feather head-dress, the body-hugging stage-costume and the large fan which are used to attract attention. In Mae West, these props reach outlandish proportions as the body of the actress is topped by a fabulous head-dress finished off by a sumptuous feather train and complimented by an enormous fan. These contrive to conceal the body and at the same time to draw attention to it as the focus of the display. This is emphasized by the hand on hip stance, the contraposto position and the alarmingly broad grin of the performer, which reveal the well rehearsed, professional training of the music hall and the Griffithian school of silent film acting.

Within these paintings, there is a contrast between the natural and the unnatural. In Mae West, this is represented by the differences between the figure of the actress and the nude statue to her right. Such codes were commonly adopted in advertising imagery for films to signal the mythical woman, a goddess or heroine as a sculptured form, against which the mortal woman was

compared. A postcard in Burra's collection from Atlántida (Ger. 1932), Pabst's film about the Queen of Atlantis bought at the Joya Cinema in Granada, employed a similar device [pl.170].[150] It shows the heroine, Birgitte Helm, draped against a monumental sculptured head. Mae West's exaggerated scale and the imposing, physical presence of the star suggest such a language. This notion of contrast is further underlined by the ideas of immobility and passivity versus those associated with activity. The star's provocative stance and display of her body add to the sense of theatre. Make up and costume play a vital role in this simultaneously masking and adorning the body of the female for the spectator. This is given an obvious sexual connotation by the presence of sensual materials of fur, feather and gauze, which package the body ready for the male viewer to consciously or unconsciously unwrap. Similar codes are apparent in the postcard in the lumimous textures of the drapery and the alertness of the star contrasted with the passive grey coldness of the sculptured head.

A similar use of the tactile and sensual qualities of materials to suggest a sexual characteristic was also employed in a set of postcards collected by Burra in Spain and France in which images of flamenco performers or local women in folk costume incorporated embroidery, silk fragments or 'real' hair attached to hand-coloured photographs [pl.167].[151] The contrast between the 'cold' photograph and the sensual qualities of the collaged materials reinforced the appeal of the female figure. Thus the simple postcard was transformed into a fetishistic souvenir to be prized.

Similar ideas were featured in surrealist head-objects by Banting, Object Head, (c.1935) [pl.171] and later, Aileen Agar's Angel of Anarchy (1938), where feathers, jewellery and the flamboyant use of richly textured cloth acts to counter the object-head's anonymity.[152]

Within the codes of representation applied to the female figures in Mae West, Madame Pastoria and Nellie Wallace, an important characteristic is the enlargement of the human anatomy. Whilst this could be seen within the figurative tradition of classical monumentalism practised by artists such as Picasso in the early 1920s, it additionally suggests a larger than life figure.[153] This 'énormément', I suggest, acts to signify the presence of a star personality and to indicate that quality of difference which, Richard Dyer has argued, is crucial to the status of celebrity. It signals "a different kind of person",[154] a distinctive type of female glamour in which the body and face are "destined for mass consumption."[155] This necessity of the female performer to be distinctive had a long ancestry in the female 'Commoedia dell'Arte' performer, a carnivalesque figure of humour and also one who stood outside conventional social formations. As Dyer noted: "The cultural predecessors of stars can be seen as disruptive characters such as the artist, the prostitute, the adultress, the great criminal and the outcast..."[156] Many film actresses such as Mae West, coming to the cinema from training in the music hall or burlesque, had had a grounding in acting these stock characters of underworld types. Such figures as noted earlier, formed a major subject in Burra's painting throughout the

1920s and early 1930s. The female star as represented in these works must be seen as a continuation of this 'low life' subject-matter, although carrying attributes related to Surrealism and Freud, and drawn from popular culture.

In addition, the star's direct relationship to the contemporary was strongly underlined by the adoption of codes of representation derived from popular culture; film stills, popular postcards and illustrations from film magazines such as Ciné Parade, Cinéa and Film.'[157] Burra's postcard collection focused on such female stars as Josephine Baker, Greta Garbo, the Dolly Sisters, Birgitte Helm, Raquel Mellor, Asta Nielson, Tullulah Bankhead and Kiki of Montparnasse [pl.121]. Such sources offered a wide array of female models and types, many of whom specialized in portraying characters from the darker side of urban experience, who exhibited a keen knowledge of contemporary sexual mores. In particular, Burra collected stills of Mae West from Belle of the 90s.'[158] These frequently used a low viewpoint to make the star appear physically imposing and employed compositional devices or photographic aids to accentuate particular aspects of appearance or dress.

Such female film stars were also represented both on screen and sometimes off, as conspicuous manipulators of sexuality, using make up and modern fashion aids. As James F. MacMillan has suggested, because of this, female stars were pilloried by the Church and conservative groups for their 'immoral' conduct and behaviour.'[159] Their proffering of 'indecent' role models for

women was an important area of debate throughout the 1920s and 30s. Film, in general, and female film stars in particular, were attributed with playing an important role in spreading these "pernicious" attitudes.

A key figurehead for the liberated, independant woman was Mae West, who throughout the 1920s and 30s, offered sophisticated female role models, whilst at the same time exploiting popular appeal. When considered alongside the gallery of other preferred female stars such as Birgitte Helm, Asta Nielsen and Raquel Mellor, Mae West offered a distinctive example of the American female star and a unique antidote to the stereotype Hollywood starlet. Mae West, for many generations of British filmgoers presented a radically different image of female sexuality. In films such as I'm no Angel (1933) and She Done him Wrong (1933), she not only proffered different behavioural norms and roles for women, but also was seen to be equally successful in the manoeuvring of the strategies of high finance as she was in those of sexual politics. She asserted femininity not as the negative of masculinity, but raised questions of a more complex nature which required a more sophisticated definition of female sexuality.[160]

In an interview published in The Boston Herald, 7 March 1937 in a section entitled "Patron of the Vulgar", Burra spoke of his fascination with the actress: "I like Mae West, I like her very much indeed."[161] The extent of his admiration, especially after seeing She Done Him Wrong in New York in late 1933-34, can be

measured by the adoring tone of his letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer in the following year:

> "Mae West remains my favourite since seeing Belle of the '90s, which I enjoyed more than anything I've seen for a long time my favourite scene is when she stands draped in diamonte covered reinforced concrete with a variety of parrots feathers, ammerican beauty roses and bats wings at the back and ends up waving an electric ice pudding in a cup as the Statue of Liberty. Some of the sets I thought were the best I've seen."[162]

His dedication as a fan was exemplified when he wrote that he was "prepared to beard a howling mob for Mae" to see her next film.[163]

Mae West (1934-35) is indeed derived from film stills and hand-tinted postcards in Burra's collection. This is recognizable in the close-up details of the elaborate outfit, the figure and the "unnatural colouring" typical of cheap postcards.[164] In Burra's painting, as in contemporary film stills, Mae West's body, its imposing size and hourglass figure are important signifiers of her appeal. As in stills from Belle of the Nineties (1934) [pl.172] showing Mae West as the louche saloon entertainer, the elaborate costumes with sequins, fans and feathers emphasized the body's size and contours. Many of her outfits were illustrated in popular film magazines and appear to imitate the revealing costumes of the cheap nude revues. Burra's press cuttings included examples of costumes with tight bodices, voluptuous proportions and extensive trains, similar to those featured in Man Ray's article in Minotaure, No. 5, May 1934, "Danses horizons" with a series of 32 stills of dancers, some blatently erotic [pl.173].[165] The fashions of the 1890s in Belle of the Nineties were especially suitable vehicles for exploiting the erotic connotations of the late 19th Century 'femme fatale'.

The theme of the '_femme fatale_' was a popular subject in _surrealist_ circles notably through literature and popular cultural sources. Such a figure was frequently represented in these postcards in 'titilating scenes' with semi-erotic overtones.[166] Burra's collection included examples of the erotic 'femme fatale' type, which were similar to those from Eluard's collection illustrated in _Minotaure_, Nos. 3/4 December 1933, under the title Les Plus Belles Cartes postales [pl.174].[167]

Burra's interest in _fin de siêcle_ eroticism was also shared by Aiken and many surrealist authors.[168] An important text for the discussion of ideas related to these subjects was Mario Praz's influential publication _The Romantic Agony_ (First published in Italian in 1930, English translation 1933).[169] Burra knew this study in great detail and relished its descriptions of the erotic. In the preface, Praz outlined his project as a re-assessment of continental literary _Romanticism_ in the light of its erotic content. He wrote that the edition was:

> "a study of _Romantic_ literature (of which the Decadent movement at the end of last Century is only a development) under one of its most characteristic aspects, namely that of erotic sensibility. It is therefore, a study of certain states of mind and peculiarities of behaviour, which are often given a definite direction by various types and themes.."[170]

This focus on the erotic sensibility was an important source of meanings for Burra and _surrealist_ artists and writers. As Breton acknowledged, Praz's _The Romantic Agony_ comprised: "a collection of the indisputable facts of the greatest importance ... it is obsessed with the idea of pleasure obtained through cruelty, inflicted or received, sadistic or masochistic..."[171]

The central direction of Praz's investigations was the importance of sexuality as the "mainspring of works of the imagination" in European literature at the end of the 19th Century. Two sections of the book addressed the subject of the '<u>femme fatale</u>' - chapter 4, "La Belle Dame sans Merci" and chapter 5, "Byzantium".[172] These considered the sterotypes and genealogies of the fatal woman and the specific nature of female eroticism. Such an enterprise foregrounded the notion of woman as temptress, seductress and harpy. It exploited the associations of the '<u>femme fatale</u>' as a purveyor of a mysterious, but potent sexual power, Praz traced this ancestry under the heading "La Belle Dame sans Merci", back to Dante and Elizabethen writers. This involved a discussion of key literary figures such as Webster, Flaubert, Mérimée, Lewis, Sue, d'Aurévilly, Dekobra, de Quincey, Mirbeau and Wilde - all of whom, as Clover de Pertinez recalled, featured in Burra's own library or the Burra family library at Springfield. The artist also read Huysmans, Céline, de l'Isle Adam and de Gourmont at this period whose work shared a similar fascination with the exotic streak in the <u>Romantic</u> sensibility. In <u>The Romantic Agony</u>, Praz even mentioned examples of such a tradition in contemporary French writing giving examples which mirrored Burra's interest in Kessel, Carco and Genet.[173]

The central exponent for such a female type of romantic heroine was Salomé, who, according to Praz, was linked in one genealogical branch to a localized incarnation of the exotic woman in Spanish and French literature. The Mediterranean 'Salomé type', noted

Praz, was "studied more or less from life" and best represented in the works of Merimée, Gautier, Flaubert and Süe as the female "sorcière" and "fatale allumeuse".[174] In particular, Mérimée's Carmen in Notre Dame de Paris (1831) offered a memorable stereotype who, bearing in mind Burra's fascination with Spain from 1933, must have appeared an appropriate figurative vehicle for ideas of Hispanic exoticism and eroticism. As Praz noted: "It was Mérimée, who localized in Spain, the type of the fatal woman ... [in whom] ... the exotic and erotic ideals go hand in hand, and this fact also contributes another proof of a more or less obvious truth - that is that a love of the exotic is usually an imaginative projection of a sexual desire."[175]

Reconsidering Madame Pastoria as a Spanish 'femme fatale', she can be seen as a contemporary 'Carmen' figure, who mixes not only the fiery nature and sexual appeal of Mérimée's heroine, but has her roots in Spanish folk-loric traditions, which are emphasized by her flamenco skills. Her derivation "from life" is indicated by means of her place in contemporary Spanish popular culture. She is not merely a "picturesque" practitioner of flamenco, but as her grip on the audience and her haughty gestures suggest, a professional manipulator of erotic insinuation. She represents the survival of the Carmen stereotype as a figure upon whom erotic longing can be projected.

This idea of the foreign woman as a figurative screen for the projection of the exotic and erotic underpinned Praz's second type of "fatal women". She is heavily inscribed by a malevolent, sado-

masochistic impulse and marked by a "realism of experience", often accompanied by mental instability. Praz continued his description of the type as follows:

> "[she] ... is no longer on the mythical plane of woman, ... but we are faced with a type of fatal woman, which has been studied more or less from life - the type hinted at in Baudelaire's Mademoiselle Bistouri and found again in Les Diaboliques (1874) by Barbey d'Aurévilly,..in the Marquise de Sade by Rachilde (1886), in Huysmans's Là-Bas (1891), in Le Jardin des suppli, ces by Octave Mirbeau (1898-9), - the type, which eventually crystallized round Salomé's grisly passion ... the hysterical woman of exasperated desires in whose hands man becomes a submissive instrument."[177]

Other sources for such a tradition of decadent misogyny represented through dominant heroines in literature were Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Paul Verlaine and Remy de Gourmont. Also read by Burra at this time were works of Céline and Wyndham Lewis in which there was a strong sense of cynical misogyny.[178] In his chapter entitled 'Byzantium', Praz maps out various territories of meaning in relation to such a demonic type of 'femme fatale', exemplified by Salomé and characterized by Praz as an "idéale volupté", whose diabolical nature was " a matrix of sex and death". Praz identified such a figure as an important indicator of these themes in a broader investigation of the literature and psychology of the late 19th Century 'Decadent movement'.[179]

Praz did not restrict his discussion to literary sources, but included references to the visual arts. Influenced by Huysmans's Certains (1889), he outlined some parallels in painting for the types outlined in his study. Praz selected Moreau's Salo, mé (1876) and L'Apparition (1876), Rop's Satanic Women in the illustrations to d'Aurévilly's Les Diaboliques (1883), Beardsley's illustrations to Wilde's Salomé (1894) and those representatives

ERRATUM.
Page misplaced. Follows p. 454.

by Morris and Rossetti of Pre-Raphaelite women who were seen to embody "incarnations of the exotic and mystic."[180] Such a tradition of female representation, argued Praz, formed a visual equivalent to the literary tradition and was similarly marked by an erotic and exotic attitude towards 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'. Derived from these sources, Praz established a number of important characteristics which could be attributed to this type. These were a facial pallor reminiscent of an apparition and stressing the woman's 'unearthliness', a position of fixity reflecting "the beauty of inertia", the sense of a sudden revelation or insight, a "richness" in dress and jewellery, a sense of 'restraint' or binding as if a wild animal chained, a 'troubled ambiguity' of sexual identity, often accompanied by a intimation of mental instability or upset, and the impression of a 'Satanic beauty' with a primitive air.[181] Quoting extensively from Huysmans's, especially in his discussion of Moreau, Praz draws a precise portrait of the female 'Salomé' type in literature and painting. Such a '<u>femme fatale</u>' agreed with Huysmans's description in <u>A Rebours</u> (1884): "Elle devenait en quelque sorte, la déité symbolique de l'indestructible Luxure, déesse de l'immortelle Hystérie, la Beauté maudite ... la Bête monstreuse."[182]

Such a female type is not a conventional beauty, but rather stands as a personification of anti-Hellenistic femininity. She is a deviant characterization, who transcends accepted boundaries and models. She carries many traditional male aspects and has animalistic overtones. She does not easily fit into accepted

notions of the literary heroine nor the conventions of female portraiture, but stands apart as a different species. This difference as an essential distinguishing feature is further accentuated by the idea of mental imbalance. It was crucial to the celebration of such a type as a "Satanic beauty"; a feminine cipher for romantic and decadent eroticism in which pleasure and evil, intelligence and madness were inextricably interwoven.

It is not without importance that Mae West has many similarities to Praz's definition. Her pale face, heavily made up and whitened, her immobility and elaborate costume, reiterate the features of the Salomé type. Her hourglass body bound by the corsets and stays of the costume carries overtones of a wild animal tamed. Her broad hips, muscular thighs and monumental, imposing presence act to 'masculinize' her body. The fans and feathers contrive to hide her identity. Furthermore, the slanted mouth, fixed grin and half-closed eyes signal an impression of lunacy or trance. Whilst such associations may have been derived from the conventions of popular postcards, film magazines and stills or the prototypes of titilating press publications, they also make a knowing reference to the characterization of the Salomé type of 'femme fatale' outlined in The Romantic Agony and exemplified in the works of Moreau, Beardsley, Rops and by certain Pre-Raphaelite female figures.[193]

These areas were also important to discussions of contemporary film stars and their sexual role-playing on the screen. This was especially critical around 1933, when both Mae West in I'm No

Angel (1933) and She Done Him Wrong (1933) and Greta Garbo in Queen Christina (1933) caused public outrage with their performances of commanding, masterful women. Garbo was accused of promoting 'lesbianism' and West attacked for her outrageous immorality, especially in I'm No Angel, which contained some of her fruitiest lines.'[84] The central issue was the way in which female performers should display sexuality and sexual desire in films. The humour in Burra's painting suggests the comic edge of West's performance and the satirical tone, her louche characterization. Also there is a sense of that melodrama tinged with sexy insinuations and double-meanings for which West was notorious. Burra catches the 'style' of Mae West as a performer, a fabulous femininity, postured in the manner of the grand guignol.

However, these codes also suggest carnivalesque and literary sources. The monumental, inflated size of Mae West's body in the painting simultaneously stands as a metaphor for the scale of the spectacle and alludes to the unreality of the grotesque carnivalesque form. Furthermore, it is underlined by associations of a deranged, contorted body. Such hysterical reverberations set the image of the female star as a Salomé 'femme fatale' and articulate a particular type of difference in which sexuality and eroticism are key constituent parts. Such a figurative transformation is especially prevalent in the later painting Figure in a Café (1935-6) [CC.127], where animalistic and demonic overtones are emphatically declared in the nude woman's imaging as a beast with bird-like talons, threatening eyed breasts and

muzzled face. She stalks the bar as if seeking out her prey. She is the culmination of this figurative tradition of the threatening 'femme fatale', a kind of post-Freudian bestiary figure with all the associations of a predatory harpy.

These paintings and the ideas which formed an important part of their conception, drew on surrealist sources and need to be evaluated within the context of surrealist debates at this specific historical moment. Some of these were outlined in Breton's text in Minotaure, No. 5, May 1934, entitled "La beauté sera convulsive".[185] Breton argued that the a priori requirement of a "surrealist work of art", was that it should act in a manner similar to the way in which the sexual impulse stimulated the unconscious. The illustrations which accompanied the article were strategically chosen to highlight this parallel and to elucidate an understanding of "explosante fixe", a key paradigm for the surrealist response. Amongst them were Man Ray's photographs of a Spanish dancer caught with swirling skirts in mid-performance, Explosante-fixe (1934) [pl.175], crorals and corals photographed close up by Brassaï and other photographs of surreal objects including Erotique voilée, a natural form whose transformation signalled "magie circonstancielle".[186] Such notions of transgression by means of physical change and deformation were used by Breton as a touchstone for the aesthetic. As Rosalind Krauss has shown, such codes also suggested Freud's essay The Uncanny (1919). In her article,"Corpus delicti"(1986), Krauss outlines these correspondences by referring to Freudian

ideas on the uncanny and parallels in animism, ritual and mythology.'[87]

The performance of a dancer passionately engaged in physical movement and ritualistic practices in Madame Pastoria, a music hall singer fixing the audience's attention and projecting the fantasy of another world more tempting and possibly erotic than ordinary existence in Nellie Wallace or the entry into a bar of a female-animal hybrid, primitively masked and sexually charged in Figure in a Café, allude to, even if the do not illustrate, similar areas of understanding. They indicate a point at which there is a breakdown in the distinction between reality and imagination. They represent moments when reality collapses under the breath-taking shock of sights which reinstate earlier states of being and initiate erotically charged sensations stimulated by a 'corpus delicti'.'[88]

In these investigations, Burra's work parallels issues outlined in the surrealist periodical Minotaure, which was an influential source of ideas. From the first issue of Minotaure in May 1933, as Dawn Ades has suggested, the full range of surrealist activity in painting and sculpture was presented within a literary and artistic periodical which self-consciously addressed an expanded field of operation. The magazine declared its aim to consider: "Plastic arts - poetry - music - architecture. Ethnography - mythology - spectacle. Psychology - psychiatry - psychoanalysis".'[89] Within this project, the female body was a dominant text 'for experiment' and a significant field of

exploration. Visual images, in particular photographs, provided relevant 'evidence' of points made in the texts; sometimes they stood alone, often they reiterated ideas in the articles or at other times, were used to contrast with the text.[190]

The crucial position of the human body as a site for surrealist explorations was heralded in the first issue, May 1933, by Picasso's portfolio of drawings Une Anatomie (1933). Accompanying these illustrations were Brassaï's photographs from Raynal's Variété du corps humaine, showing passive female nudes in close up made unfamiliar by heavy illumination or odd angled viewpoints.[191] These works focused on the female anatomy as a site of disruption and as a fetishized object. In the photographs, the viewer recognizes the presence of the human figure through the skin and its texture, but fails to elucidate exact meanings of such a body object. It is transformed into a landscape of surfaces and shadows which are ripe for conjecture and guesswork. As Rosalind Krauss has noted, these codes of surrealist photography when applied to the female anatomy, reconstitute the body as a sexually intimate fetish object. Photographs such as those by Brassaï reproduced in Minotaure, defy any sense of the natural. They transpose the body into a different register. They displace its human aspects. As Krauss concludes: "The object "straight" or manipulated, is always manipulated and thus, always appears as a fetish. It is this fetishization of reality that is the scandal."[192]

Related to this subject, ideas on the display of female sexuality were outlined in a number of important articles published in Minotaure, Nos. 3/4, in December 1933. Firstly, Tristan Tzara in "D'un certain automatisme du goût", linked female sexuality and desire to the decorative qualities of dress and clothing. He suggested that fashion acted as a screen for the projection of sexual instincts and offered an image of unconscious desire. According to Tzara, hats in particular, were a crucial signifier of sexual interest and secret eroticism.[193]

Secondly, in the illustration of Eluard's postcard collection entitled "Les Plus Belles Cartes-Postales" and in a double-page spread which contrasted photographs of nude women by Man Ray with earlier ones by Nadar, the erotic nude pin up was seen to be a central focus in popular culture as well as in historical and contemporary photographic practice.[194] In these examples, the fetishistic nature of such image's appeal was accentuated.

Thirdly, Dalí published an article "Le phénomène de l'extase", which was accompanied by a collection of photographs of which the majority were close ups of female faces.[195] Women were shown with eyes closed either in dreams or suggestive of hysterics with eyes fixed, slightly gaping mouths and rigid expression. These images harked back to the photographs of Charcot's female hysterics from the clinic at Salpétrière, published in an earier issue of La Révolution Surréaliste in March 1928.[196] Dalí's close ups could also be seen to refer to another text in the issue, Dr Jacques Lacan's psycho-analytical exploration of the sexual impulse

towards violence in the crimes of the Papin Sisters. The article was entitled "Motifs du crime paranoiaque" and considered the murder by two sisters of their employers, their subsequent trial and imprisonment.[197] The central theme, which links all these texts and images, is the female anatomy as a depositary for erotic codes, which suggest both female sexuality and hysterical derangement. These two key areas of surrealist interest inscribed the female face and body with associations drawn from studies of female hysteria and sexuality.

In the sixth issue of Minotaure, Winter 1934-35, these investigations were to be placed into a literary context in Eluard's "Physique de la Poésie", which juxtaposed artists' works against poems on a similar theme. (For example, Picasso's against Apollinaire's, Redon's with Baudelaire's, Rops, Renoir and Matisse's against Mallarmé's.)[198] Furthermore in the same issue, Rétif de la Bretonne et
Maurice Heine's text "La femme féeique" explored the image of the ideal woman in writings of Rétif de la Bretonne.[199] This undoubtedly informed readings of Bellmer's doll photographs entitled Poupée- variation sur le montage d'une mineure articulée, also in this issue, in which the themes of eroticism and fetishism were allied to grotesque distortion and physical deformation of the female form and had distinctly sadistic connotations.[200]

Such ideas had also been considered in Breton's important article on surrealism and painting in Minotaure No. 5, May 1934: "La beauté sera convulsive", in which erotic pleasure and physical disturbance are inextricably fused together.[201] Breton's three

conditions of 'convulsive beauty' are extremely relevant to the discussion of this theme and to Burra's monumental figure paintings. Firstly, Breton signalled the importance of "expiration of movement" as a signifier of the 'convulsive state'. Secondly, "hardness, rigidity, regularity and lustre" similar to the model of a crystal, were presented as distinguishing features. Thirdly, he stated that the unexpected discovery or encounter with the erotic object must be marked by a sense of revelation associated with "the marvellous precipitate of desire."[202]

To review the figurative language in Mae West in the light of these comments is revealing. Whilst Burra's painting appears a light-hearted, almost comic image of a bawdy film star of the 1930s playing up to her fans, many of her facial and physical features - the exaggerated smile-grin, the upwardly turned eyes with fixed stare, the immobile pose and solid appearance of whitened flesh - have a disturbing similarity to the characteristics of hysterics and the mentally deranged. Compared for example, with earlier photographs of Salpétrière internees in La Révolution Surréaliste, March 1928 [pl.176], the film star could be seen as complying with all those features which classified the lunatic in a hysterical performance. Mae West's "attitude passionelle"[203] carries many of the hallmarks of derangement, but it is represented as a public performance rather than an institutional one. Her physical state similarly mirrors her psychic disturbance through her rigid body, deformed features and extravagant pose. The face's whiteness further accentuates this 'unnaturalness'.

Furthermore, Mae West's elaborate, sensual costume and flamboyant headdress with feathers and the provocative fan arouse suggestions of a spectacle of coquettry. They intimate, as in Tzara's analysis, her inner erotic desire. In a manner reminiscent of Dalí's close up photograph compilation, this image of Mae West employs codes which suggest the phenomenon of ecstasy through the contortions of the female body. Hers is a state of heightened sexual and psychological arousal reproduced as a spectacle of performance. As part of this display, the star's body consciously glamorized escapes the condition of 'naturalness' and normalcy. Instead, the painting offers an image of the body metamorphosized and transformed into a site of new meanings all pertinent to the status of film star. This metamorphosis establishes the female body as a screen for covert, erotic and degenerate meanings. It offers it as an illicit text, which the male audience voyeuristically writes and consumes for their own pleasure.[204] This chance sighting of the star is a moment of contact, which corresponds to that accidental encounter so revered by the surrealists. It is an instant when reality is impregnated by unconscious sexual desires and when passion and eroticism on the scale of madness, inform the ordinary experience.[205]

These ideas in Burra's work made reference, as I have already suggested, to major surrealist themes in 1933-5 and in particular, exploited the notion of 'convulsive beauty'. In addition, they explored post-Freudian understandings of eroticism and sexual desire in relation to the figure of the female performer. The codes of representation of the female body in these paintings,

drew on ideas suggested by surrealist photographs featured in Minotaure, by popular illustrations and postcards of film stars in the 1920s and 30s. However, the works also carried associations of ritual public performances. In this sense, popular films, music hall and flamenco dancing retained an historical significance perpetuating ritual practices and ancient meanings within modern culture. The performances of female entertainers could be seen to parallel Mediterranean carnival parades and the rituals of 'tribal' societies, interests which Burra shared with Nash at this period.

Furthermore, the sexual nature of this display was indicated through the works' references to literary sources - to travelogue accounts of the scandalous women of abroad and to the typology of a decadent 'femme fatale', outlined in Praz's The Romantic Agony. In the body language of these portraits, notably Mae West, this identified the physiognomy of the female performer with lunatics and the mentally imbalanced; a knowing commentary by Burra on the strength of their erotic impact and sexual appeal. This suggests understandings drawn from surrealism, which placed the female figure and her body at the centre of a complex nexus of radical meanings. In the distinctive case of the performer, it acknowledged her role in an on-going tradition, which identified transgression and deviancy with low-life and popular culture. These wider issues, I feel, underpin not only the later figure compositions of 1934-35, but underscore the representation of the female figure as duenna, hostess, giantess and bird woman in Burra's work of the 1930s.

1. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, Autumn 1931-32 in T.G., pp. 88-89 No. 9.
2. Burra's interest in Lyon teashops as places to sit and watch confirmed in conversation with Clover de Pertinez, 16 July 1982.
3. See earlier discussion of BRASSAÏ, The Secret Paris of the 30s and 'parading time'. FREUD 1916-17, op. cit., p. 192.
4. For discussion of importance of Ernst's collages see pp. 325-28
5. Illustrations of drapery window dressing were published in Der Querschnitt and Variétés. In particular, see Der Querschnitt, March 1931, section after p. 150. which feature Atget's photographs of Paris shop-window dummies and see pp. 149-50
6. Minotaure, 5, May, 1934, pp. 18-9.
7. Burra's knowledge of French and Spanish would recognize these linguistic meanings and associations.
8. Sheridan's Duennas was revived at the Lyric Hammersmith in 1925. Reviewed in Studio, 89, 1925 by R.H. Wilenski, "The Art of the Theatre - The Play-fair - Sheridan 'Duenna", p. 71. The play featured Elsa MacFarlan and Nigel Playfair and the review illustrated George Sheringham's poster, which Wilenski thought derived motifs from Goya and in its "boleros, mantillas, high combs and castanets" typified Sheridan's 18th century Seville. (illustrated p. 71).
9. CAUSEY 1973, op. cit., p. 14.
10. ARMSTRONG, John, "The Present Tendency of Paul Nash" in Apollo, XVI, November 1932, p. 231.
11. CAUSEY 1973, op. cit. p. 15. According to Causey, Nash may have been introduced to Thompson's work by Herbert Read. Quote READ, Herbert, Contemporary Experience - Autobiographies, 1963, p. 345. As Andrew Causey makes clear, an important influence on Nash and his photography and art came through WILENSKI, R.H., The Modern Movement in Art, London 1927 and The Meaning of Modern Sculpture, London 1932. Also important were illustrations of BLOSSFELDT, Karl, Art Forms in Nature, I, 1929 and II , 1932, 2nd ed, which Nash reviewed in "Photography and Modern Art", The Listener, VIII, 1932, pp. 130-31. Cf., CAUSEY 1973, op. cit., pp. 14-15, and p. 18, note 9.
12. BROWNE, Sir Thomas, Urne Buriall and the Garden of Cy rus, London 1932. See pp 40-41
13. ARMSTRONG 1932, op. cit., p. 234.
14. NASH, Paul, "The Meaning of Modern" in The Weekend Review, 16 July 1932. Quote from letter, Paul Nash to A. Bertram April 1934. Quoted in CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 296.
15. Paul Nash's Marsh Personage illustrated in NASH, Margaret ed., Fertile Image, London 1951. plate 59 and note p. 30. It is composed of 2 pieces of driftwood. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., Catalogue no. 1310 and pp. 253-5. A drawing Wood Fetish (no. 811, p. 429) is related to it. It was exhibited at the 1936 London International Surrealist Exhibition as Found Object Interpretated, Vegetable Kingdom . Cf., CAUSEY 1980, ibid., p. 479. Cf., letter Paul Nash to A. Bertram, 14 April 1934 in CAUSEY 1973, op. cit., p. 84. For further consideration of Nash's photography and metaphysics, see CAUSEY ibid., pp. 13-15.
16. For extended discussion of Nash, objet-trouvé and Surrealism, see CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 261-3. For Nash's Event on the Downs (1934), Cf., CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 83, ill. no. 145.

17. Paul Nash writing in Picture History, (Notes on work from 1933-45) quoted in CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 84.
18. For Nash, Surrealism and Romanticism Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 262-3.
19. In Burra Papers, Tate Archive. COMMELIN, P. Nueva Mitologia griega y romana, Paris 1907, illustration 'El Sol' p. 98.
20. Anne Ritchie and Barbera Ker-Seymer remembered trips to Camber Sands, Winchelsea Beach and Dungeness to search for 'found objects'. Interviews - 17 February 1982 and 19 February 1983. An early letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer, 2 January 1928 notes Burra's interest. "On Sat I went down to the beach to look for seaweed and shells. I got some lovely tufts of seaweed ... the seaweed will look lovely bunched on the shoulders quite like a flower from the Gallery Lafayette only weaved by nature's loving fingers in Neptune's marine cavities." W.C. Letters, p. 42
21. Paul Nash organized an exhibition entitled Room And Book, Zwemmer Gallery London, June 1932 to which Burra contributed a 'found object'. From Burra Library in Private Collection there was a copy inscribed " from Paul Nash". Paul Nash's Room and Book - A Collection of Essays on Aspects of Design was published by the Soncino Press, London 1932.
22. READ, Herbert ed., Surrealism, London 1936, p. 64. Introduction quoted in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 373. For further discussion Cf., LEEDS CITY ART GALLERY 1986, op. cit., pp. 52-53. For details of Nash Cf., CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., pp. 85-6 and CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 260-2.
23. For further discussion of Banting Cf., PARIS GALÉRIE 1900-2000, Peinture Surréaliste en Angleterre 1930-60, Paris 1982, pp. 26-27 and Cf., LEEDS CITY ART GALLERY 1986, op. cit., pp. 41-42. For Richards Cf., ibid., p. 43 and ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 368.
24. See REMY, Michel, "Surrealism's Vertiginous Descent on Britain in LEEDS CITY ART GALLERY, op. cit., pp. 19-55. See pp. 41-46 "The Wreckers of Form".
25. Salvador Dalí exhibition at Zwemmer Gallery, London, September 1934 and Levy's Gallery, New York November-December, 1933, which coincided with Burra's visit to New York. Whilst the critical reception of Dalí's work in Britain was mixed, Geoffrey Grigson in a review of "The Year's Art 1934", December 1934 recognized that "Dalí will most affect the best English art in the next 10 to 20 years." Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive. Also Burra's Library contained DALI, Salvador, The Conquest of the Irrational, New York 1935. Now in Private Collection. According to Clover de Pertinez, Dalí's book "fascinated Burra". Interview with author 16 July 1982.
26. GRIGSON, Geoffrey, "Mysticism, Sculpture and Machine Guns". The Bookman, May 1934, p. 106 from Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
27. DALI, Salvador, "Objets surréalistes" in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, 3, December 1931, pp. 16-17. Quoted in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 260.
28. See earlier pp. 307-9
29. Wheels was exhibited at International Surrealist Exhibition, New Burlington Galleries, London 11 June-4 July 1936. No. 43, lent by P. Nash.
30. Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, For Dalí, 3, pp. 16-17, 5, pp. 45-48. Giacometti, 3, pp. 18-19. Tanguy, 3, p. 27 and Duchamp, 5, pp. 1-2.

31. PARIS, RATTON GALLERY, Exposition surréaliste d'objets, Paris 1936.
32. BRETON, André, "Crisis of the Object" in Cahiers d'Art, Nos. 1 and 2, 1936. Translated in LIPPARD, Lucy ed., Surrealists on Art, New Jersey U.S.A. 1970, pp. 51-5.
33. See earlier p.282
34. MAYOR GALLERY, London, Recent Developments in British Painting, April 1933 and Art Now exhibition, 11 October-7 November 1933 with accompanying publication READ, Herbert, ed., Art Now, London 1933. For Unit One Cf., pp.282-3
35. HARRISON, C. English Art and Modernism 1900-1939, London 1981, pp. 231-233.
36. READ, Herbert, The Meaning of Art, London 1931.
37. READ, Herbert, Art and Industry, London 1934 revealed his understandings of the Bauhaus concept of design education within the work of Gropius and Maholy-Nagy. Cf., READ 1931, op. cit., pp. 24-5 . For further discussion on how Read's critical concepts were influenced by German aesthetics and psycho-analysis. C.f. THISTLEWOOD, David, Herbert Read: Formlessness and Form, London 1984, Chapter 5, pp.24ff. and CANTERBURY COLLEGE OF ART, Homage to Herbert Read, October 1984 with essay by MILLS, Roger, "Herbert Read - Theory and the Avant-garde", ibid., pp. 16-23.
38. Cf., READ 1933, op. cit., preface pp. 13-14, "The Psychology of Art - the receptive aspect".
39. READ 1933, op. cit., p. 133-4.
40. READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 124-5. For wider discussion of Read's model Cf., THISTLEWOOD 1984, op. cit., 76-84.
41. READ, Herbert, "Ben Nicholson and the Future of Painting" in The Listener, 9 October 1935. Quoted in MILLS 1984, op. cit., p. 17.
42. READ 1933, op. cit., p. 129.
43. Cf., THISTLEWOOD 1984, op. cit., pp. 76ff.
44. MAYOR GALLERY, London, Exhibition of Recent Paintings by English, French and German Artists, April 1933 included work by Braque, Picasso. Léger, Marcoussis, Herbin, Arp, Masson, Picabia, Miró, Ernst, Wadsworth, Nicholson, Armstrong, Hillier, Nash, Klee, Lurçat, Baumeister, Zadkine and Moore.
45. In a later exhibition at the Mayor Gallery Twenty Five Years of British Painting 1910-35, April-May 1935, the foreward by Michel Sévier noted that within the period, British art had undergone "a renaissance in which our national artistic consciousness was liberated from the fetters of insular constraint and in which our pictorial art emerged from a state of sterile provincial inertness as a live universal force." p.i
46. Wheels was exhibited as Still Life, No. 116.
47. Cf., READ 1933, op. cit., Chapter 5, "Subjective Idealism" pp. 122ff.
48. C.f. earlier discussion pp.372 376
49. Burra's knowledge of the intimacies of the brothel parade could have been derived from MACORLAN, Pierre, Images Secrètes de Paris, Paris 1930, which outlined the procedure in vivid detail and was accompanied by a plate similar in composition to the work on p.672, and referred to Freud's ideas on p.76
50. SPIES, Werner, Max Ernst - Lop-Lop - the Artist's Other Self, London 1983.
51. SPIES 1983, op. cit., p. 79. See also LEGGE, Elisabeth, Conscious Sources of the Unconscious - Ernst's Use of Psycholanalytical themes and imagery 1921-24, University of London, Courtauld Institute 1985 unpublished Ph. D. thesis. Cf., GREEN, Christopher, Cubism and its Enemies - Modern Movements and Reactions in

French Art 1916-28, London 1987, pp. 259-264 for discussion of Surrealism and metamorphosis and pp. 280-2 for Ernst and Freud.

52. ERNST, Max, Une Semaine de bonté, Paris 1934, 4th book. Reproduced in RUBIN, William ed., Primitivism in 20th Century Art, New York, Museum of Modern Art 1984, 2nd ed. 1955 p.555. Cf., MAURER, Evan, "Dada and Surrealism", ibid., pp. 539-593.

53. ELUARD, Paul and ERNST, Max, Les Malheurs des immortels, Paris 1922. Illustration reproduced in Variétés IV, 15 December 1929, p. 568.

54. See earlier pp. 391-2

55. Reproduced on p. 49 in SPIES, Werner, "Une poétique du collage", pp. 45-69 in PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE: Paul Eluard et ses amis peintres, 1895-1952, Paris 1982.

56. See STICH, Sidra, Towards a Modern Mythology - Picasso and Surrealism, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of California at Berkeley 1972 for extended discussion of surrealist use of bird mythology and Freud, Cf., pp. 125ff.

57. Paul Nash in a review "Art and the English Press" in The Weekend Review, 4 June 1933 (Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive) referred to the importance of this publication. Nash also collected some of Ernst's work at this time.

58. According to the catalogue, two versions Nos. I and II were shown as 14 and 16. Also reproduced in READ 1933, op. cit., plate no. 100.

59. NASH 1930, loc. cit.

60. BROWNE, Sir Thomas, Urne Buriall and The Garden of Cyrus, London 1932. Cf., CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 81, plate 140. Cf. CAUSEY 1980, ibid., pp. 221-243. Cf., p. 224 where he quotes a letter from Nah to Hartley Ramsden, 4 June 1941. Referring to Mansions of the Dead, Nash stated that the "soul like a bird or some such aerial creature." Also CAUSEY notes that the notion of 'visiting' was not authorized in the original, ibid., p. 225. Burra's Library contained AUBREY, John, Miscellanies upon Various Subjects, London, Reeves and Turner 5th ed. 1890 which included Hydrotapia or Urn Burial by Sir Thomas Browne.

61. ARMSTRONG, John, "The Present Tendency of Paul Nash" in APOLLO XVII, November 1932, p. 231-4. Illustration p. 235. Quote p. 231.

62. NASH, M. ed., Fertile Images, London 1951, Plate 62 for Woodstack and Barn, Rye. See CAUSEY 1975, op. cit., p. 85, No. 149 for Wood Fetish.

63. FRAZER, James, G. The Golden Bough - A Study in Magic and Religion. First edition, London 1922. Edition used abridged 1954. Special reference to Part II, "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul" 1911. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 328-31 and pp. 334-5, who does not mention it as a sourcebook, but notes the importance of Frazer's work to Nash. Bearing in mind Aiken's interests in myth and the occult at this time, either or both of them must have known it. Burra's library contained a copy of Frazer's study now in Tate Archive, not dated.

64. AIKEN, Conrad, Great Circle, New York 1933. Burra's Library copy inscribed, "Ed from Conrad, Rye 1933". AIKEN, Conrad, Landscape West of Eden, London 1934. It was dedicated to Nash and addressed "the myth of man's arrival at consciousness from a state of innocence." Quoted in MARTIN 1963,'Myth and ritual in modern creativity', op. cit., p. 141. Such theories of 'ritual' as Andrew Causey has pointed out underpinned Nash's Druid Landscape of 1934. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., pp. 256-7. Burra's Library also

contained copies of Man Myth and Magic from 1960s, and London 1890, BARING-GOULD, S, Curious Myths of the Middle Ages, London 1881.

65. Aiken on his relationship with Nash, quoted in letter to Anthony Bertram. Quoted in KILLORIN 1978, op. cit., p. 292.

66. BRETON, André, Second Manifeste du Surrealisme, Paris 1930. Quoted in WALDBERG, Patrick, Surrealism, London ed. 1978, p. 43.

67. FREUD, S. Totem and Taboo - Some Points of Agreements between the Mental Lines of Savages and Neurotics, Vienna 1913. Edition used Pelican Freud Library, Vol. 13, The Origins of Religion, Harmondsworth 1986, pp. 44-224. JUNG, C.G. Psychology of the Unconscious, originally pub. Vienna 1912. English translation - New York 1916, London 1917. French edition 1928.

68. FREUD 1913, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

69. CANETTI, Elias, Crowds and Power, Harmondsworth 1981, pp. 432-33.In Transition, XXIII 1931, p. 190 Eugene Jolas noted how artists: "have learned through the discoveries of Janet, Freud, Jung, Levy-Bruhl etc. that there are hidden forces in the subconscious, which are not only the residence of our own personal lives, but are remnants of those Dark Ages before history began ... we have within ourselves, direct contact with the primitive periods of humanity as well as with cosmic forces." Quoted in MACMILLAN, Dougald, Transition - the History of a Literary Era 1927-38, London 1975, pp. 35ff.

70. STICH 1977, op. cit., pp. 36ff. for discussion of Totem and Taboo and Ernst as one example of this interconnection.

71. FREUD 1913, op. cit., p. 49.

72. FREUD 1913, op. cit., pp. 132-5. For concept of 'animism' Cf., LEVI-STRAUSS, Claude, Totemism ,London 1962 (translated Rodney Needham), p. 3 and FINKELSTEIN, H. Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object, Massachusetts USA 1979,"The Occult and the Object," p. 89.

73. FREUD 1913, op. cit., p. 133.

74. FREUD 1913, op. cit., pp. 219-224.

75. FREUD 1913, op. cit., p. 71 and pp. 71-5.

76. FREUD 1913, op. cit., p. 89.

77. WATERTON, Charles, Essays in Natural History, London 1838. From Springfield Library, Private Collection.

78. Burra's postcard collection in Private Archive.

79. In Banting Papers, Tate Archive, there are postcards from the British Museum (Natural History) of fossilized sponges and Venus-flower baskets, which may have influenced this biomorphic development in Banting, Moore or Burra. John Banting, One Person Show, Wertheim Gallery , London, April 1931. Nash reviewed it with references to ossified fossil forms having a surrealist inheritance. [Banting Press Cuttings, Tate Archive] Burra knew Banting at the Royal College of Art and through Barbera Key-Seymer. Interview 19 February 1983.

80. John Armstrong exhibited at Leicester Galleries in 1929, Recent Developments, and member of Unit One. Herbert Furst commented on Armstrong's work in Unit One: "forms have a significance other than that which belongs to the objects with which they happen to be associated." Quoted by Annette Armstrong, "John Armstrong" in PORTSMOUTH CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY 1978, op. cit., pp. 9-11. Quoted p. 10.

81. For a broader analysis of 'Surrealism and Painting in Britain' see REMY, Michel, LEEDS CITY ART GALLERY 1988, op. cit., pp. 40-53. In

particular, this brand of surrealism common to Burra is these bird women, to Banting, Armstrong and Moore is noted by Remy as part of an aim to "destabilize the images ... and amongst others the human figure, by painting it into doubt and ambiguity." (p. 41).

82. FRAZER, J. London 1954. Cf., in particular, Section IX on Tree Spirits, pp. 109-19 seems relevant to Nash's Totems discussed earlier on the external soul in birds for Urne Burial1 and the external soul in inanimate object in later 'stone object' compositions. Cf., CAUSEY 1980, op.cit., p. 224 and pp. 328-31, 334-5. For Burra, Frazer discusses the role of birds as "scapegoats", which may be relevant to the prostitute analogy. In general terms, Frazer opened up a compendium of levels of meaning in relation to myth, magic and religion for Burra.
83. Documents II, 1, 1930, pp. 1-8. Quoted from BATAILLE, Georges, Documents, Paris 1968, pp. 95-104. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 233-4.
84. "Archontes à tête de canard", Cabinet des Médailles, Paris 2180 B.C. with inscription 'ABA ATANAABA' and "Dieu acéphale surmonté de deux têtes d'animaux", Cabinet des Médailles, Paris 2170. There is a representation of the Egyptian gods Anubis in the circle at the foot of the illustration.
85. Figs. No. 29, 2 30 and 39 from GIVRY, Grillot de, Witchcraft, Alchemy and Magic, London 1931.
86. LEIRIS, Michel,"A propos du Musée des sorciers", pp.109-116. C.f., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978 op. cit. p.246.
87. Burra Library, Private Collection contained LEVI, Eliphas, Dogmas and Rituals of High Magic, 1856 and LEVI, Eliphas, Occult Philosophy, 1862. Confirmed in conversation with author 16 July 1982. Also contained in Burra Collection, BARING-GOULD, J. Curious Myths of the Middle Ages, London 1881. PONCIAS, L. La F.M., Paris 1936. SWEDENBURG, E. Heaven and its Wonders and Hell - from Things Heard and Seen, Harmondsworth 1968. BLAVATSKY, H.P., Studies in Occultism, London 1974.
88. BATAILLE, Georges, "Le bas matérialisme et la Gnose", Documents II, 1, 1930, pp. 1-8.
89. KRAUSS, Rosalind, E. "No More Play" in The Originality of the Avantgarde and Other Modernist Myths, London 1985, 4th ed. 1987, pp. 68-9. Quote p. 69.
90. KRAUSS 1987, op. cit., pp. 68-9.
91. William Blake illustrations to BLAIR, Robert, The Grave, London 1808, Reunion of Soul and Body. This was illustrated in Revue de l'Art, April 1908 and featured in an undated copy of Le Crapouillot in Burra Collection, Tate Archive.
92. Burra's Library contained GILCHRIST, Alexander, Life of Blake, London 1863 and YOUNG, Edward, The Complaint, or Night Thoughts, London 1797. Now in Tate Archive.
93. SOUPAULT, Philippe, William Blake, Paris 1928.
94. SELIGMAN, Kurt, Mirror of Magic, London 1948. Cf., illustration No. 62, p. 160, Alchemical Allegory - The Philosopher's Egg. For general discussion of alchemy and surrealism Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 287.
95. GIVRY, Grillot de, Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy, London 1931, translated by J. Clocke. Book III, Alchemists- the Secret Doctrine, pp. 347ff.
96. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p.326. Entry for 12.182.

97. BRETON, André, Second Surrealist Manifesto, 1930, p. 13. Quoted in RAY, P.C. Surrealism in England, Ithaca, USA, p. 50.
98. BRETON, André, in This Quarter, VI 1932, p. 37.
99. MAYOR GALLERY, Unit One exhibition, April 1934 included: Still Life (Still Life with Figures in a Glass) 1933, No. 25; Landscape of Megaliths 1934 (as Landscape Composition),No. 9; Stone Tree 1934 as No. 13.
100. The polarity of 'modern' versus 'primitive' was a common model in early 20th Century British criticism. It formed a discursive tradition going back to 18th Century of a Rousseauesque 'Romantic cult of the primitive' reinforced by 19th Century Darwinian social theories. Cf., COWLING, Elizabeth, "The Eskimoes, the American Indians and the Surrealists" in Art History, I, 4, December 1978, pp. 497-8 and MAURER 1984, op. cit., p. 549.
101. This reinforced earlier comments on contemporary discourses relating 'primitivism' to 'naturalness'. Cf., READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 45ff: "The Significances of Primitive Art". As R. Mortimer noted in "How the Native Thinks", Vogue, early September 1936, reviewing Lucien Levy-Bruhl's work:"The Cult of the noble savage is recently revived... and anthropological analysis is "no longer systematic", p. 56. For an extended discussion see COWLING, Elizabeth, "An Other Culture" in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 463-5.
102. See earlier discussion of drapery studies in Minotaure, pp 352-3
103. See earlier for discussion of Opium Den and Storm in a Jungle Cf., pp. 355-6 and pp. 364-6 and for Freud and Sexuality Cf., pp 376-8
104. An important source was JUNG, C.G. Psychology of the Unconscious, first pub. Berlin 1912. Through their interest in primitive art, ethnography and reading articles by Jung, Frazer and Levy-Bruhl, this led many surrealists to a broader understanding of the role and operations of myth in primitive society, which informed the conception "of a collective myth appropriate to our time". BRETON, André,"Limites non-frontières du surrealisme." Paris 1937. Reprinted in La clé des champs, Paris 1953, and translated in COWLING 1975, op. cit., p. 465. Cf., BRETON, André,"Le Surréalisme et la Peinture"in La Révolution Surréaliste,4 July 1925. Quoted in WALDBERG 1978, op. cit., p. 25. For extended discussion of surrealist interest in myth see CHADWICK, Whitney, Myth in Surrealist Painting 1929-39, U.M.I. Research, Massachusetts, U.S.A. 1980.
105. READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 124-5. As Read noted: "the psycholanalytical theories of Freud and Jung gave us plenty of justification for such a possibility", ibid., pp. 133-4. See THISTLEWOOD 1984, op. cit., pp. 70-6.
106. Herbert Read in The Listener, 7 June 1933, review of Ernst's exhibition at the Mayor Gallery,Mayor Gallery Press Cuttings, Tate Archive.
107. READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 14-15.
108. READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 13-14.
109. READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 13-14.
110. Cf., earlier discussion, pp 418-9
111. In Burra's Library, HEARN, Lafcadio, Miscellanies, Vols. I and II, London ed., 1924, p. 22. and Fantaîsies Créoles- Suivi de Rêveries Floridiènnes, Paris, 1901. Now in Burra Collection, Tate Archive, London.
112. Cf., earlier pp.417-8
113. ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 234.
114. LEIRIS, Michel, "Le 'Caput Mortuum' ou la Femme de l'alchimiste", Documents 1930, II, 8, p. 23.

115. LEIRIS 1930, op. cit., p. 23.
116. A review of William Seabrook's L'Ile Magique, Paris 1929, appeared in Documents, 6, November 1929, pp. 334-5. Burra referred to Seabrook's work in letters to Paul Nash, [Nash Correspondence,Tate Archive] notably a letter from Paris c. 1931, in which Burra noted that "Seabrook and book on Africa is here."
117. LIMBOUR, Georges, "Eschyle, le Carnaval et les Civilisés", Documents, II 2, 1930, pp. 97-102.
118. COWLING 1978, op. cit., pp. 489-92 for discussions of Miró and Eskimo masks.
119. Burra Library contained CLOUZOT, Henri, Sculptures africaines et océaniennes - Colonies françaises et Congo belge, Paris 1924. Now in Private Collection.
120. Apouéma mask: "Apouéma masque du messager de paix où de guerre", Nouvelle Caledonie.
121. As already mentioned READ 1933, op. cit., pp. 44-5 and the periodicals Minotaure and Documents focused on the importance of 'primitivism'. An earlier article, "L'Art sauvage" by Paul Eluard in Variétés, June 1929 pp.36-7 stressed the importance of metamorphosis and primitive sculpture and would have been known to both artists.
122. Burra letter to Paul Nash, from Paris, 26 May 1931 ,Nash Correspondence, Tate Archive.
123. BABÉLON, Jean , L'Art précolombien, Paris 1930.
124. For wider discussion of Surrealism and 'Primitivism' Cf., RUBIN, William ed., Primitivism in 20th Century Art, 2 vols, New York 1984 especially MAURER, Evan, "Dada and Surrealism", pp. 535-594. Cf., COWLING 1978, op. cit., pp. 463-5.
125. BRETON, André,"Océanie," -op. cit. -, p. 279. Quoted in COWLING 1978, op. cit., pp. 464-5.
126. See ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 280-2 and p. 329 and more recently GENEVA, MUSÉE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE 1988, Focus on Minotaure- the Animal Headed Review. See JAMIN, Jean, "On the Human Condition of Minotaure", pp. 79-84.
127. Minotaure,2, June 1933. Special number on Mission Dakar-Djibouti, pp.31-33.
128. Cf., CALAME-GRIAULE, G. and GUIART, J. "Dakar-Djibouti, Minotaure and Marcel Grianle" in GENEVA, MUSÉE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE 1988, op. cit., pp. 89-93.
129. Masked dancers from French Section. Photograph p. 45 from Michel Leiris's "Masques Dogon", Minotaure, 2, June 1933, pp. 45-50.
130. LEIRIS, Michel, "Danses funéraires dogon", Minotaure, 1, February 1933, pp. 73-6.
131. LEFEVRE GALLERY, Primitive African Sculpture, London 1933.
132. READ 1933, op. cit., p. 46.
133. Quoted from AIKEN, Conrad, "A Heart for the Gods of Mexico", p. 124 in MARTIN 1963, op. cit., pp. 131-147.
134. See CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 262. Cf., letter to Anthony Bertram, 14 April 1934. Quoted in CAUSEY 1980, op. cit., p. 261
135. Postcard in Nash Papers, Tate Archive. Referred to by CAUSEY, A. and COLVIN, C. Supplement to Paul Nash's Photographs, London Tate Gallery 1977. Cf., no. 10. Postcard reproduced in T.G.. p. 90, Cf., CAUSEY, A. AND COLVIN, C. ibid., p. 90. Nash photographs reproduced No. 6, 10 and 11.
136. C.C. No. 114.
137. Postcards in Burra Papers, Tate Archive.
138. Rotogravure picture sections in American magazines such as The New York Times, 4 November 1931, which Burra would have seen on

trips to New York in 1933-4 and influenced the mural work of Thomas Hart Benton, especially those for the New School for Social Research in New York City on the theme of 'America Today' notably 'City Activities' 1930-31. For further discussion Cf., BAIGELL, Matthew, Thomas Hart Benton, New York 1975, pp. 73-88. Illustration from page 83. Magritte's L'attentat (1931 or 32, Groeninge Museum, Bruges) had a similar framing device of the nude female body within an arched facade. Magritte's work was becoming more widely known and illustrated in surrealist periodicals. Magritte's "Les mots et les images" had been published in La Révolution Surréaliste, 12, 15 December 1929, pp. 32-33, and his works frequently illustrated in Variétés. An article by Paul Nouge "Les images défendues" in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, V, May 1933, p.24 and VI, illustrated Au seuil de la liberté. As Dawn Ades pointed out in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 272, no. 11. p. 263. its theme of violence and sexuality make it an appropriate reference for Burra's work. Cf., CAUSEY, Introduction to C.C. p. 54. For dream clustering of symbolic imagery as a means of representing sexual desires, see ADES, Dawn, Dalí, London 1982, pp. 80-3.

139. PERTINEZ, Clover de, "Edward in Spain" in W.C. 1982, pp. 73-83.

140. Confirmed in discussion with Clover de Pertinez, 16 July 1982. See PERTINEZ 1982, op. cit., pp. 80-82. Spanish Collection in Burra's Library, included SOLANA, J. G. La España Negra, Madrid 1920, Burra Collection, Tate Archive and in a private collection other works mentioned.

141. Cf., PERTINEZ 1982, op. cit., pp. 81-2.

142. Burra's collection of works by Lorca, Complete Works (Vols I-IV). Now in Tate Archive. Interest in Alberti and Spanish surrealist poetry confirmed in conversation with Clover de Pertinez 16 July 1982. For further discussion of Spanish surrealist poetry, see MORRIS, C.B. Surrealism and Spain 1920-36, Cambridge 1972, pp. 89ff.

143. The theme of 'Day of the Dead', Malcolm Lowry and Mexican Culture is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it extends ideas of Hispanic culture, carnival and eroticism after Burra's visit to Mexico with Aiken in 1937.

144. Cf., Burra's letters to William Chappell from Madrid c. 1934 in T.G. 1973, p. 90, no. 11.

145. See earlier for vogue for Spanish films in American film p.238 Confirmed in discussion with Clover de Pertinez, 16 July 1982.

146. For a detailed discussion of carnival in Europe Cf., STALLYBRASS, P. and WHITE, A. The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, London 1986, pp. 178-79. For Spanish carnival, see CARO-BAROJA, Julio, El Carnaval, Madrid 1965.

147. Discussion of these ideas in relation to Parisian culture Cf., RIFKIN, Adrian, A Street Plan for Desire, BBC Radio 3 Programme 12 November 86 and Paris in the 20s, 13 November 1986.

148. Super Cinema illustrated T.G. No. 37 and illustrations to WOOLF, Humbert, ABC of the Theatre, London 1932. No. 40, T is for Tallulah. Press cutting from Burra Press Cuttings, Tate Archive showing Bankhead in 'Reflected Glory', unknown source.

149. For Dolly Sisters see H.G. pp. 84-5 and earlier discussion p.233 For Asta Nielson in The Snack, Cf., earlier pp. 196-7

150. Burra Postcard Collection, Private Collection.

151. Burra Postcard Collection, Private Collection. Probably bought on visit to Granada in 1933.

152. Photograph of John Banting's Hat Creation by Barbera Ker-Seymer in Banting Papers, Tate Archive. Aileen Agar, Angel of Anarchy (2nd version) illustrated in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 358, No. 14.3
153. Cf., earlier discussion of Monumentality and female figure pp. 236-7
154. DYER, Richard, Stars, London 1979. Edition 1986, p. 48.
155. DYER 1979, op. cit., p. 14
156. DYER 1979, op. cit., p. 16 and quote p. 14.
157. As mentioned earlier, Burra's Library contained an extensive supply of such sources. Some in Burra Papers, Tate Archive, Londa.
158. Cf., H.G. pp. 112-3 and C.C., p. 55
159. Cf., MACMILLAN, James, F. Housewife or Harlot - the Place of Women in French Society 1870-1940, London 1981, pp. 163-7 and MELLEN, Joan, Women and their Sexuality in the New Film, New York 1974, pp. 243.
160. See MELLEN 1974, op. cit., pp. 239-243 and WALKER, Alexander, Sex in the Movies, Harmondsworth, 1966, p. 66.
161. Article by M.J. Rosenau, "Just bad feelings - Surrealist Says in Explaining Grotesque Creations". Quoted in H.G. p. 66. Cf., pp. 64-66.
162. Letter to Barbera Ker-Seymer c. 1934-5 in W.C. p. 89.
163. H.G. pp. 113-4 and C.C. p. 55.
164. See C.C. p. 55.
165. Illustration possibly from Paris Plaisir in early 1930s, a Press Cutting from Burra's Press Cuttings, Tate Archive. MAN RAY article Minotaure, 5, May 1934, pp. 27-29.
166. Burra's Postcards featured a large number of erotic and semi-erotic female 'fin de siecle' nudes. Now in private collections.
167. ELUARD, Paul, "Les Plus Belles Cartes Postales",in Minotaure 3-4, December 1933, pp. 85-100 and Nadar/Man Ray photographs pp. 4-5.
168. As Clover de Pertinez has recalled in W.C. pp. 73-74, the Library at Springfield contained many examples of works by 'fin de siecle' symbolist writers especially Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Huysmans and de Gourmont which are now either in the Tate Archive or Private collections. Also from the mid-1930s Burra's interest in Moreau developed, especially following visits to the Gustave Moreau Museum in Paris with Pertinez in 1933. For Aiken's interest in 'fin de siecle' poetry Cf., MARTIN 1963, op. cit., pp. 26-7.
169. PRAZ, Mario, The Romantic Agony, Rome 1930 translated into English, Oxford University Press 1933. Edition used Oxford 1979. Clover de Pertinez remembered that "Burra used Praz's book as bed-time reading" and was "fascinated by the gory parts". In conversation with the author 16 July 1982.
170. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., Preface to First Edition, p. xv.
171. BRETON, André, "Limits non-frontières du Surrealism" Quoted in La Clé des Champs, Paris 1953, p. 160. Originally published in Nouvelle Revue Francaise, February 1937.
172. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., La Belle dame sans Merci, pp. 199-300, Byzantium, pp. 303-434.
173. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. xxiii. Pertinez in conversation with author 16 July 1982.
174. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 205.
175. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 207.
176. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., pp. 205-210.
177. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 277.

178. Clover de Pertinez noted the importance of Céline, Lewis and Huysmans and others in the period from 1932 to Burra's thinking in conversation with author 16 July 1982.
179. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., pp. 305-312.
180. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 212 and p. 277.
181. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 308.
182. PRAZ 1979, op. cit., p. 307.
183. For literary connections Cf., PRAZ 1975, op. cit., p. 307-8 quoting Huysmans.
184. Burra Library Collection included Greta Garbo, Berlin 1932. See MELLEN 1974, op. cit., pp. 238-9 and EELLS, G. and MUSGROVES, S. Mae West-Biography, London 1984, pp. 129ff.
185. BRETON, André, "La beauté sera convulsive", Minotaure, 5, May 1934, pp.9-16. KRAUSS, Rosalind, "Corpus Delicti" in KRAUSS, R. and LIVINGSTON, J. L'Amour fou - Photography and Surrealism with an essay by ADES, Dawn, London 1986, pp. 57-114.
186. Cf., KRAUSS and LIVINGSTON 1986, op. cit., pp. 57-100 and ADES, Dawn,"Photography and the Surrealist text," pp. 154-189. Breton quoted on p. 183 and ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., p. 283.
187. KRAUSS ibid., in KRAUSS and LIVINGSTON 1986, op. cit., p. 85.
188. Cf., KRAUSS ibid., p. 85.
189. See ADES, D. in ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978 and Cf., KRAUSS and LIVINGSTON 1986, op. cit., p. 176.
190. See ADES in KRAUSS and LIVINGSTON 1986, op. cit., pp. 155-6.
191. Pablo Picasso's drawings from Une Anatomie, Minotaure, 1, February 1933, pp.31-35. Brassaï's photographs from Raynal's Variété du corps humain, ibid., pp.41-43. Cf., ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN 1978, op. cit., pp. 284-7.
192. KRAUSS 1986, op. cit., p. 91.
193. TZARA, Tristan, "D'un certain automatisme du goût", Minotaure No. 3-4, December 1933, pp.81-84.
194. ELUARD, Paul, "Les Plus Belles Cartes Postales" in Minotaure 3-4, December 1933, pp. 85-100. Man Ray and Nadar, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
195. DALÍ, Salvador,"Le phénomène de l'extase," ibid.
196. ARAGON, Louis and BRETON, André, "Le Cinquantenaire de l'Hysterie", La Révolution Surréaliste, 11, 15 March 1928, pp. 20-22.
197. LACAN, Jacques, "Motifs du crime paranoiaque" in Minotaure, 3-4, December 1933, pp. 25-8.
198. ELUARD, Paul, "Physique de la Poésie" in Minotaure, 6, Winter 1934-5, pp.6-12.
199. HEINE, Maurice, "Rétif de la Bretonne et la femme féeique" in Minotaure, 6, Winter 1934-35, pp.53-6.
200. BELLMER,H, "Poupée - variations sur la montage d'une mineure articulée", in Minotaure, 6, Winter 1934-5. pp.30-31.
201. BRETON,André, "La beauté sera convulsive" in Minotaure, 5, May 1934, pp.9-15.
202. See ADES 1986, op. cit., quoted pp. 183-7.
203. Cf., note 196.
204. See DYER 1979, op. cit., pp. 14-16 and pp. 99-100, "Stars as Signs" and BARTHES, Roland, Mythologies, Paris 1957, London 1984, ed. translated by Annette Lavers, pp. 56-7, The Face of Garbo and p. 85.
205. Cf., GREEN 1987, op. cit., p. 289.

Conclusion.

The 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition in London forms the high point of Burra's involvement with Surrealism and the terminating point of this thesis. The catalogue lists six works: The Three (1932)[CC.89], Hostesses (1932)[CC.86], The Eyes (lost), Two Giantesses (1932)[CC.90], Revolver Dream (1931)[CC.74] and Wheels (1933-34)[CC.103]. Installation photographs also show The Duennas (1930)[CC.61]. The selection suggests the significance to Surrealism of the bird-woman-personage theme with its overtones of metamorphosis. Amidst such a range of international Surrealist art, Burra's work formed a major part of the British participation in the exhibition. These paintings were not, as Herbert Read suggested in the catalogue, "tentative" offerings, but reaffirmed, as I have already outlined, many of the key areas of Surrealist thinking and activity from the early 1930s. They formed a valuable contribution to the surrealist artistic project of the 1930s.

Later in the year, Burra's signature to the "Declaration" in the Fourth International Surrealist Bulletin issued in September 1936 by the Surrealist Group in England, marked a rare entry into the politics and polemics of International Surrealism and suggests a degree of real commitment. This, however, needs to be viewed cautiously. Although Burra's work was regularly seen within the context of Surrealism, illustrated in Surrealist periodicals and exhibited alongside other surrealist art-works in the New York Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism show in December 1936, the Paris International Surrealist

Exhibition in January 1938 and the Zwemmer Gallery Surrealism Today show in June 1940, his involvement in the group was without real conviction, and he always insisted upon his total independence from the group. Yet this personal distancing is offset by the evidence of Burra's works themselves, which up to 1936 address many of the themes central to Surrealism and employ techniques and share imagery used by surrealist artists.

Burra's contribution to British Surrealism, although recognized by fellow artists such as Nash and Banting, also remains difficult to evaluate since Burra's individualistic nature, idiosyncratic approach and eclectic interests offered precisely those kinds of characteristics which were seen to be at the root of the failure to initiate systematic Surrealist activity in Britain earlier than 1936. His lack of support for the London Bulletin and its circle of British Surrealists suggests a typical unease with the notion of an 'orthodox' Surrealist movement, British or continental, and its political stance.

Indeed, a major difference was Burra's conception of art as an autonomous activity, independent of any committed political position. Such an attitude towards the relationship between art and politics was not unusual amongst the artistic community in England in the 1920s, at the time of Burra's formation and art school training. In Burra's case, it was undoubtedly linked to his wealthy social position and private means, and to his family's conservative upper middle-class background. Art from such a viewpoint, was positioned outside ideology, and regarded as a self-generating activity, allied to the

liberal professions, practised by independent individuals and designed for an elite and informed audience.

It was precisely this concept of art, premised as it was on a notion of romantic individualism, which underpinned Burra's lack of commitment to any particular group or to any political party before 1936-7. This was exemplified by his passive role in Unit One, which spearheaded avant-garde art in Britain, and later as we have seen by his inactivity within the British Surrealist group. Burra's deliberately uncommitted and fiercely individualistic stance made the artist's contribution to British Art difficult to assess accurately, even in the late 1930s when there was increasing international recognition of his importance, marked by his inclusion in the survey of Contemporary British Art at the New York World's Fair in April 1939 and his first foreign one person exhibition at the Springfield Museum of Art, Massachusetts in May 1937. The labelling of Burra as 'eccentric' by contemporary critics in the 1920s and 30s can be seen as symptomatic of this lack of easy classification and was reflective of the artist's highly unorthodox approach.

In this approach and also in his adherence to celebrating the conspicuously modern and sophisticated in any context, Burra comes closest to Cocteau; an influence which he readily acknowledged. The parallel with Cocteau seems particularly appropriate in the way Burra employed irony, humour and parody to undermine the 'seriousness' of his subjects. The caricatural nature of many of Burra's works in the 1920s, which have a flippant, light-humoured tone and focus on the comic and theatrical also suggest Cocteau's style. Burra is at his

most Cocteau-like when examining the public posturing of expatriate groups in France. He deals with complex issues in an apparently casual, incidental way and the works offer a light-hearted, frequently ambiguous commentary on social attitudes. Like Cocteau, Burra was an adept practitioner of a sophisticated artistic language in which an eclectic range of sources and historical references was combined with humour to signal a particular attitude to contemporary life. Such a distinctively modern tone of voice and witty theatricality were features adopted from Cocteau's elegant 'style' as outlined in his Le rappel a l'ordre (1926), and, furthermore, were characteristics associated with Cocteau's image throughout the 1920s.

The importance of contemporary illustration and popular literature to Burra's work was, indeed, crucial throughout the Inter-War period, as I have suggested. It is within the context of contemporary illustration in the 1920s and early 30s that Burra's work can be most appropriately situated, whether from the point of view of its imagery or its graphic style. Burra's work was undoubtedly illustrative in conception and his method of working emphasized this narrative approach. Burra did not, however, work as a professional illustrator in the period, but maintained throughout his life an ambition to be an artist in his own right. His only successful venture into illustration was when he collaborated with Humbert Woolfe on The ABC of the Theatre in 1932. Burra's interest in theatre and film, and his caricatural style were particularly well suited to Woolfe's lampoons. Burra's attempts to do commercial designs, namely his advertising designs for motor cars for Crawfords in 1928-9 and travel posters for the London Passenger Transport Board in 1934 and Shell-Mex, were unsuccessful, and

any ambitions which Burra might have had to work for an author or magazine as a professional illustrator would have been curtailed by his ill health anyway.

Burra's work was, however, strongly influenced by contemporary illustration, and in particular, Burra's selective development of distinctive social themes and figure types drew on the work of the French L'Araignée illustrators and the Mexican caricaturist Covarrubias. These illustrators depicted similar urban subjects, underworld characters and popular milieux to Burra and provided the precedent of an appropriate and modern graphic language. They presented Burra with a means of representation which could incorporate features from the direct experience of urban nightlife with character types and distinctive details drawn from contemporary popular literature. These illustrations distilled together such sources to offer a visual idiom in which an intimate knowledge of the city - for example, the Northern quarters of Paris or the nightclubs of Harlem- could be convincingly portrayed.

The drawings of Dignimont and Covarrubias were especially important as sources for his work and come closest to Burra's representation of Paris and Harlem. Both illustrators focused on selective details of certain figures, their body language and social ritual, to initiate the viewer into the closed worlds of low-life Paris or Harlem. Burra's work similarly concentrates on such types and features in order to give authenticity to his experience. Dignimont's illustrations of Paris provided Burra with a memorable array of under-world types -the mec, the prostitute and the pimp- and accentuated the fraternity of

the low-life bar and bal. Burra's adoption of these milieux as places of conspicuous group identity and sites of a distinctive sub-cultural display was heavily indebted to Dignimont's illustrations. In Covarrubias's work, it was more the stylish mannerism, up-to-the-minute fashions and self-conscious pose, which acquired a special significance to Burra as a knowing commentary on New York's Negro life, and it is these features which I think are particularly relevant to Burra's fascination with Harlem nightlife as a dynamic and exhilarating experience.

Burra's debt to popular literature is further evident in the way the works suggest both an involvement with and a detachment from events. Burra participates 'inside' the sub-cultural milieux and yet is capable of standing back and reviewing others' social attitudes as an outsider. Such a distinctive approach to the city was displayed in the work of many young writers of the 1920s, but was particularly the hallmark of Pierre MacOrlan and Carl Van Vechten, both of whom Burra had studied closely in the Inter-War years. Burra, in a manner reminiscent of MacOrlan guiding his reader through the secret geography of Northern Paris or the red-light quarter of Marseilles, introduces a territory that is known intimately from experience, yet is approached in a detached way. Such a narrative stance is shared with Van Vechten's writing. When recounting the vices of Harlem's night-clubs and dancings or describing the latest drug-fashion, the author adopts a matter-of-fact tone of voice and refrains from moral comment. Such an uncommitted approach is equally sensed in Burra's chameleon-like ability to monitor different urban sub-cultural groups or record illicit entertainments without registering a personal

viewpoint or moral position, remaining throughout at a distance from events.

This independent type of social commentary was also the frequently adopted mode of the more serious middle-class magasines which Burra took, such as Vogue, Bystander and Tatler. Within these publications, a peculiarly sophisticated and urbane sensibility, and a studiedly personal tone of voice were de rigueur. Its main exponent was the society diarist exemplified by the Tatler's "Jennifer's Diary" or Vogue's gossipy "How one lives from day to day". Aided more often than not by the photo-reportage photographer or the celebrity photographer, the discerning society columnist offered a keen social reading backed up by 'documentary' photographic evidence. As I have already suggested, Burra's letters ape this type of commentary, where in order to gain a feeling of the distance between experience and commentary, he adopts outrageous fictional personae, often for instance, taking the tone of a flamboyant society hostess, as a means of reviewing others' experience.

Burra's position in relation to such sources was always highly selective and distinguished by a characteristically maverick attitude. He mixed first-hand experience of the modern city with material gleaned from numerous secondary sources. What was especially distinctive was the way in which Burra in a post-Dada way plundered literature, painting, photography and film in order to rejuvenate an artistic vocabulary relevant to contemporary life. Photo-reportage photography was especially influential and his artistic language was indebted to a knowledge of contemporary French illustrated magasines

such as Le Crapouillot and international art journals such as Variétés and Der Querschnitt. He eagerly collected photographs by Krull and Brassaï illustrated in these journals to provide himself with a wealth of visual information about sub-cultural groups. He also adopted New Objectivity's close up positions and unusual angles and incorporated into his works the "candid camera" approach underwritten as it was by an appropriate voyeuristic attitude.

This plundering is especially apparent in the works of the late 1920s and early 1930s when Burra was adept at exploiting the language of Dada montage without its political message, and was able to mix in an unorthodox way devices drawn from French popular film and German 'New Objectivity' photography with the imaginative workings of the Surrealists' 'revolutionary' imagery. In the later 1930s Burra's deployment of Freudian symbolism again suggests the artist's ability to recognise the relevance of Freud's ideas to his own interests. Burra uses Freudian symbols in a highly selective way to underscore his fascination with the prostitute and the performer. However, the works still retain a characteristic detachment. The paintings, whilst suggesting the artist's own erotic interests, simultaneously distanced them by means of the adoption of "conventionalised" sexual symbolism and the incorporation of imagery from photography, popular postcards and film stills.

On a personal level, this independent attitude allowed Burra to mix friends from a variety of social and political backgrounds and to move easily between circles with extremely different political complexions: from the Communism of the circles of Nancy Cunard and

John Banting to the traditional conservatism of the Burra family; from the modish, homosexual bohemianism of Cocteau's group to French and British Surrealist circles. Burra had a chameleon-like ability to adapt to various social groups and milieux, and from such a position, he was able to note those casual incidents, the characteristic retorts and the vicarious sexual liasions, which were such a revealing part of the shifting nature of the social scene in the 1920s and '30s.

However, this lack of personal involvement, and the notion of art as a non-political, autonomous activity, were clearly challenged in 1936 by his specific experience of the Spanish Civil War. From this period, Burra's work carries specific references to contemporary events and draws on his experiences at the time of his second visit to Spain in Spring- Summer 1936, which was disturbed by the early stages of the Civil War. By June 1936, Burra was forced to leave Madrid - a city he had planned to stay in permanently- because of the escalation of street fighting, mass street demonstrations, church burning and bombings. Burra's conservatism in politics led him to support the fascist forces in the conflict, although this was never explicitly registered in his works. It was a position, which would have been clearly at odds with the British Surrealist group and many of his fellow British artists and writers in the late 1930s.

Burra's travels to the United States in 1937, and to Mexico with Aiken in May 1937 to stay in Cuernavaca with Malcolm Lowry, mark a watershed, closing a period of Burra's fascination with European centres of avant-garde and bohemian activity in Paris, Marseilles and Toulon, Barcelona and Madrid. They heralded a new interest in non-

European cultures - Mexican culture in particular- and one which was shared by many writers and intellectuals in the late 1930s. In Burra's case, this carried a wider significance than the discovery of a new destination for foreign excursions and more sites for the exotic display of an alien culture. The works are distinguished by a significant change of mood and tone, and are more rhetorical in mode. This is also reflected in the way the experience of travel is now used as a vehicle to exploit references to art history and literary traditions. This suggests an altered attitude towards the role of the artist in the post-Civil War era. Instead of being an uncommitted commentator on the social scene, Burra becomes involved in situating contemporary political events within the context of wider artistic and literary traditions.

The predominant subjects of the post-Civil war period are ritualistic violence and religious flagellation incorporated into elaborate scenarios of war and death. Burra's interest in the occult and mythology are registered and the paintings mix themes of violence and devastation with ideas suggested by Catholic rites. The Mexican paintings include appropriate material drawn from Burra's knowledge of Hispanic literature, which he acquired via Aiken and Lowry, and studies of Catholic sculpture and Baroque church architecture. They take the form of Baroque allegories and employ complex literary, mythological and religious symbolism. Their themes of the 'Day of the Dead', the 'Torturer' and 'Beelzebub' are grounded historically in the post-Spanish Civil War era, and culturally in the intellectual disillusionment of the late 1930s. Furthermore, they register Burra's knowledge of 'Black Humour', which was influenced by the writings of

Céline, Huysmans, Lewis and later, Sartre, and reveal Burra's extensive understanding of Hispanic, French and British literature - an understanding which, I believe, was unique amongst British painters of the period.

This change of mood and tone is continued in works relating to the later trips to Ireland in July 1938 and to Northern Italy, particularly Venice, in August 1939 just prior to the start of the Second World War, which similarly employ increasingly erudite terms of reference. Images derived from 17th and 18th Century Italian painting and drawn from Burra's knowledge of late 19th Century French and Spanish literature are included in many of the paintings. Modifications in his artistic practice further substantiate a changed outlook: from 1937 the artist worked on a larger scale and almost exclusively in watercolour. The serious tone, mythological symbolism and large size of the paintings completed after 1936-7 stand in sharp contrast to the light-hearted, humorous nature of Burra's earlier works with their caricatural approach and smaller scale.

From the late 1930s, urban subjects formed only a small part of Burra's oeuvre, with the exceptions being the Gorbal scenes of the 1940s, the American dance hall and bar scenes of the mid-late 1950s, and the London pub and bar scenes of the 60s. The underlying fiction, seen in Burra's earliest consideration of the urban scene, of a popular sub-cultural cameraderie around which a mythology of the modern could be woven, was abandoned. The idealised vitality and energy of the city and its crowds, and the glamour of its entertainment industries, both public and private, are no longer central. The casual incident

exploited for all its dramatic effect and the vicarious delight in the bizarre are unusual in the post-1945 period. Burra instead begins to expand the more traditional areas of British landscape and still-life, and even though pre-war surrealist images, such as the bird-figure, conspicuously reappear, initially in the striking 'Birdmen and Pots' works of 1945-6 and later in the mythological 'birds in landscape' works of the early 1950s, they never carry the meanings which they held in the 1930s.

In conclusion, to analyse the imagery of Burra's work from 1919-36 is to become aware of the artist as an adept practitioner in the art of image-making. Burra's work made informed references throughout the period to a wide range of historical and contemporary sources in British, French, German, Spanish and American art and literature. It adopted devices from photo-reportage photography and popular film to provide keen observations on modern urban life. Burra's work also registered an interest in Surrealist investigations into psycho-analytical theory, mythology and ritual. This suggests a more complex field of reference than is usual in British Art of the period, and it is by placing Burra's work within such an international context that the sophistication of his artistic imagination and culture can be understood most fully.

Chronology 1905 - 1940

1905 March 29, Edward John Burra born at his grandmother's house in Elvaston Place, South Kensington. He was the only surviving son of Henry Curteis Burra and Ermentrude Anne (born Robertson-Luxford). The family had lived since 1864 in a substantial early Victorian house, Springfield, Playden near Rye with a library.

c.1913-19 Burra at Northaw Place, Potters Bar, a boarding prep school, from which he eventually had to be withdrawn because of persistent ill health and his education was continued at home.

c.1920 First trip abroad, to Switzerland, with his mother.

1921-23 Following art classes with a Miss Bradley in Rye (c.1919-21), Burra entered the art department of Chelsea Polytechnic, where he did life drawing, illustration and architectural drawing and became an accomplished draughtsman. A devoted filmgoer from childhood, Burra visited the Kings Picture Playhouse and Chelsea's House of Enchantment, which were close to the Polytechnic; and a little later the Shaftesbury Pavilion to see new foreign films. Burra travelled out into the suburbs to see modern German films. Burra was also deeply interested in jazz, and went to Levy's at Aldgate to buy records.

1923-25 Two years at the Royal College of Art, where his drawing tutors included Randolph Schwabe and Raymond Coxon. He considered registering for a further year in the autumn of 1925.

1925 Travelled to Bordighera with his mother in the spring. In the autumn, after leaving the Royal College of Art, went to Paris with his friend, William Chappell, staying in Montparnasse with Florence Rushbury and meeting Cedric Morris and Lett Haines. In October Burra and his friend Barbera Ker-Seymer joined the newly formed London Film Society.

1926 In April went to Italy for the first time with his family to visit his sister Anne in Florence and visited Siena. On the way home stopped off in Paris on his own.

1927 January, in Paris again with William Chappell and Sophie Fedorovich. In September, Burra and Chappell went to the South of France for the first time, to Cassis, Marseille and Toulon. In the course of the year he became very friendly with the painter Paul Nash, who lived at Iden, also near Rye. In the summer he experimented with oil painting. In December exhibited at the New English Art Club, 76th exhibition, New Burlington Galleries, encouraged by Nash.

1928 In February Nash offered to teach him wood engraving, the offer being accepted now or in the following year. Exhibited at the New English Art Club, 77th exhibition, in June at the

New Burlington Galleries. September, in Toulon with Chappell; others there included Irene Hodgkins and Tristram Hillier, and the writer Anthony Powell. From Toulon to Paris where Chappell and Frederick Ashton joined the Ida Rubinstein ballet company. In Paris till December meeting John Banting among others. On these visits to Paris, Burra and his friends spent many of their evenings in cinemas, circus, dance and music halls. In this or the following year, Burra was commissioned by Crawfords to do advertising designs for motor cars, which were rejected.

1929 April, first one-person exhibition at the Leicester Galleries. Exhibited at London Group, 27th exhibition in December. Began a closer study of avant-garde periodicals with Paul Nash. Started making collages c.1929-1930.

1930 February to April, with Nash and others in Toulon, Marseille and Nice; with Nash studied contemporary painting at Léonce Rosenberg's gallery in Paris on the way. Exhibited at London Group Exhibition, 28th exhibition. Autumn in Scotland.

1931 January, introduced by Nash to the American poet Conrad Aiken, who had settled in Rye the previous August; close, lifelong friendship began. August, Nash proposed to Cassells that Burra illustrate a de luxe edition of Aiken's recently published poem John Deth, but the project did not come off. May, Burra in Paris, where he switched loyalty from Montparnasse, where he had always previously stayed, first to Pigalle and then St Germain des Prés. In August, in Toulon with Chappell and their photographer friend Barbera Ker-Seymer who took photographs of Cocteau smoking opium. Burra had a baby box camera. French artists and writers in Toulon at the same time included Cocteau, Desbordes, Gide, Maurois and Tchelitchew. The French and English parties stayed partly at the same hotel, the Hôtel du Port et des Négoçiants on the Rade, and also met at the Café de la Rade and Raymond's Bar. Exhibited at the Tooth's Gallery 'Recent Developments in British Painting' organized by Nash, in October.

1932. April, showed 'decorative objects' (unidentified) at the Room and Book exhibition organized by Nash at the Zwemmer Gallery. June, second one-person exhibition at the Leicester Galleries. Autumn, publication of the ABC of the Theatre by Humbert Woolf, with illustrations by Burra. November, opening at the Savoy Theatre of Frederick Ashton's ballet Rio Grande based on the poem of the same title by Sacheverall Sitwell with music by Constant Lambert; Burra did the decor and costumes on Ashton's initiative in June. Burra's work included in an exhibition of British art at the Hamburg Kunstverein, organized by Anglo-German Art Club, which subsequently toured Germany.

1933 February, in Paris with Clover de Pertinez, met Jules Romains, who was working on Les Hommes de bonne volonté, April, first visit to Spain, starting in Barcelona and joining Aiken and Malcolm Lowry in Granada and continuing

with them to Seville, Ronda and Spanish Morocco, before returning to England by sea from Gibralter via Lisbon. October, to New York with Sophie Fedorovich and Olivia Wyndham. Stayed till December at 1890 7th Avenue in Harlem with friends of Barbera Ker-Seymer and visited the Apollo and Savoy dance halls and other Harlem nightspots; with the Aikens in Boston at Christmas, and then moved back to New York to 125 East 15th Street on the lower east side. Visited the Wadsworth Atheneum while in Hartford with Frederick Ashton who was producing a ballet there with Gertrude Stein; returned to England in March 1934. October 1933, included in the Art Now exhibition at the Mayor Gallery, and his work illustrated in Herbert Read's accompanying book.

1934 Represented at the Unit One exhibition which opened at the Mayor Gallery in April and then toured in England until January 1935.; accompanying publication by Herbert Read with several works reproduced. About this time made advertising designs (unused) for Shell-Mex and London Transport.

1935 Spring, with Clover de Pertinez in Barcelona, visiting dance and strip clubs in the Paralelo and Barriochino district. To Madrid - Burra's first visit - where they visited the Prado. Learned Spanish in order to read poetry and literature. Burra returned to England in July because his father was ill.

1936 April, opening at Sadlers Wells of Ninette de Valois' ballet Barabau with music by Vittorio Rieti and decor and costumes by Burra. Spring, met Clover de Pertinez in Madrid, and considered settling there permanently, but was disturbed by the violence and returned to England in June just before the start of the Civil War. June, represented in the International Surrealist Exhibition in London. September signed the statement in the International Surrealist Bulletin No 4 by the Surrealist Group in England. December, represented in the Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1937 January, arrived in America to stay with the Aikens in Boston; visits to the Old Howard Burlesque Theatre, the Silver Dollar Bar and other nightspots. April, visited Springfield Museum of Art, Mass., to see Fantastic Art, Dada Surrealism, which was on tour there, and made a second trip a week or two later for a one-person exhibition of his own work there. May, with the Aikens by train to Mexico where they stayed at Cuernavaca with Malcolm Lowry, who was working on Under the Volcano; also visited Mexico City and Taxco, where Burra admired Spanish Baroque art and the contemporary muralists. Visit curtailed because of ill health and returned to England in July. Autumn, included in the Surrealist section of the Artists International Association exhibition Unity of Artist for Peace, Democracy and Cultural Development.

1938 January, included in the International Surrealist Exhibition at the Galerie des Beaux-Arts, Paris; July visited Dublin

and the West of Ireland. Planned to have a one-person show at the Matthiesen Gallery, but it did not take place.

1939 April, included in Contempory British Art exhibition in the British Pavilion, New York World's Fair; exhibition subsequently toured USA and Canada. August, visited Milan, the Lombard cities and Venice with his sister Anne.

1940 War years spent at Rye with very little travel possible even within England, apart from occasional visits to London. Conrad Aiken, in America during the war, encouraged Burra to use the books in the library at his Rye home, which was strong in sixteenth and seventeenth-century English poetry and drama. Developed an interest in Eliot (a friend of Aiken), and in the upsurge of new Romantic poetry. June, included in Surrealism Today exhibition at the Zwemmer Gallery.

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