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A Study of the Relationship Between Paul Cézanne and Paul Gauguin

by

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the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
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Abstract

This thesis provides a critical analysis of the literature concerning the relationship, both artistic and personal, between Paul Cézanne and Paul Gauguin. It proceeds from the popular belief that Cézanne harbored an excessive amount of ill will towards Gauguin. Examination of the sources upon which this belief is based prove them to be controversial and conflicting, yet the myth of Cézanne's animosity towards Gauguin is still widely accepted, effectively obscuring the more positive, creative aspect of their interaction. In the assessment of this relationship, Camille Pissarro emerges as a pivotal figure because of his close ties to both artists. It will be shown that Gauguin found in Cézanne's art concepts which were germane to his own artistic practices and theoretical directions. The later Symbolist interpretation of Cézanne reflects the dissemination of Gauguin's teachings about the artist and reveals that, in some measure, Gauguin was responsible for the critical acclaim Cézanne was to receive in his final years.

Sommaire

Cette thèse fournit une analyse critique de la littérature qui adresse les rapports, artistiques et personelles, entre Paul Cézanne et Paul Gauguin. Elle provient de la croyance populaire que Cézanne maintenait beaucoup de ressentiment envers Gauguin. L'examen des sources sur laquelle cette croyance est basée démontre qu'elles sont controversées et se contredisent. Cependent le mythe de l'animosité de Cézanne envers Gauguin est couramment accepté effectivement obscurant les aspects plus positifs et créatifs de leur interaction. Dans l'évaluation de cette relation, Camille Pissarro se démontre comme étant une figure instrumentale grâce à son rôle de maître envers Cézanne et Gauguin. Il sera révélé que Gauguin a trouvé dans l'art de Cézanne des idées qui étaient relatives à l'origine de ses propres pratiques, artistiques et théoriques. A la fin de siécle, les interpretations symbolistes des oeuvres de Cézanne reflétent la dissémination des préceptes de Gauguin au sujet de cet artiste et établissent, en quelque sorte, que Gauguin était responsable pour l'acclamation que Cézanne allait recevoir à la fin de ses jours.

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Introduction

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) and Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) are two of the most important artists of the modern period. They knew each other and moved in the same artistic circles. Surprisingly, no single account consolidating all of the pertinent information about the relationship between these influential figures has emerged. What record we have of their relationship is dispersed throughout the numerous studies devoted to them.

The generally accepted view that has come down through the literature is that, although Gauguin held only admiration for Cézanne, Cézanne disliked Gauguin and dismissed his art outright. This notion, apparently, originated in the writings of Octave Mirbeau, who recorded that, in 1894, Cézanne vehemently accused Gauguin of "stealing his sensation."[1] According to John Rewald, Cézanne's hostility towards Gauguin first surfaced in 1881.[2] It was in that year that Gauguin wrote to Pissarro, facetiously suggesting

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[1] Octave Mirbeau, preface Cézanne, Bernheim-Jeune, 1914 cited in Victor Merhlès, ed., Correspondance de Paul Gauguin, Paris, 1984, note 3, 351.

[2] John Rewald, The History of Impressionism, New York, 1973, 458.

All quotations appear in the language of the text from which they are taken.

that he drug Cézanne in order to learn the secret of his painting.[1] Rewald further substantiated the account of Cézanne's hostility towards Gauguin by recording that Monet had warned: "Never mention Gauguin to Cézanne! I can still hear him shout with his southern accent: 'That Gauguin, I'll wring his neck!'"[2] Cézanne's opinion of Gauguin and his art was revealed by Emile Bernard in Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne (1907). Quoting Cézanne, Bernard wrote: "Gauguin n'était pas peintre, il n'avait que des images chinoises."[3]

It would appear from the literature that Gauguin consistently continued to admire Cézanne, while Cézanne expressed only unmitigated animosity towards him. Gauguin, it is frequently noted, became increasingly vindictive and was quick to defend himself and his art against negative criticism. This aspect of Gauguin's personality was clearly expressed by Gauguin in a note to Paul Signac written in 1886: "I may be an artist full of hesitancy and with little knowledge, but as a man of the world I will allow no one the right to annoy me."[4] When Edgar Degas expressed

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[1]Gauguin to Pissarro, July 1881, in Merhlès, no. 16, 20.
[2]John Rewald, Paul Cézanne: A Biography, New York, 1968, 119-120. Rewald did not cite the original source of this comment.
[3]Emile Bernard, "Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne," Mercure de France (1 and 16 October 1907) in P. M. Doran, ed., Conversations avec Cézanne, Paris, 1978, 62-63.
[4]June-July 1886, cited in John Rewald, Post-Impressionism from Van Gogh to Gauguin, New York, 1956, 41.

indifference to works Gauguin exhibited in 1889, Gauguin was quick to respond: "He doesn't see in my canvasses what he sees himself (the nasty smell of the model)....Degas is growing old and furious because he hasn't produced the last word."[1] In contempt of Camille Pissarro's criticism Gauguin boldly declared: "Hang Pissarro, but when we are in Tahiti I shall defy Pissarro and his associates."[2]

Given Gauguin's defensive, critical nature and the sharp competition that existed in the late nineteenth century avant-garde, it is significant that among the more important contemporary artists, Cézanne was the only one not to become a victim of Gauguin's invective.[3] Gauguin's writings give no indication that he was even aware of Cézanne's alleged hostility towards him. In fact, the opposite is true. When referring to Cézanne, Gauguin openly expressed only admiration and wonderment. If Cézanne did express his hostility towards Gauguin, why did Gauguin not react to Cézanne in his customary manner by lashing out at his detractor?

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[1] Letter from Gauguin to Bernard, Maurice Malingue, ed., Lettres de Gauguin à sa femme et à ses amis, Paris, no. XCII, 173-174, 1946, cited in Rewald, 1956, 303.

[2] Wayne Andersen, Gauguin's Paradise Lost, New York, 1971, 136.

[3] See Griselda Pollock, Avant-Garde Gambits: 1888-1893 Gender and the Color of Art History, New York, 1992, 15 for the relationship between avant-guardism and artistic competition during this period.

The information pertaining to the relationship between Cézanne and Gauguin is contained within a massive body of literature. The common beliefs which have evolved concerning the relationship of Cézanne and Gauguin are deeply embedded in the literature; the 'story,' as it has been briefly outlined above, has assumed such an aura of authenticity that it has entered the history of art unquestioned. Since one of the principal tasks of art history is to separate myth from fact, this thesis proposes to consolidate the literature on this subject and submit it to a critical review and reinterpretation in order to gain a more truthful understanding of what transpired between these two artists artistically and personally.

The literature here considered to be the most relevant consists primarily of Cézanne's and Gauguin's personal correspondence and writings and the material written by the contemporary personalities who were closest to them. In the review of this literature, Camille Pissarro emerges as an important figure. Both artists developed close, personal ties with him during critical, formative stages in their artistic careers. Cézanne was closest to Pissarro between 1872 and 1881; Gauguin between 1879 and 1886. The overlapping years clearly identify Pissarro as an intermediary in any exchange of ideas. Chapter One, "Pissarro's Self-Proclaimed Pupils," is concerned with those student/mentor relationships. It demonstrates that the

relationships were, in the physical sense, parallel and not interrelated, yet, at the same time, through the person of Pissarro, a very important interaction took place in which Cézanne influenced the direction of Paul Gauguin's artistic development.

Virtually every Gauguin monograph and exhibition catalogue clearly identifies the paintings which are indebted to Cézanne. For the most part, Gauguin's debt is considered to be restricted to the sporadic appropriation of Cézanne's brushstroke. But, as this study will show, it was more than technique alone that attracted Gauguin to Cézanne's art. This thesis does not undertake a comprehensive review of all of the Gauguin paintings which were technically influenced by Cézanne. It does, however, in Chapter Two, "Gauguin - Vanguard Collector," consider the varied influences of the Cézanne paintings Gauguin purchased and studied, and suggests that Gauguin gained not only technical proficiency from the example of Cézanne's art, but also emotional and intellectual insight, which contributed to the formulation of his own unique Symbolist aesthetic.

In 1885 Gauguin began to move away from the artistic teaching of his mentor. The direction he chose did not conform to Pissarro's philosophy regarding the role of art in society. The third chapter, "Pissarro, Cézanne, and Gauguin after 1885," explores the role of competition as a dominant factor contributing to the disruption of the

personal relationships between all three artists. Once competition rather than cooperation prevailed, the exposure of differences, faults and shortcomings became the general, although not exclusive, subject matter in the writings of all three artists.

Chapter Four, "Cézanne on Gauguin," looks specifically at the alledged notion that Cézanne disliked Gauguin and dismissed his art. By isolating the specific documents which have been cited to support this point of view and by reassessing their reliability, this chapter attempts to uncover the origin of this 'accepted fact.'

Symbolism in painting emerged in the late 1880s. Adherents of this artistic movement rejected all realist conceptions of art, declaring instead that the primary goal of the artist should be the depiction of subjective themes derived from ideas and personal emotions. This goal would be realized by the symbolic use of formal elements, such as, color, line, and form. Gauguin was one of the foremost leaders in the development of the movement. He took an active role in the dissemination of Symbolist theory and became one of the most influential painters for a younger generation of artists at the end of the nineteenth century. Chapter Five, "Gauguin's Followers and Cézanne," considers the transference of Gauguin's lifelong admiration of Cézanne to his followers and whether or not it influenced their understanding of Cézanne. The study concludes that Gauguin

must be identified as an instrumental figure who, through his outspoken admiration, contributed to the critical acclaim Cézanne received in his later years.

Chapter 1 - Pissarro's Self-Proclaimed Pupils

Paul Cézanne first met Pissarro in 1862 at the Atelier Suisse, lived in close proximity to him from 1872 to 1874, and visited with him for shorter periods in 1875, 1877 and 1881. In Cézanne's first letter to Pissarro, dated March 15, 1865, the subject was the Salon.[1] Cézanne acknowledged that he expected to be rejected by the Salon officials telling Pissarro he was submitting works "qui feront rougir l'Institut de rage et déséspoir." He went on to extend his wish that Pissarro complete "quelque beau paysage" for submission to the coming Salon. Cézanne, at this time, was pursuing the romantic, emotional and often violent style which has been identified with his early years.[2] In the mid-1860s, there was little indication that within less than a decade, under Pissarro's guidance, Cézanne would rechannel his energy away from fantasy towards the direct observation of nature.

The first exchange of ideas between Cézanne and Pissarro revealed that Cézanne's early style intrigued Pissarro and

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[1] John Rewald, ed., Paul Cézanne Correspondance, Paris, 1937, 91.

[2] For a discussion of Cézanne's early, violent imagery see Robert Simon, "Cézanne and the Subject of Violence," Art in America (May 1991), 120-135, 185-186.

that he found the young painter's technique worthy of consideration. Christopher Campbell has demonstrated that Pissarro did study and was temporarily influenced by Cézanne's revolutionary use of the palette knife in 1867.[1] Because the majority of Pissarro's early output was destroyed during the Franco-Prussian War, only two paintings remain which provide evidence for this episode: Still Life (1867, Toledo Museum of Art) and Square at La Roche-Guyon (1867, Staatliche Museum zu Berlin-Preussiche Kulturbesitz Nationalgalerie). Campbell contends that "in their visual chaos" these works are unprecedented in Pissarro's oeuvre, and he maintains that the two paintings are technically similar to Cézanne's Portrait of Uncle Dominique (profile), (1866, The Provost and Fellows of King's College, Cambridge on loan to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Venturi 80).[2] The friendship between Pissarro and Cézanne was founded upon a shared interest in technical problems, and Cézanne's trust in Pissarro was nutured by Pissarro's demonstration of sincerity.

Although Cézanne had begun to heed Pissarro's Impressionist advice to paint directly from nature in 1870,[3]

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[1]Christopher Campbell, "Pissarro and the Palette Knife," Apollo 136 (November 1992), 311-314.
[2]Campbell, 313.
[3]Paintings from l'Estaque in 1870 show Cézanne working from the motif out of doors.

it was not until 1872 that Pissarro began to have a direct artistic influence on Cézanne. Late in 1872, coinciding with the birth of his son, Cézanne moved his family to Auvers, a small community within walking distance of Pontoise, to work side by side with Pissarro. In anticipation of the move, Pissarro wrote to the painter, Antoine Guillemet, expressing his belief in Cézanne:

> Our friend Cézanne raises our expectations and I have seen, and have at home, a painting of remarkable vigor and power. If, as I hope, he stays some time at Auvers where he is going to live, he will astonish a lot of artists who were in too great haste to condemn him.[1]

Several paintings from 1872 through 1874 document that the two artists frequently worked from an identical motif.[2] Under Pissarro's influence Cézanne learned to redirect his emotional energy into more carefully executed paintings which reflect a disciplined observation of the motif. However, the influence was not exclusively restricted to painting techniques. According to Joachim Gasquet (1873-1921), Cézanne later acknowledged a further debt to

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[1]Camille Pissarro to Antoine Guillemet, 13 September 1872, cited in Christopher Lloyd, "Paul Cézanne, pupil of Pissarro," Apollo (November 1991), 284.

[2]Lloyd, 284-290.

Pissarro, stating that the discipline he had learned from Pissarro's example was also responsible for a complete change of lifestyle. As quoted by Gasquet, Cézanne commented:

> Until the (Franco Prussian) war, as you know, I lived in a mess, I wasted my whole life. When I think about it, it was only at l'Estaque that I came to fully understand Pissarro - a workaholic. An obsession of work took hold of me.[1]

The importance of Pissarro in Cézanne's personal and artistic development is further underlined by a letter Cézanne wrote to his mother in September 1874, which reveals that Pissarro's moral support and encouragement had effectively bolstered Cézanne's self-esteem:

> Pissarro n'est pas à Paris depuis environ un mois et demi, il se trouve en Bretagne, mais je sais qu'il a bonne opinion de moi, qui ai très bonne opinion de moi-même. Je commence à me trouver plus fort que tous ceux qui m'entourent, et vous savez que la bonne opinion que j'ai sur mon compte n'est venue qu'a bon escient. J'ai à travailler toujours, non pour arriver au fini, qui fait l'admiration des imbéciles.[2]

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[1] English translation of this passage in Joachim Pissarro, Camille Pissarro, New York, 1993, 105.

[2] Cézanne to Elizabeth Aubert Cézanne, 26 September 1874, Rewald, 1937, 122-123.

In 1874, Pissarro painted an oil portrait of Cézanne (fig. 2). This endeavor was atypical for Pissarro who, except for two portrait commissions from his friend Murer, never concerned himself with portraits of individuals outside his own family.[1] In the background of the portrait, framing Cézanne's compact, stationary presence, Pissarro reproduced contemporary caricatures of Adolph Thiers, a conservative in politics and art, and Gustave Courbet, an artistic radical. Pissarro made subtle adjustments to the figures so that they appear to be saluting Cézanne. This device, more typical of the sophisticated Manet, who had altered Olympia's glance to express gratitude to Emile Zola in his Portrait of Zola (1868, Musée d'Orsay), was unusual for Pissarro.[2] In contrast to Manet's urbane portrait of Zola, however, Pissarro's depiction of Cézanne identified him with the values Pissarro most prized, those of the working man and peasant. Also included in the painting was one of Pissarro's own landscapes, The Gisors Road, House of Père Gallen, Pontoise (1873, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Warner, Washington D.C.).

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[1]Theodore Reff, "Pissarro's Portrait of Cézanne," Burlington Magazine 776 (November 1967), 628.
[2]Reff, 1967, 629.

Theodore Reff contends that the portrait was symbolic, loaded with references to Pissarro's own political doctrines, which had little application for the apolitical Cézanne.[1] The meaning of the portrait has more recently been reinterpreted by Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, who believes that Cézanne was politically oriented at the time of the execution of his early works.[2] Her position provides evidence for even closer ties between Pissarro and Cézanne which would have extended beyond painting into the realm of politics.

This portrait records the moment when Cézanne was directly under Pissarro's influence and is indicative of their personal and artistic relationship. Its personal value to Pissarro is demonstrated by the fact that it remained in his studio until his death. About a decade later, Cézanne featured Pissarro's landscape, The Gisors Road, House of Père Gallen, Pontoise, in one of his paintings - Still Life with Soup Tureen (1883-85, Louvre, Paris, Venturi 494).

Cézanne developed a slow, methodical approach to painting while working at Pissarro's side. This very

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[1] Reff, 1967, 630.
[2] Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, "An Artistic and Political Manifesto for Cézanne," Art Bulletin 72 (September 1990), 482-492.

controlled and calculated manner initiated the development of his 'constructive stroke' in 1877.[1] Emphasizing the structural qualities of a painting and seeking a more solid expression, Cézanne moved beyond Pissarro's Impressionist goal of capturing the fleeting qualities of light and atmosphere.

During the period when Cézanne was working with Pissarro, Paul Gauguin first began to paint. Through the course of his association with Pissarro, Gauguin was Pissarro's admirer, his student and finally his opponent. Their common ground was painting, but their lifestyles and philosophies were in conflict almost from the beginning. Once Gauguin became strong enough to move away from Pissarro and develop his own distinctive style, disagreements began.

Gauguin may have been first introduced to Pissarro in 1874, during the first Impressionist Exhibition, by his guardian, Gustave Arosa, a photographer and art collector. Within Impressionist circles, Gauguin's early works, executed before working with Pissarro, could not have gone unnoticed. By 1879, he was invited by both Pissarro and Edgar Degas to exhibit with the group. This opportunity for Gauguin was the outcome of a rupture within the original group

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[1]See Theodore Reff, "Cézanne's Constructive Stroke," Art Quarterly 25 (Autumn 1962), 214-227.

created when Degas imposed the stipulation that the exhibitors in the Fourth Exhibition of Independent Artists could not submit to the Salon. Ironically, Gauguin's debut coincided with Cézanne's withdrawal from the association.[1] On April 1, Cézanne wrote his last letter to Pissarro to inform him that his decision to submit to the Salon was in conflict with the new directive.[2] Two days later Gauguin penned his first letter to Pissarro confirming his acceptance of the invitation.[3]

Gauguin's submissions were too late to be included in the exhibition catalogue. The only work commented on by Duranty, the critic for the Gazette des Beaux-Arts, was a marble bust of Gauguin's son Emile.[4] Unfortunately no trace remains of the other works which Gauguin elected to show in his debut with the Impressionists.

The salutation on Gauguin's correspondence with Pissarro changed in 1879 from "Mon cher Monsieur Pissarro" to "Mon cher Pissarro," a greeting far more informal and friendly.[5]

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[1]Charles Moffett, The New Painting 1874-1866, San Francisco
[2]Fine Arts Museum, San Francisco, 1986, 260.
Cézanne to Pissarro, 1 April 1879, in John Rewald, ed.,
[3]Paul Cézanne, Letters, New York, 1984, 181.
Gauguin to Camille Pissarro, 3 April 1879, unpublished
[4]document, cited in Rewald, 1973, 423.
Duranty mentioned every participant including Gauguin, but only in reference to a "small agreeable sculpture,
[5]the only sculpture in the show." Moffett, 253.
Merete Bodelsen, "Gauguin, the Collector," Burlington Magazine 112 (1970), 590.

It was also during 1879 that Gauguin began to visit Pissarro at Pontoise. By 1880, Gauguin wrote to Pissarro with the news that he was moving to Montmartre, and he stressed the fact that this would make it easier for them to work together as he would then have ample studio space for both of them.[1]

A small pencil sketch of Pissarro by Gauguin, dated 1880 (fig.3), reveals Gauguin's perception of Pissarro. Although Pissarro was only fifty years old, Gauguin depicted him as a kindly, grandfather figure. Hatless, with his bald pate accentuated, he peers over wire rim glasses with an introspective expression, both thoughtful and gentle, projecting an openness and acceptance younger contemporaries could easily appreciate.

Gauguin's strong alliance with Pissarro was noted during the Fifth Impressionist Exhibition in 1880. Charles Ephrussi, critic for the Gazette des Beaux-Arts, made this clear when he cited Gauguin as an example of the ill-fated direction Gustave Caillebotte[2] was pursuing in his paintings.

> As elsewhere, blue is the obstacle, the great stumbling block, against which the Impressionists crash. And so Caillebotte, whose beginnings created a sensation, went

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[1] Gauguin to Pissarro, Merhlès, no. 12, 18-19.
[2] Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894) is best noted for his controversial bequest in which 40 paintings by the Impressionists entered the Luxembourg Museum.

> into service under Pissarro's flag,
> like Zandomeneghi and above all Gauguin,
> or rather, he went over to the blue camp.[1]

One of the paintings submitted by Gauguin was Apple Trees in the Hermitage Neighborhood of Pontoise (fig. 4), a work true to Pissarro in style and subject matter.

Although the exact date of the first meeting between Cézanne and Gauguin cannot be verified, it is known that they worked together with Camille Pissarro in Pontoise in the summer of 1881. The undated pen and ink drawing, An Impressionist Picnic c 1881 (fig. 1), by Georges Manzana-Pissarro (1871-1961), captured this historical moment in art history.[2] This amusing caricature, recalled from memory, as the inscription "Souvenir de l'été" implies, recorded the activities of four Impressionist artists working "en plein air" on the bank of a river. The participants' names were recorded in the lower left hand corner: Guillaumin, Pissarro, Gauguin, Cézanne, Madame Cézanne,

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[1] Charles Ephrussi, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1 May 1880, cited in Moffett, 325.

[2] Manzana Pissarro was only ten years old in 1881. In 1895, heeding the advice of his father, Georges adopted the pseudonym Manzana, his paternal grandmother's maiden name. Pissarro had encouraged his sons to establish a separate identity because he feared that his own rejection by the artistic market would be projected onto them. John Rewald, ed., Camille Pissarro: Letters to his son Lucien, London and Henley, 1980, 274.

le petit Manzana. Although the sketch is undated, the use of the pseudonym indicates that the drawing was created around or after 1895.

Manzana Pissarro became known for his talent for caricature. He was a witness to the bickering and numerous quarrels which disrupted the relationship between Gauguin and his father after 1883, yet, Impressionist Picnic c1881 evokes no sense of discord, recording only a harmonious outing.

In July of 1881, Gauguin wrote the letter to Pissarro which is the document art historians repeatedly cite as the reason for the onset of Cēzanne's hostility towards Gauguin. In it Gauguin states:

> M. Cēsanne (sic) a-t-il trouvē la formule exacte d'une oeuvre admise par tout le monde? S'il trouvait la recette pour comprimer l'expression outrēe de toutes ses sensations dans un seul et unique procēdē je vous en prie tâchez de le faire causer pendant son sommeil en lui administrant une de ces drogues mystērieuses et homēopathiques et venez au plus tôt à Paris nous en faire part.[1]

On the basis of this letter, John Rewald wrote: "Cēzanne, nervous and suspicious, did not take this pleasantry too

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[1]Gauguin to Pissarro, July 1881, Merhlēs, no. 16, 20.

well and seriously began to fear that Gauguin was out to 'steal' his sensations."[1]

The letter gives no indication whether it was written before or after the meeting recorded by Manzana Pissarro. It does, however, reveal that Gauguin was aware of Cézanne's work and highly curious about his progress. It also suggests that the subject of Cézanne's work was a frequent topic of conversation between Gauguin and Pissarro.

A well noted aspect of Gauguin's character is his sardonic sense of humour. A friend and admirer recorded: "Gauguin always spoke in a jesting manner, which gave rise to many errors and fables about him."[2] In a letter to Armand Seguin, dated January 15, 1897, Gauguin, himself, wrote:

> Et il (pupil Louis Roy) va essayer de mettre sur un livre non pas ses théories sur la couleur mais les miennes qu'il croit avoir comprises, sans compter toutes les bourdes que je lui ai contées par ironie; Je suis quelque fois pour m'amuser un peu moqueur.[3]

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[1] Rewald, 1973, 458.

[2] Anonymous, "Gauguin et l'Ecole de Pont-Aven" by "un de ses admirateurs de l'Ecole de Pont-Aven," Essays d'Art Libre, November, 1893. Cited in Rewald, 1956, 298.

[3] Letter from Gauguin to Armand Seguin, 15 January 1897, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, N.A. Fr. 14827 p. 9r. Cited in Amishai-Maisels, Gauguin's Religious Themes, New York and London, 1985, 9-10.

As well, Gauguin demonstrated that he, himself, was not outside the range of his own sarcasm when he scratched, "Vive la sintaise," an off-color pun based in the word "synthèse," onto an earthenware pot he gave to his friend Filiger.[1] The evidence suggests that Gauguin's sense of humour had, at times, obscured his true character. He mocked overly serious neophytes, and he had no qualms about parodying his own inventions. In addition, as with truly effective sarcasm, his was also capable of exposing deeper concerns and could allude to a subject of contemporary controversy.

What then could have been the actual focus of his barb? Can we infer by his reference to an elusive "formula" that he was specifically referring to an article by Emile Zola, published in Le Voltaire on 22 June 1880, in which the author (a onetime ardent Impressionist supporter) indicated that, although he still had sympathy for the movement, he did not believe that the Impressionists would ever succeed?[2] As stated in Zola's article:

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[1] As cited in Rewald, 1956, 298, this anecdote, attributed to Mothérē, husband of Marie Henry, Gauguin's innkeeper at Pont Aven, was recorded by Chassē in Gauguin et le groupe de Pont-Aven, Paris, 38.

[2] Emile Zola, "Le naturalisme au Salon," Le Voltaire, 22 June 1880, as quoted in Rewald, 1973, 447.

> The real misfortune is that no artist of this group has achieved powerfully and definitely the new formula which, scattered through their works, they all offer. The formula is there, endlessly diffused; but in no place, among any of them, is it to be found applied by a master. They are all forerunners, the man of genius has not arisen. We can see what they intend, and find them right. But we seek in vain the masterpiece that is to lay down the formula...This is why the struggle of the Impressionists has not reached a goal; they remain inferior to what they undertake, they stammer without being able to find words.[1]

Zola'a article raised the very question of the viability of Impressionism, and it was was viewed with disappointment by the Impressionists. Monet answered Zola by speaking disparagingly of the newcomers and implied that the acceptance of 'first-come daubers' was destroying the solidarity of the group.[2] Gauguin was one of the newcomers, and, one year later, he may have still have had in mind Zola's criticism and Monet's rebuttal. Zola referred to a 'formula' as the goal and Gauguin, in inquiring if Cēzanne had found the elusive formula, was possibly making reference to the article, but, the sheer absurdity of the request and Gauguin's reputation insure that it was done in a mocking manner. It was, however, also a compliment because Gauguin,

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[1] Ibid.

[2] E. Taboureux, "Claude Monet," La Vie Moderne, 12 June 1880, as quoted in Rewald, 1973, 447.

as will be demonstrated, was intrigued by and recognized the powerful direction of Cézanne's art.

The close relationship which Pissarro shared with both Gauguin and Cézanne would lead one to believe that he was acquainted with their respective character traits, including Gauguin's humour. The supposition that Cézanne reacted negatively to Gauguin's words implies that Pissarro chose to share Gauguin's letter with Cézanne in full knowledge of the possible reaction. However, friendly relations continued between Pissarro and his students, and no mention was made of the offending letter.

Although it is not possible to ascertain what occurred, it must be acknowledged that Cézanne was particularly sensitive to criticism from Zola, his best friend. Their relationship finally floundered in 1886, when Cézanne was finally able to comprehend that Zola would never understand what he was trying to achieve. While the words of Gauguin's letter must have seemed harmless to the author, they could have reminded Cézanne of the fact that his friend had viewed him only in terms of failure.

Throughout 1882 Gauguin kept in close contact with Pissarro. Nothing in the correspondence refers to Cézanne. The letters only reveal that Gauguin was relying more and more strongly on Pissarro for personal and artistic guidance. He confessed his artistic frustrations and the difficulty presented in trying to coordinate a successful business

career with painting when he wrote: "I cannot resign myself to spending the rest of my life in finance and painting. I have got it into my head that I shall become a painter."[1] Gauguin was also confident in sharing his financial difficulties with Pissarro following the collapse of the Bourse in 1882. In 1883, he confessed that all was not well. "Je viens de m'addresser à beaucoup de monde et partout c'est la même réponse, que les affaires ne vont pas, qu'il y a beaucoup d'employés sans place et pas d'emplois vacants."[2] And, in October, he wrote: "Je n'ai pas de place en vue...,"[3] sharing with Pissarro his final defeat in business. Although Gauguin had spoken cavalierly of forsaking his financial security to art, he was forced into this eventuality. He set out to adopt Pissarro's lifestyle, but he lacked Pissarro's stoicism.

A double portrait, dating from 1883, illustrates Pissarro's and Gauguin's student/mentor relationship (fig.5). Drawing each other's likeness on the same sheet of paper, Pissarro's calm demeanor becomes a foil for Gauguin's tension. Gauguin portrayed Pissarro in color, while his mentor, more spontaneously, captured his student's image in black and

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[1]Gauguin to Pissarro, May-June 1882, Merhlès, no.23, 29.
[2]Gauguin to Pissarro, October 1883, Merhlès, no.40, 53.
[3]Gauguin to Pissarro, 11 October 1883, Merhlès, no.41, 55.

white. This drawing, as with the oil portrait of Cêzanne, remained in Pissarro's possession until his death.[1]

The first flicker of discontent is contained in a letter, dated Nov. 20, 1883, which reveals that Pissarro objected to Gauguin's political orientation. In the letter to his son, he related the details of a conversation he had with Gauguin concerning a newspaper report of an inflammatory incident in Tongking and thereby exposed the disillusionment he felt. "But at last I begin to realize that my poor friend Gauguin does not see clearly. He is always on the side of the bastards! - he is more naive than I thought."[1] From this time on, Pissarro viewed Gauguin in a more critical light, and he began to question his motivations and intentions.

In the spring of 1884, Gauguin moved to Rouen to join Pissarro, who had been living there since the previous fall. Sensing that financial manipulation was the primary motivation behind the move, Pissarro wrote to his son:

> Yesterday I received a letter from Gauguin...He is going to look me up and study the place's possibilities from the point of view of art and practicality. He is naive enough to think that

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[1]The drawing was donated to the Louvre in 1947 by Pissarro's son Paul Emile.

[2]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 20 November 1883, Rewald, 1980, 48.

> since the people of Rouen are very wealthy, they can easily be induced to buy some painting... Gauguin disturbs me very much, he is so deeply commercial, at least he gives me the impression. I haven't the heart to point out to him how false and uncompromising is his attitude; true his needs are great, his family being used to luxury, just the same his attitude can only hurt him. Not that I think we ought not try to sell, but I regard it a waste of time to think only of selling, one forgets one's art and exaggerates one's value.[1]

Pissarro's social and artistic beliefs engendered little sympathy for Gauguin. Unfortunately, his own affairs were precarious and later letters to his son reflect a situation which continually grew more desperate until even Pissarro was forced to flog his paintings from dealer to dealer. Nevertheless, in 1883, he could only find Gauguin's monetary concerns reprehensible.

Cézanne's position in the art world continued to interest Gauguin. Displeased with the gallery dealers' practice of displaying Impressionist paintings alongside works by more traditional artists, he wrote:

> ...si vous mettez Cêsanne (sic) à côtê d'un peintre tranquille faisant ce qui est connu Cêsanne (sic) sera rigolo; si au contraire vous êtes groupés de même nature l'ensemble forme un principe qui s'impose.[2]

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 31 October 1883, Rewald, 1980, 244.

[2]Gauguin to Pissarro, 7 May 1883, Merhlès, no. 35, 43.

For Gauguin, Cézanne was the exemplar of the group, and the radical nature of his work illuminated the difficulties faced by the entire group and underlined the necessity that they all exhibit together.

During 1883 Cézanne lived and worked in L'Estaque and Aix. Pissarro continued to give his support and encouragement. His desire to bring Cézanne to the attention of the public was revealed when he wrote to J.K. Huysmans and confronted him because he failed to mention Cézanne in his 1882 publication L'Art Moderne.

> Why is it you do not say a word about Cézanne whom all of us recognize as one of the most outstanding and curious temperaments of our time and who has a very great influence on modern art.[1]

Along with Pissarro, Gauguin was definitely one of Cézanne's greatest fans, and the enthusiasm he exhibited in the acquisition and study of Cézanne's paintings certainly would have reflected this admiration, and may have, in part, encouraged Pissarro to write this letter.[2]

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[1]Camille Pissarro to J.K. Huysmans, draft dated 15 May 1883, as cited in Rewald, 1973, 473.

[2]Chapter Two of this study concerns Gauguin's collection of Cézanne's paintings and their importance to him.

In July of 1884, Gauguin wrote to Pissarro that he had seen and was disturbed by Monet's Italian paintings.[1] Eager to discuss the paintings, he wrote:

> ...ils sont d'une exécution étonnante et c'est en partie ce qui fait leur défault; j'avoue qu'ils me déplaisent totalement surtout comme voie. Il y a incontestablement dedans des qualités supérieures propres à cet artiste mais c'est bien dangereux. Sorti de là j'ai vu chez Tanguy quatre Césanne (sic) très travaillés de Pontoise; voilà des merveilles d'un art essentiellement pur et qu'on ne se lasse pas de regarder.[2]

In discussing both Monet and Cézanne in the same letter, Gauguin defined the means by which he evaluated a painting. He favored Cézanne's art which was pure and personally overwhelming whereas, in his estimation, Monet's only genius lay in his stunning yet superficial execution.

Gauguin was beginning to grapple with artistic problems and theories which would eventually lead to the formulation of his brand of Symbolism, which he labeled Synthetism. Writing to Emile Schuffenecker from Copenhagen, he singled out Cézanne, the man and his art, to illustrate newly found insights:

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[1] [2] Gauguin to Pissarro, July 1884, Merhlès, no. 49, 64-65.
[2] Ibid.

> Voyez Cēsanne (sic) l'incompris, la nature essentiellement mystique de l'Orient (son visage ressemble à un ancien du Levant) il affectionne dans la forme un mystère et une tranquillité lourde de l'homme couché pour rêver, sa couleur est grave comme le caractère des Orientaux; homme du Midi il passe des journées entières au sommet des montagnes à lire Virgile et à regarder le ciel, aussi ses horizons sont elēvēs ses bleus très intense et le rouge chez lui est d'une vibration étonnante. Comme Virgile qui a plusieurs sens et que l'on peut interprēter à volonté, la littérature de ses tableaux a un sens parabolique à deux fins; ses fonds sont aussi imaginatifs que rēels. Pour rēsumer quand on voit un tableau de lui on s'écrie, Etrange mais c'est une folie - Ecriture séparée mystique, dessin de même.[1]

This important letter reveals Gauguin's fascination with Cēzanne and it discloses a compulsion to explain, in philosophical and mystical language, the irrepressible attraction Cēzanne's canvasses evoked within him. Gauguin was searching for the laws which govern human emotions, and he explained to Schuffenecker that lines, colors, and sounds provoke, repulse, console and subdue. He then wrote that he had determined that the analysis of brushstrokes and color would separate the great artist from the small in the same way that handwriting analysis could differentiate the candid man from the liar.

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[1]Gauguin to Emile Schuffenecker, 14 January 1885, Merhlès, no. 62, 87-89.

It is difficult to establish when Gauguin became interested in the mystical sciences, however, a letter written to Pissarro one month before the letter to Schuffenecker, revealed that Gauguin was a novice in the science of handwriting analysis:

> Je ne suis pas encore très savant mais je suis sûr de découvrir un jour non seulement le caractère mais le sentiment qui a guidé une lettre...Je vous envoie une partie détachée de votre lettre. Vous verrez que le mot mystère est écrit différament de la ligne au-dessus, pas un jambage n'est lié. Pour écrire un mot plus lisiblement, on le met plus gros ou avec des lettres majuscules mais on ne change pas son habitude d'écrire. Pourquoi- Parce que mystère est dans la pensée la signification de mystique et que les écritures des mystiques sont séparées. Vous voyez que la pensée influe directement sur l'écriture - Avez-vous une lettre de Cézanne?[1]

Pissarro's response to Gauguin's investigations are unknown. All we know for certain is that one month later Gauguin was exploring the mystical dimension of painting with Cézanne and his art at the center of his thoughts. He had also provided a literary portrait of Cézanne as a mystic. This characterization was far removed from that projected in Pissarro's 1867 painted portrait.

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[1]Gauguin to Pissarro, December 1884, Merhlès, no. 57, 77.

The letter from Gauguin to Schuffenecker in 1885 marks the beginning of Gauguin's move away from Pissarro. Cézanne and Pissarro, while not estranged, had not visited one another since 1881. Pissarro's pupils were now mature artists leaving behind a mentor in lieu of their own work. Pissarro had shared his belief in Cézanne with Gauguin and found an easy convert, but he was ill-prepared for the new directions Gauguin would discover within Cézanne's painting.

Chapter 2 Gauguin - Vanguard Collector

Gauguin's interest in Cēzanne is not only revealed through his relationship with Pissarro but by the Cēzanne paintings he purchased and studied. Regardless of whether the acquisitions were initially suggested by Pissarro or reflect Gauguin's personal preference, Gauguin emerges as one of the few individuals to acknowledge Cēzanne through the early acquisition of his works.

After five years at sea (1866-1871), in the service of the merchant marine and the navy, Gauguin returned to Paris. Sponsored by his guardian, Gustave Arosa, he embarked on a new career in the world of finance and began to cultivate an interest in the fine arts both as a collector and a student of painting. The stimulus to collect was animated by the example of Arosa, whose personal collection included works of contemporary painters and was available to Gauguin. A penchant for avant-garde art took Gauguin to the shops of Père Tanguy, Durand-Ruel and Madame LaTouche.[1]

Merete Bodelsen's research[2] indicates that the majority of the works in Gauguin's collection were purchased between

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[1] Julien Tanguy ran a small art supply shop and was the only dealer to support Paul Cēzanne until 1895.

[2] Merete Bodelsen, 1970, 599-615.

1879 and 1883. The evidence suggests that prior to 1879 Gauguin did not have the financial means to indulge his passion for art. In 1876, as the following letter reveals, the family's resources were hardly secure:

> Yesterday we visited Mette and Ingeborg. They were both glad to see us, but what a terrible remote place they live in; Paul's affairs seem to be in a bad way; I do not think his job is any too secure, it must be harassing for Mette.[1]

This letter, written by Marie Heegard, Mette's friend and companion, reported Gauguin's, as yet, unsuccessful ventures into business. In addition to this, Merete Bodelsen's identification of at least four separate commercial establishments in which Gauguin was employed between 1872 and 1880,[2] points to constant business upheaval, dissatisfaction and insecurity in the painter's early business career. However, in 1879 Gauguin found success. This was a landmark year in which his earnings of 35,000 francs permitted him a degree of financial independence and the resources to gratify his passion for art.

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[1]Marie Heegard to her parents in Denmark, October 1876, cited in Merete Bodelsen, "The Dating of Gauguin's Early Paintings," Burlington Magazine (June 1965), 313.
[2]Merete Bodelsen, 1970, 597-601.

Bodelsen, in her reconstruction of Gauguin's collection, determined that Gauguin's holdings consisted of just under fifty paintings or pastels by fifteen artists.[1] He favored Pissarro, Guillaumin and Cēzanne, holding, through either purchase or trade, thirty paintings and etchings by these artists.[2]

Financial setbacks halted further additions after 1883, and Gauguin was forced to begin slowly liquidating his holdings to support his family. The failure of all attempts to make a living through painting in France had prompted Gauguin to move to Denmark in 1884. Eight months later, he returned to Paris, leaving most of his collection behind to provide financial security for his family.

The identification of many of Gauguin's holdings was made possible through a review of an exhibition of the collection in Copenhagen, in 1889, by the Danish critic, Karl Madsen.[3] Further identification of the paintings owned by Gauguin was made possible by lists compiled by Gauguin

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[1] See "Catalogue of Gauguin's Collection" in Bodelsen, 1970, 605-612.

[2] The other contemporary artists whose paintings were in his collection included Degas, Jongkind, Manet, Renoir, Sisley and Cassatt.

[3] Karl Madsen, review of "Scandinavian and French Impressionists" (October 30-November 11, 1889), Politiken, 9-10 November 1889, excerpts of which are reproduced in Bodelsen, 1970.

in two of his sketchbooks, which are respectively designated Rouen Sketchbook 1884 and Album Briant 1888.[1] A few other holdings were confirmed through inscriptions on the paintings or through letters but the contents of the collection, as it has been reconstructed by Merete Bodelsen, remains indebted to Madsen's review and Gauguin's two lists.

Although Gauguin once boasted that he had twelve Cēzanne's in his collection, only five can be confirmed by the historical documents.[2] In the following list, the first title refers to Gauguin's personal designation in the Album Briant. The second is the title by which each painting is more commonly known.

1. Femme Nue (c 1867, lost). In the discussion this work will be designated, Female Nude.

2. Maison de Zola, identical with The Château at Mēdan, (1879-1881, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum, Venturi 325).

3. Midi (l'Estaque) identical with Mountains - L'Estaque,[3] (1886-90, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, Venturi 490).

4. Nature morte, identical with Still Life with Compotier, (1879-82, private collection, Venturi 341).

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[1] Album Briant, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins (R.F. 30273). The designation Rouen Sketchbook 1884 was specified by Merete Bodelsen, 1970, 602.

[2] Letter from Paul Gauguin to Ambroise Vollard, January 1900, in John Rewald, Studies in Post-Impressionism, New York, 1986, 189-190.

[3] The chronology for this painting does not correspond to Bodelsen's evidence. If it is the painting owned by Gauguin, then it should be dated no later than 1883.

5. Allée d'arbres was not included in Venturi's catalogue and is now titled Avenue of Zola's Country House (Gothenburg Art Gallery, Sweden).

Bodelsen, on the basis of borrowed motifs, has suggested that a sixth painting by Cézanne, The Harvest (Private Collection, Venturi 249), was also in Gauguin's possession.[1]

Cézanne's painting, Female Nude, has been identified as the work which was rejected along with his Portrait of Achille Emperaire, (c1867, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, Venturi 88), by the Salon of 1870. The only visual representation of this work can be found in a caricature of Cézanne by Stock, which appeared in 1870 and showed the painter as a rustic peasant with his two rejected Salon entries (fig.6). In the lower right hand corner, Female Nude, a painting of a bony, angular, aged nude appeared. Contemporary written accounts by Karl Madsen, Emile Bernard and Maurice Denis do confirm Stock's satirical exaggeration.[2]

The painting was slated to be shown in the 1889 Copenhagen show, Scandinavian and French Impressionists, but Karl Madsen's review revealed that it was not included to the subsequent relief of the Copenhagen community:

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[1]Merete Bodelsen, "Gauguin's Cézannes," Burlington Magazine (May 1962), 211.

[2]Madsen cited in Bodelsen, 1970, 605. Emile Bernard, 1907, in Doran, 68. Maurice Denis, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, I, 1934, 167, cited in Bodelsen, 1970, 605.

> A large picture of an elderly, naked woman, painted larger than life by Cézanne, has not been hung at the exhibition, in due respect to Copenhagen's state of innocence. It is neither a particularly attractive nor a particularly good picture, and its absense cannot be described as a loss. The elderly woman displays the sad ruins of her charms stretched on a dazzling white sheet, one hand grasping a folded fan; cloth of a dull vermilion is draped over a chair; in a corner on the black wall hangs a small picture, which seems to be an undoubtable genuine "Image d'Epinal".[1]

In his review Madsen continued to describe the color as lacking but praised the swirling, violent brushwork for being reminiscent of great Spanish masters.

In 1934, Maurice Denis recalled that he had seen the painting in Paris at Tanguy's shop. Referring to the work as "Femme du Vidanger," he commented, "c'était, sur un fond noir, une femme nue, âgée, étendue, très réalisée."[2] Emile Bernard saw this canvas at the same time as Denis and recorded his first impression in 1907. "J'ai vu autrefois, chez le père Tanguy, le marchand de couleurs de la rue Clauzel, une femme nue couchée, qui, quoique bien laide, était un magistral morceau..."[3]

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[1]Madsen in Bodelsen, 1970, 605.
[2]Maurice Denis, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, I, 1934, 167 in
[3]Bodelsen, 1970, 605.
Bernard, 1907 in Doran, 62.

Madsen, Denis, and Bernard all emphasized an overwhelming effect of dissipated beauty flaunted by the painter. Compared to the idealized, limpid nudes of the Salon, the work must have been viewed as a direct assault on the academic establishment.

Gauguin's financial history suggests that this painting could have been purchased by him in 1879. If so, then it is possible that Female Nude was the inspiration for Gauguin's own Nude Study. Suzanne Sewing (fig.7), painted in 1880. Although the composition is different and blue tonalities replace Cézanne's vermilion, both artists portrayed less-than-perfect female, nude figures without recourse to idealization. Gauguin's exotic elements, mandolin and Algerian fabric, did little to draw attention from or enhance the ungainly body of Suzanne, a servant girl.

A realist agenda was claimed for the painting by Joris K. Huysmans, who blissfully ignored the unreality of the figural situation, claiming instead that "she is a girl of our times, not showing off for the crowd, since she is neither wanton or coy, but simply busy mending her togs."[1]

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[1] J.K. Huysmans, "The Exhibition of the Indépendents of 1881," L'Art moderne, Paris, 1883. Reprinted in Marla Prather and Charles Stuckey, Gauguin: A Retrospective, New York, 1987, 40-49.

Gauguin's painting was influenced by Impressionist subject matter (an everyday subject, realistically portrayed), but her nakedness was exposed in an unrealistic context and implied rather a desire to add shock value to this work. This feature may have been encouraged through the study of Female Nude.

From the descriptions of Cézanne's Female Nude, it appears that Gauguin had no interest in copying Cézanne's technique at this time. The brushwork in Nude Study. Suzanne Sewing evokes none of the violent energy reported by Madsen. When compared to the other Cézannes owned by Gauguin, Female Nude was an unusual selection, serving more as an impetus to rebellion against academic subject matter, perhaps, in sympathy with Cézanne's personal battle with the Salon.[1]

Cézanne's painting of the Château at Médan (fig.8) remained in Denmark after Gauguin's departure in 1884. By 1893, it was in the possession of Edvard Brandes, Mette's brother-in-law. In 1903, Gauguin described the painting in his manuscript Avant et après:

> Cézanne peint rutilant paysage; fonds d'outremer verts pesants, ocres qui châtoient; les arbres s'alignent, les branches s'entrelacent, laissant

[1]Rewald has written that by 1865 Cézanne enjoyed making the "Institute blush with rage and despair," 1973, 134.

> cependent voir la maison de son ami
> Zola aux volets vermillons qu'orangent
> les chrômes qui scintillent sur la chaux
> des murs - Les véronèzes qui pétardent
> signalent la verdure raffinée du
> jardin, et en contraste le son grave des
> orties violacées au premier plan
> orchestre le simple poème. C'est à Médan.[1]

Gauguin's poetic description, even though it was written fourteen years after his last viewing, still carries strong visual memories for the quality of color and the expressive force of Cézanne's painting.

Château at Médan provides one of the earliest examples of Cézanne's constructive stroke,[2] a distinctive method of applying the paint in successive, parallel strokes in each part of the composition as he constructed different forms and differentiated spatial areas. This manner of paint application was developed by Cézanne in the late 1870s. There is no work in Gauguin's oeuvre which can be specifically related to Château at Médan through motif or direct inspiration; however Gauguin did appropriate Cézanne's constructive stroke in later works, which suggests that the painting served an instructional purpose for Gauguin.

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[1]Paul Gauguin, Avant et après, 1903, 191 cited in Bodelsen, 1970, 606.
[2]Reff, 1962, 221.

Cézanne's Avenue of Zola's Country House (fig.9) and Mountains - L'Estaque (fig.10) were purchased by Gauguin simultaneously in the summer of 1883. Both paintings remained in Copenhagen and were subsequently sold before Gauguin returned from his first trip to Tahiti in 1893. Gauguin related the news of his purchase to Pissarro in a letter dated to the end of July, 1883:

> Je fais réentoiler en ce moment deux tableaux de Césanne, j'ai fini par les extorquer à Tanguy dans les prix doux 120f la paire. Vous devez les connâitre l'un est une allée ébauchée, les arbres rangés comme des soldats et les ombres portées en gradin comme un escalier. L'autre est une vue du Midi inachevée mais cependent très pousée. Bleu vert et orangé. Je croix que c'est tout simplement une merveille; Madame Latouche m'a accusé de folie...[1]

In his 1889 review, Karl Madsen commented that "...the path winding across broken ground (in Mountains - L'Estaque) reminded a French painter - the owner of the picture - of the lonely path along which Christ wandered in sombre thought towards the Mount of Olives."[2] This comment led Merete Bodelsen to suggest that this work may have inspired

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[1]Gauguin to Pissarro, between 23 to 29 July 1883, Merhlès, no. 38, 50-51.
[2]Madsen in Bodelsen, 1970, 606.

Gauguin's dramatic self-portrait Christ in Gethsemane (1889, West Palm Beach, Norton Gallery and School of Art), painted during a period of depression accompanied by overwhelming feelings of oppression.[1] Gauguin's personal reflections, as recorded by Madsen, reveal that he was deeply affected by emotional qualities he perceived in the painting. Indeed, Gauguin's self-portrait, executed during the same year, evokes the "sombre," "lonely" feelings Gauguin attributed to Mountains - L'Estaque.[2]

Cézanne's Mountains - L'Estaque was also the model for a fan (fig.11) executed by Gauguin in 1885. Working within the demands of the fan format, Gauguin altered Cézanne's composition by shifting the center of the painting to the right, flattening and elongating the mountain, and adding foreground elements for balance. Even though Gauguin was thinking of Cézanne in mystical terms, as the letter to Emile Schuffencker in January 1885 revealed, the fan, painted after Mountains - L'Estaque, evokes no Symbolist content. The fan was a decorative, technical exercise. Gauguin's later comment that Cézanne's picture elicited a vision of the "lonely path along which Christ wandered in sombre thought," reveals that, for Gauguin, there were

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[1]Bodelsen, 1962, 207.
[2]Madsen in Bodelsen, 1970, 606.

different levels of interpretation which could be applied to Cézanne's work.[1]

Perhaps the most celebrated Cézanne painting owned by Gauguin is Still Life with Compotier, dating from 1879-82 (fig.12). Its special status for Gauguin was confirmed in a letter to Emile Schuffenecker, his friend and fellow painter, in 1888:

> Le Cézanne que vous me demandez est une perle exceptionelle et j'en ai déjà refusé 300 Frs: j'y tiens comme à la prunelle de mes yeux et à moins de nécessité absolue je m'en déferai après ma dernière chemise.[2]

Gauguin's declaration was confirmed by the fact that the painting remained in his possession until 1897, when, ill, impoverished and in need of hospitalization, he was forced to direct the dealer Chaudet to sell the painting.

Gauguin further indicated his admiration by reproducing the painting in the background of his Portrait of a Woman with Still Life by Cézanne (fig.13) in 1890. Gauguin's painting is a true homage to Cézanne. Not only does Cézanne's still life appear in the background but, Gauguin

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[1]Madsen in Bodelsen, 1970, 606.
[2]Gauguin to Emile Schuffenecker, June 1888, Merhlès, no. 147, 181-182.

has also endowed his model's countenance with a mask-like quality, which is a characteristic that is frequently commented upon regarding Cēzanne's portraits of Madame Cēzanne (figs. 14 and 15).[1] To further confirm this dependence on Cēzanne, an X-ray of the painting has indicated that Gauguin originally chose to portray the model with crossed hands, which is, once again, frequently the case in Cēzanne's portraits of his wife.[2]

Openly appreciative, Gauguin discussed this work and others in Avant et après:

> La vindangeuse, le vin à quatre sous, la maison du pendu. Impossible à decrire - Faites mieux allez les voir. D'un compotier et les raisins murs dépassent la bordure, sur le linge les pommes vert pomme et celles rouge prune se marient - Les blancs sont bleus et les bleus sont blancs - Un sacre peintre que ce Cēzane (sic).[3]

Gauguin used Still Life with Compotier as an instructional model, and the painting was imprinted on the minds of the younger generation of artists. Karol Maszkowski, a Polish painter whose memoirs were published

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[1]This aspect of Cēzanne's portraits of his wife was pointed out to me by Prof. Solomon Kiefer during our discussions.
[2]Richard Brettel, French Impressionists, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1987, 30.
[3]Gauguin, 1903, 31 in Bodelsen, 1970, 606.

in 1925-26, recalled how Gauguin would 'explain' Cézanne at the restaurant Chez Madame Charlotte in 1894 with the help of this particular painting.[1] Still Life with Compotier subsequently reappeared as the central object of veneration and as a symbol of Cézanne in 1900 in Maurice Denis' painting, Homage to Cézanne (fig.16). This work bears witness to Gauguin's efforts to instruct his younger colleagues about Cézanne's art.

On the basis of borrowed motifs, Merete Bodelsen has argued that The Harvest (fig.17) was also part of Gauguin's collection, even though it was not tabulated in the Album Briant list of works.[2] Clearly, it was the model for a fan (fig.18), painted in 1884, and for a stoneware ceramic jug, which was created in Chaplet's studio in the winter of 1886-87.[3] Gauguin's adaptations of the painting indicate that he was interested in the decorative qualities of the composition, and he freely aranged Cézanne's motifs to conform to the medium of his choice.

Even though the majority of the paintings in the collection were entrusted to Mette upon Gauguin's return to Paris in 1885, as the following letter demonstrates,

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[1]Bodelsen, 1970, 606.
[2]Bodelsen, 1962, 211.
[3]Merete Bodelsen, Gauguin's Ceramics, London, 1964, 48-49.

Gauguin kept a close watch on Mette's transactions:

> Je réponds de suite par le courrier afin que tu puisses répondre aussitôt pour la vente des tableaux; ce qui me rend du reste perplexe. J'ai laissé en Danemarck les tableaux et du train que celà prend un jour je n'aurai plus rien. Je tiens à mes 2 Césanne; ils sont rares de ce genre-là car il en a fait peu d'achevés et un jour ils auront une très grande valeur. Vends plutôt le dessin de Degas, mais il faut avouer de ce côté que lui seul se vend très couramment et qu'il est coté bien plus cher que 200 couronnes. Je te laisse latitude puisque tu as besoin et qu'a défaut d'argent de moi tu as là une ressource. Maintenant sauf le Manet Miss Cassatt il faut arrêter la vente sinon je n'aurai plus rien un jour. L'important ce sont les miens qu'il faut pousser.[1]

This letter is insightful with respect to the importance and monetary value Gauguin placed upon the Cézannes in his collection. In 1885, Cézanne was known only to a small handful of artists, and the sole establishment where anyone could view his paintings was Tanguy's art supply shop. There was vitually no market for Cézanne's paintings; however, as well as valuing the Cézannes for their unique artistic qualities, Gauguin was confident that they would appreciate in value. The effectiveness of this letter in preventing the sale of the Cézannes at this time became

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[1]Gauguin to Mette, December 1885, Merhlès, no. 90, 118.

irrelevant because Mette eventually sold all of the Cézannes in her possession to support herself and her five children.

Gauguin's attachment to his Cézannes and his dismay over Mette's decision to sell the paintings is reflected in a letter, written in December of 1893, in which Gauguin urged Mette to recover Mountains - L'Estaque from Edvard Brandes by offering one of his own paintings in exchange before initiating an offer to purchase. Gauguin wrote:

> Vois donc s'il est possible de changer le Césane (sic) avec des toits rouges pour une de mes toiles - tu m'a dit dans le temps que Brandes te les avait achetés avec les conditions de les recéder au prix d'achats. Dans ce cas j'aimerais mieux le racheter avec l'interêt de l'argent. J'aimerais énormément à avoir ce tableau.[1]

In 1893, Gauguin received a small inheritance of 13,000 frs. making this offer possible. When the initial offer through Mette was refused, Gauguin wrote to Brandes himself on February 17, 1894, in an attempt to recover all of his Cézannes.

> Ce que je vais vous demander va vous paraître bien étrange, mais vous connaissez quels sont les caprices des Artistes.

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[1]Gauguin to Mette, December 1893, Malingue, Paris, 1946, CXLVIII, 255, in Bodelsen, 1970, 603-604.

> Aujourd'hui que je puis le faire je désire avoir encore une fois quelque tableaux que vous avez acheté à Mette. Or, comme vous l'avez fait pour lui rendre service j'espère que ma demande vous paraîtra naturelle. Il est juste pourtant que vous y trouviez bénéfice.
>
> Voici donc ce que je vous propose. De la collection je voudrais avoir les Pissarro et les Cézanne. Je vous les racheterais aux prix que vous les avez payés plus naturellement l'interêt couru...[1]

Gauguin reassured Brandes that with the Degas, Manet, Guillaumin and Lewis Brown paintings in his possession, which had also been purchased from Mette, Brandes would still have his expenditures compensated for and be ahead financially. Nevertheless, Brandes politely refused Gauguin's request, explaining that the paintings formed part of a small collection to which he was attached.[2] The extent of Gauguin's anger at this refusal can only be measured by his sarcastic final reply to Brandes which denigrated Brandes' financial acumen in purchasing "des toiles fort embarassantes et à l'épogue très discréditées."[3]

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[1]Gauguin to Brandes, 17 February 1894, Bodelsen, 1970, 604.
[2]Brandes to Gauguin, copy of letter written by Gauguin in Bibliothèque d'art et d'archeologie, Paris and cited in Bodelsen, 1970, 604.
[3]Gauguin to Brandes, copy by Gauguin of his response included in his letters in Bibliothèque d'art et d'archeologie, Paris and cited in Bodelsen, 1970, 604.

The Cézanne paintings in Gauguin's collection held a special significance for Gauguin. Not only were they of great financial worth to Gauguin, they were also an integral part of his artistic growth. He studied and copied Mountains - L'Estaque and The Harvest; he included Still Life with Compotier in one of his own paintings, and he may have been inspired by Female Nude to produce a work in sympathy with Cézanne's direction. Gauguin's Portrait of a Woman also revealed Gauguin's study and admiration for Cézanne's portraits of his wife.

Gauguin studied the Cézanne paintings in his possession and discovered the artist's methods but, more importantly, as his statements reveal, he perceived in them an inner mystery which became part of the fuel inciting his search for an alternative mode of representation. Gauguin's focus on the expressive qualities of Cézanne's color in his description of Château at Médan and his comment to Madsen that Mountains - L'Estaque evoked an emotional effect were not the traditional responses to Cézanne's art. Whether this novel interpretation coincided with Cézanne's intended objective is beside the point. Gauguin's recognition of the emotive potential in Cézanne's art implies that he found Symbolist traits in these paintings which corresponded with the direction he was following.

Chapter 3 - Pissarro, Cézanne and Gauguin after 1885

In 1886 Pissarro began to explore the principles of Neo-Impressionism, a new movement initiated by Georges Seurat. Neo-Impressionism applied scientific color theory to Impressionism in order to create works with a greater luminosity and advocated the application of small dots of juxtaposed pure color which, through the process of optical mixing in the retina of the observer, would result in luminous, intermediate color. Gauguin, at first, expressed an interest in the new discovery, but after being personally slighted by Signac, Seurat's ardent disciple, he disassociated himself from the new movement.[1] Following the incident, Gauguin projected his anger onto Pissarro and refused to greet his mentor when Pissarro entered La Nouvelle-Athènes in the company of Seurat and Signac. Although Emile Schuffenecker attempted to restore harmony between the two artists by informing Pissarro that the artists at Pont Aven were continuing to explore the principles of Neo-Impressionism, Pissarro was not swayed. In Pissarro's opinion, Gauguin and his associates were

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[1] Gauguin, after obtaining permission from Signac to use his studio, had been forcibly ejected by Seurat and Pissarro who were unaware of the arrangement.

blunderers who would "try again and again - particularly Gauguin - to steal our places."[1]

Gauguin did not pursue the new trend but separated himself from the divisionists and began to speak disparagingly about Seurat's group, referring to them as "young chemists" and "travellers in petit point"[2] and to Signac, in particular, as "a salesman of little dots."[3]

Pissarro's involvement in pointillism so dismayed Gauguin that by 1892, as a letter to his wife Mette reveals, he dismissed Pissarro's entire oeuvre:

> You see what has happened to Pissarro, owing to his wanting to be in the vanguard, abreast of everything; he has lost every atom of personality, and his whole work lacks unity. He has followed the movement from Courbet and Millet up to these petty chemical persons who pile up little dots.[4]

Like Gauguin, Cézanne was disappointed with Pissarro's work with the pointillist technique. To Louis LeBail, a painter influenced by both Pissarro and Cézanne, Cézanne remarked, "if he had continued to paint as he was doing

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 20 May 1887, Rewald, 1980, [2]111-112.
[2]Françoise Cachin, Gauguin, Paris, 1990, 39.
[3]Gauguin to Bernard, October 1888, in Daniel Guérin, ed., [4]The Writing of a Savage, Paul Gauguin, New York, 1978, 24.
[4]Paul to Mette Gauguin, March 1892, in Guérin, 54-55.

in 1870, he would have been the strongest of us all."[1] On the issue of Neo-Impressionism, Cēzanne and Gauguin were united. The course painting should pursue was not to be directed by the application of scientific theories and principles.

Gauguin moved to Brittany in 1886 and quickly became the undisputed leader of a group of young artists in Pont-Aven. Pissarro, while admitting to Gauguin's success, was not impressed. In a letter to his son, Pissarro wrote:

> Gauguin is gone...completely disappeared... but I did hear that this summer at the sea shore he laid down the law to a group of young disciples, who hung on the words of the master, that austere sectarian. At any rate it must be admitted that he finally acquired great influence. This comes of course from years of hard and meritorious work--as a sectarian![2]

The following day Pissarro once again wrote to his son concerning a conversation he had with Félix Braquemond on the subject of Gauguin. As related by Pissarro, Braquemond had concluded that Gauguin's art was the "art of a sailor, a little taken from everywhere."[3] Pissarro,

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[1] Cēzanne to L. LeBail, Rewald, 1973, 536.
[2] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 22 January 1887, Rewald, 1980, 96.
[3] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 23 January 1887, Rewald, 1980, 97.

finding support in Braquemond's conclusions, put into words his own underlying suspicions:

> Aha, what do you think: I was always discreet, but I am not surprized, I made up my mind about him a long time ago, and while I won't say that he may not change for the better, at bottom his character is anti-artistic, he is a maker of odds and ends.[1]

Throughout 1891 Pissarro became increasingly disturbed with many of the critical reviews which were being published concerning Cēzanne and Gauguin, and he expressed his objections in the frequent letters he wrote to his son. After reading Emile Bernard's short biography on Cēzanne in Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui,[2] Pissarro was furious because Bernard failed to give him credit for the role he had played in Cēzanne's development during the years at Pontoise.[3] As the letter to Lucien, dated 7 May 1891, reveals, he

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Emile Bernard, "Paul Cēzanne," Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui, VIII, No. 387, 1891. Reprinted in Linda Nochlin, ed., Impressionism and Post-Impressionism: 1874-1904, New Jersey, 1966, 98-102.

[3] Bernard appeared to have credited Monet with influencing Cēzanne when he wrote: "He met Monet who dreamed of nothing but sun and light and he succumbed in his turn to the charms of great brightness; but he recovered little by little his calm and his ponderation, and he returned more complete and more knowing to the point of departure." Nochlin, 101.

placed all the blame for Bernard's ignorance squarely on Gauguin's shoulders:

> This ignorant fool claims that Cézanne for a time was under the influence of Monet. That is the limit, no? However Gauguin knows all about the Cézanne studies done in Auvers, Pontoise and elsewhere! Zola himself noted and, as I see it, correctly noted, by whom Cézanne was influenced. But I was wrong to speak of Bernard's ignorance, it is just sharp practice à la Gauguin.[1]

Octave Mirbeau's "On Gauguin's Progress," an 1891 review of an exhibition of Gauguin's sculpture written as a favor to Pissarro, provoked Pissarro because, in his opinion, Mirbeau's words essentially undermined the very social and political fabric of society.[2] Mirbeau's endorsement of the "disquieting and savory mixture of barbaric splendour, of Catholic liturgy, of Hindu reverie, of Gothic imagery, of obscure and subtle symbolism"[3] in Gauguin's art went too far for Pissarro, who responded in a letter to Lucien

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 7 May 1891, Rewald, 1980, 167. Pissarro was desperate for money at the time of this letter and Monet's recent success with his Haystack Series signalled Pissarro's own failings. Bernard's omission was, [2]for Pissaro, a double blow.

[2]Octave Mirbeau, "On Gauguin's Progress," Echo de Paris, 16 February 1891. Reprinted in Prather and Stuckey, 147-150. Mirbeau, as well as responding to Pissarro's intercession, had also been requested by Stéphane Mallarmé [3]to help a destitute Gauguin.

[3]Mirbeau in Prather and Stuckey, 146.

that the entire Symbolist movement was following the direction of the "frightened bourgeoisie" who were attempting to control the working class by leading them back to superstitious beliefs.[1] Pissarro continued, "Hence the bustling of religious symbolists, religious socialists, idealist art, occultism, Buddhism, et., ect. That fellow Gauguin has sensed this tendency."

Albert Aurier's article, "Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin,"[2] also disturbed Pissarro, and, after expressing concern about the "tenuous logic of the 'littérateur,'" he put into words his fundamental reasons for not supporting Gauguin's art:

> According to him (Aurier) what in the last instance can be dispensed with in a work of art is drawing or painting; only ideas are essential and these can be indicated by a few symbols...Now I will grant that art is as he says, except that 'the few symbols' have to be drawn, after all; moreover it is also necessary to express ideas in terms of color, hence you have to have sensations in order to have ideas...This gentleman seems to think we are imbeciles! The Japanese practiced this art as did the Chinese, and their symbols are wonderfully natural, but then they were not Catholics, and Gauguin is a Catholic. I do not criticize Gauguin for having painted

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[1] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 13 May 1891, Rewald, 1980, 170-171.

[2] Albert Aurier, "Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin," Mercure de France, Paris, 1891, 159-164. Reprinted in Herschel B. Chipp, Theories of Modern Art, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1968, 89-93.

> a rose background nor do I object to the two struggling figures and the Breton peasants in the foreground, what I dislike is that he copped these elements from the Japanese, the Byzantine painters and others. I criticize him for not applying his synthesis to our modern philosophy which is absolutely social, authoritarian and anti-mystical.---There is where the problem becomes serious. This is a step backwards; Gauguin is not a seer, he is a schemer who has sensed that the bougeoisie are moving to the right, recoiling before the great idea of solidarity which sprouts among the people... The symbolists also take this line! What do you think? They must be fought like the pest![1]

Pissarro's condemnation of Gauguin was not based on considerations of style, but on his annoyance with Gauguin's philosophy, and he held the firm belief that the path Gauguin had elected to follow was a return to the dark ages of mankind.

Pissarro never endorsed Gauguin's mature style. In 1893 he saw the Durand-Ruel exhibition of Gauguin's Tahitian paintings and had the opportunity to confront Gauguin about his theories but, as Pissarro's letter of Nov. 23, 1893 to his son indicates, he remained unconvinced that Gauguin's art had any merit:

> I saw Gauguin; he told me his theories about art and reassured me that the young would

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 20 April 1891, Rewald, 1980, 163-164.

> find salvation by replenishing themselves at remote and savage sources. I told him that this art did not belong to him, and he was a civilized man and hence it was his function to show us harmonious things. We parted, each unconvinced. Gauguin is certainly not without talent, but how difficult it is for him to find his own way! He is always poaching on someone's ground; now he is pillaging the savages of Oceania.[1]

By 1893 Pissarro's hostility towards Gauguin had grown to the point where he believed that Gauguin was behind the negative reviews which were published about him. In response to a particular review by Camille Mauclair,[2] in which Mauclair had attacked all the contemporary painters including the Impressionists, Cézanne and Gauguin,[3] Pissarro, nevertheless, wrote: "Words, words...and they control everything. Gauguin is behind this. Farceur and trickster."[4]

Although the two artists had gone their separate ways, between 1879 and 1884 Gauguin had absorbed the teachings of Pissarro. The lesson which Gauguin must have found most helpful in the development of his mature style may be inferred from a letter which Pissarro posted to his son

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[1] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 23 November 1893, Rewald, 1980, 221.

[2] Camille Mauclair had succeeded Albert Aurier as editor of the Mercure de France.

[3] Rewald, 1980, note 241.

[4] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 29 May 1894, Rewald, 1980, 241.

Lucien on the day before one of Gauguin's visits in 1883. In this letter Pissarro told Lucien that:

> ...the moment will come when you will be amazed by the ease with which you will remember forms and, curiously, the observations which you set down from memory will be infinitely more powerful and more original than those taken directly from nature. The drawing will have art - it will be your own - this is a good way of escaping slavish imitation.[1]

Gauguin later copied down the following quote from a text written by the Turkish-Parisian painter, Zumbel-Zadé. The text circulated in Parisian art circles in 1886, however, Pissarro's teachings from 1883 held the same advice.

> It is better to paint from memory. Thus the work will be your own; your sensation, your intelligence and your soul will then survive the scrutiny of the amateur.[2]

In Pissarro's mind, the development of memory was a skill designed to enhance the portrayal of objective subject matter and its purpose was to release the artist's personal

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[1] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 15 June 1883, Rewald, 1980, 35.

[2] Gauguin, "Diverse choses," 1896-97, unpublished manuscript, Musée du Louvre, Paris, sections of which were published in Jean de Rotonchamp, Paul Gauguin, 1848-1903, Paris, 1925, 210 and cited in Chipp, 65.

sensation. However, one of the main characteristics of Symbolism, as developed by Gauguin, was to rely more heavily on memory to give expression to subjective ideas.

In formulating his own style, Gauguin had come to terms with what he considered to be the problems associated with Impressionism. In the same manuscript in which he had transcribed Pissarro's advice about memory, Gauguin revealed his observations:

> Impressionists study color exclusively in terms of decorative effect, but without freedom, for they kept the shackles of verisimilitude. For them the dream landscape, created from many different entities does not exist. They look and perceive harmoniously, but without any aim. Their edifice rests upon no solid base which is founded upon the nature of sensation perceived by means of color. They heed only the eye and neglect the mysterious centers of thought, so falling into merely scientific reasoning...They are the officials of tomorrow, as bad as the officials of yesterday...There is no thought there.[1]

The direction Gauguin had chosen had taken him to the representation of subjective thought through the use of line and color. According to Gauguin, the Impressionists, in continuing to explore objective representation, had not

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[1]Gauguin, 1896-97, in Chipp, 65.

only lost their avant-garde outlook but had failed. He now seemed to side with Zola in contending that the Impressionists were "aboard a boat that is vacillating, badly constructed and incomplete."[1]

Although Gauguin had expressed his dismay with Pissarro, he later recanted and acknowledged his debt to him in an article, written in 1902, which he hoped would be published in the Mercure de France.[2] Unfortunately the article was rejected, which denied Pissarro the chance to read Gauguin's words:

> If we look at Pissarro's art as a whole, despite its fluctuations...we find not only an enormous artistic determination which never wavers but, in addition, an essentially intuitive thoroughbred art...He has looked at everyone, you say! Why not? Everyone has looked at him too but disowns him. He was one of my masters and I do not disown him.[3]

Gauguin's unpublished 1902 essay also revealed his critical appraisal of Cézanne. He confronted an imaginary critic and pointed out that Cézanne was not monochromatic but "polychromatic or even polyphonic," which he then qualified by writing:

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[1]Gauguin, 1896-97, in Chipp, 65.
[2]Gauguin's article was finally printed in 1951 thanks to Mme. Joly-Segalen under the title Raconteurs de Rapin.
[3]This excerpt was taken from Guérin, 218.

> ...you can be sure that colored painting has entered a musical phase. Cézanne, to mention an old painter, seems to be a pupil of César Franck; he is constantly playing the organ, which is what made me say that he was polyphonic.[1]

The musical qualities of line and color were often stressed as major concerns in a canvas by Gauguin. A complete art, like music, "acts on the soul through the intermediary of the senses, harmonious colors correspond to the harmonies of the sounds."[2] The genesis of the painting Manao Tupapau (1892, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo) was given validity by Gauguin through a correlation of the musical and the literary.[3] In comparing Cézanne to César Franck, Gauguin revealed that he was continuing to find in Cézanne's works qualities which corresponded with his own concept of artistic integrity.

The acclaim Cézanne received following the 1895 Vollard exhibition of his paintings rewarded Pissarro's early support of Cézanne. In a letter to his son, dated November 21, 1895, Pissarro revealed his continued support when he

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[1] Gauguin in Raconteurs de Rapin, Guérin, 218-220. César Auguste Franck (1822-1890) is recognized as the first important instrumentalist after Berlios. His compositions are noted for their chromaticism and skillful counterpoint or cyclic form.

[2] Gauguin in Chipp, 61.

[3] Gauguin, Cahier pour Aline, 1893 in Chipp, 69.

expressed his opinion that anyone who could not appreciate Cézanne demonstrated that their "sensibilities were defective."[1] He then praised the paintings by Cézanne which he had viewed with the following words:

> I also thought of Cézanne's show in which there were exquisite things, still lifes of irreproachable perfection, others much worked on and yet unfinished, of even greater beauty, landscapes, nudes, and heads that are unfinished yet grandiose, and so painted, so subtle...Why? Sensation is there![2]

The next day, Pissarro again wrote to his son to express his indignation concerning another harsh review written by Camille Mauclair and published in La Revue:

> You will see that he (Mauclair) is ill informed like most of the critics who understand nothing. He simply doesn't know that Cézanne was influenced like all the rest of us, which detracts nothing from his qualities. People forget that Cézanne was first influenced by Delacroix, Courbet, Manet and even Legros, like all of us; he was influenced by me at Pontoise, and I by him. You may remember the sallies of Zola and Béliard in this regard. They imagined that artists are the sole inventors of their styles and to resemble someone else is to be unoriginal. Curiously enough, in Cézanne's show at Vollard's there are certain landscapes of Auvers and Pontoise that are similar to mine. Naturally, we were always

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 21 November 1895, Rewald, 1980, 275.
[2]Ibid.

> together! But what cannot be denied
> is that each of us kept the only
> thing that counts, the unique
> 'sensation'! This could easily be shown.[1]

Pissarro placed the quality of 'sensation' over that of 'style.' He accepted that an artist could work within a similar or the same style and still transmit a novel approach. He accepted influence as an unavoidable element, but, in the case of Gauguin, he also believed that the artist must remain within his own artistic tradition. He considered Gauguin's adaptation of primitive and Asian forms a step backwards. In the letter dated May 7, 1891, (see p. 52) Pissarro actually sought recognition for the role he had played in Cēzanne's development, however, in this letter he accepted, as inevitable, that artists working in close proximity would show similarities in style. What remained important was that each canvas could, through the individual perception of the artist, evoke a unique sensation.

Pissarro never derided any aspect of Cēzanne's work or personality. In a letter to his son, Pissarro divulged that the painter, Francisco Oller, had related to him that Cēzanne had verbally dismissed all the Impressionists, by

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[1]Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 22 November 1895, Rewald, 1980, 276.

stating, "Pissarro is an old fool, Monet a cunning fellow, they have nothing in them...I am the only one with temperament, I am the only one who can make a red!..."[1] Pissarro's response, as related to his son, was tolerant and understanding. "Is it not sad and a pity that a man endowed with such a beautiful temperament should have so little balance."[2]

Although Pissarro was forgiving, he must have been wounded by this comment. Unfortunately, he died before Cézanne revealed his true feelings about his most important teacher. In 1905, Cézanne told Jules Borély that Pissarro "fut un père pour moi. C'était un homme à consulter et quelque chose comme le bon Dieu."[3] In addition, in a letter to Emile Bernard, Cézanne referred to his mentor as the "humble and colossal Pissarro."[4] However, his greatest homage was simple and direct. In two exhibition catalogues, he identified himself as "Paul Cézanne, pupil of Pissarro."[5]

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[1] Camille to Lucien Pissarro, 20 January 1896, Rewald, 1980, 280.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Jules Borély, Vers et Prose, XXVII, 1911, 12 in Doran, 21.
[4] Rewald, 1973, 578-579.
[5] The exhibition catalogues date to 1902 and 1906, when Cézanne exhibited with a group of artists in Aix-en-Provence. Rewald, 1973, 579.

The underlying atmosphere surrounding Pissarro, Cézanne and Gauguin after 1885 was permeated by a fierce, aggressive competition - the product of a struggle for recognition. Justification of personal, artistic merit was sought at the expense of competitors. Gauguin and Cézanne both offered similar negative views concerning the value of Neo-Impressionism, and they censured their mentor for his involvement in the movement. However, despite the bickering and backstabbing, Cézanne and Gauguin did remember their debt to Pissarro, thereby acknowledging the importance of his contribution to their respective development. Pissarro, progressively more bitter, held Gauguin responsible for his own personal failings and the misrepresentation of the facts regarding Cézanne's development. Pissarro's statement: "Gauguin knows all about the Cézanne studies done in Auvers, Pontoise and elsewhere!" (see letter p. 51), is further proof, directly from Pissarro, of Gauguin's deep interest and close observation of Cézanne's work. Despite the antagonism competition engendered, Gauguin continued to discover positive qualities in Cézanne's work which were completely in harmony with his Symbolist orientation.

Chapter 4 Cézanne on Gauguin

Although it is generally accepted that Cézanne never saw any value in the art of Gauguin, only one letter to Emile Bernard (which will be dealt with presently), written by Cézanne himself, can be quoted to support this belief. Virtually all of the remaining evidence rests within secondary accounts that were published after Cézanne's death.

Emile Bernard was introduced to Cézanne's paintings by Gauguin in the mid 1880s, when he was a member of the Symbolist circle in Pont-Aven. In 1904, he visited Cézanne in Aix-en-Provence. A relationship grew out of this visit and the ensuing correspondence between Cézanne and Bernard has formed the basis of much of what is known today about Cézanne's theory of art. Within that correspondence rests the letter, dated April 15, 1904, in which Cézanne makes reference to Gauguin while offering Bernard a critique of a still life he painted in Cézanne's studio:

> Permettez moi de vous dire que j'ai revu votre étude faite du rez-de-chausée de l'atelier, elle est bonne. Vous n'avez, je crois, qu'à poursuivre dans cette voie, vous avez l'intelligence de ce qu'il faut faire et vous arriverez vite à tourner le dos aux Gauguin et aux Van Gogh![1]

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[1]Cézanne to Emile Bernard, Aix-en-Provence, 15 April 1904, Rewald, 1937, 259-260.

After spending time studying in Italy, Spain and Egypt, Bernard, in 1904, had disowned his Breton period and was working in a style which was based on classical values. However, Cézanne's comment "vous arriverez vite à tourner le dos aux Gauguin et aux Van Gogh," implies that, in his opinion, Bernard's work continued to show the influence of these artists.

Cézanne began his letter by urging Bernard to keep in mind the theoretical concepts they had previously discussed. He reminded Bernard to pay attention to the formal qualities of objects in space and to recognize the delicate balance between surface and depth in human perception.[1] In reminding Bernard of their past discussion, Cézanne seemed to be admonishing Bernard to attend to the present lessons and leave the past behind. Cézanne's closing remark regarding Gauguin and Van Gogh, which has been interpreted to express disapproval, may quite simply have been Cézanne's expression of the sage advice to be your own painter.

After Cézanne's death in 1906, the accounts of his animosity towards Gauguin multiplied. In 1907 Emile Bernard

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[1]Cézanne's words were, "...traiter la nature par le cylinder, la sphère, le cône," and "la nature, pour nous hommes, est plus en profondeur qu'en surface..."

and Maurice Denis both included disparaging references to Gauguin in their essays.[1] Bernard recalled that when he had raised the subject of Gauguin's admiration for Cézanne's paintings, Cézanne had responded angrily, saying:

> Il ne m'a pas compris, jamais je n'ai voulu et je n'accepterai jamais le manque de modelé ou de graduation; c'est un non-sens. Gauguin n'était pas peintre, il n'a fait que des images chinoises.[2]

Bernard, it must be remembered, had been hurt and had disavowed Gauguin in 1891 because Gauguin did not invite Bernard to participate in the exhibition of his paintings at the Hotel Drouot.[3] More importantly, he was upset because Gauguin had denied him his fair share of the credit in evolving the Symbolist style during the period of his closest collaboration with Gauguin. After the break between Bernard and Gauguin, one of the subjects of contention between the two artists was Cézanne. Seeking to emphasize his own influence on Gauguin, Bernard claimed, in a letter to

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[1] Emile Bernard, "Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne," Mercure de France, October 1 and 16, 1907, 385-404, 606-627 in Doran, 49-80. Maurice Denis, "Cézanne," L'Occident, September 1907 and later published in Maurice Denis, Théories: 1890-1910, Paris, 1920, 245-261.

[2] Bernard in Doran, 62-63.

[3] Henri Dorra, "Emile Bernard and Paul Gauguin," Gazette des Beaux-Arts 45 (April 1955), 244.

Chassē, that "(Gauguin) truly saw in my work and learnt the exposition of my ideas all that could be learned from Cēzanne."[1] Gauguin, in his predictable manner, intimated that Bernard was painting still lifes in order to sell them as original Cēzannes.[2] Keeping the underlying controversy in mind, Bernard's recollection of Cēzanne's words may be, in part, a reflection of his ongoing battle with Gauguin.

According to Maurice Denis, writing in 1907: "Il (Cēzanne) aimait à parler avec une apparante modestie de sa petite sensation, de sa petite sensibilitē. Il se plaignait que Gauguin la lui êut prise, et qu'il l'êut promenée dans tous les paquebots."[3]

Denis's statement can be traced back to comments supposedly made by Cēzanne during a luncheon hosted by Monet on November 28, 1894. Octave Mirbeau, who was in attendance, provided a longer and more descriptive rendition of Cēzanne's accusation in the preface to the exhibition catalogue, Cēzanne (Bernheim-Jeune, 1914). He wrote:

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[1]Bernard to Chassē in Ch. Chassē, Le mouvement symboliste dans l'art du XIXième siecle, Paris, 1947, 100 as quoted in H. R. Rookmaaker, Gauguin and 19th Century Art Theory, Amsterdam, 1972, note ai, 314.

[2]Gauguin, "Notes sur Bernard" (not dated), published in Dorra, 1955, Appendix II, 260.

[3]Denis, 261.

> Déjà il s'impatientait des emprunts de Gauguin. Un jour il nous disait; "Ce monsieur Gauguin, écoutez un peu...Oh! ce monsieur Gauguin... J'avais une petite sensation, une toute petite, toute petite sensation. Rien...ce n'était rien...ce n'était pas plus grand que ça... Mais enfin, elle était à moi, cette petite sensation. Eh bien! un jour, ce monsieur Gauguin, il me l'a prise. Et il est parti avec elle. Il l'a trimballée sur des paquebots, la pauvre!...à travers des Amériques...des Bretagnes et des Océanies, dans des champs de cannes à sucre et de pamplemousses...chez les nègres, est-ce que je sais? Est-ce que je sais ce qu'il en a fait? Et moi, maintenant, que voulez-vous j'en fasse? Ma pauvre petite sensation!" Et Cézanne soupirait, gémissait comme un enfant.[1]

Mirbeau's account portrays Cézanne as a weak, whimpering individual engulfed by self-pity. For what purpose? In all probability, Cézanne did express a negative opinion regarding Gauguin, however, Mirbeau appears to have embellished, exaggerated, and sensationalized Cézanne's comments to provide a 'lively' account to guarantee his readership. In doing so, Mirbeau effectively insured that the negative aspect of the Cézanne/Gauguin relationship would be the principle focus of subsequent accounts of the interaction between these two artists.

In 1922, Gustave Geffroy's, Claude Monet, sa vie, son oeuvre was published and, in this volume, Geffroy quoted

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[1]Octave Mirbeau, preface to Cézanne, Bernheim-Jeune, 1914, as quoted in Merhlès, n. 3, 351.

Mirbeau's description of Cézanne's outburst at Giverny with the following statement:

> ...s'emportant contre un autre peintre qu'il accusait de lui avoir "volé sa petite sensation." Il y revenait sans cesse: "Je n'avais qu'une petite sensation, Monsieur Gauguin me l'a volée!" Il n'admirait pas beaucoup...[1]

The repetition of Mirbeau's account provided evidence to substantiate Geffroy's claim that Cézanne was very critical of all of his contemporaries except Monet. In this same passage, Geffroy wrote that Cézanne considered Monet to be the greatest of all the painters and that he (Cézanne) would add his work to the Louvre.[2] Thus, in recounting Mirbeau's words, Geffroy elevated Monet's reputation at the expense of Gauguin.

There is one seldom cited recollection which provides an opposite point of view from the accepted opinion that Cézanne disliked Gauguin and dismissed his art. It is by Joachim Gasquet, one of Cézanne's earliest biographers, who was the son of one of Cézanne's childhood friends. A writer and poet, Gasquet, like Cézanne, had very strong

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[1]Gustave Geffroy, Claude Monet, sa vie, son oeuvre, Paris, [2]1922, 198 in Doran, 4.
[2]Ibid.

ties to their native Provence, and the two men maintained a close friendship between 1896 and 1900. Gasquet's book, Cézanne, was written during the winter of 1912-13, and first published in 1921.[1] On the subject of Gauguin, Gasquet wrote:

> He (Cézanne) spoke to me and always sympathetically, of van Gogh, two of whose pictures he enjoyed looking at at my house, and of Paul Gauguin; I don't believe he ever went to see them at Arles, as some have claimed. He ran into Gauguin at old Tanguy's and in cafés, but not often.[2]

Gasquet drew much of his information on Cézanne from the earlier accounts of Bernard (1904 and 1907), Denis (1907) and Vollard (1914). He also contributed his own observations, providing an account which is believed to reveal more of Cézanne's personality than the previous publications.[3] Joachim Gasquet offered a completely different understanding of the Gauguin/Cézanne relationship.

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[1] Joachim Gasquet, Cézanne, Paris, (1921) 1926, excerpts in Doran, 106-161 and Joachim Gasquet, Joachim Gasquet's Cézanne: A Memoir with Conversations, trans. Christopher Pemberton, London, 1991.

[2] Gasquet, 1991, 100.

[3] Richard Shiff in the introduction to Gasquet, 1991, 15. Emile Bernard, "Paul Cézanne," L'Occident, Paris, July 1904, 17-30. Ambroise Vollard, Paul Cézanne, Paris, 1914.

According to Gasquet, Cézanne had a superficial, yet cordial, relationship with Gauguin. They were passing acquaintances who ran into each other occasionally. Of even greater importance, there is no record of any vehement response from Cézanne on the subject of Gauguin.

As presented here, there is a sufficient amount of conflicting, controversial, and exaggerated material obscuring what Cézanne actually thought of Gauguin. It is possible to interpret Mirbeau's claim that Cézanne accused Gauguin of stealing his sensation as a contradiction of Bernard's recollection that Cézanne believed that Gauguin did not understand him. According to Mirbeau, there was an accusation of complete appropriation, yet, Bernard reported a failure on Gauguin's part to grasp the basic tenets of Cézanne's paintings.

It should be acknowledged that Cézanne, at times, spoke disparagingly of all of his contemporaries. Also, as confirmed by a 1906 letter to his son, Paul, a degree of paranoia was part of his character. Regarding his perception of how he was viewed by the painters of his generation, Cézanne wrote: "Je crois les jeunes peintres beaucoup plus intelligents que les autres, les vieux ne peuvent voir en moi qu'un rival désastreux."[1]

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[1]Cézanne to his son, 15 October 1906, Rewald, 1937, 297-98.

Except for Cēzanne's letter to Bernard, dated April 15, 1904, which may be interpreted to reflect only artistic guidance, there is no really concrete evidence from Cēzanne's lifetime which suggests that he harbored an 'excessive' amount of hostility towards Gauguin. The opinion that Cēzanne disliked Gauguin and dismissed his art was primarily based on sensationalistic writing and personal ambition, and as with Geffroy, it could serve ulterior motives. Not surprisingly, since conflict is generally more entertaining than harmony, Joachim Gasquet's recollection, which contradicts both Bernard and Mirbeau, was given little notice in later accounts of the two artists.

Chapter 5 Gauguin's Followers and Cézanne

Following the death of Gauguin in 1903, Maurice Denis wrote an article which was designed not to evaluate Gauguin's life work but to record Gauguin's influence on the artists of his own time.[1] Denis clearly placed Gauguin at the head of the Symbolist movement. Although he acknowledged Emile Bernard's contention that Gauguin was not the creator of Symbolism, he succinctly stated, "...(Gauguin) was the master, and the undisputed one."[2] Gauguin, in Denis' estimation, had been responsible for freeing artists from academic convention and for allowing artists to experience the "joy of self-expression" by granting his students the freedom to use lyricism and exaggeration as freely as poets.[3]

Denis related the story of Gauguin's famous painting lesson in which Gauguin had taught Paul Sérusier to paint what the eye perceived in the brightest, purest colors possible. The outcome of this lesson was the painting, Landscape of the Bois d'Amour at Pont-Aven (1888, Denis Family Collection, Saint- Germain-en-Laye). When Sérusier showed the painting to his friends at the Julian Academy,

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[1]Maurice Denis, "The Influence of Paul Gauguin," L'Occident, October, 1903. Reprinted in Chipp, 100-105.
[2]Denis, 1903 in Chipp, 102.
[3]Denis, 1903 in Chipp, 103.

the small landscape sparked their imagination, and, believing that Gauguin's lesson was the key to a new direction, they rechristened the painting The Talisman. According to Denis, the lesson revealed "that every work of art was a transposition, a caricature, the passionate equivalent of a sensation received."[1] With this new direction in mind, Denis then disclosed that the young artists discovered, "with such emotion," Paul Cézanne.[2]

In the article, Denis also wrote:

> He (Gauguin) revealed Cézanne's art to us not as that of an independent genius, or of an irregular from the school of Manet, but as what it actually is, the outcome of a long effort and the necessary result of a great crisis.[3]

This statement is significant in revealing that Gauguin had offered a new interpretation of Cézanne which placed his art outside mainstream Impressionist criticism. Denis' acknowledgement that Gauguin "revealed Cézanne" together with his proclamation that Gauguin was the "undisputed leader" identify Gauguin as an influential figure in the eyes of the younger generation. The extent to which the

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[1]Denis, 1903 in Chipp, 101.
[2]Denis, 1903 in Chipp, 101.
[3]Denis, 1903 in Chipp, 102.

young artists accepted Cézanne as a painter to be followed and admired and how they began to interpret his paintings thus reflects, in large part, Gauguin's teachings on the subject of Cézanne.

The most evocative image which records Cézanne's place of honor among the Symbolists is Homage to Cézanne (fig.15) painted by Maurice Denis in 1900. Cézanne is not represented by his person but, symbolically, by his painting, Still Life with Compotier. Gathered around the still life are Odilon Redon, one of Symbolism's founding fathers, and six artists, all of whom were followers of Gauguin: Edouard Vuillard, Ker Xavier Roussel, Maurice Denis, Paul Sérusier, Paul Ranson, and Pierre Bonnard. Denis also chose to portray Ambroise Vollard, the art dealer in whose gallery the group had gathered and who was by 1900 the agent representing both Cézanne and Gauguin, André Mellerio, a Symbolist writer and critic, and his wife, Marthe Denis.

Still Life with Compotier is the same painting which was once owned by Gauguin and it is the work which Maszkowski recalled had been repeatedly used by Gauguin as an instructional model to explain Cézanne to his followers.[1] Vollard, in his memoirs, also confirmed the importance

[1]Bodelsen, 1970, 606.

of this work for Gauguin by writing that it "held pride of place in Gauguin's studio in 1894."[1]

Undoubtedly, Denis was aware that Gauguin had owned the still life and although Vollard wrote that Denis saw and copied the painting at the home of Dr. Viau,[2] discussions among the Symbolists must have alerted Denis to this particular painting much earlier. Sérusier had recalled that when Gauguin was embarking on a new still life he would inevitably remark: "Let's make a Cézanne,"[3] which, without doubt, would bring to mind Still Life with Compotier, Gauguin's favorite Cézanne painting.

By 1900, Cézanne had received critical acclaim. His works were more in evidence. Out of the numerous still lifes available, Denis chose to portray the painting once owned by Gauguin for a particular reason. Perhaps Denis' painting was intended as much as a tribute to Gauguin as it was to Cézanne, for it was Gauguin who had worked so actively to place Cézanne's art in the minds of the younger generation, and often with this very work as his instruction piece.

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[1] Ambroise Vollard, Recollections of a Picture Dealer, Paris, 1936, 62.
[2] Vollard, 62.
[3] Sérusier to Chassé, R. Rey, Gauguin, Paris, 1928, 25 as quoted in Rewald, 1956, 308.

Although Homage to Cézanne can stand alone as a conclusive statement immortalizing Cézanne's stature among the Symbolists, the writings of André Mellerio, Maurice Denis, Emile Bernard and Paul Sérusier provide further evidence for the extent to which Gauguin's followers adopted Cézanne as one of their heroes. Common to each of these writers was a desire to illuminate the classical tendencies in Cézanne's art. At the same time, they shared an interpretation of Cézanne which was strongly Symbolist in language and which echoed the sentiments Gauguin had expressed as early as 1885.

André Mellerio, whose image was included in Homage to Cézanne, discussed Cézanne's work in Le mouvement idéaliste en peinture (1896):

> In Cézanne there is something at once naive and refined. Of nature he gives a version all his own in which the juxtaposition of hues and the arrangement of lines make his so forthright painting a kind of synthesis of colours and forms in their intrinsic beauty. It is as if he wished to restore to each object its original form, intact, not devitalized by art practices, its true and essential lustre.[1]

[1] André Mellerio, Le mouvement idéaliste en peinture, Paris 1896, 18 as quoted in Lionello Venturi, Cézanne, New York, 1978, 40.

Mellerio's 1896 description, which focuses on Cézanne's ability to use color and line and synthesis to reveal an essential truth, makes him the first critic to allude to the Symbolist character of Cézanne's paintings.[1]

Emile Bernard's earliest article on Cézanne was written in 1891.[2] In this essay, he referred to Cézanne as a pure painter, who "opens for art that surprising door: painting for its own sake."[3] Bernard's connection to Gauguin was very close until 1891, and his words seem to express the same conclusion Gauguin had previously reached in 1884 when he wrote; "voilà des merveilles d'un art essentiellement pur" in regard to Cézanne's painting.[4] In the article, Bernard also specifically cited Gauguin as an authority on Cézanne by quoting Gauguin's appraisal of the master's paintings in which he had proclaimed: "There is nothing that looks as much like a daub as a masterpiece."[5]

Bernard's 1904 essay claimed Cézanne for the Neoclassical revival, but the words he wrote were strongly Symbolist in language and ideas when he wrote:

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[1]Venturi, 1978, 41.
[2]Emile Bernard, "Paul Cézanne," Les Hommes d'Aujourdhui, VIII, No. 387, 1891, reprinted in Nochlin, 98-102.
[3]Bernard, 1891 in Nochlin, 100.
[4]Gauguin to Pissarro, July 1884. See page 24.
[5]Bernard, 1891 in Nochlin, 102.

> I say that Cézanne is a painter with a mystical temperament by reason of his purely abstract and aesthetic vision of things...he is content with certain harmonies of lines and tones taken from just any objects, without troubling about these objects in themselves, like a musician who...would be satisfied with making series of chords whose exquisite nature would infallibly plunge us into something beyond art...[1]

Bernard's reference to Cézanne's "mystical temperament" and his comparison of Cézanne's art to music must have originated with Gauguin who, in 1885, had been the first to describe Cézanne's temperament and art in mystical terms and who had frequently written about the correspondence between art and music.

In 1905, Charles Morice, Gauguin's friend and biographer and the editor of the Mercure de France, polled his readers concerning their views on the current status of modern art.[2] Paul Sérusier, who by reason of The Talisman, was the student most personally influenced by Gauguin, sent Morice the following thoughts on Cézanne regarding his contribution to the modern movement:

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[1]Emile Bernard,"Paul Cézanne," L'Occident, July 1904, 17-30, reprinted in Judith Wechsler, ed., Cézanne in Perspective, New Jersey, 1975, 43-44.

[2]Charles Morice, "Enquête sur les tendances actuelles des arts plastique," Mercure de France, Paris, LVI, No. 195, 1 August 1905.

> He showed clearly that imitation is merely a means and that the only aim is to arrange lines and colours on a given surface in such a way as to charm the eye, speak to the spirit, and finally to create a language by purely plastic means, or even to rediscover the universal language.[1]

Sérusier's response began by stating that Cézanne was the initiator in "the resurrection of all the solid, pure, classical arts." However, his words restate the lesson of The Talisman. Sérusier appears to also consider Cézanne's contribution to be close to the notion of Symbolic correspondences, since Cézanne's plastic means are thought to correspond to a universally comprehensible language.

In 1907, "Cézanne" by Maurice Denis, appeared in L'Occident.[2] In this article, Denis sought to define Cézanne as a classicist. But, as Venturi has noted, as with Mellerio, Bernard and Sérusier, Denis' argument is expressed in the language of Symbolism rather than that of Classicism.[3] In fact, in this essay, Denis provided the strongest argument for defining Cézanne as a Symbolist when he quoted Cézanne as stating:

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[1]Paul Sérusier, Mercure de France, vol. LVI, no. 196, 15 August 1905, 544 in Wechsler, 1975, 47.
[2]Maurice Denis, "Cézanne," L'Occident, September 1907, reprinted in Denis, 1920, 245-261.
[3]Venturi, 1973, 45.

> La nature j'ai voulu la copier, je n'arriverai pas. Mais j'ai été content de moi lorsque j'ai découvert que le soleil, par exemple, ne se pouvait pas reproduire, mais qu'il fallait le représenter par autre choses...par de la couleur.[1]

Denis explained that this statement by Cézanne was equal to the definition of Symbolism as it was understood in 1890. He also wrote that the painters of this period, above all Gauguin, had an unequivocal admiration for Cézanne. He brought Odilon Redon into the discussion, explaining that Redon sought to express, through plastic equivalents, his emotions and dreams. In speaking about Redon, Denis stated that he hoped to make more explicit his definition of Cézanne and concluded that, "tous deux s'expriment au moyen d'une méthode qui a pour but de créer un objet concret, à la fois beau et représentatif d'une sensibilité."[2] Thus, in 1907, Denis put into words the message he wished to convey in Homage to Cézanne. In doing so, he revealed that in his understanding there was a strong Symbolist orientation in Cézanne.

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[1]Denis, 1920, 253.
[2]Denis, 1920, 254.

Conclusion

In a 1975 essay, George Levitine made the following remarks concerning clichés in art history:

> Art history is overflowing with clichés. In fact, most writings about art - books, surveys, essays, and articles - are almost as replete with clichés as Gustave Flaubert's Dictionnaire des idées reçues. Clichés possess a life of their own. Without any attempt at levity, one can state that they are immensely important, for they tellingly reflect mutations of aesthetic points of view, as well as the degree of arteriosclerosis effecting the critical thinking of a given era. For this reason, at the risk of sounding trite, it is possible to observe that, for the scholar, clichés can be simultaneously revealing and misleading: they convey an image of a certain cultural moment seen for a certain (not necessarily the same) standpoint but their insistent repetitiousness, brutalizing this image, blurs the lucidity of art historical vision.[1]

Levitine's words are, in effect, a warning to the scholar for they emphasize the importance of critical thinking, particularly when the scholar is faced with a universally accepted fact. This may sound obvious, even trite, as Levitine fears; however, the literature pertaining

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[1]George Levitine, "Trompe-l'oeil versus Utopia: The Context of Early Nineteenth-Century Primitivism," Search for Innocence: Primitivistic Art of 19th Century, College Park, Md., 1975, 11.

to Cézanne and Gauguin provides a specific example demonstrating that the persistent repetition of the overly familiar and commonplace continues and has, in this case, obscured our understanding of the interaction between these two artists.

The accepted viewpoint pertaining to the relationship between Cézanne and Gauguin has been limited by boundaries that were defined by the generation of writers who began working in Cézanne's and Gauguin's lifetime. For this reason, the clichés are often difficult to identify because they have come down to the present day with the unquestioned authenticity provided by an 'on the scene' reporter. Not only did the subsequent repetition of certain unquestioned statements create the clichés which blurred our understanding, the clichés actually worked to discourage further investigation.

An analysis of the literature reveals that there is a lack of reliable information upon which to base a conclusive statement about Cézanne's actual feelings for Gauguin. His personal feelings have been transmitted through the eyes of others and often with a biased point of view. After 1885, there is no doubt that competition was responsible for the breakdown in relations between Pissarro and Gauguin. At the same time, it has been shown that Cézanne was not immune to this competitive atmosphere, for he admonished Pissarro for his Pointillist direction and

declared himself superior to his Impressionist colleagues. Since both Cézanne and Gauguin later paid tribute to Pissarro, their condemnation of Pissarro after 1885 can be viewed as temporary and most likely fueled by artistic self-interest. The accepted view of the Cézanne/Gauguin relationship was fostered within this climate and is consistent with the divisive nature of a competitive environment. Although there is no evidence to suggest that Cézanne was on friendly terms with Gauguin, it may, perhaps, be a mistake to believe that Cézanne harbored a greater amount of hostility for Gauguin than he did for the majority of his fellow artists.

It was in the interest of writers to highlight the dissension between the three artists, to a certain extent, for the purpose of generating readership or emphasizing a particular point of view. Thus, the true nature of their relationship was transformed, through repetition, descriptive elaboration, and magnification. In time, the myth assumed the guise of truth, an accident of history that has blurred the reality scholars seek to understand.

The documents which prove Gauguin's admiration for Cézanne, as well as the Cézanne paintings Gauguin collected and studied, reveal that Cézanne was an important model in the germinal stages of Gauguin's own art and theory. Gauguin was attracted to Cézanne's art in the late 1870s. As his commitment to art deepened, Gauguin re-evaluated

Cézanne's art and began to discover characteristics, namely Cézanne's use of color and the emotive potential of his paintings, which were consistent with the direction he was following.

As a Symbolist, Gauguin called upon the traits in Cézanne's art, which he could then identify as Symbolist, to transmit his understanding and appreciation of Cézanne's work to the younger artists under his influence. Gauguin did not conceal his source. He was open and free in sharing his insights with his followers. The esteem and honor which was subsequently bestowed upon Cézanne by Symbolist artists and writers can only be viewed as a direct reflection of Gauguin's words and actions.

The interaction between Cézanne and Gauguin appears to have been unilateral. At this time, there is no evidence which demonstrates that Cézanne accepted or even received any artistic stimulation from Gauguin. However, the notion that Cézanne dismissed Gauguin's art contains within it the implication that Cézanne never viewed himself as a Symbolist, and it has restricted research in this area. A further evalution of Cézanne's oeuvre, if it is liberated from this idea, may reveal that Cézanne and Gauguin could have shared similar objectives.

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Fig. 1 Georges Manzana Pissarro, An Impressionist Picnic c1881.

Fig. 2. Camille Pissarro, Portrait of Paul Cézanne, 1874.

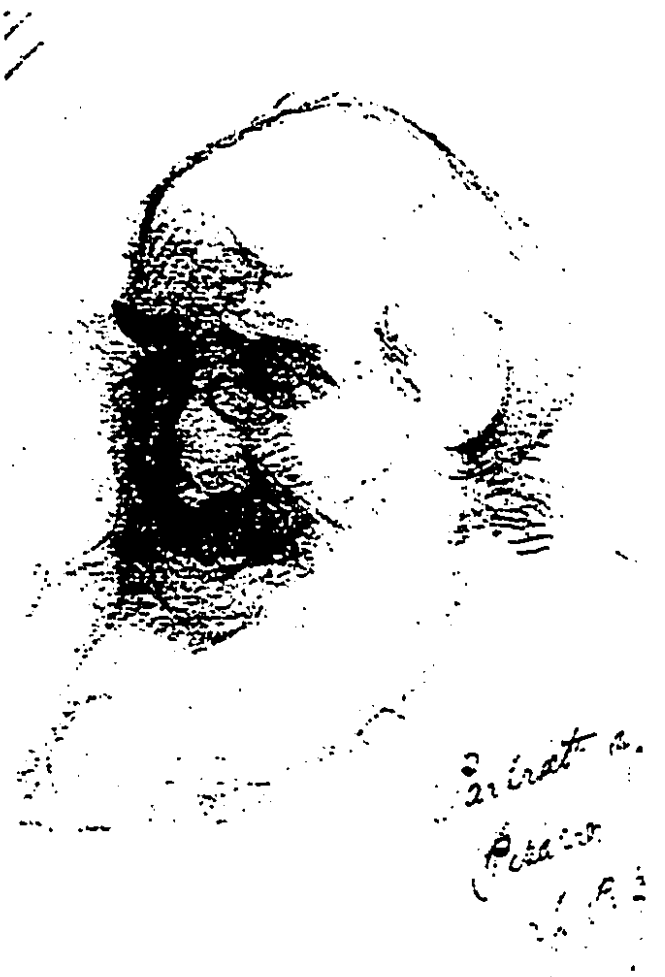

Fig. 3. Paul Gauguin, Portrait of Camille Pissarro, 1880.

Fig. 4. Paul Gauguin, Apple Trees in the Hermitage Neighborhood of Pontoise, 1879.

Fig. 5. Portrait of Gauguin by Pissarro Juxtaposed with Portrait of Pissarro by Gauguin, 1879-1883.

Fig. 6. "Le Salon par Stock" from Stock Album, 1870.

Fig. 7. Paul Gauguin, Nude Study. Suzanne Sewing, 1880.

Fig. 8. Paul Cēzanne, Château at Mēdan, 1879-81.

Fig. 9. Paul Cézanne, Avenue of Zola's Country House.

Fig. 10. Paul Cézanne, Mountains - L'Estaque, 1889-90.

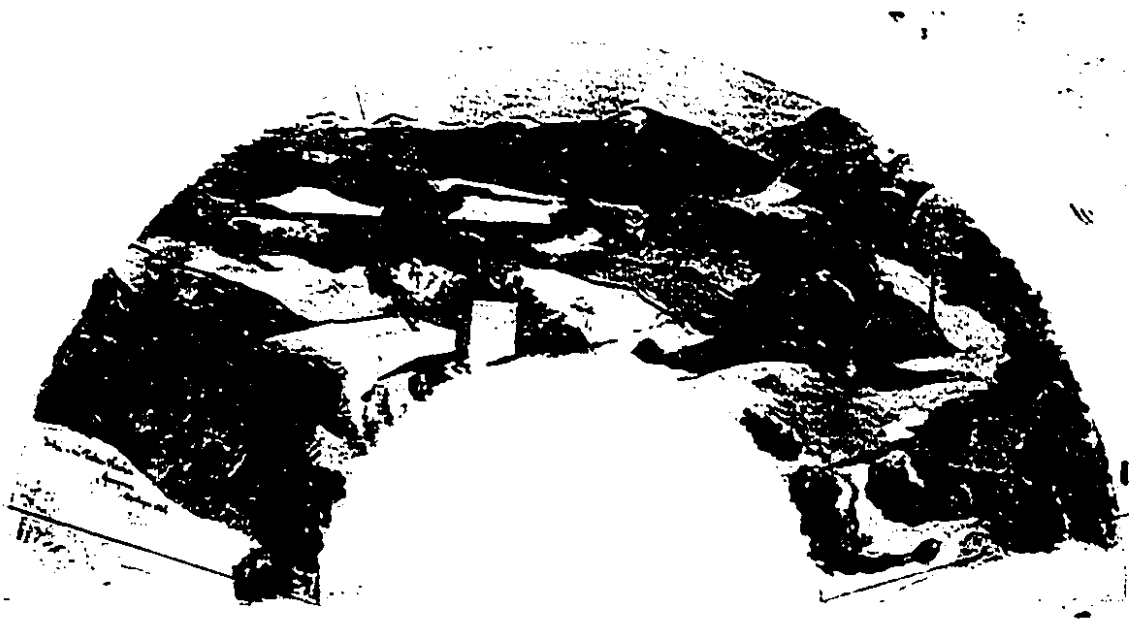

Fig. 11. Paul Gauguin, Fan with Landscape after Paul Cézanne, 1885.

Fig. 12. Paul Cézanne, Still Life with Compotier, 1879-82.

Fig. 13. Paul Gauguin, Portrait of a Woman with Still Life by Cézanne, 1890.

Fig. 14 (left). Paul Cézanne, Mme. Cézanne in a Red Armchair, 1877.
Fig. 15 (right). Paul Cézanne, Portrait of Mme. Cézanne, 1881-82.

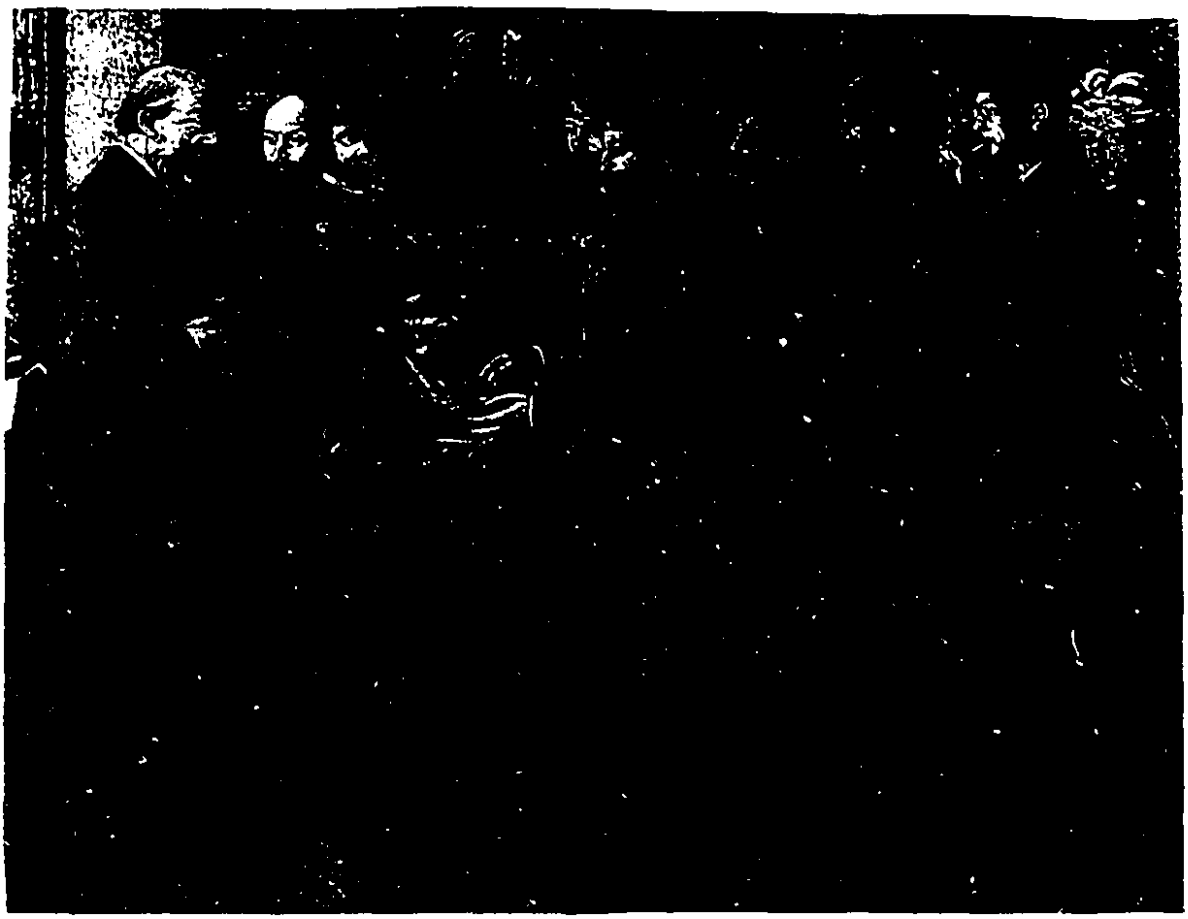

Fig. 16. Maurice Denis, Homage to Cézanne, 1900.

Fig. 17. Paul Cēzanne, The Harvest, 1880.

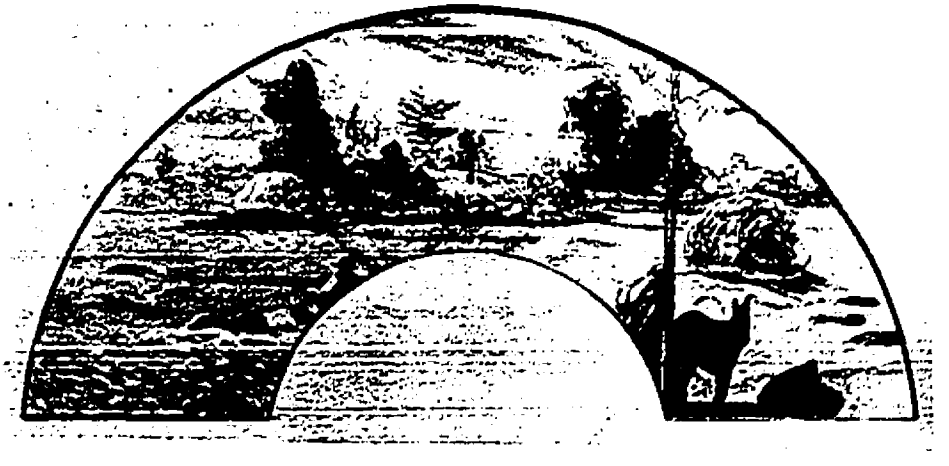

Fig. 18. Paul Gauguin, Study for a Fan (with motifs from Cēzanne's The Harvest. before 1884.