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ÉCOLE DE PARIS IN AND OUT OF PARIS (1928–1930): A TRANSREGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE EXHIBITIONS OF THE “SCHOOL OF PARIS” IN VENICE, CAMBRIDGE, RECIFE, SÃO PAULO, AND RIO DE JANEIRO

Summary:

This article examines how art exhibitions shaped the label “École de Paris” (School of Paris) in transregional dynamics between 1928 and 1930. Since 1925, art critics used the term “École de Paris” to describe art from Paris, especially from the Montparnasse district, which was created in an internationalized artistic milieu. Since its emergence and when used in exhibitions, the label has been highly ambivalent and has allowed different views of Paris as a migrant city and center of modern art. On the one hand, exhibitions of the School of Paris demonstrated the involvement of artists and critics in a vibrant, leading art center, and on the other, they were always part of tendencies abroad that coped with or counteracted the hegemony of Paris. Around 1930, “École de Paris” exhibitions were already an internationally spread phenomenon. This essay focuses on three of them: the first monographic exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 1928, an exhibition at the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art in Cambridge, MA (1929), and a traveling exhibition in Brazil in Recife, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (1930). I will ask how artists, curators and critics appropriated, relocated, and transformed this label outside Paris and analyze exhibition catalogues and press material on these three cases. First, I will demonstrate that the “École de Paris”, as an art-critical and institutional label of the Parisian interwar period, oscillated between nationalist and cosmopolitan claims. Second, I present two strategies of School of Paris exhibitions abroad that served artists and critics: one highlighting national art in other countries and competing with Parisian hegemony in art (Venice and Cambridge, MA), and one embracing its cosmopolitan universalism (Recife/Rio de Janeiro/São Paulo).

Key words:

exhibition history, modern art, art and migration, transregional dynamics

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the Paris quarter of Montparnasse became a focal point for an internationalized art field, and artists' transnational mobility and migration laid the basis for the city's image as cosmopolitan hub. Art critics and curators of the interwar period soon used the term *École de Paris* ("School of Paris") for artists who immigrated to the French capital, and more rarely for French artists who attracted these foreigners with their art and academies, thus underscoring Paris's status as a center of modern art. In the recent past, numerous studies on the School of Paris have focused on the role of foreign artists within the Parisian art scene and its dynamics of inclusion and exclusion (cf. Kangaslahti 2011, Kangaslahti 2009, Krebs 2009, Andral and Krebs 2000). The present article, however, examines how the label was shaped within transregional dynamics. It focuses on artists and critics that were both active within Paris and curated exhibitions of the School of Paris elsewhere. Thus, they transformed and relocated the label and the implied image of Paris as a center of modern art and a site of migrant artists.

The School of Paris is very difficult to characterize, because it does not constitute a homogenous artistic movement, stylistic approach, or consistent stable of artists in its exhibitions. This is why Sophie Krebs described it as an art-critical label that later was adopted by art institutions (Krebs 2009: 62–130, 365–448). The art critic André Warnod coined the term in the newspaper *Comœdia* in 1925, whereupon it made its way into art-critical and art historical writings and museums.¹ He described Paris—and more precisely, the Montparnasse district—as the outstanding center of attraction for artists from all over the world, including Amedeo Modigliani, Chaïm Soutine, Marc Chagall, Tsuguharu Foujita, and Pablo Picasso.² "School of Paris" was an ambivalent label. On the one hand, art critics linked it to the ideal of freedom and peaceful coexistence of foreign and French artists who pursued cubism and expressive figuration. Thus, they justified artistic migration to the city and rejected the existing xenophobia and anti-Semitism of the French art scene. On the other hand, in the service of more nationalist positions, the label confirmed the hegemony of the French capital over international modern art.³ In both cases, the School of Paris was closely linked to an image of Paris as a center of modern art that could be formulated in different ways.

It is certain that the label appeared first in Paris. But the School of Paris was by no means a local matter in the years that followed. Numerous international exhibitions relocated the image of Paris as a migrants' city abroad. The first

1 André Warnod used the term for the first time in two articles, "L'État et l'Art vivant", *Comœdia*, January 4, 1925, and "L'École de Paris," *Comœdia*, January 27, 1925. He elaborated his view on the School of Paris in his book *Les berceaux de la jeune peinture*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1925. For a detailed discussion of the concept "École de Paris," cf. Fabre 2000.

2 Warnod dedicated individual chapters in his monograph to the artists Amedeo Modigliani and Jules Pascin. Women artists only played a peripheral role in his monograph, and he mentions Marie Laurencin, Hermine David, Valentine Prax, Mela Muter, and Alice Halicka, among others, in the chapter "Les femmes peintres." (Warnod 1925c, 226–230).

3 For the ambiguities of the School of Paris label within Parisian art criticism and art institutions cf. Kangaslahti 2009.

monographic exhibition of the School of Paris did not take place in Paris, but in Venice (1928). An exhibition in Cambridge, Massachusetts (1929), and a traveling exhibition through Brazil, in Recife, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro (1930), also took place. Many others followed, but it is these three exhibitions in Italy, the United States, and Brazil that I will examine here in more detail.⁴ They show how the label of the School of Paris, oscillating between cosmopolitanism and nationalism, was shaped within transregional dynamics. Furthermore, these exhibitions shed light on a phenomenon that is rarely addressed when analyzing the School of Paris. The artists and art critics examined here were transmigrants, and were active at more than one site of modern art.⁵ They often maintained close ties not only to their adopted country but also to their place of origin.

Within this chronological micro-perspective on the globally scattered phenomenon of School of Paris exhibitions, I intend to highlight the active role of artists and critics involved in the circulation and relocation of the image of Paris as a center of migration. We will see how artists and critics from Paris and abroad collaborated on the international exhibitions of the School of Paris. On the one hand, these exhibitions demonstrated the involvement of artists and critics in a vibrant, leading art center, and on the other, they were always part of tendencies abroad that coped with or counteracted the hegemony of Paris. To examine these aspects, I analyze exhibition catalogues and press material on the international School of Paris exhibitions between 1928 and 1930, which thus far have been underexposed. First, I will demonstrate that the School of Paris, as an art-critical and institutional label of the Parisian interwar period, oscillated between nationalist and cosmopolitan claims. Second, I present two strategies of School of Paris exhibitions abroad that served artists and critics: one highlighting national art in other countries and competing with Parisian hegemony in art (Venice 1928, and Cambridge, MA, 1929), and one embracing its cosmopolitan universalism (Recife/Rio de Janeiro/São Paulo, 1930).

The School of Paris Label between Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism within Paris

In Paris of the interwar period, the School of Paris label was coevolving with the internationalization of the art scene in Montparnasse. Parisian art critics used it both to exclude foreign artists from the Parisian art scene as a separate case

4 The School of Paris had previously been part of the traveling exhibition *Exposition multinationale* (1927) in Berlin, Bern, Paris, London, and New York. In 1928 the School of Paris provided a large part of the *Exposition de l'Art français contemporain* in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. The first monographic exhibition in Venice was followed by the abovementioned exhibitions and by exhibitions at, for example, the Galerie Pleyel in Paris (1928), Wildenstein & Company in New York (1930), the Municipal House in Prague (1931), the Lefevre Galleries in London (1932), and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (1932). In 1932 the Musée du Jeu de Paume in Paris set up Room 14 for the School of Paris.

5 For the concept of transmigration cf. Glick Schiller 1995.

and to include them as an integral part of French art (cf. Kangaslahti 2009, 166f.). As I will point out, in Parisian art criticism the label was both used for nationalist and cosmopolitan claims. Warnod repeatedly referred to Paris, and Montparnasse in particular, as the world center of modern art, and the arrival of foreign artists evidenced this fact. In this sense, the School of Paris meant not only a welcoming of the artists' migration to the city, but was in conformity with more nationalist narratives on modern art, underlining the prominent role of the French capital in the universal development of modern art. These ambivalent implications oscillating between cosmopolitan ideals and French universalism were also used within the Montparnasse art scene to ascribe central importance to artistic activity there. I will therefore examine the ambiguities of Warnod's concept of the School of Paris and its transfer to the art scene of Montparnasse in the case of the magazine *Montparnasse*.

The Montparnasse district was already an important contact point for foreign artists in Paris before and after the caesura of the First World War (cf. Lambert 2014, Fraquelli 2002, Crespelle 1976). During the 1920s the quarter offered a low-priced alternative to the increasingly expensive Latin Quarter. Also contrasting with the artists' quarter Montmartre, and its charm of the *fin de siècle*, Montparnasse was appreciated for its progressiveness and lack of tradition. Free art academies like the *Académie de la Grande Chaumière* and the *Académie André Lhote* gave foreign artists easy access. Furthermore, cafés like *La Rotonde*, *Le Dôme*, and *Café du Parnasse* played a central role for the newcomers to Montparnasse. Often without well-equipped accommodation, foreign artists and intellectuals could dine here, establish new contacts, and find out about events in their home countries through the international press provided. Especially for Jewish artists from Eastern Europe, who experienced political persecution and repression, the quarter offered an important refuge (cf. Nieszawer et al. 2000). But also numerous artists and intellectuals from other European countries, Japan, and Latin America came to Montparnasse (cf. Greet 2018, Kaspi 2009). Artists from North America profited from the favorable exchange rate, especially before the financial crisis of 1929, and the free lifestyle, in contrast to the Prohibition era in the United States (cf. Lévy and Derouet 2003, Fraquelli 2002, 112). Jazz music and the *revue nègre* with its famous dancer, Josephine Baker, increased the popularity and interest in black culture, and African-American artists who passed through Paris could get access to art academies that remained for the most part inaccessible to them in the United States (cf. Blanchard et al. 2001, 66–107).

All these developments meant that Montparnasse was extremely international in the interwar years. Its heterogeneity, however, was subject to constant hostility from xenophobic and anti-Semitic French critics.⁶ One of the fiercest opponents was Camille Mauclair. In his polemic two-volume *La farce de l'art vivant*, he assaulted Montparnasse as a place of internationalist and bolshevist excesses, of irreversible decay, and of the decline of French art (Mauclair 1929,

6 Romy Golan describes the growing nationalism and xenophobia in the French art world and art criticism (Golan 1995, 137–154; Golan 1985, 80–87).

Mauclair 1930).⁷ There were also attempts in the independent exhibition scene to restrain the multinational mixture of the art scene. In view of the increasing participation of foreign artists, in 1924 the *Salon des indépendants* established a display organized by nationality. Many foreign artists, who were no longer exhibited in the main part of the salon but in more remote rooms, felt excluded and protested against the measure in consequence (cf. Golan 1995, 139–140, Fabre 2000, 34–35).

As Sophie Krebs and Kate Kangaslahti have pointed out, the concept of the School of Paris, described by critic André Warnod in his articles in *Comœdia* and in his book *Les berceaux de la jeune peinture* in 1925, helped to counter such developments (Krebs 2009, 87–90, Kangaslahti 2009, 170–175). Warnod integrated immigrated artists into a narrative about French art, thus acknowledging their contribution to modern art. He compared the forces of the School of Paris with that of the former *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, except that it was not institutionalized. According to Warnod, it spread the reputation of French art and attracted artists from all over the world. He emphasized the benefits of this artistic migration movement:

It is certain in any case that Paris is currently an extremely active art center and that in this concert the French, those of yesterday and those of today, occupy the best place. The French art of today is of a prodigious richness. What moral and even material benefits would France derive from this supremacy, if it were official that it ruled over the art of all the countries of the world!⁸ (Warnod 1925c, 8–9)

Although the critic uses a national-chauvinist rhetoric here, his concept of the School of Paris contained an open concept of French art that embraced foreign influences and heterogeneity. Thus, Warnod's idea of the School of Paris drew on the legal basis of French citizenship that was grounded not on ethnic descent or blood, but on residence and socialization.⁹ Emphasizing the superiority of French art, he nevertheless actively supported foreign artists in Paris. In his monograph, he especially highlighted foreign artists who had come to Paris before the First World War, such as Tsuguharu Foujita, Amedeo Modigliani, Jules Pascin, and Marc Chagall.¹⁰

7 These two volumes are the result of a campaign conducted by Mauclair between 1928 and 1929 in *L'Ami du Peuple* and *Le Figaro*.

8 “Il est certain en tout cas que Paris est actuellement un foyer d'art extrêmement actif et que dans ce concert les Français, ceux d'hier et ceux d'aujourd'hui, ont la meilleure place. L'art français d'à présent est d'une prodigieuse richesse. Quels bénéfices moraux et même matériels tirerait la France de cette suprématie, si c'est officiellement qu'elle régnait sur l'art de tous les pays du monde!”

9 Kangaslahti therefore underlines the proximity of Warnod's concept of the School of Paris to the legal basis of French citizenship, the *jus soli*, which contrasts with the *jus sanguinis* (Kangaslahti 2009, 178–180).

10 Furthermore, Warnod supported foreign artists in countless articles for *Comœdia*; for example, the Mexican artist Carlos Bracho or the German painter Helmut Kalle. See *Comœdia*, October 11, 1925, and December 3, 1926.



Front and back cover of the exhibition catalogue *Les cent du Parnasse*, June 1921, *Café du Parnasse*, Paris.

Warnod's writing strongly oscillates between French superiority and cosmopolitan ideals, and the use of the School of Paris label was instrumentalized differently in the years that followed. Within Paris it was both rejected and accepted. For art critics like Waldemar George, who in 1931 campaigned for strengthening a national genius, the School of Paris did not meet such an objective.¹¹

However, the exhibition *Les maîtres de l'art indépendant*, which took place at the Petit Palais in 1937, in paral-

lel to the *Exposition internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie modern*, underscored its outstanding role for Parisian independent art (cf. Kangaslahti 2009, 185–188). The curator of the show and director of the Petit Palais, Raymond Escholier, used this label synonymously for independent art, which, “for thirty years, has established itself abroad and has brought the prestige of the École de Paris to a very high level.”¹² (Escholier 1937, 5). Here, the label was used to emphasize the international appeal of Paris and French artists such as Matisse, Derain, and Braque.

In the international artistic milieu, however, the School of Paris was framed differently. Here, the image of Paris as the center of modern art helped to advocate a cosmopolitan mixture in art. In this respect, the magazine *Montparnasse* (1914, 1921–1930) played a decisive role. It promulgated the image of Montparnasse as cosmopolitan hub. *Montparnasse* was one of several Paris-based art magazines advocating internationalism and supporting migrating artists.¹³ *Montparnasse* arose from the collaboration of the French critics Paul Husson and Géo-Charles with artists of different nationalities, such as the German Otto Freundlich, the Russian-born Marie Vassilieff, and the Brazilian painter Vicente do Rego Monteiro, who administered the journal in 1930 and distributed it in Brazil. In addition, the magazine was closely linked to the internationalist independent exhibitions of the *Compagnie ambulante de peintres et sculpteurs*, which was founded at a first group exhibition at the café *Parnasse* and went on exhibiting in the quarter's cafés.¹⁴ These

11 George published a two-part article criticizing the School of Paris (George 1931a, Georges 1931b).

12 “[...] depuis trente ans, s’est imposé à l’étranger et y a porté très haut le prestige de l’École de Paris.”

13 Those international art magazines often established close ties between Paris and other art scenes abroad, such as the magazine *L’art contemporain. Sztuka Współczesna* (1929–1930), with constructivism in Poland, and *Muba* (1928), with the art scene in Lithuania.

14 The first such exhibition took place at *Café du Parnasse* in April 1921, 103 Boulevard du Montparnasse. The painter Auguste Clergé and Serge Romoff administered the group whose

exhibitions followed eclectic principles in terms of artists' nationality and style.¹⁵ In this sense, the journalist and critic Serge Romoff wrote in the foreword to the first exhibition catalogue, "We were fortunate enough to settle here in this artistic center of Montparnasse, which is the crossroads of the world's largest capital, in this Paris, which is the capital of the Great International Republic of Letters and the Arts."¹⁶ (Romoff 1921). Romoff refers here to the crossroads of Boulevard Raspail and Boulevard du Montparnasse, where the *Café du Parnasse* was located. This image of Montparnasse as center of the world is mirrored by the cover of the catalogue for the second exhibition. With a similar stance, the editors of *Montparnasse* held that the intersection of the Boulevard Raspail with the Boulevard du Montparnasse, where the *Café du Parnasse* and *La Rotonde* faced *Le Dôme*, was a site of artistic migration and cosmopolitan mixture:

On this great intellectual crossroads where the sons of all races mingle and are united in a common ideal of art—where the art of tomorrow is being developed, where the fusion of the peoples of Europe and the World is perhaps being prepared, Montparnasse wants to be a small spark before the future blaze.¹⁷(Montparnasse 1921, 1)

The collaborators of *Montparnasse* later linked this view to the School of Paris. As Escholier did with regard to *Les maîtres de l'art indépendant*, the Belgian artist and collaborator of *Montparnasse*, Pierre-Louis Flouquet, used the School of Paris label synonymously for the independent art scene, this time with regard to the *Salon d'Automne* in 1928, but, in contrast, he emphasized its internationality, which was strongly detached from a French paradigm in art:

There is nothing specific French about this Salon. As much as the Salon des Indépendants, it is a very Parisian Salon, i.e. European,

exhibitions were well received in the daily press. After the *Café du Parnasse* was closed down and incorporated into the *La Rotonde*, the group transformed into the *Compagnie des Peintres et Sculpteurs Professionnels* and exhibited until the 1930s at the Brasserie *Terminus*, 133 Boulevard Brune (cf. La Bouillierie and Crespelle 1991, 33–56). Husson and Géo-Charles both wrote texts for the exhibition catalogues, and the illustrator of *Montparnasse* magazine, A.-P. Gallien, was secretary of the Compagnie.

- 15 Artists were of different national origins, such as Chaïm Soutine from Russia, Tsuguharu Foujita from Japan, and Ortiz de Zárate from Chile, but also French artists such as Othon Friesz and Maurice Le Scouëzec contributed their works.
- 16 "La bonne fortune a permis de nous installer ici dans ce centre artistique du Montparnasse qui est le carrefour de la plus grande capitale du monde, dans ce Paris qui est la capitale de la Grande République internationale des lettres et des arts."
- 17 "Dans ce grand carrefour intellectuel où se coudoient les fils de toutes les races unis en un commun idéal d'art—où l'art de demain s'élabore, où se prépare peut-être la fusion des peuples de l'Europe et du Monde, Montparnasse veut être une petite étincelle avant le grand embrasement futur."

i.e. global. Its ensemble is international. Its substance is international. Derived from the great guiding principles revealed by the masters who gave life to the School of Paris, it expresses the said School in more or less plastic, subtle nuances. School of Paris! Yes, but a School of Paris imagined by a thousand foreign brains tested by the spiritual fever of artists of all latitudes.¹⁸ (Flouquet 1928, 13)

The School of Paris, as it was a developing concept in the 1920s and staged in subsequent international exhibitions, always contained a form of universalism: Paris was presented as the city par excellence that set the standards of art throughout the world, and immigration to Paris evidenced this fact. This universalism, however, moved on a scale between nationalist and cosmopolitan claims, which were not always clearly distinguished, and sometimes merged smoothly into one another.

Regarding the international exhibitions of the School of Paris, we can observe two types of exhibitions that dealt with this ambiguity differently. Relocating the image of Paris-Montparnasse as a migrants' center of art and of the School of Paris label provided two strategies for artists and curators to cope with a francocentric narrative of modern art abroad. Either they adopted the concept of the School of Paris as a model for developing their own national art, sometimes staging their capitals as alternatives to Paris, or they accepted the central status of Paris and considered it a model for internationalist and cosmopolitan collaboration.

Paris vs. Rome and New York: The School of Paris at the Venice Biennale and in Cambridge

One of the very first exhibitions of the School of Paris took place at the 16th Venice Biennale in 1928. Despite its internationalism, this group exhibition served as a platform for Italian national art. Under its director, Antonio Maraini, the Biennale supported fascist cultural policy. On the one hand, the Biennale attempted to highlight the achievements of Italian art, and most of the *Padiglione Centrale* (central pavilion) was reserved for nineteenth-century Italian art. On the other hand, the Biennale sought for a stance toward the internationalized art field that could be harmonized with fascist values. Hence, Margherita Sarfatti, a renowned art critic, member of the Biennale's board of directors, and collaborator of Benito Mussolini, opted for a contribution of foreign artists to the Italian art

18 "Pareil Salon n'a rien de spécifiquement français. Autant que le Salon des Indépendants, c'est un Salon bien parisien, c'est-à-dire européen, c'est-à-dire mondial. Son ensemble est international. Sa substance est internationale. Dérivée des grands principes directeurs révélés par les maîtres qui donnèrent vie à l'Ecole de Paris, elle exprime la dite Ecole en nuances plus ou moins plastiques, plus ou moins subtiles. Ecole de Paris! Oui, mais une Ecole de Paris rêvée par mille cerveaux étrangers éprouvée par la fièvre spirituelle d'artistes de toutes les latitudes."

exhibition in the central pavilion.¹⁹ The exhibition of the School of Paris offered an opportunity to show Italian modern art as part of a progressive international movement, as well as to underscore its particularity. Thus, the Italian artist Renato Paresce was given the responsibility for an exhibition entitled *Scuola di Parigi* (School of Paris). The painter Mario Tozzi wrote an accompanying introduction for the Biennale's catalogue.

The School of Paris obtained a prominent place in the central pavilion, where it was shown separately from the other exhibition rooms, just to the left of the entrance in room 40. Paresce brought together seventy-one works by forty-three artists from different countries, but all of them were working in Paris, such as Chagall and Foujita.²⁰ Tozzi stressed in his catalogue text the attractive effect that Paris had on artists from all cardinal directions. Nevertheless, he used the School of Paris to underscore Italian particularism in art:

[I]t will be interesting to find out how the different races react in the Paris melting pot, and how, despite everything, the savor of the native land and the color of the ancestral traditions remain intact in these artists [...]. The small group of Italians, drawing the roots of their art from the purest traditions of their homeland, fights with faith and energy so that, in the evolution of the School of Paris, also Italy will be present and speak up with virile firmness.²¹(Tozzi 1928, 123f.)

Paresce illustrated this Italian contribution to the School of Paris with three artists: Filippo de Pisis, Tozzi, and himself. All three artists were part of the so-called *Italiens de Paris* (Italians of Paris), who had exhibited several times in Paris and pursued a national particularism there (cf. Benzi 1998, 103–108). Moreover, Tozzi and Paresce were part of the Novecento movement, which was intellectually led by Sarfatti and aimed at reconciling Italian tradition with modern art. It is therefore not surprising that

19 Minutes of the “Consiglio Dirretivo” of the 16th Biennale, May 10–12, 1927, Archivio storico delle arti contemporanee (ASAC), Venice, “Scatole nere,” b.050.

20 The following artists exhibited in the show: Roger Bissière, Maria Blanchard, Rodolphe Théophile Bosshard, Serge Brignoni, Marc Chagall, Pierre Charbonnier, Chériane, Mouat Dagoussia, Amédée de la Patellière, Filippo de Pisis, Eric Detthow, Max Ernst, Serge Férat, Adam Fischer, Geneviève Marie Gallibert, Pablo Gargallo, Wilhelm Gimmi, Marcel Gromaire, Alice Halicka, Charles Edmond Kayser, Moïse Kisling, Pinchus Krémegne, Per Krogh, Louis Latapie, André Lhote, Jacques Loutenansky, Jean Lurçat, Manolo, Louis Marcoussis, Zygmunt Menkès, Milo Milunović, Chana Orloff, Renato Paresce, Valentine Prax, Ivan Puni, Magdalena Radelescu, Madeleine Radulesco, Olga Sacharoff, Jean Souverbie, Constantin Térechkovitch, Mario Tozzi, Ossip Zadkine.

21 “[...] sarà interessante rilevare come nel crogiuolo di Parigi reagiscano le differenti razze, e come, malgrado tutto, il sapore della terra nativa ed il colore delle avite tradizioni rimangono intatte in questi artisti [...]. L'esiguo gruppo degli italiani, abbarbicate le radici della sua arte alle più pure tradizioni della propria patria, lotta con fede e con energia perchè, nell'evoluzione della Scuola di Parigi, anche l'Italia sia presente e dica con fermezza virile la sua parola.”



Mario Tozzi, *Mattutino (Matins, 1927)*, oil on canvas, 166 x 118 cm, Museo del Novecento, Milan © Archivio Mario Tozzi.

Tozzi's *Mattutino (Matins, 1927)* was prominently exhibited and printed in the catalogue. In terms of style and subject, this depiction of piety is a reference to the art of Quattrocento, and thus a programmatic image for Tozzi's search for the Italian roots of modern art.

This exhibition of the School of Paris was nevertheless heavily criticized in the Italian press for its internationalism, which is why the 17th Venice Biennale in 1930 set a different focus. The following exhibition therefore sought a new way of harmonizing internationalism and national particularism. It developed the idea of a supremacy of Italian art that had its center in Rome and was competing with the School of Paris. Still, the curators integrated Italian artists living in Paris in this narrative about Italian art. This time, room 23 was curated by Tozzi together with the critic Waldemar George under the title *Appels d'Italie*. Among the twenty-three artists of French and other nationalities, they again displayed Italians working in Paris, such as de Pisis, Paresce, and Tozzi. In his accompanying catalogue text, however, George developed the image of Rome as a new center of art: "This is about proving a phenomenon of a shift of the center of gravity of contemporary art, which after a cure in opposition, which lasted half a century, regains its faith in Rome."²² (George 1930, 91) This program did not contradict George's demand, as mentioned above, to revive a *École française*. George found the fusion of Italian and French culture and the journey of modern artists to Rome a possibility for reinforcing the Latin, humanist tradition that corresponds to one of his basic values of French art, its *néo-humanisme* (cf. Chevrefils Desbiolles 2016, 100–101). By restoring a "School of Rome" as he imagined it, he also hoped to strengthen art in France according to fascist ideals, and he personally presented his ideas to Mussolini on the "return to Rome" in 1933 (cf. *ibid.* 53–56).²³ In this way, the School of Paris was transformed within a fascist ideology and given a counterpart in the Italian capital.

A phenomenon similar in its dynamics between internationalism and national particularism, albeit within a completely different ideological framework,

22 "Si tratta di provare un fenomeno di spostamento del centro di gravità dell'arte contemporanea, la quale dopo una cura d'opposizione, che dura da mezzo secolo, ritrova la sua fede in Roma."

23 George outlined his ideas for a "retour à Rome" in art to Mussolini. He explicitly formulated his idea of the "École de Rome" in the catalogue to the *Exposition des peintres romains Capogrossi, Cavalli, Cagli, Sclavi* at the Galerie Jacques Bonjean, December 9–31, 1933.

can be seen in the context of the “School of New York.” After the Second World War, abstract expressionism became known as the “New York School” and was repeatedly described with reference to the School of Paris of the interwar period (cf. Guibault 1983, Ashton 1979, Sandler 1970). But there was already an attempt to establish a so-called School of New York in 1929, and again this happened in connection with an exhibition of the School of Paris.

In 1929 the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, showed an exhibition of modern French art of the nineteenth century. As supplement, the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art organized the *Exhibition of the School of Paris* from March 19 until April 12. The works came mostly from private lenders and from the Valentine Gallery in New York, which was an early promoter of the School of Paris in the United States.²⁴ Thus, the exhibition mirrored current market trends of Jules Pascin, Moïse Kisling, and Amedeo Modigliani—the latter two were also shown in Venice.²⁵ As in Venice, the organizers of the Cambridge exhibition reflected on their own national art, but this time the answer was sobering:

This present collection presents a European style, international in scope and cosmopolitan in character with its center in Paris. [...] These artists are to a greater or lesser degree innovators. In this they differ from the Americans of our last exhibition [Exhibition of American Art, 1929], and as a result of their calculated originality, they are more surprising, more intellectual, and more sophisticated.²⁶ (Harvard Society for Contemporary Art 1929b)

The following exhibition, entitled *The School of New York*, was held from October 17 until November 1, 1929.²⁷ It was intended to be an international and

24 The show comprised the following artists: André Beaudin, Pierre Bonnard, Constantin Brancusi, Georges Braque, Giorgio de Chirico, Charles Despiau, Maurice Dufresne, Raoul Dufy, Roger de la Fresnaye, Othon Friesz, Marcel Gromaire, Juan Gris, Moïse Kisling, Fernand Léger, André Lurçat, Marie Laurencin, André Lhote, Aristide Maillol, Louis Marcoussis, Frans Masereel, Jacques Mauny, Jean Metzinger, Joan Miró, Amedeo Modigliani, Chana Orloff, Jules Pascin, Georges Rouault, Man Ray, André Dunoyer de Segonzac, Chaïm Soutine, Vergé-Sarrat, Maurice de Vlaminck. There was also a section of decorative art by Dufy, Dunand, Lalique, Legrain, Lenoscier, Marinot, Puiforcat, Raymond Tempier.

25 Kisling figured in the School of Paris exhibition at the 16th Venice Biennale. Modigliani was shown in a solo exhibition in room 31 of the central pavilion at the 17th Venice Biennale in 1930.

26 The Society’s executive board consisted of Lincoln Kirstein, John Walker III, Edward M. M. Warburg, and Sophia R. Ames.

27 The following painters participated in the show: Peggy Bacon, Peter Blume, Alexander Calder, Glenn Coleman, Stuart Davis, Preston Dickinson, Guy Pene DuBois, Ernest Fiene, William Glackens, Stefan Hirsch, John Kane, Bernard Karfiol, Leon Kroll, Walt Kuhn, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Gaston Lachaise, Georg Luks, Isamu Noguchi, Charles Rosen, Katherine Schmidt, Henry Ernest Schnakenburg, Charles Sheeler, Simka Simkovitch, Maurice Sterne, John Storrs, Dudley Talcott, Allen Tucker, Max Weber, William Zorach.



Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *Little Joe with Cow* (1923), oil on canvas, 71.1 x 106.7 cm, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Betonville, Arkansas, 2010.108. Photography by Edward C. Robinson III.

more cosmopolitan counterweight to the national art of the older generation of painters, which the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art had shown in the abovementioned *Exhibition of American Art*. It presented artists of “the two groups of Lyricists and Realists, whose roots extend into the nineteenth century,” (Harvard Society for Contemporary Art 1929a) among them George Bellows, Edward Hopper, and Rockwell Kent.²⁸ These artists were to be a “solid foundation for an American School.” (Ibid.). The School of New York, however, was to provide a necessary

and revitalizing impulse. As in the case of the School of Paris, this should come from outside.

The School of New York exhibition was a synopsis of artists, “who having perhaps a diversity of origin, had acquired their growth and influence from the vicinity of New York.” (Harvard Society for Contemporary Art 1930). The Harvard Society for Contemporary art evoked New York as an active and attractive center for living art, and strongly paralleled Warnod’s rhetoric of the School of Paris. On display were, for example, Russian-born artists such as Maurice Sterne and Max Weber, who had emigrated to New York, worked in Paris, but later returned to the United States. Furthermore, the Japanese-born Yasuo Kuniyoshi exhibited one of his cow paintings, which perfectly embodied the cosmopolitan ideal and fusion of American and foreign culture that the curators wanted to represent. In *Little Joe with Cow*, for example, he combined a Japanese subject with American folk art and Western oil painting.²⁹ The question of the current local domicile was crucial for the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art. This explains why it assigned Jules Pascin to the School of Paris and not to the School of New York. The artist had spent the duration of the First World War in New York and received American citizenship, but later returned to Paris. His artist colleagues Sterne, Weber, and Kuniyoshi, in contrast, proved in the curators’ eyes the current status of New York as a migrants’ city of art.

28 Other exhibiting artists included Thomas Benton, Arthur B. Davies, Alexander Archipenko, and John Sloan. John Marin and Georgia O’Keeffe did not match the categories of Lyricism and Realism and were presented as “strongly original artists.”

29 Kuniyoshi explained his various depictions of cows by the fact that he was, according to the Japanese calendar, born in the year of the cow (cf. Goodrich 1948, 13) In Cambridge he showed his work “Boy with Cow with Calf”.

The news of a New York School was also quickly spread in Paris. In 1930 Albert Gallatin, the founder of the *Gallery of Living Art* of New York University, wrote in the art magazine *Formes* (edited by none other than Waldemar George):

The New York School is as cosmopolitan in its make up as the School of Paris. Foreigners possessing ability as painters include the Russian Alexander Brook and Morris Kantor, the Italian Joseph Stella, the Swiss Joseph Pollet and the Japanese Yasuo Kuniyoshi. The influx of foreign bloods is good for American art, this intermingling of various cultures. (Gallatin 1930, 22)³⁰

These two cases, in Venice and Cambridge, show that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are not mutually exclusive. International exhibitions of the School of Paris could be used to prove national particularisms by pointing to internationally attractive effects of competing cosmopolitan centers.

The Hub of Universal Art: The School of Paris in Recife, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro

In 1930 the two editors of *Montparnasse*, the Brazilian-born Vicente do Rego Monteiro and the art critic Géo-Charles, decided to organize a traveling exhibition of the School of Paris in Brazil.³¹ This event presented a different point of view. The first of the three exhibitions was held from March 21 until April 2, 1930, at the Teatro Isabel in Recife, and then traveled on to São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (cf. Dos Anjos and Morais 1998, Zanini 1997, 257ff). Works of forty-nine artists were transported to Latin America on this occasion.



Exhibition of the School of Paris in São Paulo (Palacete Glória) or Rio de Janeiro (Palace-Hotel) (1930); Géo-Charles is on the left. © Archives du musée Géo-Charles – Ville d'Échirolles.

30 Trans. in Lévy 2003, 19.

31 After that, Rego Monteiro would stay in Brazil and Charles, too, would first accompany the exhibition with a lecture program and then stay for six months in Brazil. Therefore, the *Montparnasse* edition of January 1930 that served as an exhibition catalogue was the last number (cf. Emery 1994, 28–47).



Vicente do Rego Monteiro, *Femme à la Biche* (*Woman with Doe*, 1926), oil on canvas, Pernambuco State Museum, MEPE/FUNДАРPE collection. Exhibited at the School of Paris exhibition, Recife, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (1930).

The artists shown here differed from the previous exhibitions, which demonstrates once again that the School of Paris was not a consistent and stable group. This time, works by Brazilian artists, who had not been represented in Venice or New York, were added. This is the case for Vicente do Rego Monteiro and his brother, Joaquim. A special focus was on cubist art works by Fernand Léger, Georges Braque, and Picasso. The latter, according to Dos Anjos and Morais, was shown for the first time in Brazil (Dos Anjos and Morais 1998).³² This tendency toward cubism mirrored the profile of *Montparnasse*, whose former editor, Husson, saw cubism as a precursor to world art (*art mondial*) and a future cosmopolitan synthesis of humankind.³³ Another reason for this focus on cubism was that the exhibition was supported by the prominent art dealer of cubism, Léonce Rosenberg and his *Galerie de l'Effort Moderne*. Rego Monteiro, in turn, drew on cubism in his works and fused it with stylistic elements of the pre-Columbian Marajoara culture (cf. Wolfe 2014, 102–105).

Montparnasse considered Brazil a suitable choice, not only because of its editor, Rego Monteiro. The magazine registered an *esprit nouveau* (new spirit) in the Brazilian cultural scene. The country experienced an economic upswing due to government-protected coffee exports, which spurred the formation of an intellectual, cosmopolitan elite. In the interwar period, many intellectuals and avant-garde artists, such as the poet Oswald de Andrade and the artist Tarsila do Amaral traveled between Brazil and Europe, especially Paris (cf. Greet 2018, 122–130). Among others, Rego Monteiro and Andrade collaborated on the art festival *Semana de Arte Moderna*, which took place in São Paulo in 1922 and spearheaded the modernist movement in Brazil (cf. Amaral 2014, 135–

32 This exhibition showed: André Bauchant, Marie Blanchard, Borrès, Rodolphe Théophile Bosshard, Georges Braque, Massimo Campigli, Clément, József Csáky, André Dérain, Germaine Derbecq, Raoul Dufy, Eekman, István Farkas, Alexandre Fasini, Pierre-Louis Flouquet, Serge Fotinsky, Tsuguharu Foujita, Geneviève Gallibert, Albert Gleizes, Gounaro (Giorgios Gounaropoulos), Juan Gris, Marcel Gromaire, Alice Halicka, Max Jacob, Laglenne, Ismael De La Serna, Lahner, Marie Laurencin, Henri Laurens, Henri Le Fauconnier, Fernand Léger, André Lhote, Maurice Loutreuil, Jean Lurçat, Louis Marcoussis, Frans Masereel, André Masson, Joan Miró, Joaquim do Rego Monteiro, Vicente do Rego Monteiro, Georges Papazoff, Jules Pascin, Pablo Picasso, Valentine Prax, Rendon, Roux, Sandoz, Sénabrè, Gino Severini, Sterling, Léopold Survage, Kristians Tonny, Georges Valmier, Vines, Maurice de Vlaminck, Eugeniusz Zak.

33 Husson expressed this view, for example, in his article “Directives,” *Montparnasse* 23 (1923): 2.

196). This event gave rise to the Antropofagia movement, which sought cultural autonomy of modern art in Brazil under postcolonial conditions. It propagated the anthropophagic appropriation of the Western “other,” thus attenuating its hegemonic impact.³⁴

The exhibition of the School of Paris was a response to these developments. Unlike the exhibitions in Venice and New York, Rego Monteiro and Géo-Charles highlighted neither the national supremacy of French art nor the outstanding role of Brazilian art in the School of Paris. Rather, the curators wanted to present a still-developing universal art and *esprit nouveau* that they considered a global evolution. From this perspective, the supremacy of Paris in modern art seemed a fact, but unfixed, transferable, sharable, and expandable. It was Géo-Charles’s hope to create synergies between *Montparnasse* and the Brazilian avant-garde of the *Semana de Arte Moderna*.

The poet Menotti del Picchia, a participant of the *Semana de Arte Moderna* and collaborator of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, translated one of Géo-Charles’s texts, entitled “Uma informação do critico Géo Charles sobre o momento esthetico mundial.” (Menotti Del Picchia 1930a and 1930b). It was intended as information for the “Brazilian Movement,” in order to spread the latest knowledge in the field of art. Géo-Charles stresses the internationalist and pacifist traits in Paris that would have become visible in art, especially after the First World War. But it is the collaboration between writers and artists, in particular, which, in his opinion, made Paris a special place. The critic did not leave out the opportunity to attribute a central role to his magazine, *Montparnasse*, as well as the art of Rego Monteiro and his paintings’ “human, ethnic and sensitive significance that a work of art should have.”³⁵ (Menotti Del Picchia 1930b).

In this type of exhibition, Paris was neither ruled by a French nor another national paradigm. Paris was an open city, and everyone who wanted to contribute to the development of new art could enter or be inspired by its recent developments. This second type of exhibition reveals a phenomenon that Gladys Fabre described as the *Internationale de l’esprit* (Fabre 2002). After the First World War, a strong consciousness had developed in Europe, especially in left-wing political and pacifist circles. It strived for international cooperation and fraternization, also in the field of culture. Artistic mobility, migration, and exchange were necessary and welcomed practices that served the further development of a universal art. The ambitious goals of Rego Monteiro and Géo-Charles, however, remained unfulfilled. The exhibition did not generate a broad response in the local press, and was only discussed with little enthusiasm. Also, the disappointment of the Brazilian public with French modern art that some press articles reported contradicts Géo-Charles’s enthusiastic vision that the School of Paris was working on a universal modern art of tomorrow (cf. Dos Anjos and Morais 1998, 322–324).

34 Oswald de Andrade wrote in 1928 his “Manifesto Antropófago” and worked later with Menotti del Picchia on the *Revista de Antropofagia* (1928–1929) (cf. Bader 2018, Jauregui 2012).

35 “[...] significação humana, ethnica e sensível que deve revestir a obra de arte.”

Of course, this was a utopian design that reflects little of the actual barriers, like differences in citizenship or financial possibilities, that were decisive when gaining physical access to the city of Paris and its art scene. Nevertheless, the School of Paris remained an important imaginary and ideal that could be translocated and transferred to other sites of modern art. The case shows how an image of the city that represented a cosmopolitan and international center of modern art was transferred and locally adapted. While back in Paris, in the context of the magazine *Montparnasse*, this meant assigning a central status to the cosmopolitan art milieu of cafés and independent exhibitions, in Brazil it served to expand the imagined boundaries of the French capital. Artists could inscribe themselves in a narrative about universal modern art in Paris, regardless of their nationality and place of residence.

Conclusion

In the face of the transnational mobility of art critics and artists, between 1928 and 1930 the School of Paris label underwent a process of (re-)definition that was part of transregional dynamics between Paris and other sites of modern art. It always contained a universalism that confirmed Paris as the center of modern art, but this universalism could be applied variably and in different regional contexts, sometimes serving more nationalistic, sometimes more cosmopolitan ideals.

Within Parisian art criticism the label was used for art that was locally rooted in Paris, but international in scope. Thus, the use of School of Paris encompassed both the integration of immigrated artists into the French canon and the international significance of Parisian artists. Warnod used the School of Paris to integrate immigrant artists into a narrative about French art. The magazine *Montparnasse*, on the contrary, referred to the universal status of Paris as an internationalist and cosmopolitan center of art, to legitimize internationalist exhibition practices within the field of independent art.

The international exhibitions of the School of Paris around 1930 resulted from collaborations of actors both inside and outside Paris, especially artists (Tozzi, Paresce, and Rego Monteiro), art critics (Géo-Charles), and galleries (Galerie de l'Effort Moderne, Valentine Gallery). These exhibitions are as diverse as the itineraries of the artists and critics involved. Nevertheless, this article shows that it is worthwhile to study the various examples with a comparative perspective, since this points out the ambiguity and various functions of the School of Paris label, not just within but also outside Paris. On the one hand, the label helped counter the hegemony of modern French art when contrasting the art of other nations' capitals with the Parisian art scene, as in the case of the School of Rome or the School of New York. On the other hand, showing the School of Paris abroad could mean to embrace the status of Paris as an art center. By acknowledging the city's

universalistic cosmopolitanism, these exhibitions helped to include contributions from other regions into a narrative on modern art. Of course, all these cases belong to ideologically different contexts. Nevertheless, the artists' and critics' engagement reveals the active choices and transformations that were necessarily undertaken when adapting the narrative of the School of Paris, and with it the image of Paris as the center of modern art, outside of Paris.

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**ÉCOLE DE PARIS U PARIZU I IZVAN PARIZA (1928–1930):
TRANSREGIONALNA PERSPEKTIVA O IZLOŽBAMA PARISKE ŠKOLE
U VENECIJI, KEMBRIDŽU, RESIFEU, SAO PAULO I RIO DE ŽENEIRU**

Apstrakt:

Rad ispituje na koji način su izložbe učestvovalе u etabliranju termina Pariska škola (École de Paris) unutar transregionalne dinamike između 1928. i 1930. godine. Od 1925. godine likovni kritičari su koristili izraz „Pariska škola“ da označe umetnost iz Pariza, pre svega iz oblasti Monparnasa, koja je stvorena u internacionalnom umetničkom miljeu. Ovaj termin je od svog nastanka i pojavljivanja u izložbenom kontekstu veoma ambivalentan i označava različite poglede na Pariz kao umetnički centar i grad umetničkih migracija. Izložbe Pariske škole su predstavljale umetnike i likovne kritičare koji su učestvovali u životu ovog vibrantnog umetničkog centra i koji su, sa druge strane, bili predstavnici onih tendencija u inostranstvu koje su se javljale kao nastavak ili reakcija na hegemoniju pariske umetničke scene. Oko 1930. godine izložbe umetnosti Pariske škole su postale međunarodno raširen fenomen. U radu se razmatraju tri izložbe: prva monografska izložba na Venecijanskom bijenalu (1928), izložba održana u Harvard društvu za savremenu umetnost u Kembridžu (Masačusets, 1929) i putujuća izložba u Brazilu: Resifeu, Sao Paulu i Rio de Ženeiru (1930). Osnovno pitanje se odnosi na način na koji su umetnici, kustosi i kritičari prisvojili, relocirali i transformisali ovaj termin izvan Pariza, kao i na analizu izložbenih kataloga i hemerotečkih izvora. U prvom delu će biti predstavljeno kako je Pariska škola, kao likovno-kritičarski i institucionalni termin međuratnog perioda u Parizu, oscilirao između nacionalnih i kosmopolitskih težnji. U drugom delu teksta će biti mapirane strategije izložbi o fenomenu Pariske škole koje su održane izvan Pariza, a koje su umetnicima i kritičarima služile da istaknu nacionalnu umetnost drugih zemalja u odnosu na parisku hegemoniju u umetnosti (Venecija i Kembridž) ili prihvate kosmopolitski univerzalizam (Resife, Rio de Ženeiro, Sao Paulo).

Ključne reči:

istorija izložbi, moderna umetnost, umetnost i migracije, transregionalna dinamika

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