

Max Liebermann and His French Critics

Art and Politics from the 1870s to the 1930s

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Steeped in the lessons he had taken from his stays in Belgium, Holland, and France, and responsive to subjects from everyday life and the faithful rendering of nature and atmosphere, Max Liebermann set German art on a new course. His quest for freedom and independence became the cornerstones of the Berlin Secession, whose founding president he became in 1898. French critics were quick to interpret Liebermann's artistic choices, his commitment to the modern trends of the late nineteenth century, and his interest in Realism, Naturalism, and then Impressionism as signs of his closeness to France. It is therefore not surprising that Liebermann should have been recognized in Paris before he enjoyed success in Germany. One might suppose that, given its great concern with its cultural influence, France would have adopted this figure and honored his work with writings of substance and exhibitions, but that is not the case. Regularly mentioned in accounts of the Salon and the subject of numerous articles from the mid 1870s to the early twentieth century, Liebermann then almost completely disappeared from the discourse of French critics and has never had an exhibition in a French museum. While there have been many studies of his links with France and of the evolution of French critical attitudes toward his work, the lack of posthumous attention in France remains a mystery.¹ Some light can, however, be shed on this phenomenon by concentrating on the gradually shifting focus

of commentaries, from the work to the man, a process that froze the way his works were looked at in France and is one cause of the misconceptions concerning them.²

After an education in Germany and Belgium, Liebermann came to France to complete his training from 1873 to 1878, and was soon exposing his works to the judgment of the Paris Salon. In 1874, not long after the Franco-Prussian War, he exhibited there for the first time, presenting *Women Plucking Geese* (see Plate III).³ By the end of the 1870s commentary on his work was abundant. It attests to precise critical attention to the work, in that the most remarkable aspects of each work Liebermann presented are concisely described.

A number of recurrent notions soon came to characterize accounts of Liebermann's art. The development of research into Franco-German relations has made it possible to identify a certain number of received ideas that each nation applied to the other, notably in the artistic field. These discoveries have brought out the way in which certain tensions crystallized around prejudices and make it possible to analyze the way in which knowledge of the neighboring culture was often predetermined by these widespread clichés. The persistence of certain stereotypes throughout Franco-German cultural relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries should not, however, blind us to the fact that their meaning and use evolved, in accordance with the artist and period, with room for a certain amount of nuance, as can be seen from the study of a case like Liebermann.⁴ Thus, from early on, critics stressed

the importance of influences from outside Germany on his art. Borrowings from other Northern European countries and from France were identified both in his subjects and his technique.

This notion of influence, a characteristic of French criticism of German art, was generally invoked to recall the country's lack of unity, to highlight its ill-defined national identity, and to devalue German art. In the case of Liebermann, however, we may note that the borrowings from Belgium and Holland—in his early days—are not seen to diminish his own inventiveness or to make him contemptible. In 1879, Edmond Duranty, an early champion of Liebermann, described him as "one of the most original in this [German] school: his *Street in a Village of Zandvoort*, in whites and reds, and his *Dutch Interior*, with a fine brown tone, are most curious. They are closer to Belgium and Holland than to German art."⁵ If these influences from the Low Countries made the critic hesitant about attaching Liebermann to the German School, the painter was nevertheless always presented as a German, with his borrowings from Holland seen as something that set him apart from his fellow countrymen and ensured the originality of his work. It is to be noted here that the relation established between Liebermann's art and Holland and Belgium is also manifest in the subjects he chose and presented on an almost annual basis in Paris, starting in 1877 and up to his last exhibition at the 1904 Salon d'Automne. This connection between Liebermann and Netherlandish art was not a mere critical assumption but was based on observation of the works he exhibited.⁶

In addition to this interest in Holland, critics recognized two other qualities in Liebermann: his talent as an observer and his remarkable handling of light, both of which were greatly admired in 1881 and 1882. Paul Mantz's commentary on *Old Men's Home in Amsterdam* (see Plate VIII), presented by Liebermann at the 1881 Salon, clearly indicates the close connection to Holland and the exact rendering of the figures and light:

M. Liebermann is a German who trained in Holland and became besotted there with the singularities of light. The *Garden of an Old People's Home in Amsterdam* is a rather piquant little picture. The work accident victims are gathered beneath

a green bower, and the sun shining through the branches sends down a shower of golden arrows onto these uniformed old folk, for Phoebus is incorrigible and always believes that he is dealing with the children of Niobe. The effect is exceptional, but exact.⁷

Once again, the gift of observation stereotypically attributed to German artists, either to evoke the subtlety of their rendering of reality or to criticize their obsessive description of detail, is not instrumentalized in order to define Liebermann as a German artist. Attribution of this characteristic rests on the precise description of the works, and it is cited in order to link Liebermann to a contemporary artistic movement, Naturalism. The discourse does not directly link Liebermann to French painting, however.

It is in the first monograph article on Liebermann published by Paul Leroi that he truly appears as a student of the modern French School and its masters, an idea that would become a habit with French criticism of this artist.⁸ Leroi places him in the tradition of Courbet and Millet, and praises his gift for observation. Liebermann's relation to French art was thus not immediately seized upon by critics. This view emerged only after they had become familiar with his work, had identified his originality within the contemporary German School, and had connected him with Naturalism, crediting him with the shared qualities of a taste for Dutch art, precision of observation, and realistic rendering of light.⁹

As attentive observers of Liebermann's work, French critics noted the changes the artist made to his paintings in the early 1880s. Their comments on his *Laundry at Zwello* (Figure 6.1), exhibited at the 1883 Salon, are extremely severe. While most still appreciated his gift for observation and rendering light, the simplifications he was beginning to make by constructing his volumes using thick impasto caused them to judge him a poor draughtsman. Here too it is important to note that while these faults echo the stereotypes frequently invoked by French critics in relation to German art, here they are observed directly in the works and are not attributed in any specific way to the artist's national identity. Thus, writing in 1883, Philippe Burty noted that "the painting of Max Liebermann, whose vibrant touch had once impressed the public and the critics, was now lifeless, shadowy, and, to borrow a paint-



Figure 6.1. Max Liebermann, *Laundry at Zwello*, 1883, Oil on Canvas, 109 x 173 cm. Cologne, Wallraf-Richarz Museum.

ers' term, 'lanternish' (dimly lit). The faces in his *Laundry at Zwello* seem to be pasted with cheesy white and harsh pinks."¹⁰

In the course of the 1880s, as Liebermann engaged in bold pictorial experiments, the French critical reception of his work grew increasingly negative. For the most severe critics his figures verged on caricature, for others his lighting technique was poorly executed or repetitious.¹¹ Curiously enough, however, there was a marked change in the discourse on Liebermann's work at the time of the Exposition Universelle in 1889. While French critics still manifested the same attention to the work and described it in detail, they now dwelt more on the artist's choices in the course of his career, and these conditioned their judgments. Liebermann's nationality was now more frequently evoked, not only to situate him geographically but also to make the artist the very incarnation of the German School.

In *La Revue des deux Mondes*, Georges Lafenestre, conservator of the Department of Paintings at the Louvre, commented on the six works presented by Liebermann in the German fine arts section at the Exposition Universelle, which are illustrated here, including *Old Men's Home in Amsterdam* (1881), *Cobbler Shop* (1881) (Figure 6.2), *In the Orphanage, Amsterdam*, (1882) (Figure 6.3), *Street in a Village, Holland* (1885) (Figure 6.4):

[I]t is with a brutal, insistent, implacable harshness that M. Liebermann measures himself as an artist who simplifies like the photographic apparatus, that details, that models and that brings out, beneath the turbulent scattering of reflected sunlight or the massive beam of concentrated light, the angular truth of movements, the bony individuality of faces, the staccato folding of clothes, the expressive clarity of physiognomies. The fundamentally Dutch qualities—picturesque unity, harmonious fusion, the tenderness and suppleness of transi-



Figure 6.2. Max Liebermann, *Cobbler Shop*, 1881, Oil on Wood, 64 x 80 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Alte Nationalgalerie.



Figure 6.3. Max Liebermann, *In the Orphanage, Amsterdam*, 1882, Oil on Canvas, 78.5 x 107.5 cm. Frankfurt am Main, Städtisches Kunstinstitut.

Figure 6.4. Max Liebermann, *Street in a Village, Holland, 1885*, Oil on Canvas, 90 x 117 cm. Hanover, Landesgalerie



tions—altogether elude him; he replaces them with German qualities that are more wilful and deliberate, and that are not to be dismissed, for they have their value.¹²

We see here that the description highlights elements of Liebermann's painting that are identified as specifically German. This was not the case in earlier critical comments.

The qualities of Liebermann's art thus became those of modern German art, and in many of the general texts on the German section of fine arts we find words that were already being used to define Liebermann's art. For example, German artists who agreed to exhibit were hailed for their great moral but also stylistic independence: this is precisely what distinguished Liebermann, who at a young age freed himself of the lessons of the German School and privileged Holland, Belgium, and French Naturalism.¹³ The close relation established between the characteristics of Liebermann's art and those of German art, as well as the insistence on national origins, are characteristic of art criticism at these universal exhibitions, which effectively prompted French critics to unite, the better to confront international competition. But while an attempt was made to define the national specificity of German art in both 1878 and 1889, the respective conclusions reached at these two exhibitions were not the same.¹⁴

The German Empire refused to send official delegations to these two universal exhibitions in Paris, but sections devoted to the fine arts were nevertheless organized. In 1878, Bismarck entrusted the selection to Anton von Werner, director of the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin. In 1889, however, the chancellor rejected the invitation of the French government to participate in a universal exhibition that was celebrating the centenary of the French Revolution. In spite of this refusal, Max Liebermann, together with Karl Köpping and Gotthard Kuehl, organized a German fine arts section.¹⁵

These two exhibitions were thus held in very different contexts. In 1878 the French Republic was still somewhat shaky; the majority of parliamentarians were monarchists. German participation in the fine arts section was a reconciliatory gesture to France, and Anton von Werner's selection was academic, in keeping with the tastes of the ruling powers. By 1889 the French Republic had developed a more solid foundation, and the Eiffel Tower, inaugurated for the opening of the Exposition Universelle, was seen as a symbol of France's industrial resurgence as the principles of 1789 were celebrated in the centenary year of the French Revolution. The independence that French critics stressed in German artists signified their moral distance from the emperor's directives, as

well as the way they dissociated themselves from Anton von Werner's prerogatives.

The national characteristics attributed to this group of artists, and in particular their adoption of the principles of modern French art, should not be interpreted as typifying a French critical vision that saw German art as an epigone of French art. Just as Liebermann's art had been presented by French critics as an art free of German academic principles, responsive to the lessons of the Dutch, Belgians, and French Naturalism but at the same time authentic and singular, the German art at the Exposition Universelle of 1889 was described as responsive to Naturalism, the offspring of French art, but profoundly German in its achievements. According to Thiébauld-Sisson, writing for *La Nouvelle Revue*: "There has been a revolution in Germany, where the current school is infused with gravitas and pity for the humble and worships nature. Its models are the French masters and the Dutch School (for its subjects). . . . The current school is once again German, gently poetical, loving truth, not at all mocking. And to whom is this renewal owed? To France."¹⁶

French influence did not enslave German art or make it a mediocre follower lacking its own identity; on the contrary, it enabled a genuinely national German art to distinguish and establish itself. The French example was a vector of values that enabled nations to go back to their true roots and shape their own singular identity. The aim of this discourse concerning the influence of French art on German art was thus not to reduce the latter to servile imitation, but to reaffirm France's role as a driving force in the construction of national identities.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, and especially after the Franco-Prussian War, the cultural model of France as beacon of Europe, the spreader of revolutionary principles and the rights of man and the citizen, was severely shaken. France saw the achievements of German industry, schools, and universities as the main reasons for its defeat and sought ways of placing itself on the same level as the new empire. This quest characterized the early years of the republic, an unstable time of doubt and political hesitancy. The visual arts were one of the few areas not to be affected by this identity crisis; they bore witness to continuing French excellence in spite of the war and played an essential role in promoting the

French cultural model, especially at the Exposition Universelle of 1889.

With the republic solidly established, the centenary of the Revolution effectively became an opportunity to reaffirm the civilizing mission of France and to celebrate the achievements of the principles of 1789.¹⁷ So as not to seem to be challenging European monarchies, the centenary festivities avoided advocacy of popular dictatorship and remained relatively low-key during the Exposition Universelle. Republican and revolutionary principles were nevertheless implicit in the themes of many of the sections.¹⁸ It has been clearly shown that the *Centennale*, with its emphasis on the history of the development of Naturalism in the nineteenth century, was deeply marked by the will to assert the existence of a liberal artistic trend conceived by France in the years after the Revolution, one that had spread throughout Europe.¹⁹ These ideas were espoused by Antonin Proust, curator of the fine arts section, a convinced republican who invited Liebermann to organize his fine arts section, for which he too selected Naturalist works.²⁰

The link made by critics between the works of the German School in the section organized by Liebermann and those of the French School should not be interpreted as indicative of a lack of consideration for art beyond the Rhine. Liberal Germans who followed the French emancipatory model and kept their distance from the German Empire were seen as embodying the true character of the German nation. Indeed, republican discourse saw the exportation of the French model as providing a way for nations to affirm their own identity and to get back to their deep roots, the better to free themselves of the corrupt and artificial values of the monarchic system. Here we see the ideal of the republic being placed in a privileged relation to the principle of nationalities, fraternity between peoples, and the "Universal Republic."²¹ This is the significance of Liebermann's toast to "the confraternity of art" given in honor of Antonin Proust in May 1889.²² Rather than internationalist, universalist, or anti-national values, Liebermann was invoking the republican principle of fraternity in order to exhort art and its representatives to live in harmony, or at least to respect each other.

The toast "to the confraternity of art," the selection of Naturalist works for the German section, and the way it was

read by French critics made Liebermann more than a painter: he was a republican opposed to the empire, which indeed did not recognize him, and the champion of French, revolutionary values over the Rhine. More than his works, it was the artist's political personality that made him a German. At the Exposition Universelle we can see how the discourse gradually shifted from the works to the figure of Liebermann as an incarnation of the national school and to attempts to define that essence, and how knowledge of Liebermann's work thus become more political and less aesthetic. This characterization would make a lasting mark on the perception people had of Liebermann in France.

Salon criticism resumed as usual after the Exposition Universelle; it was once again attentive to the works and criticized Liebermann for going astray—for neglecting drawing and details in favor of modeling that was more sculptural than pictorial—and exhorted him to go back to his first manner. But Liebermann's role at the 1889 Exposition Universelle had an essential impact on the way his works were perceived. His role as a moral and artistic leader of modern German art, represented by painters such as Gothardt Kuehl, Fritz von Uhde, and Wilhelm Leibl, was a recurring theme, as when in 1894

Léonce Bénédict defended the acquisition of Liebermann's *A Beer Garden in Brannenburg, Bavaria* (Plate VII), or in the text of the first catalogue of the Musée du Luxembourg.²³ This image of Liebermann was consolidated over the years, especially now that, with his stock rising in Berlin, his personal disgust at the Dreyfus Affair, and the French critics' view that he was in a rut, he was no longer a regular exhibitor at the Salon after 1896. In the future he would present only *Woman with Goats* (Figure 6.5) at the Exposition Universelle of 1900 and three works at the Salon d'Automne in 1904.²⁴ Knowledge of Liebermann's work was thus no longer based on direct critical observation but congealed at the turn of the century around the image of an anti-Prussian, revolutionary and Naturalist painter whose forays into light, *plein-air* painting were initially considered to be rather mediocre but had finally begun to win praise.²⁵

The three biographical texts written for Liebermann's sixtieth birthday by Léonce Bénédict, Louis Réau, and Marius-Ary Leblond continued to convey this same image of the painter.²⁶ These were not so much an opportunity to discover Liebermann's work as a summing up, based on analysis of the works and of the artist's image as it had been shaped in



Figure 6.5. Max Liebermann, *Woman With Goats*, 1890, Oil on Canvas, 127 x 172 cm. Munich, Neue Pinakothek.

France over the years.²⁷ However they interpret Liebermann's art, these articles acknowledge his career in its entirety and combine biographical elements, his artistic work, his artistic temperament, his nationality, and the critics' own feelings, in which it is difficult to distinguish emotional elements from more scientific analysis. This synthetic approach makes Liebermann appear as a kind of symbolic figure, diversely appreciated by the different authors. He is above all a German artist, trained in the French School and marked by the time he spent in Holland, who has managed to keep his independence and disseminate the lessons of French art over the Rhine. In spite of the importance given to French art in all these articles, Liebermann nevertheless appears as an original artist who has avoided enslavement by his models and has always managed to stay independent. The effects of World War I would remove all trace of nuance from such considerations.

The three biographical texts from 1908–09 conclude the series of publications that had regularly been devoted to Liebermann since 1874, when he first exhibited in France. Absent from the Salon and other Parisian artistic events, Liebermann disappeared from critical discourse. Not long after the end of World War I he became president of the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin. Excepting one or two special links between French and German artists, France showed scant interest in what was going on across the Rhine, and when attention was focused on Germany, the fear of seeing Paris lose its status as capital of the arts and of being overtaken in the spheres of architecture and design often outweighed any curiosity that might be felt about actual German art.²⁸ Diplomatic tension would remain extreme until the Treaty of Locarno in 1924, and scientific and cultural exchanges were frozen.

After years of absence from the French art scene, the name of Liebermann reappeared in 1927 on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. To celebrate this event, the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin organized an exhibition of a hundred of his works. Karl Scheffler, editor of the journal *Kunst und Künstler* and a member of the Liebermann Jubilee Committee in Berlin, now wrote to Louis Réau, editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, to see if Paris would be interested in hosting the event.²⁹ On 27 June, Réau informed Paul Léon, director of the Beaux-Arts, of the project, insisting on the idea that

Liebermann's work illustrated the richness of Franco-German exchanges. In July 1927, Léon duly agreed to the proposal. While the artistic interest of the exhibition was acknowledged, however, there was a "question of its appropriateness, for in 1914 M. Liebermann was one of the signatories of the famous Manifesto of the 93" signed by ninety-three intellectuals who supported the German military offensive in 1914.³⁰ Thus, Liebermann's career was seen in the light of his betrayal of the country that had welcomed, trained, and exhibited him. Clearly, the issue here was no longer painting but politics. Liebermann was not being judged for his works, but for the choices he had made, as perceived by the French.

The French embassy in Germany pleaded in favor of the project, recalling that Liebermann was probably the German artist whom the French public were most likely to appreciate. Over time, the exhibition acquired tremendous diplomatic significance as a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation. Liebermann and, even more, his works, became secondary. On 9 August 1927 the minister of foreign affairs responded positively to the proposal for the exhibition recommended to him by the Ministry of Public Instruction and the Fine Arts. However, a virulent press campaign was now unleashed, led by *L'Action française* and picked up by other publications, leading to nationalist demonstrations against the exhibition. The institutions in charge held firm, but it was recognized that the Jeu de Paume was not really an appropriate venue. A plaque on its façade commemorated the execution of the English nurse Edith Cavell by the Germans in 1915.

On the German side, the organizers were not happy with a change of location. They had been informed that, since the Jeu de Paume was no longer possible, the exhibition would be held in a major gallery. Erich Hancke, Liebermann's great friend and biographer and the organizer of the Berlin exhibition, came to the embassy to explain that "Mr. Liebermann, after it being question of an official exhibition in a state venue, could not accept an exhibition in a private gallery."³¹ On both sides of the Rhine, the political and diplomatic aspect of the exhibition was thus as important as the actual presentation of the works. The Musée de l'Orangerie was now envisaged, but in the end the exhibition never took place. According to the archival materials, correspondence ceased in November 1927.

It is likely, as Louis Réau had foreseen, that the Germans had lost patience.

Responsibility for the failure of this project did not lie with Liebermann's art but with certain aspects of his career that were given symbolic value and became a political and diplomatic issue in the context of the fragile Franco-German reconciliation of the interwar years. The aspirations expressed by critics in 1889, which were echoed in the biographies of 1908 and 1909, regarding the emergence of a modern and republican German art inspired by the lessons of France, no longer obtained after the tragedy of World War I. The Weimar Republic, the offspring of that war, caused apprehension in some quarters. Max Liebermann, now director of the republic's highest artistic institution, the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin, embodied the new regime. Naturalism now belonged to history, and the break with academic art and the encouragement of modernity had finally been recognized in Germany. Liebermann had himself become the representative of tradition, and was rather closed to contemporary trends. The failure of the 1927 exhibition shows that critical discourse had shifted completely from the artist's works to his official role as a cultural representative of Weimar Germany.

At the end of the 1920s, several articles were published describing visits to Liebermann at his house in Wannsee, or in his studio on Pariserplatz.³² In these texts, however, Liebermann's contemporary works are mentioned only sparingly. The authors concentrate more on descriptions of the setting, the artist's physical appearance, his encounters and connections with French art and artists, and his views on contemporary art. There is a fairly substantial passage on his collection of Impressionist works. Liebermann had become a witness to Franco-German artistic history, a living memory. When Liebermann inquires about the intentions behind Henri Focillon's visit—"What does he want? To see the rhinoceros?"—Focillon explains that he wishes to see "a grand old man who is covered in glory, advanced in years and steeped in those memories that, through history and its ups and downs, can still bring people together."³³

Today, the French vision of Liebermann is based on the partial knowledge inherited from the turn of the twentieth century, excluding most of the works he did not exhibit in

Paris. French critics credited him with renewing German art and emancipating it from academic doctrines, not by the singular intervention of a modern style of expression, but by infusing it with the lessons from French art that had already ceased to be controversial.³⁴ Linked with a Naturalism that had become conventional by the mid 1870s, Liebermann in the 1890s responded to the experiments of the Impressionists when that movement was already well established in France. In spite of the genuine recognition of the singularity of his work and career in the texts from 1908–09, the shift in the discourse on Liebermann from the works to the man, due to the disastrous effects of World War I, was one factor leading commentators to overlook the specificity of his art. Then, in the early 1970s, when France began to rediscover the art of the nineteenth century both at home and abroad, attention was focused more on those who represented difference, singularity, and originality in relation to the French model.³⁵ Ultimately so hard to classify, Liebermann was forgotten, unknown, and shunted into the category of international artists of no great originality. It is now time to revise that image and invite the French audience to take another look at the art of this German painter who, in truth, they hardly know.

Translated from the French by Charles Penwarden

NOTES

1. See, among others, Rachel Esner, "'Art Knows No Fatherland': The Reception of German Art in France, 1878–1900," PhD diss., City University of New York, 1994; Thomas W. Gaehtgens, "Liebermann et l'impressionnisme français," in Thomas W. Gaehtgens *L'art sans frontières: Les relations artistiques entre Paris et Berlin* (Paris, 1999), 293–331; Olivia Tolède, "Max Liebermann et la France," Master's thesis, Université Paris X – Nanterre, 2000; Pierre Vaisse, "Max Liebermanns 'Eva' und die impressionistische Ursprünglichkeit?" in Uwe Fleckner, Martin Schieder, Michael Zimmermann, eds., *Jenseits der Grenzen: Französische und deutsche Kunst vom Ancien Régime bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 2000), vol. 2, 433–444; Knut Helms, "Esquisse d'un réseau libéral franco-allemand: Max Liebermann et la confraternité de l'art," in Alexandre Kostka and Françoise Lucbert, eds., *Distanz und Aneignung: Relations artistiques entre la France et l'Allemagne 1870–1945. Kunstbeziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich 1870–1945* (Berlin, 2004), 61–87; Olivia Tolède, "Berlin-Paris: des estampes du peintre-graveur Max Liebermann offertes au musée du Luxembourg (1901)," *Les Nouvelles de l'estampe*, no. 195 (July–September 2004): 7–16; Friederike

- Kitschen, commentary on Paul Leroi, "Silhouettes d'artistes contemporains, Max Liebermann," *L'Art*, no. 31 (1882): 9–13, in Friederike Kitschen and Julia Drost, eds., *Deutsche Kunst: Französische Perspektiven, 1870–1945. Quellen und Kommentare zur Kunstkritik* (Berlin, 2007), 234–241.
2. The databases of the Centre Allemand d'Histoire de l'Art played a fundamental role in my research. These gather newspaper and magazine articles attesting the critical reception of German art in France and of French art in Germany from 1870 to 1940. They are accessible online at: <[http://proweb.dfgk.dyndns.dk/\(jwj0ih55cr2eatifrsin3b45\)/Index.aspx?L=2&P=1,2](http://proweb.dfgk.dyndns.dk/(jwj0ih55cr2eatifrsin3b45)/Index.aspx?L=2&P=1,2)>.
3. Critical commentaries on Liebermann's works are relatively infrequent during the early years when he was exhibiting. Generally speaking, however, they do not express animosity; Liebermann is simply seen as an artist at the start of his career. The small number of articles about him should be attributed more to his lack of reputation than to the nationalist reactions suggested by his first biographer, Erich Hancke. Hancke, *Max Liebermann: Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Berlin, 1914), quoted by Olivia Tolède, "Max Liebermann et la France," 60.
4. On the stereotypes applied by the French to German art, see Claude Digeon, *La crise allemande de la pensée française* (Paris, 1959); René Cheval, "Cent ans d'affectivité franco-allemande ou l'ère des stéréotypes," *Revue d'Allemagne*, no. 4 (1972): 603–614; Gabriele Bleeker-Byrne, *French Perceptions of German Art (1800–1850): Studies in Stereotypes and Their Ideological Influence* (Providence, 1989); Esner, "Art Knows No Fatherland"; Rachel Esner, "Art Knows No Fatherland": The Reception of German Art in France, in the Early Third Republic, in Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann, eds., *The Mechanics of Internationalism* (Oxford, 2001), 357–373; Uwe Fleckner, "L'art allemand et son public français: Réception et transferts artistiques au XIXe siècle," in Uwe Fleckner and Thomas W. Gaehtgens, eds., *De Grünewald à Menzel: L'image de l'art allemand en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2003), 1–14; Friederike Kitschen, "Befremdlich anders: das französische Bild der deutschen Kunst," in Kitschen and Drost, *Deutsche Kunst*, 89–98.
5. Duranty, "La peinture au Salon de 1879 (Fin)," *Les Beaux-Arts illustrés*, no. 19 (March 1879): 146–147.
6. By way of example, after exhibiting *Women Plucking Geese* (1872/1) at the Salon of 1874, then *The Older Sister* (1876/3) and *Workers Cultivating a Field of Beetroots* (1876/1) at the Salon of 1876, Liebermann concentrated on Dutch subjects as of 1877. Thus alongside *Gossip* (1877/1), he exhibited *Orphan Girls in the Garden, Amsterdam* (1877/2). In 1879 he presented *Street in a Village of Zandvoort (Netherlands)* (1879/24) and *Dutch Interior* (1875/6). In 1880, the Salon showed *Kindergarten in Amsterdam* (1880/1) and *Women Peeling Vegetables, Holland* (1880/2). See the list of paintings by Max Liebermann in Paris in Olivia Tolède, "Max Liebermann et la France," n.p.
7. Paul Mantz, "Le Salon," *Le Temps*, 12 June 1881, 3.
8. Paul Leroi, "Silhouettes d'artistes contemporains, Max Liebermann," *L'Art*, no. 31 (1882): 9–13.
9. On the characteristics of Naturalism, see Ten Doesschate-Chu, *French Realism and the Dutch Masters* (Utrecht, 1974); Gabriel P. Weisberg, ed., *The Realist Tradition; French Painting and Drawing, 1830–1900*, exhibition catalogue, Cleveland Museum of Art, (Cleveland, 1980); Geneviève Lacambre, "Toward an Emerging Definition of Naturalism in French Nineteenth Century Painting," in Gabriel P. Weisberg, ed., *The European Realist Tradition* (Bloomington, 1982), 229–241; Miriam R. Levin, *Republican Art and Ideology in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Ann Arbor, 1986); Gabriel P. Weisberg, *Beyond Impressionism: The Naturalist Impulse in European Art 1860–1905* (London, 1992).
10. Burty, *Salon de 1883* (Paris, 1883), 108.
11. See for example A. Hustin, "L'Exposition internationale," *Moniteur des Arts*, no. 1526 (4 April 1884): 107; Joséphine Péladan, "Le Salon de 1884," *L'Artiste* (June 1884)s: 414–454, 438.
12. Georges Lafenestre, "La peinture étrangère à l'exposition universelle," *Revue des deux mondes*, 1 November 1889, 138–172, 154–155.
13. Emile Cardon, "Promenades à l'Exposition. VI. Allemagne," *Moniteur des Arts*, no. 1845 (12 July 1889): 253–255; August Dalligny, "L'Exposition Décennale: Sections étrangères. Le groupe des artistes allemands," *Journal des Arts*, 23 August 1889, 2 [n.p.].
14. See Françoise Forster-Hahn, "La confraternité de l'art: Deutsch Französische Ausstellungspolitik von 1871 bis 1914," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, no. 48 (1985): 506–537; Rachel Esner, "La peinture allemande à l'exposition universelle de 1855," *Romantisme, revue du dix-neuvième siècle*, no. 73 (1991): 103–112; Françoise Forster-Hahn, "Ce que les Allemands ont présenté, ce que les Français ont vu: L'art allemand aux Expositions universelles de Paris de 1855 à 1900," in Fleckner and Gaehtgens, *De Grünewald à Menzel*, 321–348.
15. On the circumstances in which the exhibitions were organized, see Françoise Forster-Hahn, "La confraternité de l'art"; Françoise Forster-Hahn, "Ce que les Allemands ont présenté."
16. François Thiébaud-Sisson, "L'Art dans les écoles étrangères," *La Nouvelle Revue* 62 (January 1890): 132–153, on Germany see 139–141.
17. Claude Digeon, *La crise allemande de la pensée française*; Maurice Agulhon, *La République 1880–1932* (Paris, 1990).
18. Pascal Ory, "Le centenaire de la Révolution française," in Pierre Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1997), vol. 1, 465–492; Maurice Agulhon, *La République 1880–1932*, 90.
19. Pierre Vaisse, *La Troisième République et les peintres* (Paris, 1995), 127; Michael F. Zimmermann, "Naturalismus unter dem Eiffelturm: Die Kunst auf der Weltausstellung von 1889," in Gudrun Gersmann and Hubertus Kohle, eds., *Frankreich 1871–1914: Die Dritte Republik und die Französische Revolution* (Stuttgart, 2002), 148–175.
20. Knut Helms, "Esquisse d'un réseau libéral franco-allemand," 61–87.
21. Maurice Agulhon, *La République 1880–1932*; Jean-Pierre Azéma and Michel Winock, *La IIIe République (1870–1940)* (Paris, 1991).
22. Forster-Hahn, "La confraternité de l'art"; Esner, "Art Knows No Fatherland," in Geyer and Paulmann; Helms, "Esquisse d'un réseau libéral franco-allemand."
23. Acquisition by the Luxembourg Museum, rough copy sent to the director of the Beaux-Arts, undated, Archives des Musées Nationaux, 2HH1 1894 and L. Bénédict, *Le musée du Luxembourg* (Paris, 1894), n.p. On the acquisition of this work, see Mathilde Arnoux, *Les musées français et la peinture allemande 1871–1981* (Paris, 2007).
24. *Pig Market in Haarlem* (1894/1), *Young Girl Entering a Classroom*, *Bathing Boys* (1900/1).
25. It is important to note that the light-toned style of painting toward which Liebermann was moving as of the mid 1890s was only rarely assimilated to Impressionism by French critics. Gustave Kahn's description of Liebermann as "the champion of French Impressionism and the leader of German Impressionism" is very much an exception. Gustave Kahn, "Artistes contemporains: Max Liebermann," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (October 1901): 285–298, 287.
26. Marius-Ary Leblond, "La peinture allemande et Max Liebermann," *L'Art et les artistes* 10 (1908–09): 115–123; Louis Réau, "Max Liebermann," *La Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 24 (December 1908): 441–455; Léonce Bénédict, "Max Liebermann," in *Art et Décoration: Revue mensuelle d'art moderne* 25 (May 1909): 117–126.

27. The archives kept at the library of the INHA (*Dossiers patrimoniaux, fonds Louis Réau*, dossier no. 4) show that Louis Réau had read Hans Rosenhagen's book on Liebermann, published in 1900. He repeats its biographical information and, without quoting the source, even translates some of its descriptions of the works. However, we may also observe that Réau's article does not take into account the interpretations put forward by the German author. He simply takes up the general ideas about Liebermann expounded by French authors, both in the press and in the book by the Marquis de la Mazellière on *La peinture allemande* (Paris, 1900), 292–295, which emphasizes Liebermann's transition from an analytic manner that precisely details every element in the painting to an overall, synthetic view. Bénédite, who did not speak English, also worked from the analysis of Liebermann's work proposed by the Marquis de la Mazellière and used documentation provided by Liebermann in person to write his article: Ms 375, 6, I, f 202, 8 June 1908, letter from Liebermann to Léonce Bénédite, Bibliothèque Centrale des Musées Nationaux, Paris. In contrast, Marius-Ary Leblond got bogged down in definitions of artistic profiles based on "racial psychology," taking up the most contemptuous received ideas about German art.
28. *Paris-Berlin : Rapports et contrastes France-Allemagne 1900–1933*, exhibition catalogue, Centre Georges-Pompidou Paris (Paris, 1978); Robert Frank, Laurent Gervereau, and Hans Joachim Neyer, eds., *La course au moderne : France et Allemagne dans l'Europe des années vingt, 1919–1933* (Paris, 1992); Isabelle Ewig, Thomas W. Gaehtgens, and Matthias Noell, eds., *Das Bauhaus und Frankreich: Le Bauhaus et la France 1919–1940* (Berlin, 2002); Andreas Holleczek and Andrea Meyer, eds., *Französische Kunst-Deutsche Perspektiven: Quellen und Kommentare zur Kunstkritik* (Berlin, 2004); Kitschen and Drost, *Deutsche Kunst*; Marie Gispert, «L'Allemagne n'a pas de peintres»: Diffusion et réception de l'art allemand moderne en France durant l'Entre-deux-guerres, 1918–1939, thesis, Université Paris I, 2006.
29. Mathilde Arnoux, "L'échec du projet d'exposition Max Liebermann au musée du Jeu de Paume en 1927," *Histoire de l'art*, no. 55 (2004): 109–118.
30. On support from German intellectuals for the *Manifesto of the 93*, see, among others, Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of German Mandarins: The German Academic Community 1890–1933* (Cambridge, MA, 1969); Marion F. Deshmukh, "German Impressionist Painters and World War I," *Art History* 4, no. 1 (March 1981): 66–79; Jürgen von Ungern-Sternberg and Wolfgang von Ungern-Sternberg, *Der Aufruf "An die Kulturwelt!"* (Stuttgart, 1996).
31. Letter dated 30 October 1927, Pierre de Margerie to Herriot, Archives Nationales, F²¹4051/3, *Projets d'expositions : Exposition Max Liebermann, 1927*.
32. André Germain, "Visite à Liebermann," in André Germain, *Chez nos voisins* (Paris, 1927), 22–27; Henri Focillon, "Visite à Liebermann," *Revue d'Allemagne et des pays de langue allemande*, no. 28 (1930): 110–118.
33. Focillon, "Visite à Liebermann," 112.
34. See on this question the interpretation by Vaisse, "Liebermanns 'Eva' und die impressionistische Ursprünglichkeit?" 441.
35. The acquisition of foreign paintings made with a view to constituting the collections of the future Musée d'Orsay reflects this phenomenon. Within the limits of what was available on the market, choices concentrated on art that was most typical of the country concerned. Thus several German painters and one Swiss assimilated to the German School entered the collections, and *The Tree of Crows* by Caspar David Friedrich was acquired in 1976. A year later the Louvre purchased *Diana's Hunt* by Arnold Böcklin, and the *Portrait of a Couple* by Franz Ittenbach entered the collections in 1979, while in 1980 Franz von Stuck was represented by *The Wild Hunt*. Although the influence of French culture was certainly assessed here, the most important thing about these works was that they should represent authentic German culture. See M. Arnoux, *Les musées français et la peinture allemande*.