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How do the Political Effects of Pictures Come About? The Case of Picasso's *Guernica*

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This article[1] is not concerned with the history of *Guernica*'s creation nor with the uniquely well-documented process of its making, which have been discussed on numerous occasions.[2] Nor do I intend to deal with the controversies over the correct interpretation of the symbols in the picture, those endless disputes concerning the precise meaning of the bull and horse.[3] Rather, I wish to offer a few observations about the political effect of the work, and then try to indicate what general conclusions we might be able to draw from this.

Picasso painted the picture on commission from the Spanish Republic and its Popular Front government for the Spanish pavilion at the International Exhibition held in Paris in 1937. Unlike most other nations, the Spanish Republic did not represent itself in the exhibition in terms of its economic power, but in terms of its cultural values, among which works of art of the avant-garde took pride of place (Picasso, Calder, Mirò, Gonzalez and others had all offered works of art). In this way the Spanish Republic — embattled as it was by the fascists — enlisted international solidarity with the help of artists.

Though the Spanish pavilion was first opened in June 1937, too late to be included in the illustrated guides, and though the press hardly took any notice of it, its impact, and in particular that of Picasso's work, seems to have been considerable. If one is to believe the observations published in the *Cahiers d'Art*, the basic content of the picture was readily recognised by the visitors, who were in no way an artistic audience.[4] Picasso himself called the picture his answer to the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica — after which he named his painting — by the German fascists.[5] Guernica was then on everybody's lips and had come to serve as a symbol of the victims of the fascist terror.[6]

Not surprisingly, Picasso's picture was criticised, as was the whole avant-garde, both by the left and the right. Much more surprising, however, is the amount of spontaneous acclaim it received, both from the left and from the liberal bourgeoisie.

Though the organ of the French communist party, *L'Humanité*, refrained from taking any view on the subject, a number of communist artists expressed great enthusiasm over the picture. One only needs to think of Eluard's tributes, or the following comments by Johannes Wüsten, a German artist living in exile in France:[7]

> Picasso's great work, the bombing of Guernica, is in no way second to Dix's trench scenes, as far as horror is concerned. (Nobody would have anticipated that abstract forms had such a realist impact!) Art critics may consider its value for art history. What grips me about it, immediately — in the same sense that there is something that severs any possible connection between the defeatist Dix and the militant anabaptist Grünewald — is the bull, which raises itself up from the midst of the catastrophe; it pauses, imperturbable, in the midst of this hell. No muscle hints at flight amid the general rout. It watches out, its sharp horns at the ready, its tail nervously lashing about — only it does not yet see the opponent which it will fall upon in a moment. . . .

It can certainly be demonstrated that Picasso's work played a decisive role in winning over the left to avant-gardism in painting and convincing them that it was possible to make political statements using non-realist forms — this is clearly apparent in Wüsten's comments. Doubts were expressed, not so much by left radical or independent progressive intellectuals — like Herbert Read in England, who was very enthusiastic about Picasso's *Guernica* — as by artists and critics who were close to the Communist party — such as Anthony Blunt in England who was initially quite critical of *Guernica*.[8] Just as left intellectuals — though in no way all of them, as the example of Blunt shows — were to some extent won over to the idea of avant-garde form by Picasso's picture, so bourgeois or liberal progressive artists and critics were converted to the possibility, or even the necessity, of a political engagement within an avant-garde artistic practice. Modernism was championed in France by bourgeois circles who advocated a formalist progressiveness in art that, in an art for art's sake way, focused exclusively on artistic means, and did not seek any point of reference outside a circumscribed bourgeois notion of art.

One could say that Zervos' discussion of *Guernica* represents one of the first attempts to interpret a modernist work of art from the perspective of contemporary political struggles, in particular the war in Spain and the fascist threat at home.[9] One might even say that the picture served as a means whereby the politicisation of a bourgeois cultural élite was strengthened, or even set in motion. This could only happen because Picasso's work satisfied the formal aesthetic avant-gardist expectations of such circles. The picture fitted the criteria of artistic avant-gardism that, particularly in France, had a long

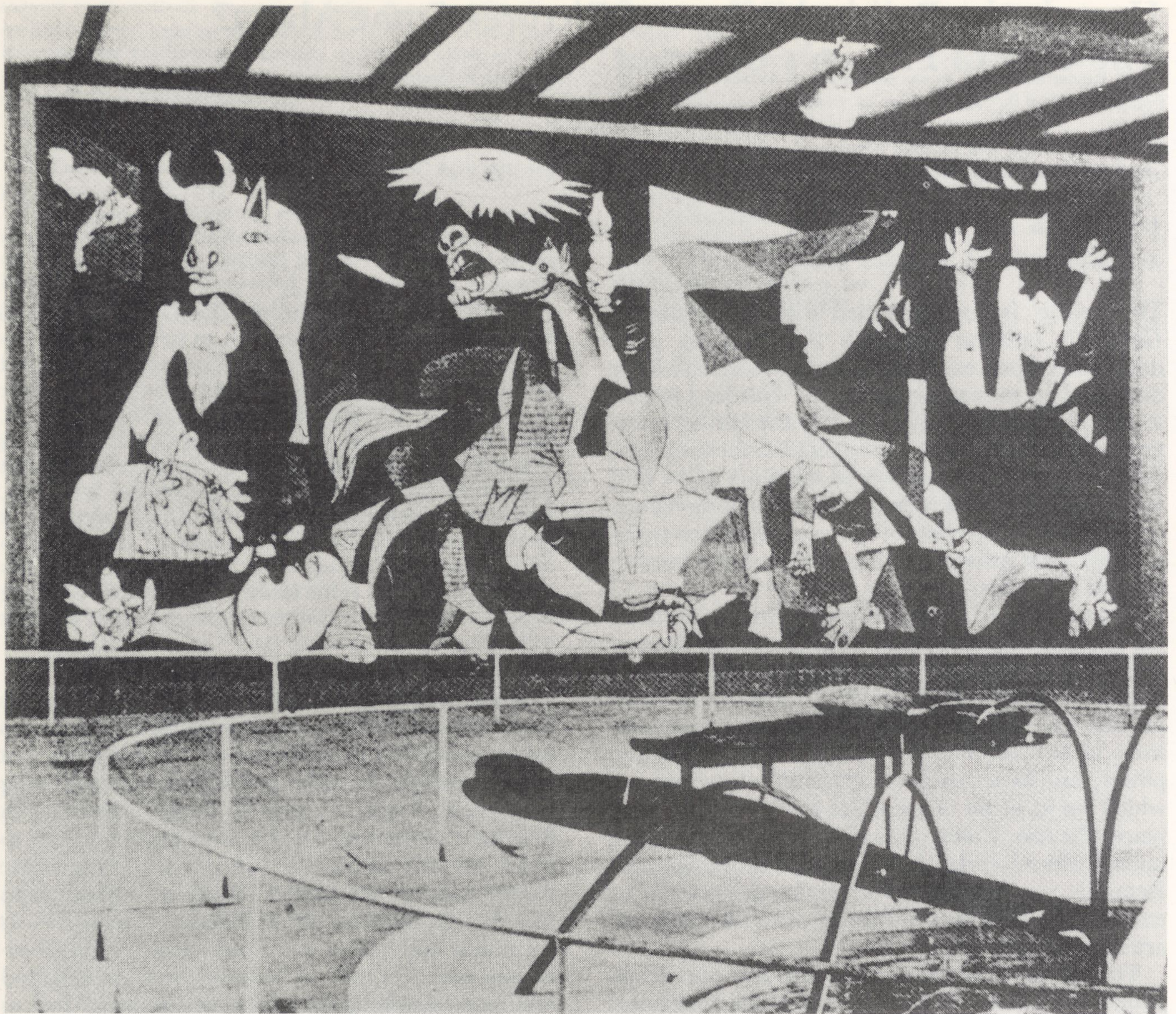

Fig. 1. Installation photograph of Picasso's *Guernica* in the Spanish Pavilion of the 1937 Paris International Exhibition.

tradition of elaboration and refinement behind it. Picasso's work succeeded in bringing together two usually quite separate areas of concern regarding visual imagery — the formal preoccupations of the artistic avant-garde and the interest in putting over a political message.

But the effect that the picture had as a result can certainly not be ascribed simply to Picasso's genius. The basis for the painting's wide impact had already been laid by a range of earlier initiatives. French as well as emigré German artists had set up and been active in working together in organisations that supported the politics of the French and Spanish Popular Front. Exhibitions were organised and commissions carried out to draw attention to the fascist threat. Artists designed posters, illustrations and caricatures as anti-Hitler propaganda. Pictures by Lingner and Kokoschka dealing with the war in Spain were widely circulated. We should also remember that works by Fougeron, Pignon, Taslitzky, Jacques Lipchitz, Masson and Sima all introduced the theme of the Spanish Civil War into art.[10]

Numerous artists took part in anti-fascist demonstrations, designing banners, decorations and floats. Among the visual symbols deployed on political banners were portraits of celebrated critics of capitalism and political oppression, as well as revolutionary heroes — these included Marat, Saint-Just, Robespierre, Callot, Daumier and Courbet. Not only were copies of Goya's *Third of May 1808* and Delacroix's *Liberté guidant le peuple* used, but also a Cimabue *Madonna*. 'We are carrying the Museums onto the streets' Taslitzky wrote.[11] In a similar vein, Barrault gave public readings of poetry by Eluard, Aragon and Prévert to workers in factories.[12] A broad consensus established itself in which the fight against fascism in Spain was seen as a matter of saving

Fig. 2. Communist rally under the 'Front populaire', 1936.

human culture, where all the great masterpieces of this culture, regardless of the particularities of their content and the circumstances of their creation could nevertheless stand as potential witnesses against the destructiveness of fascism.

Important too for the political mobilisation of many contemporaries was, without doubt, the fact the anti-fascist struggle in France and Spain could be associated with the defense of nationalist values. Spain had been attacked: the destructive will and terror of the fascists was directed against a great nation and a great culture. Nationalist sentiment had not yet been as discredited as it became after the Second World War, particularly in Germany, where such values remained the exclusive prerogative of the far right — not even just the conservatives — while they were excluded from left and liberal political discourse.

The so-called Iberian character of Picasso's work had already been discovered by critics in the early 1930s.[13] Moreover, there was at this point in Picasso's work an increasing play upon Spanish or Mediterranean myths, such as the bull fight and the Minotaur, so that the ground for understanding *Guernica* was already prepared. For some time the artist had been suffusing his work with elements of these myths. For Picasso himself, the nationalist elements in his work and in his political outlook remained unequivocally bound up with the anti-fascist struggle. Having previously adopted a quasi-anarchistic 'man of nature' artist's attitude against the state institutions, and viewing the Spanish state with distant irony, Picasso now claimed that he had never felt himself so much a Spaniard as he did since the Republic had come under threat. Without the slightest hesitation he gave his unqualified acceptance to the request of the besieged Spanish Popular Front government that he take over the post of director of the Prado.[14]

Picasso and *Guernica* certainly stood at the very centre of the artistic initiatives and discussions that, whether more or less consciously and directly, were caught up in the politics of the French and Spanish Popular Front. Fougeron wrote, for example: 'I don't want to compel the spectator to accept something nor to circumscribe his response, but he must understand, that my themes are Picasso and the Spanish Civil War.'[15] This, however, should not be seen as a quasi-automatic consequence of Picasso's great work. It required the effort of many parties, of individual as well as collective work, for *Guernica* to have the enormous impact it did. Thanks to the help of numerous artists, intellectuals and politicians, and their organisation or artistic activities, public awareness of the struggle in Spain and the character of fascism increased. A cultural climate was created as a result of which the potential receptiveness of a broad and not exclusively artistic public was

prepared. No art is ever entirely the creation of a single (gifted) individual, but the work of several: it presupposes active involvement from people outside the purely artistic sphere. This is particularly true of an art which seeks to be politically effective. In Picasso's case, quite new structures of artistic reception had to be fashioned, because traditional institutional frameworks for the display of art, such as the official art exhibition, were just not adequate to the occasion.

In the cultural politics of the French and Spanish Popular Front, the very broad incorporation of a cultural heritage, including masterpieces of the most varied style and tradition, was characteristic. José Renau, director of the Art Academy in Madrid under the Popular Front government, whose idea it was to offer Picasso the post of director of the Prado, recalled the following incident:[16] he met Picasso shortly before he handed over *Guernica* and said to him on the spur of the moment: when the war comes to an end, a special room should be arranged in the Prado Museum in which Velázquez's *Las Meninas, Guernica* and Goya's *Execution on the 3rd May* would all be shown together. Picasso did not answer, but the gesture he made in response seemed to indicate to Renau that the idea appealed to him.

Renau's proposal can hardly be traced back to the history of traditional museums and their conception of picture display. Rather it was stimulated by the so called street museums of the 1930s, about which Taslitzky spoke, where works of art of the most diverse orientation were symbolically gathered together in order to strengthen the will to defend and save the threatened cultural legacy of humanity. The masterpieces of the history of art, that hitherto had remained firmly in the grip of bourgeois institutions, were now, at least in theory, torn from this esoteric and élitist context and associated with the visual symbols of resistance, thus being drawn into the struggle over cultural hegemony. In these years a second culture temporarily achieved dominance, and could stake out its claim as regards cultural products that previously had been the exclusive possession of the more conservative forces in society.[17]

Just as people could imagine Picasso's *Guernica* set beside Velázquez's *Las Meninas* in the Prado, one of the most venerable and traditional of museums, so it could be seen at the same time as a symbol of the struggle on the streets, and seemed equally appropriately located in that context. When Sert, the architect of the Spanish pavilion of 1937, took part in the symposium on *Guernica* organised by the Museum of Modern Art in New York after the war in 1946, he proposed that the picture be carried in triumph down 5th Avenue to the United Nations, thus keeping alive in this centre of international political debate the memory of horrors of war and the Spanish people's heroic struggle against aggression.[18] Sert's fantasy, as well as Renau's, demonstrates that in the cultural politics of the Popular Front no distinction was made

Fig. 3 Demonstration at Père-Lachaise with banners designed by Taslitzky and Gruber, 1936. Photograph by David Seymour.

between masterpieces of high art and art used in political agitation.

In the anti-fascist struggles of the 1930s, there existed two distinct conceptions of how art should be drawn into the political arena. Controversy on the subject played a role too in the subsequently celebrated expressionist debate.[19] The first alternative was practised mainly in Germany and by German emigrés. Art was to be put completely at the service of politics; only overtly political content, and forms that conveyed this content in the optimal manner and actively promoted political struggle, were considered legitimate. In this *agitprop* view, all artists and works of art were excluded that remained resistant to a close identity between form and content. This tendency, which Aragon also represented, was never able to gain full acceptance in France.[20] The second tendency was the one tried out in the Popular Front politics of France and Spain (it was only here that Popular Front politics was a practical proposition; it certainly was not in Germany). Here there was an acceptance of the (relative) autonomy of different cultural spheres, with their own independently developed semantics and formal language. It was not a matter of trying (in a centralising fashion) to bend and direct these to the demands of politics. Rather the politics was to arise out of the necessity of defending these autonomous spheres. Thus artists and works of very different origin could be drawn into the struggle. The political stand taken by individuals developed out of the need to defend the realities of art, and from the particular stamp they gave to reality through their work.

Picasso had always quite consistently taken this point of view in relation to his picture *Guernica*. Even when he joined the Communist party in 1944, he defended his use of an artistic language that did not bear directly on political realities. He did not take as his point of departure realistic images of the destruction of Guernica which were available, for example, in newspaper photographs. Furthermore, he never allowed himself to be committed to any unambiguous political interpretation of the work's animal symbolism, even if it was clearly directed against Franco and the fascist assault on Spain. When asked whether the bull in *Guernica* stood for fascism, he denied this, and insisted that the bull signified rather a generalised 'darkness and brutality'.[21] 'In this picture I was concerned with the definitive expression and the definitive solution of a problem and that's why I used symbols.' He did not countenance, then, disregarding the immanent artistic problems with which he was posed by the composition and ordering of the symbols in favour of making an unambiguous and clearly determinate political statement.

On the other hand, Picasso was equally emphatic about putting his picture at the disposal of the struggle for the Spanish republic, for which he painted it, and which had prompted the picture in the first place. He had it exhibited in London in 1938 and in various places in America in 1939, always outside museums, using the proceeds to provide financial support for Spanish emigrés. He turned down the proposal made by Alfred H. Barr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, to exhibit *Guernica* in an anniversary exhibition celebrating the opening of the new museum building in 1939.[22] Clearly he did not want to have the political objectives he associated with the picture neutralised by having it serve quite other cultural purposes.[23] Picasso also remained quite adamant about the ultimate destination of the picture: the work belonged to the Spanish Republic and was to leave New York the moment the republic was restored.

Both in its content and in its formal language Picasso's picture represented, in Picasso's own words, a self-sufficient answer to the destruction of Guernica, one that could not simply be subsumed within some pre-established political programme. That did not mean, however, that Picasso would have been prepared to allow his picture to serve any purpose that happened to be appropriate, whether political or nonpolitical. For him the painting always remained connected with the anti-fascist struggle for the Spanish Republic. Its original political charge was something he always wanted it to keep.

The political history of Picasso's *Guernica* did not end here; and even the later phases of its history, when it was in America, have something to tell us about the mechanisms whereby pictures achieve a political impact and act as cultural symbols. As is well known, the work remained in the custody of the Museum of Modern Art until it was handed over to the Prado in 1981. It was exhibited again in Chicago in 1940, this time in the Art Institute, and in 1941 and 1942 it was shown in the Fogg Art Museum and other American museums, and afterwards at the Biennale in São Paulo, and in 1955/56 again in Europe: in Cologne, Paris, Munich, Brussels, Stockholm, Hamburg and Amsterdam.[24] It is symptomatic that this second series of showings in America and Europe was organised by museums and not by political groups, as in 1937–39.

It is quite evident that the content of the picture, and its connection with the Spanish Civil War, was more or less completely ignored by American critics.[25] This may have something to do with political events — the final collapse of the Spanish Republic and the official recognition accorded to the Franco régime in 1939. On the other hand, however, the Second World War had already broken out, and it would hardly have been far-fetched to envisage *Guernica* as an indictment of the continuation of fascist aggression against other European countries. But instead, in America above all, it was the avant-garde form of the picture that dominated perception of it. Henry McBride wrote that, while *Guernica* was conceived by Picasso as a piece of propaganda 'it nevertheless became something much more

significant, that is a work of art'.[26] In 1946 Barr had already made the point that the language of the picture was neither demagogic nor journalistic, and hence would not be widely understood.[27] Stuart Davis emphasised the artist's achievement as an abstract artist.[28]

It was this evident stylistic modernism which differentiated Picasso's *Guernica* so clearly from the work of the majority of left-wing artists in America who dominated the artistic scene in the 1930s and early 40s, supported by the public commissions of Roosevelt's New Deal politics. By contrast with Picasso, their work presented a fairly traditional artistic realism. Since the 1940s this realism has come to be classified as old fashioned and has been increasingly (and, it seems, systematically) displaced from official institutions. In its place avant-garde art has been promoted, an avant-garde art ever more exclusively conceived as an abstract art. Clement Greenberg, without doubt the most brilliant critic of the period, played a decisive role in this development. He elaborated a theory of the modern in which the truly avant-garde in painting was presented as that which tended towards the complete suppression of any appearance of three-dimensionality, and hence also of any reference to the material world outside art.[29] This abstract conception of art, evacuated of any concern with content, was well adapted to serving as a symbol of the free west, a weapon to pit against socialist realism during the cold war years of the 1950s.

The supposedly purely artistic controversy over the relative merits of a conventional realistic or modern abstract (progressive) form of art had the political effect of very much displacing artists of the left from the official artistic scene. Seen from the perspective of that scene, this could be considered simply as a side effect that indeed was not consciously intended by many of those directly involved. However, we must proceed on the assumption that in the cultural sphere, political goals, if they are ideological, and hence realised as far as possible without direct sanctions, always come about indirectly, that is, by way of a translation of political intentions into questions involving art. The political significance of artistic controversies of this kind cannot be understood by taking their internally defined terms of reference at face value.

A further question suggests itself: how is it that Picasso's *Guernica* so often features in attempts to present modern art as essentially free of content, thus making the significance of this picture, of all the artist's work, a matter of free, and hence arbitrary, interpretation? The efforts expended in trying to neutralise or even falsify Picasso's political intentions as regards this picture, the interpretational acrobatics, continue today.[30] Yet there are numerous famous works by Picasso that would be much better suited to an apolitical understanding of the modern than this particular symbol of the anti-fascist struggle.

It seems to be a law governing conflicts over hegemony in the cultural sphere that it is precisely those symbols that both sides claim for themselves that are the most fought over. The opposition between competing value systems can take place with perhaps a minimum of reinterpretation of the symbols involved. Instead of making an issue of works that can be considered as part of your own culture, and which would convey your own politics or your own set of values much more unambiguously, it is rather a matter of appropriating the works of your opponent.

Already in 1968 Franco himself was interested in getting *Guernica* back to Spain,[31] and he of all people used Goya's art to foster his image abroad, an art which during the Spanish Civil War had come to stand as a symbol of the resistance against fascism.[32] The reason is clear — in hegemonic struggles, it is a matter of building up a general consensus, and as a result symbols and values are required that mean something to all concerned, even if there is no complete agreement about what they might mean. It appears that this struggle for hegemony has been carried out much more self-consciously and strategically by the right than by the left.

I should like to end by drawing together the three most important points as I see them:

1. A political effect does not emanate from an isolated work of art, however correct and clear its political message might be. The decisive requirement is a political culture, within which it can be interpreted as a symbol. The extent of its political effect depends upon the political forces active at the time, as well as the particular accent of meaning the work is given through its political use.

2. The political effectiveness of a work of art is not in any way determined unequivocally by the fact that it is, both as regards content and form, incorporated within or subordinated to a particular political tendency or strategy. In the first place it can symbolise things other than the goals and ideas of the political group or party that it serves. For example, the semantics of the work can be conceived in a broader or more generalised way, as in the case of Picasso's *Guernica*. Here, as a result, a broader range of social experience and cultural competence could be drawn into the political struggle. This struggle could be organised on a broader basis than would have been possible if the only factors relevant to art had been purely political aims and objectives.

3. If a work of art does become a political symbol, then you have to reckon that its significance will become and will remain a matter of dispute. The opposing side will try to incorporate it within its own political strategy, to appropriate it or at least to neutralise it. The political significance of a work of art is never given once and for all, it does not have a fixed ontological status, but must be reaffirmed and

fought for over and over again. We art historians too are involved in these hegemonic stuggles.

Translated by Alex Potts

Notes

1. A German version of this article has been published in: *Das Argument*, no. 153, Sept.–Oct. 1985, pp. 701–10.

2. See *Guernica*, Legado Picasso, Madrid, 1981. R. Arnheim: *Picasso's Guernica. The Genesis of a Painting*, Los Angeles, 1962.

3. Juan Larrea: *Guernica*, New York, 1947, p. 35 ff.; A. Blunt: *Picasso's 'Guernica'*, London, 1969, p. 14; A. Barr: *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, New York, 1946, p. 202; 'Picasso Explains' (Interview with J. Seckler), *New Masses*, vol. 54, no. 11 (13 March 1945), p. 5. Photographs by Dora Maar of eight progressive stages of this mural are reproduced in *Cahiers d'art*, 12, 1937. In the first stage of the composition the fallen warrior is alive, raising his arm with his fist clenched. This is the symbol of anti-fascist and communist engagement. In the final composition Picasso has changed this motif: the warrior is dead, holding his broken sword with one hand. Ruth Capelle argues (in a still unpublished article) that Picasso changed this motif at the moment when, in May 1937, the Catalan revolutionary committees were dissolved by the central Spanish government. Picasso reflected in this way the fights within the left parties during the Spanish Civil War. Werckmeister follows her arguments. In his opinion, Picasso dissociated himself from the Popular Front and its government during the process of finishing his painting. Werckmeister ('The Political Confrontation of the Arts at the Paris World Exhibition of 1937', *Arts and Sciences*, Fall 1984, pp. 11–16) interprets Picasso's *Guernica* as opposed to the German as well as the Soviet pavilions of the International Exhibition, in both of which he sees different symbols of power. I think there is no reason to doubt Picasso's engagement for the Spanish Republican government. Although Picasso certainly weakened the socialist issue of his painting by removing the warrior's clenched fist, he made his work all the more acceptable as a uniting symbol of different parties within the Popular Front (see T. Metscher, 'Realismus und Avantgarde in Picasso's *Guernica*', in *Der Friedensgedanke in der europäischen Literatur*, Fischerhude, 1984.

4. Ozenfant: 'Notes d'un touriste à l'exposition', *Cahiers d'art*, p. 241 ff; J. L. Sert, *Guernica*, 1981, p. 28.

5. *Guernica*, 1981, p. 28.

6. A. Barr. *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, New York, 1946, p. 202.

7. Ozenfant: 'Notes d'un touriste à l'exposition', *Cahiers d'art*, p. 241 ff. J. L. Sert: *Guernica*, 1981, p. 28.

8. H. Read: 'Picasso's *Guernica*', *London Bulletin*, No. 6 (October 1938), p. 6. Reprinted in: G. Schiff (ed.): *Picasso in Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1976, p. 104 ff. A. Blunt: 'Picasso Unfrocked', *The Spectator* (London), vol. 159 (8 October 1937), p. 584.

9. *Cahiers d'art*, *op. cit.*, 105 ff.

10. Exhibition Catalogue: *Paris-Paris*, Munich, 1981, pp. 49, 56.

11. See D. Schiller et al.: *Exil in Frankreich*, Frankfurt, 1981, pp. 304, 353. B. Taslitzky: 'Souvenirs du Front Populaire', quoted in: *Paris-Paris, op. cit.*, pp. 49, 56.

12. J.-L. Barrault: *Souvenirs pour demain*, Paris, 1972, pp. 112.

13. E. Lipton: *Picasso Criticism 1901–1939. The Making of an Artist-Hero*, New York–London 1976, p. 253 ff.

14. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

15. *Paris–Paris*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

16. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

17. *Paris–Paris*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

18. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

19. H.-J. Schmidt (ed.): *Die Expressionismus-Debatte*, Frankfurt, 1973.

20. For Aragon see *Paris–Paris, op. cit.*, p. 56. Exhibition Catalogue: *Realismus. Zwischen Revolution und Reaktion 1919–1939*, Munich, 1981, p. 422. On the different conceptions of the political use of art see: S. Schlenstedt: 'Gespräche mit Stephan Hermlin', *Weimarer Beiträge*, 30, 1984, pp. 1884 (1887).

21. 'Picasso Explains', *op. cit.*; Barr, *op. cit.*, 1946, p. 202.

22. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 114, 118.

23. In 1939, Picasso made the first exception, allowing *Guernica* to be shown in the Picasso retrospective of the Museum of Modern Art. After this exhibition in 1939 the painting was shown in different museums.

24. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. Barr, *op. cit.*, 1946, p. 202.

28. *Guernica*, 1981, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

29. C. Greenberg: 'Picasso', in: C. Greenberg: *Art and Culture*, Boston, 1961, p. 59 ff.

30. See the interpretation by M. Imdahl: 'Zu Picassos Bild "Guernica". Inkohärenz und Kohärenz als Aspekte moderner Bildlichkeit', in: R. Warning, W. Wehle (eds.): *Lyrik und Malerie der Avantgarde*, Munich, 1982, pp. 521–565.

31. In 1968 Franco personally approved that efforts should be undertaken to restore *Guernica* to Spain. It was then seen as an important 'national' work of art. In recompense Picasso was offered a museum in Madrid, built to honour his 'genialidad ibérica'. Picasso refused.

32. But in the Spanish exhibition in Geneva, organised under the auspices of the Franco government, only portraits, popular images and the *Maja* by Goya were shown, rather than Goya's paintings of the Spanish war against Napoleon. These had been claimed by the popular front as symbols of its own fight against fascism. It must be interpreted as a sign of weakness that the Franco government did not yet dare to use the same paintings by Goya for its fascist politics.