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book review of

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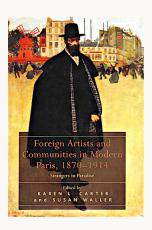
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Karen L. Carter and Susan Waller, eds., Foreign Artists and Communities in Modern Paris, 1870–1914: Strangers in Paradise. Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015.

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In Foreign Artists and Communities in Modern Paris, 1870–1914: Strangers in Paradise, Karen Carter and Susan Waller bring together sixteen essays, grouped in four sections, that explore the professional and personal experiences of foreign artists in the international cultural center that was Paris from 1870 to 1914. This forty-four-year period witnessed a constellation of interrelated processes of modernization and industrialization that deeply affected the world of the arts and thereby conditioned foreign artists and their communities.

Written by both established and emerging scholars, the essays in this volume use different methodologies. Most frequently and most extensively, the essays combine historiographical and sociological methods; overall, visual analysis is under explored. While the interdisciplinary nature of the texts greatly enriches extant art historical literature, a more patient and careful look at the art of the discussed artists might have proven beneficial.

The book's pithy title triggers a number of questions, including: What characterized the interactions among artists of the same national or ethnic background? Was there interaction among artists of different backgrounds and nationalities? What is the relation between foreign artists and the modernity of Paris? And why would these "strangers" consider Paris a "Paradise"? The editors' thoughtful introduction provides some preliminary insight into these areas of inquiry, complemented by more detailed and specific answers in individual chapters. Although they do not coincide with the structure of the book, these thematic considerations must be considered before discussing individual sections and essays.

The presence of the word "communities" in the book's title prepares the reader for the fact that the overwhelming majority of foreign artists interacted with one another during their stays, either temporary or permanent, in Paris. The first question that arises concerns such connections among artists of the same national or ethnic background. All chapters that address this aspect highlight at least two situations. In some cases, the communities that co-

national artists forged in Paris contributed to a sense of comfort and promoted those artists' professional interests. The associations of Polish artists in Paris exemplify this direction, as discussed in Ewa Bobrowska's essay. In other cases, although they knew one another, artists who shared a national identity consciously took different paths to reach both similar and widely different goals. For example, Norma Broude's essay presents the diverging career choices and paradigms of the Italian artists Giuseppe De Nittis and Federico Zandomeneghi; J. Thomas Rimer's essay singles out the professional trajectory of the Japanese artist Sakamoto Hanjirō that differed greatly from that of other Japanese artists who traveled to France and subsequently returned to Japan. These case studies pinpoint a creative tension between the artistic expression of communities of exiles and the drive for individual style and recognition. The editors drew a distinction between those artists who relocated by choice and those who moved under duress because of political turmoil at home. This volume is premised on the co-existence, in the international arts community of Paris, of both "voluntary exiles" (as coined by Hollis Clayson) and exiles in the political sense.[1]

The other form of interaction is that among separate foreign communities of artists. Did such connections occur and how can they be described in terms of tension and solidarity? The essays that address this issue only speak to cases where artists of different nationalities came together, either for the purposes of artistic collaboration or because of another identifying criterion that overrode national or ethnic backgrounds. In terms of collaboration, Juliet Bellow's essay on the Ballets Russes highlights how Scandinavian, Russian, Jewish, and French artists worked on different aspects of the company's productions and advertising materials. As is now well known, the Parisian public disapproved of their highly innovative collaborative work and French critics deemed it 'dangerous.' In terms of identities that took precedent over national and ethnic identities, Paul Fisher's essay foregrounds a queer identity and the 'tolerant' and magnetic presence of a French-American salonnière, Henrietta Ruebell, who brought together not only visual artists, but also poets and novelists of French, British, and American nationalities. In addition to these professional and personal networks that led to multicultural associations, a dividing factor that the book thoroughly explores is the strong nationalist agenda that became manifest in fin-de-siècle Paris. Embracing French art as an exponent of French identity, this nationalist discourse ran counter to the development of Paris into a "transnational artistic center" like London, Berlin, and other metropolitan areas that fostered global exchange (9).

Also highlighted in the book's title, the modernity of Paris represents a key aspect of the city's relationship with foreign artists and their communities. The book manages to convey a vibrant image of modern Paris through the lens of immigrant artists. Some essays, including those on the Italian sculptor Medardo Rosso, the Italian painter Gino Severini, and the multinational Ballets Russes, remind the reader that the modernity of Paris represented a bank of visual vocabularies and a major source of inspiration for these artists. In fact, as Sharon Hecker shows, Rosso was one of the first sculptors to showcase modern life in the medium of sculpture. Throughout the book, modernity emerges as an "equalizer" that helped foreign artists to identify as Parisian because of the shared modern experience.

Strangers or not, foreign artists often referred to Paris in admiring and optimistic terms. For some, Paris represented a Bohemian space to be sought and embraced; for others, like the American artists who sheltered themselves from the Bohemian lifestyle, the city was strictly

the site of excellent art instruction. As the editors indicated in the Introduction, foreign artists came to Paris as "migrants" rather than as "tourists" as their primary purpose was educational and professional. For the overwhelming majority of the discussed artists, Paris offered an unrivaled art market and that was no coincidence. The period under investigation, 1870-1914, was one of important transformations in terms of the nature of the art market; specifically, it saw the transition from an institutional and governmental Academy/Salon system to a liberalized and increasingly capitalist dealer/critic system. On this instrumental change, the editors cite the important work of Harrison White and Cynthia White in Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World. Elaborating on this book's contribution, Carter and Waller draw attention to the need to extrapolate the dealer/critic model in order to address other sectors of the arts, especially what came to be known as creative industries (or the "industrial arts," as Carter and Waller refer to them, in a more literal translation from the French.) Some of the book's case studies are external to the historically defined "fine arts," as in the essays of Cindy Kang (writing on a Hungarian tapestry designer), Karen Carter (writing on an American graphic artist), and Zoe Jones (writing on the depiction of foreign dances in the work of an Italian futurist painter). The artistic practices that the book addresses are thereby not only multinational and crosscultural, but also multi-medium and multidisciplinary.

The volume comprises four parts, each including four essays. Part I, "Institutions and Networks," explores how foreign artists navigated the cultural structures and opportunities of Paris, both in formal institutional settings, such as schools and official exhibitions, and in informal private settings, such as avant-garde artists' groups. Unlike the following three parts, the first section of the book is rather tenuous in terms of its cohesiveness despite the high quality of the essays. Part II, "Expatriate Communities," focuses on the dynamics of foreign artist networks in Paris. Two of the essays—Emily Burns' and Bobrowska's—explore how Paris represented a setting where two foreign artists' communities developed national cultural structures they were not able to create in their homeland, in the case of Polish artists, or because they wanted to preserve a "native" identity, in the case of American artists. The other two essays focus not on national communities, but on ethnic communities: Laura Karp Lugo writes about Catalan artists and Richard Sonn writes about Jewish artists. Part III, "Incomers and Outsiders," investigates the challenges that foreign artists faced in Paris. The effects of these challenges were hindering for some and productive for others. Part IV, "Cosmopolitans and Hybridities," concludes the book with an investigation of foreign artists in Paris whose identities were either transnational or transcending nationality. I found it interesting to connect this last section with Lugo's and Sonn's chapters in Part II, as both show how ethnic identity, as distinct from national identity, created artistic communities. A closer examination of each essay in the book demonstrates how they exemplify common themes or complement one another in the analysis of certain phenomena.

Norma Broude's essay investigates the Parisian professional experiences of two Italian artists, Giuseppe De Nittis and Federico Zandomeneghi, discussing how each artist dealt with the tension between Italian aesthetic expression and contemporaneous Parisian art trends. Broude's portrayal of De Nittis draws attention to a fundamental question that this book asks: Besides the elusive and problematic 'quality' of the work of art, what led to, or prevented, the success of the foreign artist in late nineteenth-century Paris? The case of De Nittis is particularly telling. His paintings—combining Impressionism with exceptionally skillful realism—were undoubtedly popular with the public and with prominent dealers and

critics in both Paris and London. However, as Broude argues, there were other factors, extraneous to the "quality" of the pictures per se, that contributed to the mainstream success of De Nittis. Specifically, his paintings did not overtly carry any radical political message. Also, although De Nittis exhibited in the first Impressionist exhibition and was a friend of Edouard Manet, he ceased his participation in Impressionist shows when his illusionistic paintings gained in popularity at the official Salon, granting him a "safer" and more direct access to the canon of contemporary French art. His choice of academic exhibitions echoed the choices of numerous other foreign artists (Polish, Catalan, Jewish, and Japanese, as we learn from this volume) for whom the Salon remained a legitimizing factor for their careers.

In his refusal of conventional paths, Zandomeneghi, the other Italian artist in Broude's essay, was not alone either. Other foreign artists chose alternative routes to success; for many, it was a strategy to be noticed and commented upon. The essay of Maite van Dijk explores the case of the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, who, unlike his fellow Norwegian artists, exhibited daring works at the non-juried Salon des indépendants. As one critic put it, what the public sought at the Salon des indépendants was to spot the individual artist of promise instead of looking for patterns and trends. Munch's strategy, then, to showcase himself as an unusual voice found an ideal outlet in the Salon des indépendants. Van Dijk makes an interesting case for how Munch's choice of subject matter was another strategic move to differentiate his art from that of other Scandinavian artists. Going back to Germaine de Staël's ideas in De la littérature, which associated Nordic sensibility with melancholy, French critics described Scandinavian art as expressions of deeply felt natural observations. While other Scandinavian artists capitalized on this categorization, Munch decided to stay away from it and to show figural paintings that depicted intense feelings in a jarring technique. In her analysis of Munch's strategies, Van Dijk insists on the biases that French critics had against foreign artists; she reminds the reader that Parisian critics either ignored foreign artists or labeled them as followers of French artists. A similar account of the French nationalistic bias in the reception of foreign artists is that of Juliet Bellow in her essay on the Ballets Russes in the third section of the book.

The essays of Karen Carter and Nicholas Sawicki explore the influence of foreign artists who worked in Paris on the art of their homelands. Carter explains that the posters of Joseph Christian Leyendecker, considered typically American and supportive of the argument for American participation in World War I, led to the 'golden age' of American graphic art and illustration as epitomized by Norman Rockwell. Carter argues that this chain of influence can be traced back to Leyendecker's instructors at the Art Institute of Chicago, who had been trained in Paris at the Académie Julian, and to Leyendecker's own training period in Paris at the same institution. Sawicki's eloquent exposition of Czech artists in Paris shows how they developed a double identity linked to Paris and Prague. In cultivating professional relationships in both cultural centers, they played a significant role in increasing the visibility of contemporaneous Czech art in Paris and in developing Cubist art in Prague. Sawicki's essay is one of the most convincing expositions in the book on how foreign artists' communities contributed to bridging and shifting notions of center and periphery in avantgarde art. Carter's essay also highlights the role that the private Académie Julian had as an alternative to the official Academy, in adding fine art principles (legible to the public due to their exposure to academic art) to areas of industrial arts like graphic design. Carter therefore draws attention to the significant role of the Académie Julian in the reformation of graphic design and the formation of foreign artists. It is useful to think of Carter's essay in

relation to Lugo's essay (in Part II) on how Catalan artists found an outlet for artistic expression and financial gain in poster design and illustration, just as the American Leyendecker had done.

The essays of Ewa Bobrowska and Emily Burns, both in the second section of the book, reveal two models of foreign artist communities that co-existed in Paris. Bobrowska explains that Polish artists were drawn to either Munich or Paris in order to be au courant with the latest trends in the arts and to find venues for their artistic development that were unavailable in their homeland; at this time, Polish territories belonged to Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Bobrowska's essay reveals that Polish artists formed societies for increasing the visibility of contemporaneous Polish art in Paris and sought to exhibit in both official and private settings. If the Polish art community was essentially one of exiles, the community of American artists that Burns focuses on exemplifies what Hollis Clayson called "voluntary exiles."[2] Looking for rigorous training and serious work in this European capital of the arts, American artists created a sheltered experience that allowed for drastically reduced exposure to Parisian life. Burns offers a convincing discussion of the roles that two organizations—American Art Association of Paris (AAAP) and American Girls Club (AGC) played in negotiating the tension between the bohemia of Paris, deemed dangerous and detrimental to work, and the sense of morality and work ethic that American artists sought. Burns also points out the indirect role of the two American churches in Paris and of the American government. (The wife of the American ambassador leased the AGC its initial headquarters). Perhaps the 'clannish spirit' that Burns refers to characterized, to some extent, not only the American arts community, but also the Polish and other foreign communities, inasmuch as these networks of co-nationals shared similar interests and furthered the goals of their members.

The two other essays in the book's second section investigate two groups—the Catalan and the Jewish communities—that exemplify sociability and solidarity among fellow artists of the same ethnic background. In her essay on the Catalan community, Laura Karp Lugo argues that these artists chose to move to Paris instead of Madrid in order to emphasize their regional identity as separate from Spain. As Lugo describes, many had connections with leftist voices in Paris and were under the routine surveillance of the French government as potentially anarchist Spaniards. Their Francophile identity as Catalans and their knowledge of French culture helped their integration in Paris. Not unlike Polish artists, Catalan artists, too, supported one another, taught newcomers, frequented the same cafes, and introduced fellow Catalan artists to French artists and critics. Picasso was such a nexus figure for the Catalan community. Like Czech artists, Catalan artists maintained contact with Barcelona and many returned there, but continued to have ties with Paris. Another fascinating aspect that Lugo sheds light on is that Catalan artists dedicated part of their professional activity to commercial art production, specifically designing images of Spanish themes, such as bullfights and manolas (Spanish women in costume), which had been popular in France and taken on by older generations of French artists, most notably Manet. Arguably a compromise, this kind of engagement with the expectations of the French public capitalized on ethnic identity for the benefit of the artist's integration in the Parisian art world.

This aspect also concerns Richard Sonn with regard to Jewish artists in early twentieth-century Paris. On the one hand, Marc Chagall exemplified those who consciously expressed

their Jewish identity in their art and autobiographies; Chagall often depicted Jewish themes and motifs and wrote his autobiography in Yiddish. On the other, Sonia Delaunay-Terk and Jules Pascin exemplify those artists who barely, if ever, mentioned their Jewish identity. In both cases, Sonn makes a stimulating proposition that nonetheless calls for further substantiation. He explores two recurrent aspects of the works of Jewish artists who lived in Paris permanently or temporarily: the psychological aspect, defined as an interest in subjectivity and the subconscious, as seen, for example, in the figural studies of Amedeo Modigliani; and the communitarian aspect, understood as an interest in the plight of struggling socio-economic layers, manifest, for example, in the work and activism of the half-Jewish Diego Rivera. Sonn explains that the period he investigates begins after the reinstatement of Alfred Dreyfus and ends before the arrival of the next wave of Jewish immigrants; marked by a decrease in anti-Semitism, this period was relatively more favorable to Jewish artists and represented the formative years for many Jewish artists who would subsequently become influential members of the Ecole de Paris. Another important observation in Sonn's chapter is that Jewish artists shared a neighborhood in Montparnasse distinct from the areas of Paris occupied by other Jewish immigrants (e.g. Marais), thereby foregrounding their identities as artists and liberating themselves from any societal constraints or expectations that could have hindered their artistic development.

The four essays that comprise the third section of the book focus more on individuals than on communities. These essays explore the tension between conformism and the assertion of individuality, an aspect that Broude and van Dijk also write about in Part I. Sharon Hecker investigates the unusual career of the Italian sculptor Medardo Rosso; Susan Waller provides a nuanced account of the atypical life of model and artist Gwen John; and Thomas Rimer describes the quest for an individual style of Japanese artist Sakamoto Hanjirō. Bellow's essay on the Ballets Russes sheds light on the distinctiveness of the company, too, but, because of the multiple individuals with multiple layers of identity, her study appears to be that of a small community of artists rather than of an individual authorial entity.

A salient aspect of Bellow's analysis is her eloquent discussion of how the combination of 'barbarian' and French elements in the Ballets Russes productions had a major role in the resistance that the company encountered in Paris and among critics. Outstanding in Hecker's essay is her methodology. She presents Rosso's struggle as it was revealed in his candid correspondence with his friend and sponsor, the Italian critic Felice Cameroni. This relationship allows Hecker to substantiate her argument and also sheds lights on how a powerful actor in the artist's homeland can greatly affect his professional advancement in Paris. The Italian translator of Emile Zola, with whom he had a decades-long correspondence, Cameroni wrote letters of introduction for Rosso, who hoped to gain the confidence and support of both Zola and Auguste Rodin. As a cosmopolitan, Rosso had no fixed identity and felt at ease circulating among several communities. In this regard, Hecker's discussion of Rosso is similar to the essay of Zoe Marie Jones, the last in the book, on Severini's identity as a dandy. Perhaps at odds with the cosmopolitan attitude, Rosso dealt with a medium-conditioned field—the realm of sculpture—dominated by the overwhelming artistic and personal presence of Rodin. Interestingly, Rodin represents a key figure in both Hecker's and Waller's essays. In the latter, Waller presents the reader with a nuanced reconstruction of model Gwen John's reserved personality, her personal views, according to which she considered herself a model and not an artist, and her multiple roles in the Parisian art world as artist, friend of other British women artists, and model and lover

of Rodin. Rimer's essay showcases the career choices of the Japanese artist Sakamoto Hanjirō, whose deliberate isolation is not unlike that of Gwen John, albeit for different reasons. Rimer makes a case for Sakamoto's insistence on the benefits of seeking an individual style. He cites an important idea contributed by Donald McCallum, also referenced in McCallum's own essay in the volume, that the Japanese artists who did not travel to Paris (or who, like Sakamoto, were partially resistant to what they learned in Paris) had more freedom in their interpretations and were ultimately more innovative than mainstream artists, who acquired a thorough understanding of French art and passed it on to subsequent generations of Japanese artists.

The last section of the book continues to expand on many of the themes already apparent from previous essays, although each text completely stands on its own. Paul Fisher's essay draws attention to a different model of personal and professional experience as exemplified by Henrietta Ruebell's salon as a multinational (specifically French, American, and British) space for queer artists. As the editors mentioned in the Introduction, this community can be regarded as a foil to the situation analyzed by Burns in her essay on American artists associations in Paris. Fisher defines "queer," for the purposes of his case study, as what was not within the parameters of normative sexuality in late nineteenth-century Paris. He also draws attention to the scarcity of information about Ruebell and her salons, as well as to the coded and indirect nature of extant primary sources. The strategic use of 'foreignness' is a shared notion in the essays in Part IV. Fisher argues that Ruebell's dual French and American heritage helped her to cultivate friendships with both French and American artists and writers, bridging various communities across cultural and disciplinary boundaries. Cindy Kang explores the tapestry designs of the Hungarian artist Jozsef Rippl-Ronai, who created a personal synthesis of Nabis medievalism, Art Nouveau, and the Arts and Crafts ideals of William Morris, as filtered by the French perspective with which Rippl-Ronai was familiar due to his professional activity in Paris. To these influences he added elements from his homeland and specifically visual vocabulary derived from Hungarian folk art, thereby tapping into his 'foreign' background to engage with the emerging practice of the 'total work of art.' The essay of the late Donald McCallum explains how the time that Japanese painters spent in Paris legitimized their identity as Western-style or yoga painters in Japan; on the flip side, he explains how the French mentors of Japanese art students would use their students' 'Japanese-ness' to increase their visibility as artists in the French art world. For example, Raphaël Collin presumably encouraged his student Kuroda Seiki, now a household name in Japan, to sign his submissions to the Salon in Japanese characters as opposed to the usual transliteration in the Roman alphabet. The chapter by Zoe Marie Jones connects back to the first essay in the section—Fisher's text on Ruebell's salon—in that both Jones and Fisher present artists whose identities and self-fashioning transcended national backgrounds. In the case of Jones, she makes a convincing case for how Severini strategically adopted the persona of a dandy, artfully displaying his 'foreignness' as inherent to this familiar Parisian type.

In conclusion, this volume is a welcome addition to scholarship on foreign artists communities and a refreshing perspective on the art world of nineteenth-century Paris. For the non-specialist reader, the essays can be read easily in the designated order; patterns and common themes will emerge, as outlined in this review. As such, the volume is an excellent introduction to the most up-to-date literature on the foreign artist experience in nineteenth-century Europe. Alternatively, all essays, as discrete units, can be read individually and in any order. As many essays discuss similar and overlapping themes or

present artists in multiple roles, e.g. Modigliani as Jewish artist and Modigliani as Italian artist, the index is an extremely valuable tool for using this book.

The book re-contextualizes the careers of well known artists such as Munch and Picasso through the lens of their experiences as foreign artists in Paris; it equally foregrounds lesser known artists whose works and careers still await full consideration in internationally visible scholarship. The book also establishes three factors that motivated the majority of the artists who moved to Paris temporarily or permanently: firstly, a desire to be au courant with the newest developments in the arts, which they felt they could achieve only by relocating to an international capital of art; secondly, the hope for financial success in a thriving art market, which typically could not be found at home; and thirdly, the quest for personal recognition, which they tried to achieve either through acceptance into official or unofficial Parisian art structures or through the validation of major French critics or artists. Another contribution of the volume is the insight that foreign artists typically opted for one of two possibilities when forging their Parisian personae: either they tried to be assimilated in the mainstream through catering to the public taste, adopting popular styles, and exhibiting in the official Salon instead of independent shows, or they showcased their foreign identity by means of numerous strategies that ranged from commercial art that catered to popular ethnic tropes to subtle critiques of 'othering' such as the Ballets Russes's 'blueface' performance. Last but not least, this book pays particular attention to considerations of gender and the role and status of foreign women artists. Approximately a quarter to a third of the artists in several foreign communities were women. Seemingly, women were more likely to travel to Paris from geographically close places like Poland than geographically removed places like Japan. A notable exception to this pattern is the strong presence of American women artists in Paris. As Bobrowska shows in the case of the Polish community, foreign women artists tended to have equal opportunities with their male peers. As Waller argues, traveling to and working in Paris set a psychological buffer zone for women artists that allowed them to focus on their artistic development and freed them, to some extent, of expectations of marriage and motherhood. As Burns reminds the reader, societal biases nonetheless continued to be present as in the case of the American Girls Club, which changed its name to the American Art Students Club in order to offset the assumption that the school was somehow less professional than the American Art Association in Paris.

Present in many of the volume's essays are thought provoking observations that remain treated summarily in the texts and deserve further attention. For example, Cindy Kang makes the fascinating proposition that the Hungarian artist Rippl-Ronai, who spent formative years in Paris, aligned with the French understanding of William Morris's ideas, thereby concentrating on the positive impact of fine aesthetic taste in all aspects of life for the benefit of the consumer instead of the well-being of the worker, whom Morris hoped to salvage from the oppressive industrial mode of production. This insight opens up the question of how the Parisian experience mediated the understanding of non-French art theories for non-French artists of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Another important question that the book suggests is how foreign artists changed Paris. Their contributions to the fabric of Paris and its art world are readily apparent throughout the book, but a dedicated effort to shed light on this perspective would be a stimulating direction. This collection of essays is of use not only to historians of nineteenth-century art, but also to scholars of other periods interested in artist exiles and globalization.

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Notes

[1] Hollis Clayson, "Voluntary Exile and Cosmopolitanism in the Transatlantic Arts Community, 1870–1914" in *American Artists in Munich: Artistic Migrations and Cultural Exchange Processes*, eds. Christian Fuhrmeister, Hubertus Kohle, and Veerle Thielemans (Berlin and Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009), 18.
[2] Ibid.