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# Questioning Cézanne across Sightlines: Balzac, Zola, and Merleau-Ponty

Véronique M. Fóti

Department of Philosophy, Pennsylvania State University, Philadelphia, PA 16802, USA; vmf3@psu.edu

**Abstract:** Although Merleau-Ponty's privileging of Cézanne in the context of his philosophy of painting does not explicitly address the painter's relation to literature, this relation is important and somewhat problematic. Cézanne was an avid reader of both classical Latin and contemporary French literature, but he sought, in his maturity, to dissociate painting from the inspiration of literature. The danger of a mode of figurative painting informed by literature is explored in Balzac's novella *The Unknown Masterpiece*, of which there are echoes in Merleau-Ponty's discussions of painting, and which is alluded to in Emile Zola's novel *The Masterpiece*, which led Cézanne to break off his lifelong friendship with the author. Zola's novel contradicts Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the artist's creative freedom by portraying his protagonist, modeled on Cézanne, as destroyed by a fatality of destiny. Cézanne, in his maturity, sought to conjoin in painting a "logic of the eyes" with a "logic of the brain" resulting in an art genuinely "parallel with nature", which it sought to express rather than to represent. The article explores this dissociation of painting from literature and autonomy with respect to what Merleau-Ponty calls "the dimension of color" and to Cézanne's lifelong theme of bathers in a landscape.

**Keywords:** expression versus representation; logic of the eyes; dissociation of painting from literature; dimension of color



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## I.

In concluding his Preface to *Phenomenology of Perception*,<sup>1</sup> Merleau-Ponty writes that "Phenomenology is as painstaking as the works of Balzac, Proust, Valéry, or Cézanne". It is so "through the will to grasp the sense of the world or of history in its nascent state".<sup>2</sup> In this close mutual assimilation of painting, literature, and phenomenology, nascency is understood as the perceptual genesis of sense or meaning. Cézanne is the only visual artist conjoined here with three major French writers, which suggests that his artistic quest, as Merleau-Ponty understands it, probes not only the play of visual appearances but chiefly their generative and organizing principles at the fundamental level of perception. Even though Merleau-Ponty was enchanted by Cézanne's own distinctive lingo of "an artisan of Being", which adds a literary dimension of its own to his reported reflections on painting, his guiding concern was the conjunction of the artist's "eye" with his "brain" (echoed in the title of Merleau-Ponty's late essay "Eye and Mind").<sup>3</sup> Cézanne himself was deeply engaged with both contemporary and classical French literature, as well as with the Latin classics (some of which he liked to recite by heart). Nevertheless, as this paper will argue, he rejected the assimilation of painting to literature.

Of the two Merleau-Pontyan texts that extensively engage with Cézanne, "Cézanne's Doubt"<sup>4</sup> of 1945 and "Eye and Mind" of 1960, the first takes up the issue of freedom that is the focus of the last chapter of *Phenomenology of Perception*. Although Merleau-Ponty argues, in both the *Phenomenology* and in the essay, against the Sartrean absolutization of freedom, he rejects a straightforward causal relationship between an artist's life circumstances and personal traumas and his or her creative work. Rather than deriving from life's givens, the work remains "to be done", and as such, both "calls for" and transmutes the circumstances

of its inception. Merleau-Ponty considers the challenges that Cézanne faced, until his late period, from the often brutal critical rejection of his work, his psychopathology, poverty, and his family's incomprehension of his creative aims. There were, however, also positive factors that Merleau-Ponty ignores, such as the artist's loving relationship with his eponymous son, the friendships he cultivated with significant fellow artists and critics, and importantly, an inheritance that, upon his father's death, ensured his financial freedom. He also ignores, on the side of challenges, the complexities of Cézanne's relationship with the novelist Émile Zola, his friend since their shared Provençal childhood. Zola regularly sent Cézanne copies of his newly published work, but his novel *L'Œuvre (The Masterpiece)*<sup>5</sup> led to their break in 1886. Cézanne was not the only artist to be distressed by Zola's portrayal of his protagonist, the fictional artist Claude Lantier (*Claude Monet prominently concurred*), but he saw it, with justification, as an uncomprehending and distressing caricature of himself.

*L'Œuvre* transparently alludes by its title, as well as by its narrative of an artist's self-destruction, to Honoré de Balzac's novella *Le Chef d'œuvre inconnu (The Unknown Masterpiece)*.<sup>6</sup> As already indicated, Balzac is among the French classical authors whom Merleau-Ponty considers to be in tune with phenomenological inquiry, but more importantly, the novelist puts forward a philosophy of painting that in some respects, is strikingly close to the one that Merleau-Ponty articulates in "Eye and Mind". Given that this relationship has so far been ignored by the Merleau-Ponty scholarship, an account of Balzac's novella will first of all be offered here.

## II.

In the novella, set in Paris in 1612, Balzac focuses on the fictional figure of an aged, eccentric, and highly accomplished painter, Frenhofer, whose inherited wealth has enabled him to devote the past decade to creating a work that is to be his masterpiece and that he keeps strictly hidden. Frenhofer presents himself as the sole disciple of his own master, Mabuse (modeled on the Flemish painter Ian Gossaert (1478–1532)). The reader first encounters him visiting the studio of a younger colleague, François Porbus (modeled on Frans Pourbas the Younger, 1569–1622), and in the company of the young and impoverished painter Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), who has only recently arrived in Paris. As Porbus confides to Poussin, Frenhofer had "the misfortune of being born rich", which enabled him to devote much of his energy to the needs and passions of his master Mabuse, who was as dissolute as he was brilliant. Frenhofer, stimulated by the painterly insights that Mabuse offered freely "when he wasn't drunk", carried on an unremitting theoretical reflection and analysis that resulted in a philosophy of painting. These preoccupations kept Frenhofer from achieving a coherent body of work of his own, rather than the single pieces that he has mostly left scattered around his studio. Marvelous though these are, he now suffers from self-doubt as well as a lack of recognition, noting ruefully that he has not had a disciple. Porbus warns Poussin not to imitate him: "Painters must not meditate except with brushes in hand". (De Balzac 2021, p. 43; Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 70f).

The novella's second part shows Frenhofer, after a three-month interval, in a state of depression. He no longer discourses on painting but is concerned to validate his own now completed painting as a masterpiece. To this end, he is ready to travel to the Near East or even Asia in search of a young woman of surpassing beauty, so as to assure himself that his painted courtesan's beauty exceeds that of any living rival. He has named her Catherine Lescault, refers to her as his spouse, and declares himself to be still more of a lover than a painter. He proclaims that Catherine has a soul and casts himself, as her lover and creator, in a quasi-divine position. When Poussin and Porbus suggest that he could find a model, against whose nude beauty to measure the perfection of his work, in Poussin's mistress Gillette, at the cost of letting them see his work, he at first angrily rejects submitting Catherine to such "horrible prostitution". However, neither he nor his fellow painters show much compunction about treating Gillette as a mere token of exchange in their interconnected quests concerning the painting that he at last consents to reveal.

Frenhofer, who has declared himself ready to burn his Catherine like a traditional Indian *sati* at the approach of his own death, does in fact burn her, along with all his work and his priceless art treasures, taking his own life when he learns from his fellow artists that, figuratively speaking, there was really “nothing” to be seen on his canvas; the woman’s figure had disappeared beneath layers upon layers of overpainting in a relentless search for perfection. Of her form, only a superbly painted foot was still discernible.

### III.

For Balzac’s Frenhofer, painting, far from being a slavish copying of the appearances of nature, has the task of genuinely *expressing* it. This involves revealing, in a model’s visual aspect, the deep sources of her or his comportment or their “true spirit”. He dismisses Porbus’s concern that work, based on an exacting study of nature, may yet somehow lack verisimilitude as just revealing the artist’s failure to apprehend a figure’s very spirit or soul in its embodiment. Doing so may involve taking some expressive liberties in a quest for truth (De Balzac 2021, p. 19).

Whereas Frenhofer’s quest for expressing the human and spiritual reality or essence of his figures in consummately painting their appearance became fatefully entangled with his hybridic self-understanding as a god-like creator of his creature’s body and soul, Merleau-Ponty stresses the effort of modern painting to free itself from illusionism or to become autfigurative (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 69). This quest is not reducible to a simple break with figuration, nor yet with expression as such, which is a key theme of his thought. The artist, for Merleau-Ponty, seeks to create not deceptive replicas of the real, but “systems of equivalence” which express its essentiality in a way that is radically different from the metaphysical understanding of *essentia* as a set of invariant and defining core traits of an entity or concept. Thus, in his meditation, in “Eye and Mind”, on looking at the water in a swimming pool, Merleau-Ponty observes that, in its visual presence, it is not inertly or statically self-identical but rather ever-changing. What is essential, for a painter, to this body of water is an active “internal animation” that finds expression in a play of light and constant displacements, so that the water, far from being held inertly captive in the pool, plays in light effects across the screen of cypresses and animates the atmosphere.

To turn to specifics, it is striking that Frenhofer argues that not only is the human body not definable by *lines* but also that there really are no lines (in the sense of defining outlines) in nature, which calls into question the validity of drawing (De Balzac 2021, p. 31f). Merleau-Ponty, however, recognizes that it is not simply a matter of subordinating linear definition to color, or even eliminating it in favor of modeling through color, but rather of freeing the line from prosaic delineation (as Chinese classical painting, based on calligraphy, has long done) in favor of allowing it to play freely in effracting the pictorial space. Thus, Merleau-Ponty concludes that, whether or not a painting is figurative, a line that functions within it “is neither an imitation of things nor a thing” (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 76).

Whereas Frenhofer voiced no particular concern for the pictorial space as such, and for the figures’ relation to space, other than stressing that it is the clarity or obscuration of light that reveals the figures’ plasticity and unhindered self-deportment in space, Merleau-Ponty is concerned particularly for the painterly expression of movement on a static, two-dimensional surface, such as a canvas. It is here that the conventional idea of pictorial and even sculptural representation comes decisively up against its limits. It is impossible to convey movement by arresting it in a given moment, however fleeting, but it can be expressed by showing a figure (human or animal) with its parts in positions that are incompatible in simultaneity. Expression, once again, transcends verisimilitude by seeking, not the prosaic appearance of a body’s motion, but its “secret ciphers” (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 79).

Where Frenhofer ultimately expects pictorial expression to transcend all artifice, and even art itself, seeking to exceed and displace reality,<sup>7</sup> Merleau-Ponty points forward to concerns that he had (beyond “Eye and Mind”) begun to explore in *The Visible and the Invisible*<sup>8</sup>, and left only a fragment after his death. Specifically, he notes that it is impossible

to demarcate nature from humanity or expression, that a visual *quale*, delimited though it is, presents itself as springing from “a dehiscence of Being”, that it brings with it a “lining” or counterpart of the strictly invisible, and that vision in and of itself constitutes a precession “of that which is unto what one sees and makes seen, [and] of that which one sees and makes seen unto that which is” (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, pp. 85–87).

Frenhofer’s quest was ultimately motivated by a desire for power and satisfaction, whereas Merleau-Ponty’s quest was for ontological insight.

#### IV.

Both Balzac’s Frenhofer and Zola’s protagonist, Claude Lantier, are plagued by self-doubt, but Lantier seeks validation of his art through the institution of the annual *Salon*—a validation that painfully escapes him. At the same time, paradoxically, he rejects the conventional standards and principles that govern the institution. Zola does not understand this stance as a self-destructive free choice, but rather as a fatality rooted in the artist’s character and psychological makeup. As such, it is inexorably destructive of his ability to realize his talent and his creative freedom. Zola’s stance as to a creator’s essential freedom runs counter to Merleau-Ponty’s decisive affirmation of it.<sup>9</sup>

The reader first encounters Lantier as a young painter who, gruffly but compassionately, shelters a very young woman caught in a travel mishap and a violent nocturnal thunderstorm in his threadbare Paris live-in studio. The woman, Christine Hallegrain, is a figure of Cézanne’s mistress, and eventually, his wife, Hortense Fiquet Cézanne, who has received distressingly negative treatment in the art-historical literature, at least up until Susan Sidlauskas’ recent study, *Cézanne’s Other*.<sup>10</sup> In the novel, she exudes freshness, and she eventually becomes part of Lantier’s intimate circle, formed in the Provence of his childhood and presided over by his friend Pierre Sandoz, a novelist who is a figure of Zola himself.

Although Zola was familiar with and supportive of Edouard Manet’s controversial painting, *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe* (*Luncheon on the Grass*) of 1863, which was the first modern painting to conjoin nude women with clothed men in a natural setting (historical examples include works by Titian and Giorgione), he treats his fictional Lantier as the first modern artist to take up this theme. He shows him taking the path that Manet took in submitting his work to the venue alternative to the *Salon*, the *Salon des Refusés*, where, however, his submission encounters only ridicule from a large mocking crowd. Unbeknownst to him, it also draws the attention of a rival, Fagerolles, who goes on to create a suitably gentrified piece on the same idea, which becomes all the rage at the subsequent *Salon*.

After these bitter experiences, Claude flees with Christine to the countryside, where they live for a time absorbed in the passion and tenderness of their love, and where their son Jacques is born. Claude, however, cannot long sustain the distance from the city’s intellectual and artistic milieu, so, as Zola understands his situation, he is caught inexorably “in the silent battle between happiness and the fatality of destiny” (Zola 2019, p. 86). There ensue further *Salon* rejections, along with economic hardship; and circumstances lead to the neglect and malnutrition of Jacques, who dies from an untreated illness.

Zola unsparingly traces Lantier’s descent to the nadir: as self-doubt keeps him from submitting a major work to the *Salon*, he substitutes a small painting of Jacques’s dead body, which, thanks to Fagerolles, gets hung very badly and is either disregarded or reviled as offensive. He and Christine are socially isolated and destitute, and she has come to see painting itself as her arch-rival, whom she must fight body and soul. In a night of sexual passion, she comes to feel that she has at last vanquished her rival, only to find, upon awakening, that Claude has hanged himself.

#### V.

For all his love of literature, Cézanne, in his maturity, rejected a literary mode of painting. Joachim Gasquet shows him pulling a volume of Balzac from his shelf and recalling his youthful ambition to rival in painting Balzac’s description (in *La Peau de chagrin*)

of the snowy whiteness of a table cloth and of blond rolls “crowning” the symmetrically rising place settings.<sup>11</sup> What he needed to focus on was, he came to realize, not poetic analogies but the visual givens, which moreover needed to be conjoined with “the logic of organized sensations”, specifically the sensations of color.<sup>12</sup> This insistence on indissociably conjoining vision (Merleau-Ponty’s “eye”) with logical analysis (or “mind”) marks the mature Cézanne’s departure from Impressionism.

Cézanne’s long labor to achieve the painterly “realization” of his vision (which he always spoke of as being “parallel” to nature rather than coincident with it), involved, first of all, the abandonment of his early style. This style abounds in scenes of violence and sexual aggression, executed with bold strokes of a painting knife, and focuses, as Merleau-Ponty notes, on the moral physiognomy of actions, rather than on their visual aspect.<sup>13</sup> It was, in fact, strongly literary, although it did not take its inspiration from particular authors and was not illustrative. Zola acknowledges it by showing Christine as being frightened and offended by the work she sees during her initial stay at Claude’s studio; but he does not show his protagonist’s self-development and artistic transitions, which would testify to his essential freedom. For Zola, his art remains stagnantly self-identical and does not benefit from any intellectual analysis.

Cézanne’s artistic maturation involved, first of all, working side by side with Camille Pissarro in 1873, walking to Pontoise and back again from Auvers, where he lived with Hortense Fiquet and their young son, most every day. Under Pissarro’s guidance, his work was focused on a patient study of nature, and although he moved eventually beyond Pissarro’s Impressionism, the association stimulated his abandonment of a literary mode of painting and set him on the way to his mature painterly achievement. Merleau-Ponty does not mention Pissarro’s role in Cézanne’s development.

Merleau-Ponty speaks of a “dimension of color” that in and of itself creates identities, differences, or the relations of form among things, even though it cannot claim precedence over other aspects of visual presencing, such as spatial depth (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, p. 67). He touches here on the complexities of Cézanne’s late thinking about color, which are explored in detail by Lawrence Gowing (2001, pp. 180–212). In his late period, Gowing finds, Cézanne entered upon a series of painterly transitions that estranged his art from straightforward perceptual exploration (Gowing 2001, pp. 181–87). As his friend, the writer and painter Emile Bernard came to understand, Cézanne replaced the modeling of forms with “modulations” (his own preferred term) of color that followed the sequence of the spectrum, leading up to a “culminating point” that initiated the order’s reversal. In Bernard’s view, Cézanne’s vision at this point “was much more in his brain than in his eye”.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the Impressionists, he now applied color mostly in largely equidistant and rectangular patches, so that form and structure become expressed through ordered sequences of luminous chromas.<sup>15</sup> Cézanne first explored this way of working in the transparency and superpositions of hues made possible by watercolor, whose importance and beauty Merleau-Ponty appreciates. Zola, in contrast, pays no attention to the medium.

## VI.

The last recorded visitors, in April 1906, to Cézanne’s studio at Les Lauves, were the German art collector, and founder of the Folkwang Museum, Karl Ernst Osthaus, and his (unnamed) wife, both of whom got along very cordially with the painter. Osthaus reports that Cézanne’s studio contained a very large and masterful work still in progress, showing nude female bathers in a landscape.<sup>16</sup> A previous visit, in January 1905, by Rivière and Schnerb (2001) attested similarly to a large painting of female bathers still in progress, with Cézanne admitting that he had been working on it since 1894.<sup>17</sup> The work in question appears to be *The Large Bathers*, now at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (the other two Large Bathers, already completed in 1905 or 1906, are at the Barnes Collection and London’s National Gallery).

Merleau-Ponty maintains a strict silence concerning Cézanne’s thematic of bathers—a thematic that the latter pursued in a large body of works beginning about 1870, and that

his association with Pissarro did nothing to discourage. Merleau-Ponty's meditation, in "Eye and Mind", on the element of water manifesting itself in a swimming pool, might have invited him to reflect on Cézanne's bathers, but this possibility was not pursued. Zola, in contrast, shows his protagonist Lantier working on images that involve this theme, but they relate more to Manet's *Déjeuner sur L'herbe* than to Cézanne's thematic. Cézanne's Bathers paintings are created largely from imagination and on the basis of his early studies of the nude, rather than from the model and motif.<sup>18</sup> They are essentially oneiric and offer a context for the free exploration of feeling and desire.

The theme of bathers in a landscape releases the painter's engagement with the figural dimension from the grueling labor, shared by both painter and sitter, involved in the creation of portraits, and it also relaxes societal norms concerning nudity and the erotic dimension. It opens up a space of freedom and often, in Cézanne's work, a space of play. Thus, the *Three Bathers* of circa 1875 that Henry Moore owned, and that he based dynamic sculptures on, show two of the three female protagonists wildly splashing one another at a waterfall; and even in the Philadelphia *Large Bathers*, the two young women dashing into the river on the right exude a spirit of playful exuberance. This freedom for sometimes rambunctious play sets such images apart from the classical serenity of a pristine Arcadia whose youthful inhabitants naïvely try to decipher death's self-inscription (*Et in Arcadia ego*).

In the Philadelphia canvas, the nude women are not secluded in some forest clearing but are calmly reposing, disporting, or just enjoying themselves right across the river from a village and from two enigmatic spectators on the opposite bank. Their space of release and play is not dissociated from but fully integrated with the daily rhythms of life and the life of nature. It also reveals what Emmanuel de Saint Aubert calls a "carnal spatiality" that is "always already intercorporeally interwoven" (de Saint Aubert 2020a, p. 55). For Cézanne to think of a painting in terms of release and play may already verge on the literary dimension that he sought to exclude from his work, but then a painting such as the Philadelphia Bathers is already heterodox: it does not conform to the outlines of the painter's development traced by Gowing, and notably, its color, in hues of ochres, whites, and blues and the greens of the centrally converging trees' foliage, follows the givens of nature more closely than the order of the spectrum (without, however, being Impressionist).

Among Cézanne's late paintings are watercolors of utterly unpretentious subjects, such as a tangle of leaves too roughly painted for botanical identification, or some flowerpots with straggly geraniums on the terrace at Les Lauves. The aficionado of literary interpretation would be hard-pressed to approach any of these works in literary terms, and they are certainly far more straightforward than any of the Bathers. Nonetheless, in their simplicity, they are both exalting and compelling, since they offer to the viewer's undistracted contemplation the very event of visual coming to presence. This offering, which perhaps literature as a work of language, and thus inextricably caught up in meaning, cannot rival, might be painting's most fundamental gift. Nonetheless, painting can claim no radical privilege over the literary arts, any more than literature can claim a comparable privilege since, as Merleau-Ponty holds unstilled reversibility interlinks and sustains both silent perception and speech or language. If, as he states in *The Visible and the Invisible*, "the structure of the silent world is such that all the possibilities of language are already given in it",<sup>19</sup> they are given precisely as possibilities, and not in a foundational manner. If the visible expresses invisibilities, the reverse is also true: invisibles express dimensions of the visible. These expressive interrelations are what art can bring to the fore.

Although Merleau-Ponty, in "Eye and Mind" and in *Phenomenology of Perception*, comments importantly on what he calls "the dimension of color," his persistent reflection concerning sensory presencing is focused on depth. As Emmanuel de Saint Aubert points out, depth is one of the "incorporeals" (and thus invisibles) upon which vision opens, and which sustains it (de Saint Aubert 2020b, pp. 147–50). Flesh (in the ontological sense that Merleau-Ponty gives this notion) needs the lacunar character of incorporeals to express Being in its withdrawal from positivity and representation—a withdrawal, however, that

never dissects it from the world. Depth thus functions, according to Saint Aubert, as “a privileged figure of being” for the late Merleau-Ponty (de Saint Aubert 2020b, p. 148); and painting, whether figurative or not, is the art that incessantly explores and expresses it.

To cast a retrospective glance from this ontological vantage point on the two works by Balzac and Zola, Balzac’s Frenhofer understood what Saint Aubert calls the “figuratives” that enable figuration (not limited to representation) and who glimpsed what Merleau-Ponty calls the invisible of the visible; and these challenging aspects of visual presencing were at the core of his painterly meditation. For this reason, he is a figure on which Cézanne, according to many of his interlocutors, frequently and passionately commented. However, he perverted this guiding insight with his final quest for power, recognition, and gratification, for which art became his vehicle. Zola, in contrast, shows himself in *L’Œuvre* as incapable of understanding Cézanne’s artistic aim, thought, and passion, and also of understanding art in its true nature as excessive to an accomplished presentation of the visible in its prosaic sense.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See (Merleau-Ponty 2012, pp. lxx–lxxxv). This work will be referred to as PHP.

<sup>2</sup> PHP, p. lxxxv.

<sup>3</sup> See (Merleau-Ponty 1964a). I cite my own translation of this original version, which is referred to as OE.

<sup>4</sup> “Cézanne’s Doubt” (Merleau-Ponty 1963, pp. 9–25).

<sup>5</sup> See (Zola 2019). Location of press and date of publication not given. Out of the novel’s complex threads of narrative, I am singling out and discussing only the one that directly concerns the persona and fate of its protagonist, Claude Lantier.

<sup>6</sup> “Études philosophiques” (De Balzac 2021). The novella was originally published in 1831. I concentrate here on Balzac’s narrative alone, abstracting from the context and later history of the work (which includes Picasso’s painting *Guernica* in a studio adjacent to the location of the studio of Balzac’s painter Porbus on the *Rue des Grands-Augustins*).

<sup>7</sup> Consider his deranged pronouncements to his fellow painters contemplating his now revealed work, such as “You are before a woman and you are looking for a painting”, or “Where is art? Lost, disappeared!” (De Balzac 2021, p. 64).

<sup>8</sup> See (Merleau-Ponty 1964b). English translation by (Lingis 1968). I cite and translate from the French version.

<sup>9</sup> The narrative of Zola’s novel has many strands. I abstract from this complexity to focus only on his chief character, Lantier. I also abstract from the wider context of his views on destiny.

<sup>10</sup> See (Sidlauskas 2009; Amory 2015).

<sup>11</sup> See (Gasquet 2001, p. 158). Gasquet organized his memories in the form of conversations which have raised questions as to how they complement recollection with interpretive speculation.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. In this connection, it is interesting to note that Gasquet shows Cézanne as characterizing Balzac’s *Le Chef d’Œuvre inconnu* as a book all painters should re-read at least once a year, while, unsurprisingly, he has no praise for Zola’s *L’Œuvre*.

<sup>13</sup> “Cézanne’s Doubt” (Merleau-Ponty 1963, p. 11).

<sup>14</sup> Gowing cites these comments of Bernard’s (2001) from the latter’s *Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne* (Paris, 1921), in (Gowing 2001, p. 189). Bernard often comments on Cézanne’s stressing the complementarity of “eye” and “brain”.

<sup>15</sup> See (Gowing 2001, p. 189). Gowing also points out that Cézanne’s use of such patches had its remote ancestry in his use of painting knives to create, not accents, but the entirety of paintings in his early period (p. 183).

<sup>16</sup> See (Osthaus 2001, pp. 9–99).

<sup>17</sup> *Conversations*, pp. 84–90.

<sup>18</sup> The one scholar who has focused her research on Cézanne’s paintings of bathers is Mary Louise Krumrine. See her (Krumrine 1989). She claims to have a coherent and compelling interpretation of this large and diverse body of works. Krumrine is particularly interested in what she claims is the figure of an androgyne in some of these works. Sidlauskas also speaks of the androgyne in the late Bathers as well as in Cézanne’s early *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (Sidlauskas 2009, p. 146f). One needs also to consider that, in the late Bathers, seemingly androgynous figures may also reflect the circumstance that Cézanne, as he confided to Bernard, had at times engaged a sickly old man to pose for some of his female figures.

<sup>19</sup> Section VI, p. 208.

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