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CEZANNE'S "LES JOUEURS DE CARTES"

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CÉZANNE'S "LES JOUEURS DE CARTES"

by

JILL A. KYLE

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

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May, 1985
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1985
ABSTRACT

CÉZANNE'S "LES JOUEURS DE CARTES"

by

JILL A. KYLE

The five oil paintings done by Paul Cézanne during the 1890's and entitled Les Joueurs de Cartes will be considered in this thesis both individually and collectively as a series. Certain developments in Cézanne's life are noted as likely reasons for his return to figure painting with the Joueurs series. One chapter is focused on Cézanne's artistic taste and art theory as well as the extent that both were influenced by various artistic and literary traditions. Other chapters are concentrated on the possible sources for these paintings, their formal features, chronology and interpretation. Central to the issues in several chapters is a stylistic division between the multi-figure versions in the series and the two-figure ones -- the latter bear nascent features of Cézanne's distinctive late style, developed largely from his increased use of the watercolor medium.
I particularly wish to acknowledge Professor William A. Camfield for his perceptive suggestions in the writing and organizing of this thesis. I benefitted enormously from Professor Camfield's combination of patience and scholarship. I am much indebted to Assistant Professor Marion L. Grayson who devoted large amounts of time to a thorough critique of my thesis draft. An expression of thanks goes also to Assistant Professor John S. Hallam for his helpful comments regarding the early drafts.

I am grateful to Dr. Robert W. Ratcliffe who gave me written consent to quote from his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation on "Cézanne's Working Methods and Their Theoretical Background."

As always, the greatest support and enthusiasm came from Jerry, Jerry Jr., Bonner and Dillon -- they kept reassuring me when I most needed it.
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Works are oil on canvas unless labeled otherwise. Dates from Venturi (Lionello Venturi, Cézanne - son art, son oeuvre, Paris, 1936.) and Chappius (Adrien Chappius, The Drawings of Paul Cézanne: A Catalogue raisonné, Greenwich, Conn., 1973.) have been given, with notable exceptions, based on more current chronology, shown in parentheses. Catalogue numbers of Venturi and Chappius are given as a practical means of identification. Venturi's French titles for Cézanne's works are used, with the exception of the drawings catalogued by Chappius but not catalogued by Venturi. In these instances, Chappius' English titles are given.


INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an analytical examination of published materials relating to Les Joueurs de Cartes, a series of five paintings by Cézanne. Research has been undertaken in an attempt to document in a single paper a synthesis of the criticisms, opinions and analyses of established art historians which relate to the series. The only painting in Les Joueurs de Cartes series which I have viewed is the one in the Barnes Foundation Collection. For this reason, the visual analyses and opinions of noted art historians who have seen several, if not all, of the Joueurs paintings will be appropriately addressed in the synthesis of material presented.

In Paul Cézanne's series of paintings entitled Les Joueurs de Cartes, probably painted between 1890-1895, he treats the same genre subject, with slight modifications, five times -- "a repetition without parallel in his oeuvre."¹ It has been suggested that Cézanne especially valued these genre paintings because they were "based on living models yet composed like a museum picture, ... [thus] he could work equally from nature and tradition."² Les Joueurs de Cartes are of further importance because they mark a distinct return to portrait and figure compositions beginning in 1890.
[Cézanne] put into these human beings his need of realizing pictorial freedom through a constructive force, which in the preceding period had been revealed to him by certain Provencal motifs, such as, the Gulf of Marseilles and the Sainte Victoire aux Pins.\(^3\)

The major thrust of Cézanne's art between 1884-1889 had been landscapes with a "noticeable lack of figure pictures and still lifes...."\(^4\) Lionello Venturi describes the period of the 1880's as the time when

Cézanne seemed to find in landscape the subject that best enabled him to order and clarify his sensations. From 1890 till the end of the century, his masterpieces are for the most part figure paintings.

Les Joueurs de Cartes are among Cézanne's finest works\(^6\) and also among his most paradoxical. The series has received substantial critical attention with different approaches by Meyer Schapiro, Kurt Badt, Theodore Reff and others. Additional attention has been directed to the chronology, sources and the artist's working methods for the Joueurs series by such scholars as Lionello Venturi, Adrien Chappius, Douglas Cooper, Lawrence Gowing, Robert Ratcliffe and Wayne Andersen.

There are five paintings in the series: a five-figure version in the Barnes Foundation Collection at Merion, Pa. (Illus. 1); a four-figure version in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (Illus. 2); and three two-figure versions, in the Pellerin Collection, Paris (Illus. 3), the Courtauld Collection, London (Illus. 4), and the Louvre, Paris (Illus. 5). The five-figure Barnes version is the largest canvas at
134 x 181 cm., while the four-figure Metropolitan version is a much smaller canvas at 65 x 81 cm. The Pellerin canvas is the largest of the three two-figure versions at 97 x 130 cm., the Courtauld version is 60 x 73 cm. and the Louvre canvas is the smallest of the five works at 45 x 57 cm. 7

The variation in conception among the five Joueurs pictures is significant, making it possible to divide them into two groups. The Barnes version with three card players and two spectators is similar in conception and setting to the Metropolitan version with three players and one spectator. In the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions, Cézanne changed his conception dramatically from the multi-figure versions to a stark confrontation of two figures across a narrow table centered in a more shallow spatial setting. By style, too, the paintings can be divided into two groupings. In the Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs, the figures have a firm, rounded, sculptural quality and they appear set apart from the background, whereas in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre Joueurs, the paintings are increasingly concentrated with an elimination of detail. In the last grouping, the "sense of an overall surface has been strengthened," leading to the smallest, the Louvre Joueurs, the "most harmonious and most fully synthesized in design of the series." 8 The differences in construction, color harmony and paint handling are so striking between these two groups that they indicate a major transition between
Cézanne's constructive style of 1878-1887⁹ and his late style. This late style "appeared consistently and clearly only after 1895"¹⁰; it did not begin in a single year, but developed over the course of several years. Venturi mentions "Les masques, les joueurs and 'Madame Cézanne dans la serre'" all as showing evidence of an emerging new period in Cézanne's art.¹¹ In Cézanne's landscape painting of the 1880s, the geometric ideal of his "constructive period" had been given full expression, but in the new period this ideal, although present as an underlying vision, is put into balance with a greater emphasis on free brushwork and a greater play of the artist's feelings and sensations. Venturi further describes Cézanne's development not as a turning back to the romantic phase of his youth but as "une nouvelle fureur de creation," where the color harmony reaches a degree of complexity and vivacity unknown in Cézanne's earlier pictures. The form is determined by the artist's needs for structural design more than by an appearance in nature; the subject is less a motif than it is an image, more natural than before because it is no longer constrained by adherence to an objective truth in nature, but one that blossoms like an almond tree.

Il devient toujours plus 'naturel' dans le sens de parallèle à la nature 'comme l'amandier fleurit' de par la force de sa sensation impénétrable; et en même temps il est de plus en plus libéré de la nature, de la façon de voir objective dont la photographie ou la tradition formaliste restent le témoin.¹²
Cézanne's stylistic transformation, as it began to appear in the early nineties, was accompanied by several personal developments which affected him profoundly as an artist. Biographical material will, therefore, be presented at an early stage in the thesis as relevant information in studying Les Joueurs de Cartes.

Cézanne's theories on art will be injected throughout the thesis, especially in the chapter on stylistic discussions of the Joueurs paintings. Particular attention will be given to the formal features of the Barnes Joueurs, since it is the only painting in the series this writer has seen firsthand. Cézanne's painting methods are closely related to his theories, and both will be brought to light as the paintings are considered. There has never existed a complete body of art theory in Cézanne's own handwriting -- his correspondence is the best, but not the only, source. In Cézanne's letters, in almost every instance, his remarks on painting take the form of replies to queries posed by other younger painters, particularly Emile Bernard. These written remarks belong mostly to the last ten years of Cézanne's life. The other important source for Cézanne's art theory is the reported conversations he had with young artist and writer friends, Emile Bernard, Léo Larguer, Louis Aurencé, R.P. Rivière and J.F. Schnerb among them, but most of these witness accounts were not published until after Cézanne's death. I have drawn much information from
these sources, both letters and souvenirs, and included quotes from them in the paper.

Throughout Cézanne's life he maintained a strong admiration for certain old masters whose works he studied ardently. At the same time, he followed an undoctrinaire approach to the past in that "for him, as for Delacroix himself, the historical opposition of 'drawing' and 'colour' was no longer significant: he admired outstanding examples of both styles, just as he reconciled in his own work the opposed values of line and tone or closed and open form ...."\(^{13}\) As Cézanne studied, copied and analyzed art in the Louvre, he improvised constantly and mixed styles. He admired Poussin along with the great colorists Delacroix, Rubens, Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto. "He filled his notebooks ... with drawings after sculptures of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century" as he developed his own personal style which cannot be "sufficiently defined by the categories of classical or romantic."\(^{14}\) Since it was not Cézanne's purpose to build his particular style or method on that of a preceding artist, he, instead, took various elements from the past which appealed to him and molded them into his own style. In accordance with his own practice, Cézanne advised his young friend, the painter Charles Camion, to do the same thing. "Whoever the master may be whom you prefer, this must only be guidance for you. Otherwise you will never be anything but a pasticheur."\(^{15}\)
Cézanne saw no incompatibility between styles based on drawing and those based on color. This reconciliation of artistic styles, traditionally regarded as conflicting, is exemplified in Les Joueurs de Cartes where baroque and classical features coexist in all versions. In spite of the transition of style noticeable between the two groups, there is still in both a singular exploitation of baroque and classical possibilities. In the Barnes and the Metropolitan versions there are baroque curvilinear forms in the folds and full volumes of the dark blue cloak on the card player at the right, echoed in the heavy, weighty folds of the curtain behind him. At the same time both of these paintings are classical in the careful balancing of objects according to color and volume. Another classical feature is the symmetry emphasized by a vertical axis and a central focus on the hands and the cards. In all five Joueurs paintings, the figures are nearly parallel to the picture plane, whether frontal or in profile. In the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions, however, the figures appear as unevenly lit forms in front of a shadowy setting, while the dark forms in the Barnes and Metropolitan versions stand forth sharply against the foil of a lighter background. The three two-figure versions display a classical planar framework in the shallow space dominated by verticals and horizontals; at the same time, there is a greater overall pictorial unity in the baroque sense of a subordination of
the parts to the whole image. This last feature is accomplished by the complexity of Cézanne's somber, muted color harmony and the simplification of forms. As a result of Cézanne's style, which was "stable and clarified ... [but] built upon color", and his manner of thinking that there was no reason to build a style that was definable by the categories of classical and baroque, the appeal of his art was eventually as widespread as it was hard to categorize. This is perceptible in the wide range of past art evoked by Cézanne's paintings in the minds of the critics. Guillaume Apollinaire noted in 1910 that "ce n'est pas à moi de décider si Cézanne est classique ou non", but in an earlier review of the same year Apollinaire compared the draperies in the four-figure version to those of Giotto: "Les étoffes des ouvrières qui jouent en fumant la pipe, dans les Joueurs de Cartes, rappellent les draperies de Giotto."  

Roger Fry, the British art historian and critic and one of Cézanne's most important interpreters, wrote about the Metropolitan Joueurs, claiming for it a design which gives a sense of "monumental gravity and resistance" recalling that of the Italian primitives and a few of Rembrandt's late pieces. In further reference to the Metropolitan work, Fry states that by reviewing:

... all the attempts that were made in the nineteenth century by Chassériau, Puvis de Chavannes and Watts to attain this monumental quality, we get a measure of Cézanne's greatness when we see that he alone really succeeded. He alone was sincere enough to rely on his sensations....
Fry's analysis of the Pellerin version, as the other variant of the design, contains a reference to Giotto in "the simplicity of disposition" where:

... everything [is] seen in strict parallelism to the picture plane, not only are the figures seen in almost as strict a profile as in an Egyptian relief, but they are symmetrically disposed about the central axis.... The figures have indeed the gravity, the reserve and the weighty solemnity of antiquity.21

Even during Cézanne's lifetime, as documented by several sources, there was an equally wide range of opinion about the role tradition played in Cézanne's art and its similarity with different art styles of the past. But it was precisely Cézanne's open-mindedness, his choosing various elements from past art as well as his ability to combine historically alternative styles, that accounted for the wide appeal of his mature style. Particularly in the last decade of his life, such diverse individuals as the Impressionists, the Naturalist art critic Gustave Geffroy, and the Symbolist painters and art theorists, Maurice Denis and Emile Bernard, were all ardent admirers of Cézanne, although not all for the same reasons. In 1895, Camille Pissarro wrote to his son Lucien about the enthusiasm of the Impressionists after viewing Cézanne's pictures at Ambroise Vollard's exhibition:

... landscapes, nudes and heads that are unfinished but yet grandiose, and so painted, so supple ... Why? Sensation is there! ... But my enthusiasm was nothing compared to Renoir's. Degas himself is seduced by the charm of this refined savage, Monet, all of us.22
To the Naturalist poets Joachim Gasquet, Léo Larguier and Edmund Jaloux, Cézanne was "a classicist who nevertheless remained close to nature."\textsuperscript{23} Gustave Geffroy wrote a chapter on Cézanne in his book \textit{La Vie artistique} published in 1894. Some of Geffroy's comments on the artist are:

I know another work by Cézanne, a portrait of a Gardener which belongs to Paul Alexis, a too large canvas, the clothing empty, but the head solid, well supported by the hand, burning eyes that really look ... an ingenuous grandeur, as in the Gardener, where the incorrect figures have such a proud look; that Bather, for example, who rests a foot on a hillock, and who takes on, with his sad face, his long, muscular limbs, a sort of Michel-angelesque appearance, certainly unsought for.\textsuperscript{24}

Maurice Denis wrote an article on Cézanne for the journal \textit{L'Occident} in September, 1907, in which he refers to him as "une sorte de classique" who the young artists "tient pour un représentant du classicisme ..."\textsuperscript{25} Denis and another Symbolist painter, Paul Sérausier, were attracted to Cézanne's art because of the way he reduced nature to pictorial elements and eliminated all others. Sérausier admired Cézanne as a "pure painter" whose assemblage of colors and forms, he believed, were without any literary preoccupation.\textsuperscript{26} Denis quotes Sérausier's observation of Cézanne's pictures:

'One thing must be noted,' Sérausier continues: 'that is the absence of subject. In his first manner the subject was sometimes childish; after his evolution the subject disappears, there is only the motive.'\textsuperscript{27}
In the same article, Denis poignantly describes his observation of what may be considered a paradox in Cézanne's art:

I have never heard an admirer of Cézanne give me a clear and precise reason for his admiration; and this is true even among those artists who feel most directly the appeal of Cézanne's art. But how hard it is to be precise about Cézanne!28

Difficult it is indeed to be precise, because there is no way to identify Cézanne's actual sources, even when specific features in his art, as exemplified in various observations on Les Joueurs de Cartes, evoke earlier art forms. Cézanne's novel methods of painting were the products of "long observation and meditation on nature, on the old masters, and above all on the workings of his own mind."29 He explained the need for the mind to reflect on what the eye sees to R.P. Rivière and J.F. Schnerb, Impressionist painters who visited Cézanne in 1905: "Il faut réfléchir, l'œil ne suffit pas, il faut la réflexion."30
NOTES


2Ibid.


6Ibid., p. 124.

7Kurt Badt makes an interesting suggestion that the variation in size for the two-figure versions could be relevant to their dating sequence -- the largest Pellerin canvas as the earliest and the two smaller ones, the Courtauld and Louvre versions, painted later and in that order. Badt further argues that this chronological order is appropriate for the two-figure versions because of "fine distinctions of style in the pictures and also on the visibly increasing withdrawal and alienation of the painter from his models." *The Art of Cézanne*, trans. Shiela Ann Ogilvie, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), p. 89. In this paper, I will accept the chronology that Theodore Reff proposes for *Les Joueurs de Cartes* -- 1890-92 for the Barnes and Metropolitan versions and 1893-95 for the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions. See Theodore Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," in *Cézanne, the Late Works*, ed. William Rubin (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977), p. 17. Chapter 5 of this thesis will deal with chronology of the *Joueurs* series -- range of dates, sequence of works and grounds for dating.


9Adrien Chappuis describes Cézanne's constructive style as one where Impressionist influences are abandoned and are replaced with greater clarity and "classical vision." Chappuis sees a "certain solidity and sobriety" in Cézanne's techniques especially around 1885. He also refers to Cézanne's studies for *Mardi Gras* 1888 (Illus. 7) as an indication of the artist's classical tendency (*The Drawings of Cézanne: A Catalogue raisonné*, 1973, p. 16).

11Venturi, Cézanne - son art, son oeuvre, p. 61.

12Ibid.


14Meyer Schapiro, Cézanne (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1962), p. 28. For a further discussion of Cézanne's equal attraction to Romantic and Classic styles, see Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 35. Reff uses the term 'Baroque' rather than 'Romantic,' as a description of style, but he makes the same point as Schapiro that Cézanne copied works by artists working in a Classic style as well as artists working in a Baroque style (he cites Donatello, Puget and others). Reff also describes the problems of classifying the Baroque features of Cézanne's late style according to Wolfflin's criteria:

Moreover, his [Cézanne's] very method of painting, alternating between drawing and coloring in the gradual definition of form, ... [results in] its color planes fusing with those of adjacent forms at certain points and its dark contour sharply separating it from them at others. If his style is Baroque, then, it is in a restricted, personal sense, one not defined by the traditional polarity.


16Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 28.


20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., pp. 72-73.
28 Ibid., p. 208.
29 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 44.
Les Joueur de Cartes, begun by Cézanne in the fall of 1890 at his family's estate, the Jas de Bouffan in Aix-en-Provence, constitute an important group of paintings in this artist's oeuvre on several counts. They mark a return to figure painting based on living models -- a fact made clear by at least eleven, and possibly fifteen, studies. However, they differ from Cézanne's other figure paintings done from life during the 1890's because, instead of containing single figures, there are two or more in each Joueur work. The series of Joueur oils is, then, distinguished by their complexity as well as their suggestion of genre-like themes in contrast to the relative simplicity and portrait-like quality of his other contemporary figure paintings. Although the Joueur are, in the opinion of most authors, partially based on figure paintings by old masters whom Cézanne studied in the Louvre, this is difficult to substantiate because Cézanne's studies for Les Joueur de Cartes do not include compositional studies from possible sources in the Louvre; instead, the Joueur studies are all of single figures. In fact there is no evidence that Cezanne intended at the outset to paint a series of pictures dealing with a card player theme, thus use of the term "series" in relation to Les Joueur de Cartes denotes the end result rather than an original plan on the part of Cézanne.
There are good reasons, pictorial as well as personal, for Cézanne's concentration on portraits and figure compositions done from life beginning in 1890. Unfortunately, no information is available from the artist's correspondence on this matter since no letters are known to exist for the period from February, 1890 until March, 1894. Cézanne had always been keenly attracted to the human figure. A survey of Cézanne's oeuvre reflects his plastic character of vision -- one which would have dwelt instinctively on the contemplation of forms and simply-defined volumes as he saw them in a human subject. In fact, figure painting seems always to have been in the back of his mind even during periods of close observation of nature and landscape painting. In 1873 for example, when Cézanne was in Auvers-sur-Oise painting landscapes in the Impressionist manner, he also painted *Une Moderne Olympia* (Illus. 6). Cézanne, who had painted the same motif earlier in 1870, had intended to re-do Manet, but instead he sought direction in Delacroix. The subject of *Une Moderne Olympia* is derived from Manet's *Olympia*, but the "Baroque design and highly emotional expression are linked to Delacroix." Une Moderne Olympia is specifically linked to the *Sardanapalus* of Delacroix by the pyramidal arrangement with the central figure on the bed, the table holding a sumptuous still life at the left, the man in profile in the foreground and the woman with a raised arm in the background.
Cézanne's studies of the human figure are well confirmed by the contents of his sketch books. In them are twenty-six copies after Michelangelo's Louvre sculpture of the Slaves and an écorché attributed to him, and fifty-six copies after sculptural figures by Puget. Also in his sketchbooks there are copies of busts from sculpture of the fifteenth-century Florentine School: Desiderio da Settignano's Bust of a Youth and Mino da Fiesole's Bust of Rinaldo della Luna -- the former piece drawn by Cézanne from a cast in the Trocadéro Museum.

Two years before Cézanne began work on Les Joueurs de Cartes, he had painted from a model three studies of a walking Harlequin which are related to a composition depicting a Pierrot and a Harlequin entitled Mardi Gras (Illus. 7). According to the artist's son, Mardi Gras was painted in Paris in 1888 and the models were, for the Harlequin, Paul Cézanne "fils," and for the Pierrot, Louis Guillaume, a painter friend of Cézanne's. The Mardi Gras and the five paintings of Les Joueurs de Cartes, all painted within a period of six or seven years, represent virtually Cézanne's only attempts at monumental figure compositions based directly on living models. He had never been able to realize his ambition to paint a composition of bathers from life.

In 1890 when Cézanne returned to Aix from a five month visit to Switzerland, there may have been ingredients which
quakened his lingering desire to paint large figure compositions in the classical manner. It is possible, in my opinion, that Cézanne's absence from his native Provence during his visit to Switzerland, inspired a greater appreciation for the Provençal peasants as subjects for his figure compositions. Although Cezanne had never painted peasants or day laborers before, he may have valued them as subjects who provided him with the chance to create his own original and unique type of human being, as he felt Tintoretto and Titian had done. Cézanne spoke to Joachim Gasquet about the Venetians and the universal quality present in their subjects:

Tintoret constamment excède ses sujets, s'intéresse à lui. Le Saint Jérôme du Titien, à Milan, avec toutes ses bêtes, son escargot, ses rochers qui pullulent, est-ce un ascète, un stoïcien, un philosophe, un saint? On ne sait pas. C'est un homme ...

For personal reasons, too, figure painting as a mode of artistic expression might have appealed to Cézanne in 1890. It provided a relief from the draining commitment he had followed in his landscape painting in the eighties. Between 1882 and 1888, Cézanne's studies after nature and his determination to find sufficient powers of expression often brought on physical fatigue and intellectual exhaustion because "perception of the model and its realization are sometimes very long in coming." Later in life, Cézanne wrote that "nature for us men is more depth than surface;" a depth that he endeavored to show solely by the infinite
gradation of hues and values in his paintings. A good illustration of this can be seen in a version of La Montagne Saint-Victoire\textsuperscript{44} where "the play of color contrasts is also a delicate means of evoking depth."\textsuperscript{45} The Impressionists' naturalism had appealed to Cézanne. Pissarro, he stated, "s'est approché de la nature;"\textsuperscript{46} but he was aware of their "inadvertent silting up of pictorial depth ... [which] he tried so hard to reexcavate ... without abandoning Impressionist color."\textsuperscript{47} Therefore during the 1880's Cézanne's efforts in landscape paintings were largely directed towards restoring pictorial depth. He followed a demanding process as he sought to transcribe, as accurately as possible, the spatial position of the motif.

To communicate his optical sensations exactly meant transcribing, however he could, the distance from his eye of every part of the motif, down to the smallest facet-plane into which he could analyze it ... it meant seeing prismatic color as the exclusive determinant of spatial position -- and of spatial position above and beyond local color or transient effects of light.\textsuperscript{48}

The difficulty of implementing an expression of distance solely through color required long hours of study on the site which sapped his strength considerably. In the beginning, Cézanne had enjoyed the physical exercise involved in painting from the motif out of doors -- often he walked twenty miles a day and stood for hours in bad weather. But his health could not hold up indefinitely under these conditions, and, by Cézanne's own thinking, health and an independent source of income were vital to him
as a painter. The latter he had, but he could not afford to lose his health. He wrote to Zola in 1881: "I wish you good health for it is the most precious thing, particularly when, in addition, one is in good material circumstances." 49 Cézanne pursued his commitment to landscape painting throughout most of the eighties, but by 1885 he had developed health problems which impeded his former working habits. He wrote to Zola that year of his "rather severe neuralgic pains, which left [him] only moments of lucidity, ..." 50 Soon after, his bouts with migraine headaches resumed and sores developed on his feet which made walking painful. 51 Toward the end of the eighties, by health considerations alone, Cézanne had good reason to think of returning to figure painting -- it would definitely be less demanding on his health.

In 1890 at St. Jacques Hospital, Cézanne underwent tests and found out that he was suffering from diabetes, which often caused him to be irritable, and at times to suffer acute discomfort. 52 He followed a strict diet, but otherwise he ignored his illness by continuing with long hours of work from five in the morning until dark with only a brief pause for lunch. One thing he could not ignore was advice that he must not expose himself to changing weather in the hills and the risk of catching cold. 53

Shortly after Cézanne's diagnosis, he left on a five month trip to Switzerland during the spring and summer of
1890 with his wife Hortense and their son Paul — Cézanne's first and only venture outside of France. Cézanne did not enjoy the holiday in Switzerland, which he considered a waste of time. His artistic inspiration in landscape had always been closely tied to his native Provence, and Switzerland was too remote from his roots and heritage in southern France. In Cézanne's correspondence, he frequently alludes to his deep feelings for Provence and "the links which bind me to this old native soil, so vibrant, so austere, reflecting the light ... and filling with magic the receptacle of our sensations."54 Cézanne's affection for Provence was combined with a certain nostalgia for both "the good soil of Provence, [and] the memories of our youth."55 Comradeship and country were closely bound in Cézanne's memories; they were reminders of his youth when he, Paul Alexis, Numa Coste and Emile Zola took countless excursions in the countryside around Aix. Cézanne's nostalgia also extended to the congenial, unassuming Provençal peasants, lamented by him as a type disappearing from modern society.56 Cézanne easily identified with certain of their qualities: their common sense, rough personalities and simple way of life. He once remarked to Jules Borély, the archaeologist who visited Cézanne in Aix in 1902:

Above all things I like the looks of people who have grown old without doing violence to customs, who have let themselves go along with the laws of time. Look at that old cafe proprietor seated before his doorway, what style he has!"
Cézanne was comforted when he saw the past reflected in the faces of the peasants of Aix, as well as in the faces of people his own age or older. The past was not in any way recognizable for the artist, however, in the youth of Aix whom Cézanne regarded as representing the threat of change and new ways. The artist bitterly referred to the new modes in dress and hair styles of the young people as "quel banal mensonger!"  

Cézanne's appreciation for the ordinary people of the small town Provençal society and its peasants was partly due to "his conservative reaction against the modern city world and a desire for an older, simpler, more stable order of things...."  

Cézanne's fondness for the people and the soil of Provence was shared by his young poet friend Joachim Gasquet, son of Cézanne's old schoolmate Henri Gasquet, and a leader in the neo-classical revival in Provençal poetry. Cézanne at one point referred to Joachim Gasquet's poetry as the "superb lines in which you exact the Provençal blood". Gasquet knew Cézanne well in the late 1890's; he visited him in Aix in 1896, enjoying long conversations with the artist who was touched by the younger man's enthusiasm for his paintings. When Gasquet was sincerely impressed by a view of La Montagne Sainte-Victoire, Cézanne gave the painting to him as a gift. Gasquet wrote an article in the March-June, 1898, issue of the journal Les Mois Dorés in which he described certain paintings of the Provençal peasants by Cézanne. His prose is very lofty,
describing Cézanne's portrayal of the peasants as "august figures ... who work this earth." The Metropolitan 
Joueurs de Cartes, referred to by Gasquet as "jouent aux 
Cartes en fumant," is described in exaggerated phrases. The 
setting, he writes, is a large room or "salle de ferme" of a 
farmhouse at the Jas de Bouffan in which broad-shouldered, 
suntanned peasants, with hands made sacred from the heaviest 
work, are resting from their labors by smoking and playing 
cards. Gasquet's description of the "jouent aux cartes en 
fumant" in a farmhouse "salle de ferme" at the Jas is, aside 
From Paul Alexis' letter to Zola on February 13, 1891, the 
earliest written description of the Joueurs series. 

Gasquet's flowery phrases evoke a poetic image of the 
Provençal peasant that is different from Cézanne's, however, 
because Cézanne felt a kinship with their earth-rootedness 
and their natural nobility in spite of their humble social 
status. Cézanne was keenly aware of the fickleness of 
social status; the society of Aix had kept his own father 
Louis-Auguste Cézanne at a distance as a "parvenu" even 
after the elder Cézanne had become a rich local banker. This kind of ostracism had left its mark on the young 
Cézanne by accentuating his introspective tendencies, and, 
as he grew to manhood, Cézanne increasingly avoided society 
and found it difficult to make friends. Although Cézanne 
was born in Aix in 1839 and died there in 1906, by the time 
he was an adult, he had largely lost touch with his child-
hood friends. Whenever he went to Paris, it was not to see his friends there as much as it was to witness the state of affairs in art and literature. Cézanne wrote once that his need for seclusion was due to "the fear of appearing inferior to what is expected of a person presumed to dominate every situation." He spoke about his lack of self-assurance in a letter to Victor Chocquet in 1886:

> I will allow myself to say this: that I should have wished to possess the intellectual equilibrium that characterized you and allows you to achieve with certainty the desired end ... Fate has not endowed me with an equal stability, that is the only regret I have about the things of this earth.

In 1890, when Cézanne returned to the Jas de Bouffan from his trip to Switzerland, he must have done so with eagerness for health reasons and because of his fondness for the country and peasants of Provence. John Rewald writes of Cézanne's security in working at the Jas de Bouffan where some of his own field workers were "available to him -- his own employees, whom he could set up in familiar surroundings, either in the manor house or in the farm buildings." Although Cézanne's antisocial attitude is not to be denied, it was not a bitter one; rather, it resulted from his increasing desire for solitude and his very real fear of personal entanglements. His antisocial attitude did influence his painting, because professional models upset him, and he distrusted strangers in general, which restricted his choice of sitters. Because Cézanne worked so
slowly and made such difficult, uncompromising demands on his sitters, he must have found the peasants at the Jas de Bouffan to be especially ideal subjects since they were patient, tolerant and familiar. Père Alexandre, a farm worker at the Jas de Bouffan, posed for the card player on the left in the three two-figure versions, and Paulin Paulet, a gardener at the Jas, was a model for the card player on the left in the Metropolitan version as well as in the Barnes version, where his young daughter is one of the spectators.72 The peasants and day laborers who posed in all five versions of Les Joueurs de Cartes were unsophisticated people, simply and squarely themselves, making no demands on Cézanne. Thus, they posed no threat of infringing on his privacy, or interference with his solitude, which provided him with "a sort of vacuum from which everything else in life was excluded."73 In each group of the three-player and two-player versions of Les Joueurs de Cartes, he used different peasant models in different settings. The reason for this is not clear, but it is possible that, after his first attempts, the pictures were abandoned for some reason, and at a later time, he resumed work on the series when the original models were no longer available.

When Cézanne returned to the Jas de Bouffan in the fall of 1890 and began work on Les Joueurs de Cartes, he was not in total isolation, although there were periods when he "largely lost touch with the outer world."74 By this time,
the break had occurred in Cézanne's friendship with Emile Zola and all correspondence or communication of any sort, between the two had ceased. But Zola had asked some of their mutual friends to keep him informed about Cézanne's health and his progress in painting. There are two important letters from this period, one from Paul Alexis, the other from Numa Coste relaying to Zola detailed information about Cézanne. At the beginning of 1891, Paul Alexis wrote to Zola about his visit to the artist:

Cézanne ... brings a breath of fresh air into my social life. He at least vibrates, is expansive and lively. He is furious about the 'Ball' [his wife Hortense], who, after a stay of one year in Paris, last summer imposed on him five months in Switzerland ... during the day he paints in the Jas de Bouffan, where a workman serves as his model ... Finally ... he is converted, he is a believer and goes to mass.\(^{75}\)

Likewise in 1891, Cézanne was visited by Numa Coste, another friend from his and Zola's youth, who relayed additional information to Zola about the estranged artist:

He lives in the Jas de Bouffan with his mother, who, for that matter, is on bad terms with the 'Ball', who in turn does not get on with her sister-in-law, nor they among themselves ... and it is one of the most touching things I have ever experienced, to see how this brave boy has preserved his childlike naivete, forgetting his disappointments in the struggle for life -- in resignation and suffering -- stubbornly pursuing the work which he does not succeed in bringing off.\(^{76}\)

During Cézanne's lifetime there were many broken friendships -- no matter how well they began or how strong they were for a time, they did not last. A common pattern became unavoidable:
an initial period of warmth and openness lasting for only a short time, then coldness and irrita-
bility followed by unexplained silence and withdrawal.

This applied to Gustave Geffroy, Joachim Gasquet and even Renoir, to name a few. Cézanne's break with his best friend, Emile Zola, in 1886 may have re-established in his own mind the hopelessness in his striving to maintain a "lasting communion with a fellow human being." He, in fact, gave up. It was Zola who had once told Cézanne:

... you are more of a poet than I. My verse may be purer than yours, but yours certainly more poetical, more true; you write with the heart; I, with the mind ...

And it was Zola who encouraged him to proceed with his goals as a painter, in spite of the elder Cézanne's strong objections to his son's artistic bent. Zola wrote to Cézanne in 1860, "recover your courage, seize your brushes again, let your imagination roam like a vagabond. I have faith in you." In the same year, Zola wrote Cézanne that he mourned "the writer who dies in you .... Instead of the great poet who is walking out on me give me at least a great painter, otherwise I would be angry with you." One of Cézanne's greatest disappointments was knowing that Zola had gradually lost faith in him and, in fact, had never appreciated what Cézanne was attempting in his painting. Zola, who was an early defender of the Impressionists, became increasingly conservative in matters of painting to the point that, in 1880 in an article "Le Naturalisme au Salon"
for Le Voltaire, he criticized the Impressionists for not attempting to exhibit their work at the official Salon. About Cézanne, Zola said only briefly: "M. Paul Cézanne has the temperament of a great painter who still struggles with problems of technique, and remains closest to Courbet and Delacroix." Zola doubted Cézanne's ability to express his genius because he did not think the artist was capable of giving his best; Cézanne knew this, but it is not the reason for the break in their friendship -- the reason for that was Zola's novel L'Oeuvre. Though the friendship was broken, the ties were not, even when in 1896 Zola wrote an article in Le Figaro in which he referred to Cézanne as an "abortive genius." Cézanne did not bear a grudge and showed no feelings of animosity toward his old friend, perhaps because, as Rewald suggests, it reaffirmed to Cézanne:

... l'impossibilité où il semble s'être trouvé d'établir une communion parfaite et durable, l'exasperation qu'il ressentait lorsque, après des débuts prometteurs, ses relations avec autrui prenaient une tournure qui le confirmait davantage dans sa solitude.

Cézanne's nature forced him into his eccentric course of separateness; the course embraced everything in his life -- painting, friendship, love. By the time he reached his mature style, around the age of forty, Cézanne achieved what he felt was a two-fold artistic self-possession: he no longer felt his painting was inferior to nature, but instead parallel with it; and he could maintain his self-possession in confrontation with the visual world. Near the end of his
life Cézanne explained the importance of his discovery to Emile Bernard:

As long as we are forced to proceed from black to white, ... we flounder, we do not succeed in becoming masters of ourselves, in being in possession of ourselves.\textsuperscript{86}

Gowing refers to Cézanne's artistic self-possession as a "dominion [which] was achieved in abstraction ... in visual analogies"\textsuperscript{87} and it was achieved early in the separateness of his own privacy as he met the terms, from which he had no choice, to evade interference from the outside world and interference from his own passionate will which he must keep in a state of self-possession. Cézanne realized the difficulty of his course,

that his functions required to be exercised almost in secret. Although loneliness and separateness remained a burden to him, he was compelled at each turn in his life and his painting to take refuge in seclusion. He went, as it were, to earth.\textsuperscript{88}
NOTES


32 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 104.

33 John Rewald, Cézanne, p. 98.


35 Ibid.

36 Reff, "Cézanne and Poussin," p. 159.


39 Badt, The Art of Cézanne, p. 95.

40 Infra, note 99.


42 Cézanne, Letters, p. 255, to an unknown young artist, date unknown.

43 Cézanne, Letters p. 301, to Emile Bernard, April 15, 1904.

44 La Montagne Sainte-Victoire, 1885-87 (Venturi 452), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
45 Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 66.


47 Clement Greenberg, Art and Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 50. Cézanne told Maurice Denis that he aimed "to make of Impressionism something solid and durable, like the art of the museums" ("Cézanne I," The Burlington Magazine, p. 213). In a conversation with his young writer friend Joachim Gasquet, Cézanne explained that the Impressionists had a good eye, but that was not enough. There was a vital role for the intellect in the creative process which the Impressionists had somewhat neglected. Cézanne told Gasquet that he saw in himself, as a painter, two things: the eye and the brain cooperating, each working for the development of the other. The eye which gives the vision and the sensations of nature and the brain which provides the logical organization of these sensations as a means of expression ("Ce qu'il m'a dit ...," Cézanne, rpt. in Conversations avec Cézanne, ed. P.M. Doran (Paris: Macula, 1978), p. 159). This was the basic precept for Cézanne's goal of an artistic 'realization' of his 'sensations' which Rewald, in Cézanne's Letters, p. 6, notes "proved so immensely difficult, forever unsatisfactory to himself [Cézanne]."

48 Greenberg, Art and Culture, p. 53.

49 Cézanne, Letters, p. 198.

50 Ibid., p. 213, to Zola, March 11, 1885.


53 Ibid.


56 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 22.


59 Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 126.

60 Cézanne, Letters, p. 265, to Joachim Gasquet, June 22, 1898.

61 La Montagne Sainte-Victoire au Grand Pin, 1885-87 (Venturi 454), National Gallery, London.

62 Cézanne, Letters, p. 244, to Joachim Gasquet, June 22, 1898.

63 Ibid., p. 249.

64 John Rewald, Cézanne, Geffroy et Gasquet suivi de Souvenirs sur Cézanne de Louis Aurenche et de Lettres inédites, (Paris, Quatre Chemins, 1960), p. 34. Author's translation. A "salle de ferme" is the largest room in a typical Provence farmhouse, combining kitchen, eating and living areas.

65 See p. 26 of this text.


67 Ibid., p. 134.


71 Mack, Paul Cézanne, p. 317.


Rewald, Cézanne, p. 164.

Cézanne, Letters, p. 234.

Ibid., p. 235.


Ibid. Also see John Rewald's discussion in Cézanne, Geffroy et Gasquet, p. 19.

Rewald, Cézanne, p. 9.

Cézanne, Letters, p. 70, Zola to Cezanne, June 25, 1860.

Ibid., p. 76, Zola to Cézanne, August 1, 1860.

Rewald, Cézanne, p. 125.

John Rewald describes Cézanne's reaction to L'Oeuvre in his biography Cézanne (p. 96). Zola's novel, published in 1886, is built around his theory that no painter of the modern movement had achieved success equal to that of several writers working in the same movement, such as Zola, Flaubert, Daudet and Goncourt. Zola builds his theory around the hero of the book, Claude Lantier, an artist who belongs to no specific group but who vainly pursues his struggle for innovation until his end in suicide. Zola's message to the painters of the modern movement is that they have failed because they have no leaders, no formulas and therefore no fulfillment. Cézanne recognized part of himself in Claude Lantier. What Zola brought home to Cézanne in L'Oeuvre was the author's purely literary approach to painting and his inability to understand the creative process in painting. Zola could never understand why Cézanne's artistic realizations should prove so difficult. It was beyond his knowing why Cézanne couldn't develop a formula, as Zola had in his writing, which would lead to the realization and completion of a picture.

Rewald, Cézanne, p. 161.

Rewald, Cézanne, Geffroy et Gasquet, p. 19.

87 Gowing, *Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne*, p. 7.

88 Ibid., p. 6.
CHAPTER II CONCEPTION AND SOURCES

In attempting to trace the origins of Cézanne's idea for Les Joueurs, it becomes apparent that the theme of card players appears very early in Cézanne's career, perhaps even prior to his final decision to become a painter rather than a writer. Three relevant drawings have been identified around the date that he announced his desire to become an artist, with a studio in Paris, in a letter to Zola on June 20, 1859. Sometime between 1858-1860, Cézanne made a pencil tracing from an unidentified engraving of five figures seated on long benches at a table (Illus. 8). Four of the five figures appear to be engaged in a card game. Adrien Chappius believes it is probably the earliest incidence of a card players theme in Cézanne's oeuvre. In a pencil drawing by Cézanne of a Cabaret Scene dated 1860-1862 (Illus. 9), three soldiers in seventeenth-century costume are posed, two in strict profile and one in frontal view, similarly to the three card players in the Barnes and Metropolitan Les Joueurs de Cartes. The figures in the earlier pencil tracing appear to be peasants behaving in a typically boisterous manner, but in the Cabaret Scene, the jovial aristocratic figures are in contrived poses, as though Cézanne had made a sketch-book copy from a painting seen in the Louvre. The later date also indicates this possibility, since Cézanne left Aix for Paris in 1861. The
strangest of the drawings directly related to the theme of card playing, referred to by Badt as the *Ugolino* drawing\(^92\) (Illus. 10), could be earlier than the tracing; its date is secure since it appears at the top of a letter to Zola dated 17 January 1859, along with Cézanne's inscription 'La Morte règne en ces lieux,' and a dialogue in verse.

> But I note, dear friend, that for fifteen days  
> Our correspondence has slackened its course.  
> Is it by chance, that boredom devours you,  
> Or has some bad cold taken hold of your brain  
> And confined you, in spite of yourself, to your bed?  
> And your cough,  
> Does it worry you? Alas it's not pleasant  
> But yet better than many another ill.  
> Perhaps it is love that slowly devours your heart?  
> Yes? No? By faith, I don't know  
> But if it was love, I should say that is good.  
> For love, I strongly suspect, has killed no man;  
> Perhaps, by chance, it gives us at times  
> Some little torment, some little sorrow,  
> But if it comes today, it is gone tomorrow ... \(^93\)

Around the time of this letter and drawing, Cézanne was going through a period of great frustration. He sorely missed Zola, who had moved to Paris in 1858, and, against his will, Cézanne had been pressured by his father into law studies at the University in Aix. Groping unsuccessfully toward an outlet for his creative nature, Cézanne at twenty thought as much of poetry as of painting.

Kurt Badt makes the assumption that the card players paintings embody "a memory of an inner experience which had great significance for Cézanne personally," and that the *Ugolino* drawing, which was the foundation for this series of pictures, was intended to be understood as the expression of a self-confidence won by a hard internal struggle ...
According to Badt's interpretation, the scene of five figures gathered around a table, in the center of which is a skull, is Cézanne's representation of a scene in Hell as witnessed by Zola. Zola, as Dante, is the standing figure at the right of the open door, and Cézanne as Virgil, is the standing figure behind Zola who points across him to the scene. In Badt's opinion, however, the drawing was not Cézanne's attempt at an illustration for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, although he was familiar with those cantos of the "Inferno" which told the story of Ugolino. Instead Cézanne's symbolic drawing represented a bizarre scene as an expression of the artist's feeling of great resentment, even hatred, toward his father because he consistently discouraged Cézanne's artistic bent. The tyrannical father, Louis-Auguste Cézanne, is seated at the right of the table and offers a skull to the man on the left who symbolizes Cézanne as the future painter. The three children behind the table represent the future paintings and Louis-Auguste offers the skull on the table as a symbol of inheritance.  

Badt perceives compositional relationships between the *Joueurs* and the *Ugolino* drawing which support his complex analysis of symbolic references to Cézanne's personal life. Badt suggests that when Cézanne painted the series he was unconsciously referring back to the *Ugolino* drawing. This, he asserts, can be seen in such details as: (1) a small picture hanging on the wall in the drawing and in the Barnes
picture, (2) the nearly symmetrical grouping of persons around a table in a plane parallel to the picture surface, and, (3) as in the Barnes and Metropolitan pictures, the two figures' profiles are given greater importance than the others. Badt connects the drawing and the Joueurs series also by the "antithesis between vertical and diagonal lines" and the resultant design element of a V which figures prominently in both the Ugolino drawing and in the two multi-figure versions of Les Joueurs de Cartes. In the Ugolino drawing, the V is upside down; it is formed by the cross angles of the legs of the two seated men as they extend in front of them and are framed by the perpendicular legs of the table and chairs (or right side up the outstretched legs form a U under the table, but not a V). The same V pattern of contrasting vertical and diagonal lines exists in both the Barnes picture and the Metropolitan picture, where the V is formed by the legs of the center player which are framed by the vertical uprights of the table legs. Reff takes issue with Badt in the emphasis placed on the V design element as a reason for linking the drawing with the two Joueurs paintings. Badt, in Reff's words,
It is my opinion that the importance of various points of correspondence and details between the *Ugolino* drawing and the paintings of *Les Joueurs de Cartes* should not be minimized. But perhaps the main thing Badt is glossing over is the importance of the V as a design element throughout Cézanne's oeuvre, both as a line formation and as a colored pattern area of negative space, from his early drawings to his later figural compositions and portraits. For instance, in the *Portrait de Gustave Geffroy* dated 1895 (Illus. 11), the bent elbows of the art critic, as they rest on the desk, form two pockets of negative space in the shape of a V. The V pattern provides a certain organization to the composition, just as it does in the *Ugolino* and the Barnes and Metropolitan *Joueurs*. In the *Geffroy* portrait the color areas in the negative space stabilize the central positioning of the figure and tie his form closely to the picture surface. In another example, *La Femme à la Cafetière* (Illus. 12), the V of the woman's bent elbows emphasize the solidity and volume of her figure and, at the same time, the eye is brought back from the side areas to the figure framed by the V element. It is true that in the *Ugolino* drawing, Cézanne already displays certain tendencies that recur in *Les Joueurs de Cartes* such as vertical lines combined with diagonals, organization of space into parallel layers, and a construction of solid, well-defined forms. But these same tendencies relate just as strongly to Cézanne's series of
figure compositions entitled Les Baigneuses as they do to Les Joueurs de Cartes. Aside from the imaginative content of the Baigneuse series, these paintings exhibit the same presentation for a striking combination of lines, particularly the "antithesis between vertical and diagonal." For example, the Baigneuses (Illus. 13), dated by Reff 1891-1894, thus painted during the same time period as Les Joueurs de Cartes, consists of eight female bathers with prominence given to V formations. By formal structure, the Baigneuses shares compositional elements typical of Cézanne's female bathers from the 1890's and later where the "female figures form a roughly triangular group, framed at the sides by inward-slanting trees -- a closed, compact design ..."100 The Baigneurs, dated 1894 (Illus. 14), appears to be an experiment in forward leaning males. The bodies at the sides form diagonal combinations with interspersed verticals; there are crouching poses with bent limbs, which form triangular patterns as a part of each figure. The solid, angular forms and repeated contours, although nude in both Baigneuse paintings mentioned, are related to those in Les Joueurs de Cartes. The argument could be made that not only do the Joueurs paintings show derivation from the Ugolino drawing, but the Les Baigneuses series do also, as well as others not mentioned.

There are other less complicated sources which could have provided Cézanne with the idea for painting card play-
ers. Cézanne could have witnessed, by chance, a group of peasants playing cards in a local Aix cafe. In purely pictorial terms, such a scene with symmetrically arranged figures could have suggested interesting compositional possibilities to Cézanne. This is the view of Roger Fry who believes Cézanne not only saw and studied peasants playing cards, but actually painted them at their pastime in some humble cafe in Aix. Fry's view is that this was the only time the artist could find the right conditions to fulfill his great desire to paint large scale figure pieces:

Here perhaps was the only opportunity possible to
so nervous and irritable a man as Cézanne ... He
could rely no doubt on the face that these peas-
ants took no notice of him.101

This does not seem likely considering Cézanne's slow, tedi-
ous working methods plus the suspicion he had of people
watching him work; he abhorred anyone watching him painting
at his easel.102 The setting for the Barnes version and the
Metropolitan version was either a "salle de ferme" at the
Jas de Bouffan or else Cézanne's studio there. Gasquet
describes a setting which "included several peasants assem-
bled around a kitchen table at the Jas de Bouffan,"103 which
would be fitting as the setting for the Barnes and Metropol-
itan Joueurs. The small painting on the wall, a pottery
shelf and pipe rack are typical decor for a "salle de ferme"
in a Provençal farmhouse,104 but they also could have been
studio props, since they do appear frequently in other
pictures.105 The framing swag of ochre yellow drapery on
the right of both Joueurs is not typical décor. It was
definitely a prop placed where it was by Cézanne for
compositional purposes. The setting for the Pellerin,
Courtauld and Louvre Joueurs could have been either a cafe
or a workers' lounge. The dim suggestion of a large, low
window in the background of all three is similar to a cafe
front with such a window on one side and on the other side
tables set before it. The possibility that these three
later Joueurs paintings were also posed at the Jas, however,
cannot be ruled out.

Pursuing the origin of Cézanne's idea for Les Joueurs
de Cartes, aside from older art which could have suggested
the theme, it is worth noting that the natural association
of cafe and playing card was already established in
Cézanne's mind many years before a chance observation of
card players in 1890 or thereabouts. In 1865, the art
critic Jules Antoine Castagnary, a friend of Courbet's,
compared Manet's Olympia to a playing card, and Courbet
himself had stated derisively to Manet, at the famous Café
Guerbois in Paris, that the Olympia was like the Queen of
Spades in a deck of cards. Whether Cézanne was present
at this exchange is not known, but he was certainly aware of
the critics' identifying the modern painters with a style as
flat as playing cards -- in opposition to the more accept-
able style of the Academy which kept to the traditional
modeling of three-dimensional forms by use of light and
shade. It is possible that Cézanne associated playing cards with modern painting and his own style of modeling by color. By preserving the flatness of the picture, he was rejecting the academic modeling by light and shade. Cézanne supported the activities of the modern painters who rejected the academic strictures which determined acceptable methods of painting and which influenced the Salon juries. In 1866, Cézanne wrote a letter to M. de Nieuwerkerke, Director of Fine Arts, asking that the Salon des Refusés be re-established and thus provide the modern painters a chance to exhibit their works before the public. Thus Cézanne, in the sixties and seventies, saw himself as a part of the modern movement in terms of principle as well as style. Further evidence of Cézanne's association of modern painting with playing cards can be found in a letter to Pissarro written on 2 July 1876. Cézanne makes a comparison between one of his paintings done at L'Estaque, and a playing card:

> I have started two little motifs with the sea, for Monsieur Chocquet, who had spoken to me about them. -- It's like a playing-card. Red roofs over the blue sea ...

Up to this point considerable attention has been devoted to the origin of the "idea" for Cézanne's Joueurs series; it is now appropriate to explore pictorial compositions which may have provided visual models for the Joueurs once the idea had been established. The issue becomes complicated very quickly. The main reason for this is that the most frequently mentioned pictorial sources for Les
Joueurs de Cartes are French paintings in the genre tradition. But are Les Joueurs de Cartes genre paintings? Roger Fry describes them as "almost the only definitely 'genre' pieces of his that exist"\textsuperscript{112} and Reff concludes that it was only in painting a genre scene [referring to Les Joueurs de Cartes], based on living models yet composed like a museum picture, that he could work equally from nature and tradition.\textsuperscript{113}

Cézanne himself gave no indication, by correspondence or by documented conversation, whether he considered them genre paintings or not. However, Cézanne's card players are hardly treated as typical genre subjects in a manner similar to the way earlier artists had shown them. Les Joueurs de Cartes have been referred to as "genre subjects stripped of their local color and anecdotal content and transformed into images of somber, deeply serious meditation."\textsuperscript{114} Schapiro notes that the normal aspects of the game, "as an occasion of sociability, distraction, and pure pastime," are absent; further, he states that the serious meditative mood is atypical "of the peasants of his [Cézanne's] Provence -- their play is convivial and loud."\textsuperscript{115}

Cézanne's atypical interpretation of a genre scene is apparent in another series of paintings with peasant subjects entitled Fumeur (Illus. 15, 16, 17). These three Fumeur paintings, done during the same 1890-1892 time period as the Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs, are of single figures displaying a grave demeanor. There is a similarity between the Fumeur series and the two multi-figure Joueurs
in that all five paintings appear to have been painted in Cézanne's studio—the objects which appear in them reflect Cézanne's "own interests and taste rather than that of his [genre] subjects."\(^{116}\) Cézanne makes no attempt at including the normal milieu of his genre subject as a means of characterization.\(^{117}\)

Cézanne's unusual attitude in interpreting a genre card playing theme sets the **Joueurs** series apart from older paintings which, nonetheless, offer similarities worth noting. Cézanne's visits to the Musée Granet in Aix would have brought him into contact with Mathieu Le Nain's *The Cardplayers* of 1635-1640 (Illus. 18) long before he left Aix for Paris where he had a chance to study the paintings in the Louvre. Some critics, Charles Sterling among them, think that Cézanne was probably inspired to take up the card playing theme from Le Nain's example in the Aix museum.\(^{118}\) There are some similarities between Le Nain's *The Cardplayers* and Cézanne's two multi-figured *Joueurs* paintings. In both, the figures are shown in three-quarter length and possess a monumental, plastic aspect. The card players in all three of Cézanne's earlier drawings were portrayed full-length instead of three-quarter length, as they are shown in all five *Les Joueurs de Cartes*. It is possible that the idea for the shorter length figures, also shown larger and closer to the picture plane, came from Le Nain's *Cardplayers*.\(^{119}\) The grouping in Le Nain's picture
three persons gathered around a square table with a standing child in the background -- is somewhat similar to the Barnes picture, minus the standing spectators. A close examination reveals important differences though -- Le Nain's three players turn at angles to the picture plane, whereas Cézanne's players are shown in frontal or profile view.¹²⁰ The biggest variations between the figures of Le Nain and Cézanne are in mood and spirit, as well as costume. The faces of the two card players and the observer in the LeNain painting are quite expressive, making an important contribution to the anecdotal scene of cheating at cards. By contrast, the gravity and mask-like faces of Cézanne's figures, in all the Joueurs paintings, are very unanecdotal in spirit and the faces betray no expressive qualities in order to set a mood. It is enough to make any derivation of Cézanne's card players from those of Le Nain seem doubtful. Such a derivation seems especially unlikely since Cézanne once bluntly expressed his judgment of the paintings in the Aix museum in a letter to Emile Zola on 19 October 1866: "I thought everything was bad."¹²¹

By the time Cézanne began spending time in Paris in the sixties, his studies in the Louvre would have exposed him to the works of other artists who depicted card players, such as the seventeenth-century Flemish artist David Teniers' Tavern Interior, 1640-1645 (Illus. 19). This Tavern Interior contains a card player scene with certain similarities to Cézanne's Barnes version of the Joueurs. In both there are
three card players and two spectators gathered around a table. Also in both, the card player scene is set in a shallow space defined by a wall to which is attached a shelf holding pottery. The biggest difference between the Teniers scene and Cézanne's is in the spirit and design. Teniers' peasants are represented with a certain humor, even grotesqueness, quite unlike the dignity and monumentality of Cézanne's peasants. Cézanne was no doubt familiar with this picture, which J.K. Huysmans, the art critic, referred to in his book L'Art Moderne in 1883. Huysmans also praised Cézanne in the same book, a copy of which Cézanne owned. Gustave Geffroy, an art critic friendly to Cézanne, also included a full page illustration of Teniers' Tavern Interior in his book La Peinture du Louvre.

Two possible and often-mentioned sources for the composition of Cézanne's Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs are Caravaggio's Christ and Disciples at Emmaus (Illus. 20) and Veronese's The Supper at Emmaus (Illus. 21). It is much more likely that Cézanne drew inspiration from the formal aspects of Veronese's painting than from those of Caravaggio's. There is a strong similarity between the central portion of Veronese's The Supper at Emmaus and Cézanne's Joueurs at the Barnes Foundation. In both paintings the arrangement consists of three main seated figures and the two observers as lesser figures. Cézanne's eye would have been immediately drawn to the central section of
Veronese's picture -- topped by the triangular pediment over Christ's head, symmetrically balanced and combined with patterns of cross axes in verticals and diagonals and the important V-motif formed by the spears, columns and legs. But none of the compositions which might have served, even if only partially, as sources for Les Joueurs de Cartes hold that odd characteristic he imparted to all of the paintings in the Joueurs series, namely that lack of access, the dehumanizing effect.

Theodore Reff believes that Jean-Siméon Chardin has been given too little importance by "those who have tried to locate the Cardplayers in a specifically French tradition of classical realism."\(^{127}\) While Cézanne was in Paris, the Louvre acquired more than twenty figural works by Chardin through the La Caze bequest in 1869. The publicity accompanying the Chardin paintings must have drawn Cézanne's attention to them, and quite possibly to one in particular, The Castle of Cards, dated 1737 (Illus. 22). An affinity does exist between Chardin's figure in The Castle of Cards and the left-hand card player in Cézanne's Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs by the very plastic rendering of the human figure in both. Chardin's cardplayer, who possesses a warmth and intimacy not present in Cézanne's player, is, nonetheless, immersed in a serious, total concentration on the cards he holds and in this respect he resembles the card player on the left in Cézanne's two three-player Joueurs:
Both lean forward, turning slightly away from a strict profile and gazing down with a grave, absorbed expression .... Both project a strongly defined silhouette against the neutral background .... [In both] the hat plays a large part, locking the figure into the surrounding space and placing a subtle emphasis on the head as the focus of the mental activity depicted. 128

Cézanne made known his admiration for Chardin in a letter to Emile Bernard where he mentioned a particular work by the eighteenth-century artist: "You remember the fine pastel by Chardin, equipped with a pair of spectacles and a visor providing a shade. He's an artful fellow, this painter." 129

Cézanne also admired Honoré Daumier, a French artist of his own century whose prints Cézanne collected. Francis Jourdain, a painter friend of Charles Camion who visited Cézanne in 1904 in Aix, related that he saw a Daumier print on the wall of Cézanne's studio. Jourdain described Cézanne's hilarity in looking at the lithograph, slapping his thighs and laughing so hard that tears came to his eyes, "comme s'il voyait cette image pour la première fois." 130

Unfortunately, Jourdain does not disclose the subject of Daumier's print. Reff, however, notes the similarity between a Daumier lithograph "Je Suis le Plus Grand Ennemi des Factions" of 1841 (Illus. 23) and Cézanne's multi-figure Joueurs in which

three players in strict profile and frontal views; [are] compactly grouped around a table parallel to the rear wall, their well-defined forms silhouette strongly against its neutral surface. 131

Among Daumier's numerous images of people playing table games is a small oil, painted in 1863, entitled Les Joueurs
d'Echecs (Illus. 24), which I believe exhibits important similarities with the two-figure works in Cézanne's Joueurs de Cartes series.\textsuperscript{132} In Daumier's painting, the two chess players are seen from an oblique angle different from Cézanne's Joueurs but they sit in wordless absorption and concentration. There is in Daumier's Joueurs d'Echecs an expressive hesitation on the part of the right-hand player and the expectant pose of the left-hand player quietly waiting his turn. Schapiro makes a near comparison between the two players in the Louvre Joueurs where the player on the left, "the more habitual player ... [who] has a bright mind and a sluggish body," waits his turn while the player on the right, who "has a slower mind and a livelier body or temper," takes longer and is "more strained in deciding."\textsuperscript{133} The same description would fit just as well for Daumier's two chess players. Another similarity between Cézanne's two-player Joueurs and Daumier's Joueurs d'Echecs can be seen in the background where both artists render the frame of what appears to be a window opening defined by a large grid of vertical and horizontal planes. Denis notes that Cézanne was drawn to Gavarni and Forain, also caricaturists, but more strongly to Daumier because he liked Daumier's "exuberance of movement, relief of muscular forms, impetuosity of hand, bravura of handling."\textsuperscript{134} According to Reff, the "exaggerated expressiveness of Daumier [is] the Baroque element that links him with Puget,"\textsuperscript{135} the artist after whom Cézanne did more copy sketches than any other.
In this consideration of the pictorial precedents that may have been sources for Cézanne's *Les Joueurs de Cartes*, it becomes apparent that most of them pertain to either or both of the multi-figure versions, rather than to the three two-figure versions. The reason for this is that, as is most commonly agreed upon by writers today, the Barnes and Metropolitan *Joueurs* were the earliest. They were done when Cézanne's compositional concerns centered on the balance of fully three-dimensional masses in a clean-cut space, reinforced by color contrasts. He achieved unity in this earlier style by a careful balance of solid color masses, his figure paintings were "souvenirs of the museums." As his late style was emerging in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions, his need for pictorial precedents was no less great than before, but he was looking to different historical models. His emerging late style was based more on achieving pictorial unity by using complex color tones and harmonies like the ones he found in Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese.
NOTES

89 Cézanne, Letters, p. 38.
90 Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 61.
91 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 115.
92 Badt, The Art of Cézanne, p. 103
93 Cézanne, Letters, p. 36.
95 Ibid., p. 97-106.
96 Ibid., p. 118.
97 Ibid, p. 93.
98 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 115.
99 Beginning in the mid-seventies, Cézanne painted nudes as bathers in imaginary settings. The earliest Baigneuses paintings were single bathers, but gradually Cézanne increased the number of bathers and the complexity of the design. For a more complete discussion of Cézanne's Baigneuses series, see Theodore Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 38-44.
100 Ibid., p. 38.
101 Fry, Cézanne, p. 71-72.
102 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 105.
104 Description of typical Provençal "salle de ferme" obtained from interview with Beatrix Blavier, 23 November 1983. (Ms. Blavier is a native of France with an expertise on 19th Century Provençal farmhouse interiors.)
105 Several of the objects in the Barnes and Metropolitan Journeurs are also seen in earlier and contemporary still lifes. The green vase on the shelf at the left in the


110 Rewald, *Cézanne*, p. 49.


112 Fry, *Cézanne*, p. 71.

113 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 104.

114 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 17.

115 Schapiro, *Cézanne*, p. 16.


117 Ibid.


120 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 108.


122 Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 108.
123. Ibid., p. 109.

124. Ibid.


127. Ibid., p. 110.

128. Ibid., pp. 110-111. Also on p. 111, Reff discusses the "thoughtful expression in Chardin's figure ..., that Cézanne would have admired and remembered long afterward in posing his peasant model." John Rewald refers to Reff's position on the relationships between Chardin's card player and Cézanne's card player at the left in the Barnes and Metropolitan Joueur versions. Rewald also agrees with Reff that "the resemblance is still more apparent in the water-color study [Cézanne] made directly from the model [Joueur de Cartes (Illus. 38)]; so apparent that it suggests a deliberate effort to recreate the attitude and mood of the Castle of Cards, even including the card held in the left hand ..." Rewald, Paul Cézanne, The Watercolors: A Catalogue Raisonné, p. 176, citing Reff ("Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 111).


131. Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 112.

132. There is a color reproduction of Daumier's Joueur d'Echecs in Daumier by Robert Rey (New York, Abrams, Inc. n.d.), p. 137.

133. Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 88.


135. Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 112. Reff also mentions a woodcut and a lithograph by Paul Gavarni and a lithograph by Jean-François Raffaelli as works possibly known by Cézanne and similar in some respects to his Joueur paintings.
CHAPTER III ARTISTIC TRADITION AND THEORY

A development occurred in the latter part of Cézanne's life which led to valuable information regarding his taste in art. Cézanne's reputation grew rapidly in the last decade or so of his life, with the result that many artists and writers of the younger generation traveled from Paris to Aix to seek his company. This late-coming popularity was largely due to Ambroise Vollard's major Cézanne exhibit held in 1895 at his gallery on Rue Laffitte in Paris. Other exhibitions of Cézanne's works followed, many in the same gallery, and soon the artist had attracted the ardent attention of a small group of sincere admirers seeking his friendship and advice. Emile Bernard, J.F. Schnierb, R.P. Rivière, Francis Jourdain, Maurice Denis, Charles Camion and Joachim Gasquet are a few who visited Cézanne in his studio and with whom the artist talked freely. Their memoirs are valuable sources of information concerning Cézanne during his later years, although some accounts are much more reliable than others. Of particular interest are the references made by the young writers to Cézanne's collection of drawings or reproductions from art in the Louvre -- a collection that he kept near him, in his studio. It was a "motley accumulation," diverse in quality and taste, "both provincial and sophisticated ... remarkably varied in its range of styles and subjects; in short, a
faithful image of Cézanne." Some reproductions were not seen displayed on the artist's studio wall, but were found later in Cézanne's portfolio: two engravings after Nicolas Bertin, one entitled The Tomb of Atticus; Le Brun's Group of Female Nudes; a photograph of Boucher's Diana at the Bath; a lithograph of Carle Vernet's Mameluke at Rest; and others by Courbet, Diaz, Millet and Delacroix represent a partial listing. Of the drawings and reproductions on display in Cézanne's studio, no two accounts are identical. Rivière and Schnerb, the Impressionist printmakers, mention a reproduction of Poussin's Les Bergers d'Arcadie, the beauty of whose subject was pleasing to Cézanne: "Il aimait Poussin, chez qui la raison suppléait à la facilité." They also give an account of Cézanne's admiration for Courbet's broad, solid execution, but Rivière and Schnerb found some of Cézanne's other preferences surprising: "'Quel admirable tableau!' disait-il [Cézanne] en parlant de la Femme hydro-pique de Gerard Dow." Emile Bernard refers to a reproduction of Thomas Couture's Romans of the Decadence and to several prints by Daumier and Forain clipped from newspapers; Ambroise Vollard mentions the Poussin, as well as reproductions of Signorelli's The Living Carrying the Dead, Rubens' Apotheosis of Henry IV, Prudhon's Psyche, Courbet's Funeral at Ornans, a cast of Puget's Cupid, and those items listed by Bernard. Joachim Gasquet, whose biography of Cézanne contains some unreliable data, mentions reproduc-
tions of the naiads from Rubens' *Debarkation of Marie de' Medici*, David's *Sabine Women* and Delacroix's *Death of Sar-
danapalus*, as well as the items listed by Bernard. Maurice Denis mentions reproductions of Delacroix's *Hunter* and Daumier's *Amateur*, plus the listings of Bernard and Vollard. Reff notes that Cézanne apparently made frequent changes in the reproductions that he displayed on his studio wall and those that were kept in his portfolio. By the evidence provided in Cézanne's correspondence, the first hand accounts and the publication of such important Cézanne material as the contents of his sketch books and portfolios, a concrete demonstration is provided of the great significance of past art in the development of Cézanne's oeuvre. In fact, judging from his admiration for older art and its affinities with his own -- either by direct copy, stylistic influence or borrowed motif -- it appears that tradition forms the core of Cézanne's art. In 1905, he wrote to Roger Marx, a founder of the Salon d'Automne along with Odilon Redon and J.K. Huysmans: "To my mind one does not put oneself in place of the past, one only adds a new link." 

Since Cézanne's tradition-minded art could only develop and be reinforced by contact with the work of past artists, there is a need to consider the artists who were most important to Cézanne and whose influence may appear in *Les Joueurs de Cartes*. Cézanne's responsiveness to the expressive aspects of a work, perhaps its theme or some detail of
form led to his unpredictable choice of old masters. Note has been made in the first chapter of Cézanne's duality as classicist and romanticist as manifested in Les Joueurs de Cartes: the general design in all five is classical, but to this Cézanne imparts a vitality, a rhythmic phrasing. Venturi describes "the repose and life, the Homeric solemnity, of the Card Players ... Cézanne is a classicist, within the sense that every classicist has overcome the romantic in him." 145 How, then, did Cézanne think of himself? Would he have agreed with Maurice Denis who claimed: "He is the Poussin of Impressionism"? 146 Cézanne is quoted by Bernard in his Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne as having told him that it is necessary to become again a classicist by nature: "Il faut redevenir classique par la nature, c'est à dire par la sensation." 147 And Gasquet, in his biography of Cézanne, quotes a remark he heard Cézanne make: "... je suis classique; je me dis, je voudrais être classique, mais ça m'ennuie." 148 Regardless of the insight provided by these first hand accounts, their reliability is doubtful at times because the authors often interject their own thoughts for Cézanne's. Cézanne's letters remain the only indisputable written source for what he thought about art theory and for his taste in art. In a letter written to Emile Bernard a month before Cézanne died, the old artist explained that for him classicism did not mean a return to tradition, but it meant the logical expression of his sensations, inspired
by the systematic methods of earlier artists, namely the old masters: "Je vais au développement logique de ce que nous voyons et ressentons par l'étude sur nature, ... Les Grands que nous admirons ne doivent avoir fait que cela."\textsuperscript{149} Certainly one of "Les Grands" that he admired very much was the archetypal classicist Nicholas Poussin. But Cézanne

admired and studied Poussin, ... not as the creator of a specific classical style which he attempted to revive, but for those qualities of harmony and completeness in composition and orderliness in procedure that he shared with many old masters.\textsuperscript{150}

The famous statement allegedly made by Cézanne about entirely redoing Poussin after nature may have doubtful origins; the words appear in the memoirs of Bernard, Gasquet, Vollard and Léo Larguier as:

\begin{quote}
Je me suis donc vu forcé d'ajourner mon projet du Poussin entièrement refait sur nature, et non point construit de notes de dessins et de fragments d'études; enfin d'un Poussin réel, de plein air, de couleur et de lumière, au lieu d'une de ces œuvres pensées à l'atelier, où tout à la couleur brune du jour rare et de l'absence [sic] des reflets du ciel et du soleil.\textsuperscript{151}
\end{quote}

These words, supposedly spoken by Cézanne, occurred in a conversation between Bernard and Cézanne in 1904, but were not reported by Bernard until seventeen years later in 1921. These words do not appear anywhere in Cézanne's correspondence; nor, in fact, does Poussin's name.\textsuperscript{152}

As for the evidence presented in his sketch-book as visual material itself, "the nearly four hundred copies he executed create a picture of his taste as authentic as his
letters and more comprehensive in scope."^{153} In Cézanne's sketchbooks there are only three drawings of isolated groups or figures from two paintings by Poussin in the Louvre. They are identified by Venturi as *Equisse d'une femme de profil*, a drawing of the upper torso and head of the shepherdess in Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie* (Illus. 25); *D'après "Les bergers d'Arcadie," par Poussin au Louvre*, a drawing of the kneeling shepherd from the same painting (Illus. 26); and *Détail du "Concert" par Poussin au Louvre*, a drawing of a putto (Illus. 27).^{154} All three drawings are sketched very freely. Broken, wavy lines indicate contours and particular importance is given to the shading, which does not model the forms but draws attention to the contours. The shading has been freely but carefully executed by partial rubbing with what appears to be the edge, rather than the point, of the lead. Reff dates all three drawings after Poussin between 1890-1895 because "they are almost identical in treatment of contours and shading with studies of card players [*L'Homme au Chapeau* (Illus. 28) and *Le Fumeur* (Illus. 29)] .... they suggest that Cézanne became interested in Poussin only rather later in his career."^{155} To support this, there is evidence that Cézanne did not purchase his reproduction of Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie* until 1893, judging from a note made in the margin.^{156} Adrien Chappius dates the card players pencil studies mentioned above 1892-1896. He identifies *L'Homme au Chapeau* as
a study for the head of Père Alexandre, shown in his characteristic hat as the card player on the left in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions of the _Joueurs_ paintings. On the other side of this pencil sketch there is a watercolor drawing showing a more complete version of Père Alexandre.\textsuperscript{157} The other pencil drawing, _Le Fumeur_ is a study for the head of the card player on the right in the same versions.

In the three drawings in which Cézanne copies the figures from Poussin's paintings, he makes no attempt to reproduce the entire composition. Instead, his attention is drawn to a fragment from the whole, where his attention is focused on the "more intimate and apparently accidental order."\textsuperscript{158} In the three drawings Cézanne concentrates on rhythmic sequences as patterns of straight and curving lines; of particular interest is the opposition of diagonals forming axes, important as design elements and as means of linking objects in different planes. The striking combination of lines provides, as in the _Ugolino_ drawing and in _Les Joueurs de Cartes_, a valuable means of organization within a composition, and, in the drawings after Poussin, exploits the varying linear axes and the framing elements they provide. For example, in the drawing of the shepherdess, the figure is united with the landscape behind her by the repetition of diagonal lines in the shape of her breast, her down-turned profile, the line of her shoulder, and the diagonal slant of the tree trunk on a plane behind her. In
the drawing of the kneeling shepherd, the play of cross-axes is more complicated as the horizontal forearm crosses the diagonal staff and forms a triangle with the upper arm. In both of these drawings, Cézanne makes use of the angular patterns and diagonals to unite forms in different planes.

Cézanne's perception of design and pattern and his ability to transpose them in his own compositions is consistent in his works regardless of their date. Cézanne's drawing of the putto after Poussin's *Concert d'Amours* appears to be a study of forms aligned on contrasting axes and the working of such forms as framing elements. In the drawing, the figure of the putto, partly turned on his left side, is framed at the side by adjacent forms, positioned in different spatial planes. The prominence of the second head, behind the standing putto, is increased because it is framed by the rounded angle in the contour of the putto's back. The framing contour of the putto's back adds stability to the relationship of the two forms existing on different planes yet linked to one another.

The framing element is an important compositional feature in both the Barnes *Joueurs* and the Metropolitan *Joueurs*. In these two pictures, the symmetrical grouping of the figures is placed slightly off center to the right. This position is reinforced by the framing element of the heavily-folded, yellow ochre curtain swag and the standing spectator, both on the same plane behind the almost symmet-
rical group. The curtain is a strong enframement, but the seated card player beneath it is cut off at the side, pushed to the right as it were.

Other authors point to similarities between the Barnes Joueurs and Titian's The Entombment, 1525-1530, in the Louvre (Illus. 30). James M. Carpenter makes a comparision between the off-center symmetrical grouping in both paintings. In Titian's painting the figural group is set before an asymmetrical landscape background. Moreover, the framing figure of Mary recalls the right-hand figure in the Joueurs in both her heavily-folded, mauvish-blue garment and in the manner in which she is placed far to the left, cut off at the side. Furthermore the figures of both artists are placed forward and dominate the pictorial field as clearly defined plastic forms in a shallow space and linked to each other by connecting diagonals which unite three-dimensional forms in different planes. It is a classical method of spatial design common in the paintings of Poussin and the Venetians. "Cézanne favored it ... because the steps between parallel planes could be made clear-cut while their relation to the plane of the picture was always assured by their parallelism." 159

Cézanne's image as a reformer of Impressionism and a reviver of Poussin was first established by Maurice Denis and Emile Bernard, which is not surprising since both of the younger artists were Neo-classicists. They were both
anxious to identify "Poussin ... with a tradition of discipline and order to which modern art should return, and
[Denis] finds in Cézanne a model of the direction to be taken." In 1920, Denis acknowledged that Poussin was
only a part of Cézanne's synthesis which also included Delacroix. This observation was extended by Kurt Badt who
isolates Poussin and Delacroix as the two great sources of Cézanne's style -- the classical formal tradition of Poussin
co-existing with the romantic coloristic tradition of Delacroix. Badt's adjudgement may be somewhat oversimplified; indeed, there were many artists who could have served at some point as a model for Cézanne but did not hold the same importance throughout his career.

Only Delacroix engendered sufficient enthusiasm for Cézanne to plan a composition depicting his apotheosis. He
wrote to Emile Bernard in 1904: "From my heart I agree with his [Odilon Redon's] feeling for and admiration of Dela-
acroix. I do not know if my indifferent health will allow me ever to realize my dream of painting his apotheosis." Cézanne had admired Delacroix throughout his life, as is implied and stated many times in his correspondence. In a letter to Numa Coste, written while Cézanne was in Paris in 1863, the artist mentions Delacroix as a great colorist; and again in a letter to Coste in 1864, Cézanne speaks of a copy he is working on after Delacroix's Barque de Dante. In 1902, Cézanne wrote a letter of thanks to Ambroise Vol-
lard for the gift of a watercolor by Delacroix entitled \textit{Fleurs mélangées}, referred to in the letter as "the work of the great master."\textsuperscript{166} Cézanne was an avid admirer of Charles Baudelaire whose one book of poetry, \textit{Fleurs du Mal} (1857), he had read many times judging from the shabby, torn pages described by Leo Larquier, to whom Cézanne lent it in 1902.\textsuperscript{167} One of the poems in this book, "Les Phares," includes the artists Baudelaire considered as intellectual beacons, such as Michelangelo, Rubens, Puget and Delacroix, who were also admired by Cézanne. In addition to Baudelaire's poetry, Cézanne's correspondence reveals his interest in Baudelaire's book of art criticism, \textit{L'Art Romantique} (1869). In September, 1906, Cézanne wrote to his son Paul: "One of the strong is Baudelaire, his \textit{Art Romantique} is astounding, and he doesn't go wrong in the artists he admires."\textsuperscript{168} Again in a letter to his son written 18 September 1906, Cézanne says: "I am reading the appreciation that Baudelaire has written about the work of Delacroix."\textsuperscript{169}

Theodore Reff explains that it is the "predominantly romantic character of Cézanne's taste [that links] him with Baudelaire,"\textsuperscript{170} and with Delacroix as well. Delacroix was one of the few artists whose original works were collected by Cézanne,\textsuperscript{171} who owned three of his paintings -- \textit{Fleurs mélangées}, \textit{Agar dans le desert}, and a panel depicting a lion in a desert. He also owned two original lithographs by and six reproductions after Delacroix.\textsuperscript{172} Cézanne's great regard
for Delacroix is perhaps best supported by his "cherished ... project of painting the Apothéose de Delacroix. Several versions of the theme correspond to different stages in Cézanne's career." 173 The earliest was a little oil study for the *Apothéose* dating from his Impressionist period in 1873. 174 In 1894, a photograph was taken inside Cézanne's studio in Paris on Rue Bonaparte which shows an oil sketch for the *Apothéose* in place on his easel. Wayne Andersen believes that Cézanne was in the process of painting this study when the photograph was taken. 175 Portrayed in the *Apothéose* were Delacroix, being carried heavenward by angels, Cézanne, Manet, Pissarro and Victor Chocquet, an art collector and patron of Cézanne's. The date of 1894 for this oil sketch is of interest because the two-figure versions of *Les Jumeurs de Cartes* date from this period also. Cézanne was inspired by Delacroix in another oil painting, on which he was working between 1890 and 1895, *La Préparation du Banquet* (Illus. 31), which "shows in its more overt form that aspiration toward Baroque richness and grandeur which is implicit in much of Cézanne's late work." 176 The curved forms in the *Banquet* painting are not easy to make out, but the nude male figure on the left directs the predominantly circular movement of forms curving inward toward the crowded center of the design. By the arrangement of forms in the Barnes and Metropolitan *Joueurs*, the eye is led in a remarkably similar circular motion toward a focus on
the crowded closed area of the hands and cards resting on the table. There is the same disposition in both Joueurs pictures of forms curving inward -- in this case, the figures of the card players bending over their cards and the table. The Baroque richness and grandeur is not only evident in the forms and their arrangement, but also in Cézanne's color usage. Color becomes not only structural but expressive, and "Cézanne employs tonality to create a mood, as recommended by Delacroix..."\textsuperscript{177} In both Joueurs pictures, dark values, dramatic lighting and areas of thick pigment are present. The blue, brown and mauve-violet colors are dark but strangely vibrant and contrasted to the lighter tonalities and the red of the standing man's scarf, which lends to the mood of gravity and concentration. Cézanne turned to Delacroix when, during the most objective phases of his style, he yielded to his temperament and to the demands of personal expression. Gowing describes the existence of an "essential force" which had always been an important part of Cézanne, and a "Baroque rhythm which was its instrument [that] continued to sustain him."\textsuperscript{178} The Baroque impulse denoted by Delacroix, through his powers as a colorist, worked on Cézanne's nature in the same way that the exuberance and contrast of Puget's forms did. Cézanne remarked to Bernard, "Il y a du mistral dans Puget. C'est lui qui agite le marbre."\textsuperscript{179} Judging from the number of copies made after artists studied by him in museums,
Cézanne's love of Baroque and Romantic art drew him most often to the "grandiose colourful styles of Rubens and Puget," but the only time he mentions in his letters a choice of models for museum copying, his choice is Rubens and Veronese. This occurs in a letter written to his young painter friend Charles Camion on 3 February 1902: "Since you are now in Paris and the masters of the Louvre attract you, if it appeals to you, make some studies after the great decorative masters Veronese and Rubens, but as you would do from nature -- a thing I myself was only able to do inadequately." In Cézanne's correspondence, he frequently praises the Venetians as he does in a letter to Emile Bernard dated December 23, 1904:

Yes, I approve of your admiration for the strongest of the Venetians; we praise Tintoretto ... be convinced you will rediscover without effort, in front of nature, the means employed by the four or five great ones of Venice.

Reff believes Cézanne's reference to the four or five great ones includes Veronese, Giorgione, Titian, Sebastiano del Piombo and Tintoretto. Cézanne's sketch books do not contain the ample evidence of his admiration for the Venetians that his correspondence does, however. There are three copies of Veronese, one each of Giorgione, Titian and Sebastiano del Piombo, but none of Tintoretto. According to Reff, the reason for this may have been Cézanne's interest in the overall chromatic structure of the Venetians, particularly that of Veronese, and this would not have resulted
in numerous sketch-book copies. In summary, Cézanne admired many artists which makes it difficult to point to one as being the most important influence throughout his career.

Cézanne's taste in art as well as his attitude toward artistic tradition and art theory appear to have been influenced by the writings of three authors whom he held in high esteem -- Balzac, Baudelaire and Stendhal. According to Rewald, the theories of art communicated by Cézanne to his young painter friends were those he had found expressed by Balzac's artist hero Frenhofer in the short novel Le Chef d'Oeuvre inconnu [published in 1832]; for example, Frenhofer's statement that "it is in modeling that one draws" is very close to Cézanne's own theory, as expressed to Bernard: "When the color is at its richest, the form is at its fullest. Contrasts and relationships of tone, that is the secret of drawing and modeling." Baudelaire's championing of the great colorists, especially Delacroix, and the theory that nature was the source for an artist, was a great influence on Cézanne's thoughts about art. In his article on the Salon of 1846, Baudelaire states: "The great colourists draw by the light of temperament, almost without knowing it. Their method is analogous to nature; they draw because they colour." These words are almost identical to those of Cézanne, who explained to Bernard that "drawing and color are not at all separate, when one paints, one
Cézanne also wrote to Bernard of the artist's need to study nature, using words very close to those of Baudelaire:

Let us go forth to study beautiful nature, let us try to free our minds...let us strive to express ourselves according to our personal temperament.

In his critical reviews of art, Baudelaire makes frequent reference to Stendhal's 
Histoire de la Peinture en Italie (1817). Cézanne indicated a strong interest in this book by Stendhal as early as November 20, 1878, in a letter to Emile Zola saying that he is re-reading it for the third time. Nearly twenty-four years later, in 1902, he could still recommend Stendhal's book to his friend Charles Camion. In the opinion of Robert Ratcliff, a passage at the beginning of Chapter LXVII in Stendhal's book could have had a sound influence on Cézanne's experimentations with color modulation:

Chez le Titien, la science du coloris consiste en une infinité de remarques sur l'effet des couleurs voisines, sur leurs plus fines différences, et en la pratique d'exécuter ces différences. Son oeil exercé distingue dans un panier d'oranges vingt jaunes opposés qui laissent un souvenir distinct.

In spite of the documented influence of these authors on Cézanne's thinking, Cézanne often contradicted himself. In Maurice Denis' words on this: "Cézanne was a thinker, but he did not always think the same thing every day. All those who approached him made him say what they wanted to hear. They interpreted his thought". As Rewald sums it
up, Cézanne cared little for theory that was not justified in the work, insisting that "I do not want to be right in theory but in nature."¹⁹⁶
NOTES

136 See Rewald, Impressionism, pp. 623-24, for brief description of the reliability of such sources.


138 Ibid., p. 304.


140 Ibid.

141 Reff, "Reproductions and Books in Cézanne's Studio," p. 303.


143 Reff, "Reproductions and Books in Cézanne's Studio," p. 303-304.

144 Cézanne, Letters, p. 313.


147 Bernard, Souvenirs, p. 32.


149 Bernard, Souvenirs, p. 68.


151 Bernard, Souvenirs, p. 99.


153 Ibid., p. 160. For additional information on the contents of Cézanne's sketchbooks, see Reff's review of Cézanne und die alten Meister by Gertrude Bertholdt, Art Bulletin, XLII, p. 145-149.
Reff, "Cézanne and Poussin," p. 171.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 171 f.n. 148.

Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 250.

Reff, "Cézanne and Poussin," p. 171.


Ibid., p. 171.


Cézanne, Letters, p. 302.

Ibid., p. 98.


Ibid., p. 280. The Fleurs mélangées is also referred to as Bouquet de Fleurs by some authors.


Cézanne, Letters, p. 329.

Ibid., p. 333.


Cézanne's collection of art was for the most part limited to reproductions, photographs or his own copies after original works. Of the nineteenth-century painters, Cézanne copied Delacroix more than any other (there are twenty-two copies and variants after Delacroix, two after Pissarro and one each after Millet and Renoir). See Lichtenstein, "Cézanne and Delacroix," p. 56.

173 Ibid.


175 Ibid.

176 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 35.


179 Bernard, *Souvenirs*, p. 64.


184 Ibid., p. 161.

185 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 44.

186 Cited in Rewald, *Cézanne*, p. 198-199.


189 Bernard, *Souvenirs*, p. 32.


191 Ibid., p. 172


195 Cited in Rewald, *Cézanne*, p. 194.
196 Cited in Rewald, *Cézanne*, p. 201.
CHAPTER IV FORMAL ANALYSES

An analysis of the formal features in the five Joueur pictures points to the evolution in Cézanne's style as he moved into the late phase of his paintings. In the earlier Barnes and Metropolitan versions, Cézanne's mode of representation is more expressive of his concern with form and the position of form in space. The compositional organization of these works is largely based on related or repeated shapes. The geometric character of contrasting forms -- drawings after Poussin and the sculptor Puget provided him with ideas along this line -- lend unification to his design in both of the early multi-figure Joueur. In the later group of two-figure versions (Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre), Cézanne's mode of representation has been clearly influenced by watercolor techniques as well as by his interest in the Venetian technique of superimposed oil color glazes. There is an increased color harmony in the overall pictorial effect, a merging of volumes and outlines, a perception of tilting and distortion and a greater depreciation of line -- all prominent features of Cézanne's late style. Cézanne told Emile Bernard in 1904:

Let us read nature, let us realize our sensation as in an aesthetic that is at once personal and traditional. The strongest will be he who sees most deeply and realizes fully like the great Venetians.
For more than thirty years Cézanne worked steadily, at times furiously and at variance with each of his paintings, in an effort to attain what he considered the most indispensable thing:

"It is what I have failed at ... it is the 'realisation.' I will get it maybe, but I am old and it is possible that I will die without ever having touched that supreme point: to 'realise' like the Venetians!"

Exactly what Cézanne meant by this is best summarized in a letter that he wrote in 1904 to Louis Aurenche, a young writer and friend of Joachim Gasquet's:

"Because, if the strong feeling for nature -- and certainly I have that vividly -- is the necessary basis for all artistic conception on which rests the grandeur and beauty of all future work, the knowledge of the means of expressing our emotion is no less essential, and is only to be acquired through very long experience."

The gaining of the "knowledge," imperative for realization, was part of a slow, cumulative process. For many years Cézanne had confronted the paintings of Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto in the Louvre to learn what he could of their methods. Veronese for example "was one of those of whom he thought most at the end of his life." Maurice Denis testified to this late interest in Veronese in reporting Cézanne's remark, made in the last year of his life, that he planned a sketch after Veronese's Marriage of Cana for its contrasts, which he compared to those in Delacroix's Fleurs mélangées. Cézanne's own system of modulation in the progressive build up and "layering of semi-transparent warm
and cool tones ... can be understood as a modern equivalent of the Venetian Renaissance masters' underpainting and glazing.\textsuperscript{202} Cézanne's system of modulation was similar to the Venetian method of constructing volumes out of color. This color technique was admired by young artists like Maurice Denis who describes Cézanne's painting method as an assemblage of tints with an aim at grandeur of style ... a few decisive touches declare the roundness of the form by their juxtaposition with softened tints, the contour does not come till the last, as a vehement accent, put in with turpentine to underline and isolate the form already realized by the gradation of colour.\textsuperscript{203}

In the same article, Denis compares Cézanne's painting methods to those in the fragment of a frieze by Tintoretto that was discovered in 1905 in the Scuola di S. Rocco in Venice and had been folded against a wall so that the colors had retained their original freshness. Denis writes:

"It is all colour. One would call it a Cézanne ... this precious fragment indicates in Tintoretto an effect at chromatism altogether similar to that which I have explained in Cézanne.\textsuperscript{204}

Cézanne's color modulation, as well as his overall color harmony, was built on the proper underpainting and glazing. His source for this was the Venetians, particularly Veronese whose paintings Cézanne studied during his early years in Paris in the sixties. At that time, Cézanne's interest in Veronese was in composition as well as color. Between 1866 and 1867, he made two drawings\textsuperscript{205} after Veronese's The Marriage at Cana (1563, Musée du Louvre) and a third drawing after Veronese's Esther and One of Lot's
Daughters (1555, Musée du Louvre). All three drawings depict isolated groups or figures in these paintings. R.W. Ratcliffe believes that Cézanne's painting L'Orgie, done at roughly the same time as the three drawings, shows a partial derivation from Veronese's Marriage at Cana in the arrangement of the main elements and also in Cézanne's method of building up a chromatic richness and structure from a neutral-toned ground. Ratcliffe traces the changes in underpainting in Cézanne's works through the seventies, when light gray predominates, and into the eighties when Cézanne incorporates the pale gray or beige imprimatura into the final overall color effect by letting it show through. By the 1890's, as Cézanne's pictorial inventiveness increased, the toned ground was covered by varied transparent washes, differing in hue from warm to cool. There can be little doubt, through evidence from his correspondence and from reported conversations, that from the 1890's until his death in 1906, Cézanne was preoccupied with learning all he could about the technical secrets which governed the Venetians' mastery in achieving the final overall color harmony of a picture -- the beginning of which was the proper underpainting. But for Cézanne to gain a thorough understanding of this logical build up of color in successive layers was a difficult task because he believed that the methods of the Venetians had been lost. In 1889 he said: "Today we understand nothing ... the masters of the past knew how to
work. We possess only bits and scraps of their secrets. In 1896, Joachim Gasquet accompanied Cézanne to the Louvre, where they stood in front of Veronese's Marriage of Cana while Cézanne spoke of how the pictorial harmony of the real colorists depends on the intelligent use of underpainting. He described the neutral beginning of the painting with a grisaille, followed by the development from this to a build-up of warm tonalities and a final overall color harmony. But, the underpainting was the "secret soul" giving force and strength to whole painting:

Il couvrait ses toiles d'une vaste grisaille, oui, comme ils faisaient tous à cette époque, et c'était sa première emprise ...

... la charpente douce qu'il lui fallait, et qu'il allait habiller de nuances, avec ses couleurs et ses glacis, en tassant les ombres.

Au fond, j'en suis sûr, ce sont les dessous, l'âme secrète des dessous, qui, tenant tout lié, donnent cette force et cette légèreté à l'ensemble.

The years between 1888 and 1890, a time when Cézanne was working much more frequently in the watercolor medium, show a concurrent transformation in his method of underpainting. According to Ratcliffe, in the 1890's Cézanne was achieving greater subtleties in color harmony as a result of transferring his watercolor technique to oil painting. This is apparent in Cézanne's greater use of thin washes of warm and cool tones superimposed on a uniformly applied, light-toned underpainting. This can be seen in the Courtauld Joueurs (Illus. 4) in which, as Ratcliffe describes, the
"scumble of dull yellow partly breaks through superimposed blues (top right background)."

Ratcliffe also mentions the Louvre Joueurs, where thin greenish-blue preliminary layers are visible underneath scumbles of deep red. A similar effect of glazing with semi-transparent washes placed over the white priming can be seen in the tablecloth of the Femme à la Cafetière (Illus. 12), where "the warm rusts and browns of the preliminary layers still shine through the superimposed cool blues and greens in the shadow area." Ratcliffe sees this as a good reason to place the Courtauld and Louvre Joueurs close in date to Femme à la Cafetière. In this painting there is a contrast between the thinly painted areas and the more thickly reworked areas where paint is opaque. Ratcliffe also makes the interesting point that in many of Cézanne's pictures the presence of translucent areas as opposed to more opaque areas could be due to problems in "realization" and temporary abandonment. Cézanne's preoccupation with techniques of glazing was certainly one of the aspects he had in mind when he wrote the letter to Louis Aurencche, already mentioned, about assimilating the "means of expressions" essential for "réalisation" in a picture. Through his interest in underpainting, Cézanne, although largely self-taught, remained close to the old-master tradition of a systematic preparation of the final chromatic design by the calculated use of an imprimatura with subsequent glazes and scumbles.
The influence of painting in watercolors, more pronounced from about 1890 on, carried over to his oil painting and can be seen in some aspects of the Barnes Joueurs, particularly in the thinly painted areas of mauve, green and blue over the light ground of the back wall. Part of the light underpainting of the wall shows through in spots, but it does not present an unfinished look because the light underpainting is sufficiently close in tone to the thin superimposed tints that they merge and are seen as part of the total color harmony. This is similar to Cézanne's technique of watercolor painting where the planes of transparent wash are illuminated by the white paper shining through and the shadows are painted in as varicolored hues.

In the Barnes Joueurs, as in Cézanne's watercolors, the shadows, brushed in as colors kept to a constant value, serve several purposes. By giving considerable play of color in the shadow, Cézanne achieves more overall visual attraction in the picture. This can be seen in the blue shadow on the wall just to the left of the standing spectator in the Barnes work. The viewer's attention is drawn to this color area, which contains tints of light and dark blue as well as mauve. The shadow also plays a unifying role as an important balance for the ochre curtain on the right. In fact, there is more play of color in the shadow on the left than in the larger color areas of solid forms, such as the ochre curtain. Cézanne is careful not to describe the
shadow too precisely by form; its nebulous shape prevents it from competing with surrounding volumes which are given a more exact definition. Shadows are also used by Cézanne in the Barnes *Joueurs* to affirm the position of a form in space. One example of this occurs in the dark blue area behind the face of the left card player. It is inserted as a rather arbitrary and abstract darkening, useful as a foil to the features of the left card player and, as a space determiner, it affirms his forward position in space, on the same plane as the card player directly opposite him. A compositional need, too, is filled by the shadow on the left in the Barnes *Joueurs*, which combines with the ochre swag of drapery to enclose and present the main units of the painting. It is, in effect, a compositional equivalent to the drapery, repeating with utmost subtlety the folds of the swag — an example of space balancing volume.

There are features characteristic of the two early *Joueurs*, however, which are not in accordance with Cézanne's watercolor techniques, such as the concern with form and the position of forms in space. In Cézanne's watercolors, forms are not clearly defined; instead, they dissolve or emerge from their surrounding areas. This is not true in the Barnes and Metropolitan *Joueurs* where the clear shape of forms is important in the balance of repetitive structures and color masses. These paintings do not completely show the influence of his watercolor techniques which were
important in his late style. The five- and four-figure Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs are presented with greater detail and a greater dependence on strong color contrasts to emphasize the distinctness of plastic forms -- all traits typical of the 1880's before the watercolor techniques were noticeable.

Cézanne's watercolor technique, which occupies a key position in the development of his synthesis of color and form, is best seen in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre Joueurs. In these pictures, the simplified forms are less clearly revealed, the setting is indicated less precisely and the shallower space is distorted by the close color range which renders voids and background almost indistinguishable. The effect is a close synthesis of elements within their space -- a wedding of form to space. In the view of one author, "this synthesis will have all the more chance of lasting the more advanced the abstraction, that is to say the further the image departs from its model."218 Although the images in these paintings are still clearly derived from the "repertoire of forms suggested by the concrete world,"219 they have, nonetheless, been "transformed into a complex combination of volumes whose arrangement is subject solely to the arbitrary will of the artist."220

By color, too, the late style, evident in these three works, displays increasing tendencies toward abstraction and achieves a greater unity than in the earlier Barnes and
Metropolitan Joueurs. Color is laid on more rapidly, with a freer handling of superimposed brushstrokes. There is a greater hue gradation resulting from colors laid on as built-up glazes. The watercolor techniques in the three later Joueurs pictures are most successful in creating some of the Baroque features of Cézanne's late style:

The objects emerge as unevenly lit forms from their dark, shadowy setting, rather than standing forth sharply as dark forms against a light atmospheric background, as is generally the case in the eighties and early nineties.\textsuperscript{221}

The greater influence of watercolor technique in Cézanne's oil painting leads to increased abstraction and an increased awareness of the surface of the canvas: "In water-colour we never can lose the sense of the material, which is a wash upon paper."\textsuperscript{222} According to Fry another result of Cézanne's watercolor method was that it left "greater freedom to the play of feeling."\textsuperscript{223} Because he could depend more on his imagination, or sensations, in translating changes of tone into changes of color, it was in this watercolor method that Cézanne felt he could realize the "full saturation and pressure of the colour."\textsuperscript{224} The Pellerin Joueurs is a good example of the freer late style, by Fry's description, in

The constant variation of the movements of planes within the main volumes, the changing relief of the contours, the complexity of the colour, in which Cézanne's bluish, purplish and greenish greys are played against oranges and coppery reds ...\textsuperscript{225}
Another effect that the use of watercolor had on Cézanne's method of oil painting was a reduced use of local color. In Cézanne's late oil painting, his colors attain great depth and saturation, but there are fewer spots of solid local color -- another indication of a tendency toward abstraction. The color becomes more expressive than descriptive, as in the Louvre Joueurs where color is seen as a subtly "contrasted expression: violet against yellow, but both neutralized; in the left figure, violet jacket, yellow pants; the converse in the right." The reduced use of local color was in accord with Cézanne's increasing tendency to reduce his sensations and forms to their simplest -- a characteristic traceable throughout the Joueurs series. Thus, in the Louvre Joueurs, the simple single figures in their shallow space are rendered with scumbles of local color over layers of glazes. In some paintings done close to the same time period as the three two-figure versions, there is a complete absence of local color, as in the hands of Madame Cézanne dans la Serre, dated 1890. In this picture, the neutral underpainting shows through unmistakably with not a trace of local color. Venturi considers it unfinished, owing to Cézanne's deep preoccupation with aesthetic problems of volume and composition. A better explanation, it seems, would take into account the usefulness of incorporating the neutral underpainting in the total optical effect as a deliberate calculation on the part of
Cézanne. In the Barnes Joueurs, done probably in the same year as Madame Cézanne dans la Serre, the hands are not in the least unfinished in appearance. The flesh tones are over-painted with reddish tones to give a ruddy complexion. This naturalistically colored flesh occurs in the hands of the player on the right; they are a lighter color with ochre tints exemplifying Cézanne's modification of a local color as it shares the reflected tint of a nearby object, in this case the ochre curtain.

The colors in the Barnes Joueurs are a bit dead and limited in range, but contrasting hues simultaneously clarify the arrangement of three-dimensional masses and indicate their position according to planes at different distances from the viewer, thus establishing decorative patterns on a two-dimensional surface in a manner which lends equal interest to all parts of the picture. The greatest color contrasts are seen in the darker tones -- blue, ochre, brownish-purple and bluish-purple -- against the light tonality of the background wall.

Already mentioned is the importance of shadows as space definers for forms on different planes; they are also important in providing unity by linking a figure with the color of a nearby plane. This is true of the shaded area to the left of the standing spectator which has a predominantly bluish cast and links him with the light blue tonality of the wall behind. As Cézanne explained: "an optical sensa-
tion ... allows us to classify the planes represented by
colour sensations as light, half tone or quarter tone.
Light, therefore, does not exist for the painter."230 Thus,
by Cézanne's theory of "chromatism -- transposition, that
is, of values of black and white into values of color,"231
the shadows, as color components, allowed him to substitute
both contrasts and likenesses of the surrounding tones.
This can be seen in the Barnes Joueurs in the white table
with its bluish tints and the white jacket of the hatless
player with its ochre tints -- both table and jacket reflect
and mingle in the shadows with the surrounding local tints.
Tints from the background or side of each object are seen in
the part of that object that is in light as well as the part
of the object that is in shadow.

In the Barnes Joueurs, it soon becomes evident that the
colors in the picture are working on different levels at the
same time: a visual counterpoise resolving illusion and
flatness. The space is clearly defined, and the objects in
it, but the eye keeps being pulled back to the surface. Is
this due to drawing or color modulation? John Elderfield
believes that "drawing is perhaps the key factor in Ce-
zanne's art"232 and, because Cézanne's tectonic or form-
building method led him to work from contour inward to mass,
the essential features of edge description and reinforcement
of contour were all important. Reff, too, agrees with Elder-
field that color, "for all its constructive and expressive
power" was not enough, "line was also needed ... in fact ... the two elements are equally essential and ultimately inseparable, as Cézanne was perfectly aware." Cézanne told Emile Bernard:

By the very act of painting, one draws, the accuracy of tone gives simultaneously the light and shape of the object, and the more harmonious the color, the more the drawing becomes precise. When the color achieves richness, the form attains its plenitude. The contrasts and connections of tone -- there you have the secret of drawing and modeling.  

Modeling was important but so was edge definition, achieved through contrast of complementary colors -- as in the purplish-blue coat of the player on the right in the Barnes Joueurs and the ochre yellow curtain behind him -- and by reinforced contours -- most noticeable where the dark figures are silhouetted against the background wall. In the Barnes Joueurs, a contour line, creating a push-pull effect between surface and depth, can be seen along the standing spectator's left arm and shoulder. This line has a crucial function; because of its strong outer contour, it appears to be located at the deepest point in the picture, yet, at the same time, it manages to advance forward to the picture plane, to the homogeneous flatness of the entire image. It is hard to tell if the duality of surface and depth is due more to the force of Cézanne's drawing or to his color modulation. It is possible to look at the Barnes Joueurs and allow the eye to scan the surface as a "mosaic of separate and slightly fused tones," but not for long. The illu-
sion of depth and solidity snap the eye back into another perspective very quickly -- the colored patterns jump back and forth between the surface and the images they create.

Much of the activated tension between the planes and the objects located in these planes may be accounted for by the colors Cézanne chooses for his solid forms. The darker colors are in a close value range, as are the lighter tonalities in the background wall. As a result the darker toned objects have a solidity that denies a purely surface position, they have weight and they exist convincingly in their space. The background becomes an orchestration of varied hues that describe a solid wall whose light colors help position it as a boundary for the deepest space in the picture. Here the value relations become important; lighter valued colors -- blue, mauve and green superimposed on white ground -- define the solid wall at the deepest plane. The larger volumes are in darker value as they are positioned in planes closer, and always parallel, to the picture surface. The sense of depth is, therefore, created by these contrasts. At the same time, attention is drawn to the surface -- the mauve scumbles on the wall are picked up and given a darker value in the suit of the man sitting at the left. Likewise, the use of blue progresses forward, from the scumble on the wall to the spectator's suit on the left to the darker blue of the right player and then to the very light tint of blue on the table. One color, then, blue,
brings the eye from the deepest fictive space to the surface. Another device used by Cézanne in bringing color areas to the surface is negative spaces as trapped areas of color which rise forward and tend to associate with the two-dimensional surface pattern. A good example of this is the V of the hatless man’s slanting legs under the table -- the space enclosed, consisting of two bluish color areas separated by the light brown chair rung, lifts forward in a close relationship with the canvas plane. In the same manner, the chair at the left has two pockets of negative space, a V at the top and a rectangle below the seat, which also appear as planar color areas, framed and drawn to the surface.

In the Barnes Joueurs, the solid, volumetric form of the players is reinforced by dark colors kept in a close value range. Even the white jacket of the center player has prominent ochre tints and the white table has strong tints from the surrounding deep blue and mauve. The strong value-solid relationships in the Barnes Joueurs are much more effective in creating a tension in the push and pull of planes than the looser rendering of color relationships in the paintings of the second group. Perhaps this was due to the influence of watercolor painting which, admittedly, is more noticeable in the three paintings of the second group.

In the two-figure Joueurs, Cézanne used a freer color orchestration by loosening the value-solid form relationship. By eliminating tensions between the push and pull
of planes, Cézanne, in effect, may have been eliminating the sense of tension between man and his environment.\textsuperscript{237} This would be best illustrated in the Louvre Joueurs:

The struggle is quieted in the card players where the quite essential act of concentration is perfectly visualized by the artist. The classic-static compositional format is one with the theme. Cézanne's whole life reveals a paring away of all activities and associations that hindered the primacy of the act of concentration.\textsuperscript{238}

This brief study of Cézanne's resolution of illusion and flatness in the Barnes Joueurs demonstrates one aspect in Cézanne's predominant concern for unity in his pictures. Gowing explains that it was the idea of pictorial unity, already implicit in Impressionism which was his starting point, that led Cézanne to thoughts on the "squareness and the flatness of a canvas ... [and] the character of painting as an action in itself."\textsuperscript{239} The unity of tone had always been important to Cézanne, but Gowing cites paintings like the Portrait de Victor Chocquet,\textsuperscript{240} done when the artist was first turning away from Impressionism, as an example of Cézanne's concentration on a new form which incorporates the squareness of the canvas into the image itself.\textsuperscript{241} "For Cézanne, ... the whole virtue of objectivity, to which he clung as to a rock, was that a picture might contain itself."\textsuperscript{242} The Courtauld Joueurs is singled out by Gowing as a good example of the subtle and cumulative adjustments used by Cézanne as he works to bring the subject and image into a unity within the frame. The result is that the whole image inclines slightly to the left very noticeably in the Court-
auld Joueurs, but less so in the Pellerin and Louvre versions. Cézanne set a task for himself to hold in equilibrium two conceptions: the reality of a subject's external appearance, and the reality of a rectilinear canvas into which the image must be incorporated. In Cézanne's late work, illusion of depth was of even less consequence because such an illusion does not agree with the frame and "would have betrayed not an aesthetic only, but the state of private self-possession...".

Cézanne's "research for form," for the real material character of things, was an important ingredient in his finding objectivity in an image. What Cézanne was really after, according to D.H. Lawrence, was "a direct, instinctive grasp of the objective contents of reality." Lawrence believed that Cézanne wished to displace our present mode of the mental visual consciousness, the consciousness of mental concepts, and substitute a mode of consciousness that was predominantly intuitive, the awareness of touch.

In line with Lawrence's thinking, it follows that Cézanne's interest in the objective substance of an image would be based on form: form in its relation to other forms and to space and, lastly, form that had never been submitted to prior, academic governing systems such as scientific perspective. Still life painting had become important to Cézanne, at least from the late seventies, as a means of expressing ideas of form in space -- free from
connotations of either mankind or landscape -- which he later transferred to figure painting and landscape. In Cézanne's still lifes, up to around 1895, the main pattern is of whole objects, sharply marked off from one another, and the particular individuality of these objects. The same approach is followed by Cézanne in his figure painting in both the Barnes and the Metropolitan **Joueurs**. For instance, the focal point of the Barnes picture, the hands on the table and the objects they surround, could be described as a still life itself set within the framing position of the players who intently study the objects in their hands and on the table -- the contents of the still life. G. Monnier's description of Cézanne's still lifes before 1895 could easily apply to the 'still life' within the Barnes **Joueurs**:

The objects of Cézanne's still lifes were situated in a well-defined space, generally on tables with precisely defined edges. The backgrounds, too, were clearly defined. After 1895 support and framework are often less important, and stress is laid on the objects themselves...
hub-and-spokes motif, established by the distribution of the cards and pipe on the table, as a movement [which] radiates outward ... continued by the volumes of the hands ... repeated by the seated figure on each side, the standing man and the figure of the girl, as these are related to the hatless central figure.249

In a larger sense it is, perhaps, not too far-fetched to consider the Barnes Joueurs in totality as a large still life with people as objects in a careful arrangement. Their presence as objects is reinforced by their mask-like faces which dissolves their singularity as human beings and reduces them to inanimate images.

The period of the 1890's, a time of great pictorial inventiveness in Cézanne's career,250 witnessed the invention of an extremely complex still life, Nature Morte avec l'Amour en Plâtre (Illus. 32), which Reff places close in date to the Metropolitan Joueurs by its light tonality, dominated by bright blue, red and white, with larger areas of yellow, tan, gray-green, and gray-blue in attenuated, atmospheric states.251

Like the Barnes Joueurs, this still life incorporates a painting-within-a-painting motif. Two paintings are shown in the background of the still life, while a single picture cut off by the top edge of the canvas appears in the Barnes painting.

For at least twenty-five years, Cézanne experimented in still lifes with the placement of spherical, convex forms on flat surfaces with well-defined edges. This can be visually documented by one studio prop, a green and tan pottery vase,
which appeared many times in his still lifes between 1877 and 1894. Interestingly, this vase also appears on the shelf in the upper left of the Barnes Joueurs. In spite of its small size, the vase is an important form in the Joueurs picture because it is depicted with such convincing volume. Cézanne's reference to curvature in two letters to Bernard -- in neither is there mention of cubes -- suggest that he was partial to curving geometric solids because their convex surfaces were closest to the concentric nature of vision itself.²⁵² In the first of the letters to Bernard, Cézanne mentions the need to "treat nature by means of the cylinder, the sphere, the cone, everything brought into proper perspective so that each side of an object or a plane is directed towards a central point."²⁵³ Cézanne's partiality to "the cylinder, the sphere, the cone," forms well suited to color modulation because their curving surfaces recede from the eye, is further indicated in a second letter to Bernard:

[The eye] becomes concentric through looking and working. I mean to say that an orange, an apple, a ball, a head, there is a culminating point; and this point is always -- in spite of the tremendous effect; light and shade, colour sensations -- the closest to the eye; the edges of the objects flee towards a center on our horizon.²⁵⁴

Objects like the ubiquitous green vase had curving surfaces that lent themselves well to color modulation, but they were also important because they demonstrated another theory of Cézanne's which was that the eye sees all bodies
in space as convex. Rivière and Schnerb give an extended account of a favorite maxim of Cézanne's that "everything is spherical and cylindrical;" by Rivière and Schnerb's account,

Cézanne would indifferently show an apple or an object that was positively spherical or cylindrical, as a flat surface such as a wall or floor ... one of the causes of their appearance of solidity comes from the knowledge of flat surfaces that he brought into relief, whether it be a meadow or the table on which some fruit is placed.

This passage, although accurately quoted, does not make exactly clear the point Cézanne was attempting to illustrate. Cézanne eventually came to see convexity everywhere and he applied his axiom, bodies seen in space are all convex, equally to spherical objects and to flat surfaces. Norman Turner illustrates this principle of "subjective curvature of flat surfaces" in Cézanne's Fleurs dans un vase vert (Illus. 33). In this still life, the same spherical green vase is set in a clearly defined background of wall and table top. Both are flat surfaces, but both are given spherical and cylindrical properties ... The way the bottom of the vase rests in a nest of convexities is no less striking than the ease with which one understands that the actual surface was flat.

Cézanne accomplished this effect by constant modulations from light to dark and from warm to cool in the coloring of bare surfaces such as tabletops and walls. Referring back to the green vase in the Barnes Joueurs, it is at once noticeable that the convexity of the spherical body of the
vase is carried out at the bottom, where its convex base seems to rest in a convex portion of the shelf. The same treatment of the vase and its support system occurs in a still life done at the same time as the Barnes Joueurs -- Vase de Tulipes (Illus. 34). In both pictures the shelf (or table) and wall are painted in subdued light tones echoing those of the lower part of the vase. The slight curvature of the horizontal boundary of two colors responds to the curvature in the base of the vase.

Unstressed relationships, such as convexities in spherical bodies and their supporting surfaces and contrasts of form and color and their adjustment to surrounding settings, are discussed above with specific reference to several of Cézanne's still lifes. Thus it can be seen that Cézanne's experiments with form relationships were often first worked out in still life compositions and then carried over to figural paintings. Similar unstressed relationships occur in the Barnes Joueurs as repetitive forms and motif patterns, but the overall image is not dictated by one governing pattern. The variety of angled and arcuated forms relate to each other by repetition within the same or on different planes. Most often the curved forms enclose angular ones: the curved back of the left player contains the angle of his bent arms; the sloping shoulders of the hatless player enclose the V-shaped lapel of his dark vest, which is echoed by his chin above and his legs below the
table; and the heavy outer curves of the ochre curtain contain several angular folds within it. One of the most interesting line-and-pattern relationships in the work can be seen in the two open-ended triangles formed by the stems of the pipes hanging from the wall rack and pointing in a straight line to the counterpart, the V of the hatless man's legs.

In Cézanne's still life compositions another method employed to achieve overall unity in the midst of contrasts was alternating and repeating angular and oval motifs. An early still life containing the same green vase, Poterie, Tasse et Fruits of 1877 (lllus. 35), repeats many of the compositional relationships present in the Barnes Joueurs. The still life is a study of round forms within a rectilinear V motif, also a dominant compositional combination in the Barnes picture; the familiar V motif appears as a truncated diamond pattern in the wall paper which is reinforced as a diamond pattern by the repeated V of the drapery hanging down over the front of the table. The V of the drapery continues in a larger sense and completes the lower part of a diamond composed of four sections of the wall paper design, within which are the round forms of the cup, vase and apples. The Barnes Joueurs is also unified by a large diamond motif which encloses both round and angled forms. Barnes and De Mazia describe an upper pyramid with its tip extending to the small picture on the wall and a
lower inverted pyramid whose tip is formed by the converging legs of the hatless player.259 "Within the area at the center common to both the main and inverted pyramids, [are] the details -- objects on the table, hands and arms ..."260 A similar combination of patterns and motifs, then, is used in both the early still life of 1877 and the later Joueurs composition of 1890.

Few aspects of Cézanne's work have caused as much puzzlement as have certain peculiarities or distortions in the representation of various objects. Cézanne himself had very little to say about the distortions in his pictures; they are, perhaps, best explained as necessary to Cézanne's process of fashioning the final image on the canvas, as mentioned earlier in Gowing's remarks (p. 92 of thesis).261 Another explanation is offered by R.W. Ratcliffe, who explains how certain distortions of objects in Cézanne's pictures developed from continual reworking of the forms which brought about successive changes in the positions of contours.262 A distortion noticeable in all three two-figure Joueurs is the slight rotation to the left of the vertical axis. Ratcliffe singles out the series of Les Joueurs de Cartes compositions to illustrate the leftward slopes in their vertical elements -- in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions, the background paneling and foreground table legs, and in the Barnes and Metropolitan versions, the table legs and background picture frame.263
In my opinion the slope in the Barnes work is not noticeable. Lawrence Gowing makes the point that the leftward slant in Cézanne's composition may occur because the eye enters and explores a picture from the left; "the great progressions in paintings are all from the left and the great confrontations at the right." Ratcliffe attributes the marked leftward tilt of the wine bottle in the Louvre Joueurs to repainting or restating the relationship between the vertical axis of the wine bottle and the vertical grid of the paneling behind it — the result of which was increased asymmetry. Although the wine bottle may originally have been more nearly vertical, Ratcliffe observes that

progressive shifts in contours of the successive restatements of the position of the bottle are more obvious because the relatively thin painting allows easy recognition of the preliminary strokes. The darker, more opaque curving strokes lie over the earlier, thinner contours at the upper left shoulder and lower right side.

Ratcliffe mentions Helmut Ruhemann's theory that Cézanne could have incorporated the left slope into the Courtauld Joueurs for a physiological reason. When the artist focused his eyes on a restricted area of his subject, as the area of the hands and cards of the two men, he may have become aware that straight lines seen peripherally had a sideways slant. Perhaps he then included this phenomenon in his pictures with the added purpose of making the viewer concentrate on the same area that he had. Not to be overlooked is the
possibility that the distortions happened because, after undergoing a lengthy process of observation, Cézanne often worked very rapidly and made mistakes. As he once told Maurice Denis, "Quand je commence, je peins facilement, et après je corrige." Some years later the same young artist, when speaking of Cézanne's search among variants to find the correct relationship of forms to each other, attributed Cézanne's "deformations ... to his research for form. It is there that one discovers the most hesitation, the most pentimenti on the artist's part." 

In the Barnes Joueurs, there is a slight discontinuity or distortion in the line at the top left side of the table, but this does not show as much reworking as some of the contours of the dark forms where these receive the strongest edge definition by placement in front of the light background. Standing at the right side of the picture and viewing it from a sharp angle, the impasto areas (where edges have been most visibly reworked) are separated from the thinly painted wall by lines, which by their "shine" indicate that they were painted in last. The heaviest paint layer with the clearest indication of concerted reworking can be seen on the left side of the seated player's back. A shiny curving line traces the edge of his back and continues up along the right shoulder of the standing spectator. There is also evidence of reworking on both sides of the girl's head and considerable signs of reworking along the
left side of the hatless player's head and shoulders. The impasto pentimenti areas in the Barnes Joueurs mark the areas of the greatest color contrasts as Cézanne encountered difficulties in methodically working to establish the right relationship between the dark forms and their background. By D.H. Lawrence's judgment, the contours in Cézanne's pictures were among the most interesting aspects because they were at once "so crude and admirable," attributes of "his conflict and failure." For Lawrence, this is what made Cézanne "the only really interesting figure [in modern art], and that not so much because of his achievement as because of his struggle." 270

Cézanne's problems in reaching proper form relationships were accompanied by the often more difficult solutions in arriving at the proper color relationships. Ratcliffe has also done important research in this phase of Cézanne's work which centers on the artist's method of reworking a painting by varying, in some cases significantly, the relative thicknesses of paint. Ratcliffe has found that many of Cézanne's oil paintings dating from the late 1880's to the early 1890's are thinly painted over the greater part of the surface. 271 He has closely examined some paintings by Cézanne from this period, although not the Barnes or the Metropolitan Joueurs, and has been able to study the stratification of the paint layers in areas that tend to appear flattened out under normal viewing conditions. He has made
interpretations concerning the significance of these alternating thick and thin areas as actual records of Cézanne's struggle to achieve final realization in a picture. Fortunately, one of the pictures scrutinized by Ratcliffe under a raking light and analyzed by its stratification was the Louvre Joueur. An important conclusion was that the most crucial areas were inevitably located at the contours, the meeting place of the individual pictorial forms that together form the composition. The best indication of Cézanne speaking about the importance of contour areas is to be found in one of his conversations with Léo Larguier: "La forme et le contour des objets nous sont donnés par les oppositions et les contrastes qui résultent de leurs colorations particulières." Around these major contour areas, regardless of the differences that exist in the surface organization of Cézanne's brush work over the forty years of his painting life, there is a relief-like patterning. And in spite of Cézanne's thinner,

more diluent application of each colour restatement, even small paintings like the Louvre Joueur de Cartes show on careful examination, the continued evolution of a relief pattern, marking the exact degree of reworking at the main contour areas.

In the Louvre Joueur, Ratcliffe found many discrepancies in the relative paint thicknesses on either side of the contour areas dividing the main figures from their dark background. Thinly painted areas are "the broad, essentially orange-red
red colour patches of the players' faces and hands, [and] the main colour mass of the table." Ratcliffe found that there was no apparent rule defining the relative thicknesses of paint representing dark or light values -- the upper area of the table cloth, with many changes in tone, did not show a measurable relief; whereas, the horizontal section of the table, under the main cloth fold, with bands of equal tone value showed considerable irregularity in paint thickness. Both the relief patterning as well as the distribution of thick opaque areas with thin scumbles seemed to depend on the problems Cézanne had in "achieving the most satisfactory colour relationships at the many meeting places of certain forms." Often the most reworked areas correspond to an obvious center of interest -- for instance, the thick repainting lying to the left of the right card player's face. Cézanne was obviously more concerned with color relationships at the crucial juncture areas where important forms met than he was with the correctness of the form itself.

To return briefly to the earlier discussion on underpainting and the super-imposed glazes, it becomes apparent that here was only the beginning stage of a long evolution through which Cézanne worked toward an eventual color harmony and a possible realization of the motif. Each layer of paint plays a part as a different stage in the evolution of the painting.
Where the paint lies thinnest, at times a mere scumble over the intense white ground, it seems the colour value was determined at an early stage and that it could hold its own in the progressive heightening or ameliorating of the innumerable colour contrasts and accords.

The degree to which Cézanne could rely on the preliminary layers for the color harmony, according to Ratcliffe, depended on whether Cézanne's break in concentration came early or late in the painting process. Cézanne's sense of color relationships allowed him to maintain a process of continually enriching his initial statements as long as he was physically able to meet the strains that his means of expression required. However, during the last ten or fifteen years of his life, Cézanne's diabetic condition and failing health must have interrupted his process of concentration frequently, thus increasing his difficulties in achieving a realization.
NOTES

197 "Lisons la nature; réalisons nos sensations dans une esthétique personnelle et traditionnelle à la fois. Le plus fort sera celui qui aura vu le plus à fond et qui réalisera pleinement, comme les grand vénetiens." (Emile Bernard, "Paul Cézanne" L'Occident, July 1904, rpt. in Conversations avec Cézanne, ed. P.M. Doran (Paris: Macula, 1978), p. 36.

198 "Ce qui me manque... c'est la réalisation. J'y arriverai peut être, mais je suis vieux, et il se peut que je meure sans avoir touché à ce point suprême: Réaliser comme les Venitiens [sic]!" (Emile Bernard, Souvenirs, pp. 20-21).

199 Cézanne, Letters, p. 299.


201 Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 85. Also see catalogue, Cézanne Retrospective Exhibition, Paris, 1939, preface by Maurice Denis, p. 5.


204 Ibid.

205 Drawing after Veronese's The Marriage at Cana (Chappius 168, dated 1866-69; Venturi 1578, dated 1873-77) in the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

Drawing after same work by Veronese (Chappius 169, dated 1866-69), also in the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

206 Drawing after Veronese's Esther and One of Lot's Daughters, 1866-69 (Chappius 170), Kunstmuseum, Basel.

207 L'Orgie, 1864-68 (Venturi 92), Le Comte Collection, Paris.


209 Ibid., p. 111.


Gasquet "Ce qu'il m'a dit," p. 132-133.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 112


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 77.

Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Last Decade," p. 35.

Roger Fry. Cézanne, p. 64.

Ibid., p. 66.

Ibid., p. 65.

Ibid., p. 73.

Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 88.


Madame Cézanne dans la Serre, 1890 (Venturi 569), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Salinger and Sterling, French Paintings, p. 100.

Cézanne, Letters, p. 310, to Emile Bernard, December 23, 1904.


233 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 49.

234 Bernard, *Souvenirs* p. 32.


237 Ibid., p. 85.

238 Ibid., p. 86.


240 Portrait de Victor Choquet, 1876-77 (Venturi 283), Collection Lord Rothschild, Cambridge.


242 Ibid., p. 9.

243 Ibid.

244 Ibid., p. 8.


249 Barnes and De Mazia. *Art of Cézanne*, p. 365.

250 Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 32.
251 Ibid., p. 30.
253 Cézanne, Letters, p. 301, to Emile Bernard, April 15, 1904.
256 "Cézanne montrait aussi bien une pomme ou un objet positivement sphérique ou cylindrique, qu'une surface plane comme un mur ou un plancher ... on pourra vérifier qu'une des causes de leur aspect solide vient de la science qu'il a apporté au modelé des surfaces planes, que ce soit une prairie ou la table sur laquelle sont posés quelques fruits." (Riviére and Schnerb, "L'Atelier de Cézanne," rpt. in Conversations, p. 88). English translation in Judith Wechsler, Cézanne in Perspective (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1975), p. 60.
258 Ibid.
259 Barnes and De Mazia, p. 88.
260 Ibid.
261 Gowing, Exhibition of Painting by Cézanne, p. 9.
263 Ibid.
264 Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, p. 9.
265 Ratcliffe, "Cézanne's Working Methods," p. 166
266 Ibid.
267 Ibid., p. 343.
272 Ibid., p. 216.
273 Ibid., p. 283.
274 Léo Larguier, Dimanche avec Cézanne, p. 135.
276 Ibid., p. 299.
277 Ibid.
278 Ibid.
279 Ibid.
280 Ibid., p. 306.
CHAPTER V CHRONOLOGY

In the past, the dating of Les Joueurs de Cartes has been an issue of great confusion for both the range of dates for the entire series and the sequence in which they were painted. None of the Joueurs pictures are signed or dated, but this is not unusual. In his catalogue raisonné, Venturi lists only fifty-one oils as having either signatures or inscriptions, and, according to John Rewald, Cézanne signed and dated fewer than twelve paintings -- none executed after the middle seventies.

The earliest attempts to date Cézanne's paintings were made by Ambroise Vollard and Georges Rivière. Vollard, an art dealer who arranged Cézanne's first one-man exhibit in November, 1895, dated all five of Les Joueurs de Cartes between 1890 and 1892. The dealer's dates are, for the most part, based on his memory of what the artist told him. Vollard's statements are not always reliable since his memoirs "are little more than a collection of unrelated anecdotes -- those colorful bits of gossip for which ... [he] was famous among artists." Georges Rivière, a young art critic friend of Renoir who later became father-in-law to Cézanne's son, left dates which were in some cases inaccurate, "though at other times extremely accurate." Rivière, who wrote for the journal L'Artiste, held Cézanne in high esteem as early as the third Impressionist exhibit
in 1877 when he wrote enthusiastically of Cézanne's pictures. In 1933, Rivière published his book about Cézanne, but his sequence in dating Les Joueurs de Cartes does not seem plausible. He placed the Metropolitan four-figure version earliest in the series with a date of 1890. The two-figure Courtauld and Louvre versions were attributed to the following year, while the Barnes five-figure version along with the Pellerin version were dated 1892.\textsuperscript{286} No other analyst agrees with this sequence.

The first catalogue raisonné of Cézanne's work was written in 1936 by Lionello Venturi, whose dates of 1890-92 for Les Joueurs de Cartes are the same as Vollard's.\textsuperscript{287} These dates have been widely questioned because it seems unlikely that the gradual but dramatic change in the artist's conception between the Barnes Joueurs and the Louvre version could have occurred over only a two-year span. Also to be considered is the fact that Cézanne traveled a great deal during this period, dividing his time between Aix and restless travels around France to Paris, Fontainebleau and other sites along the Seine, the Marne and the Oise rivers.\textsuperscript{288}

Kurt Badt's chronology for the Joueurs series stretches the period from 1890 to 1899, based on the fact that the Jas de Bouffan was not sold until 1899. Badt suggests that all of the paintings in the series were painted at the Jas and that the first two multi-figure versions should be ascribed
to the beginning of the decade and the second grouping to the end of the decade. The main argument in establishing dates for the series revolves around the order in which the paintings of Les Joueurs de Cartes were executed, not the general range of dates. Most writers today agree that the multi-figure Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs were painted first in the series.

The most important continuing debate on the chronology of the Joueurs series involves two Cézanne experts, Lawrence Gowing and Douglas Cooper. Although in one instance their dates differ by only one year, namely the Courtauld Joueurs, dated c. 1892 by Cooper and c. 1893 by Gowing, it is important to follow their arguments. They represent two completely different approaches or options in determining the most likely sequence. In the oeuvre of any artist, not just Cézanne's, style can be analyzed as a recognizable development within a certain phase or time period. In spite of Cézanne's inevitable juxtaposition of earlier forms alongside later ones, there is a progression of style that can be detected. This is the theory of Lawrence Gowing as he determines which stylistic elements "are continuous and involuntary and which are variable, adopted for the purpose of particular pictures." Gowing does not follow Venturi's dates, but proposes new ones based on his own experience as a painter. There is an interesting chronology itself in the debate between Gowing and Cooper on the dating
of Cézanne's **Joueurs**. In August, 1954, Gowing wrote the primary text for the exhibition catalogue of paintings by Cézanne at the Tate Gallery in London. In it, he deals with the problem of dating Cézanne's **Joueurs de Cartes** by describing a character of vision perceptible in Cézanne's development within the three two-figure **Joueurs**. Gowing's theory is based on a recognition of Cézanne's vision as grounded in a conviction that the objectivity in the material character of things must be preserved in a painting. This, he suggests, pertains directly to a determination of the sequence of the two-figure grouping. In the Courtauld version, Cézanne is making such an extreme attempt to integrate the image with the frame, that the whole scheme is tilted slightly downward at the left side. For this reason, Gowing views the Courtauld version as the first of the two-figure versions datable to c. 1893. According to Gowing, the slant is eliminated by Cézanne in the Pellerin and the Louvre versions, where the pattern is more regularized and rectangular and the image more successfully integrated with the frame. Cooper agrees with Gowing that the Courtauld **Joueurs** precedes the other two-figure versions but is rather cursory in his explanation: "I also regard the more deliberately composed and slightly finer Louvre version (V.558) as being a development from the Courtauld version (V.557)." To this he adds, "I see no reason to alter the date 1892 given in the catalogue of the Salon d'Automne of
1907." For some reason, Cooper does not mention the Pellerin version specifically. He places all three of the two-figure versions earlier than the five- and four-figure versions, based on the fact that the multi-figure works are more "complex" and therefore must be later. How much later he does not say.  

Cooper ignores the very thoughtful argument made by Gowing for placing the five- and four-figure versions earli- est in the series. Gowing refers to Cézanne's return to Aix in the fall of 1890 as the start of a five-year period during which Les Joueurs de Cartes were painted, ending in 1895 with the portrait of Gustave Geffroy (Illus. 11). Gowing notes that there is considerable stylistic develop- ment within the Joueurs de Cartes series. In the early 1890's in Aix, Cézanne underwent one of the periodic outbursts of a baroque flour- ish in his style, shown in the concave and convex curvilinear drawing which defines the form in such pictures as ... the Nature Morte avec L'Amour en Plâtre [c. 1892] [Illus. 32]. This style of draw- ing is ... most marked in the Joueurs de Cartes with five figures....; in the Femme à la Cafetière [Illus. 12] and the portrait of Geffroy it has again almost disappeared, assimilated into the broader architectural design which becomes characteristic of the second half of the decade.  

Gowing describes the sculptural, curvilinear definition of forms as still discernible in the Courtauld Joueurs, in the head of the card player on the left. Here is another reason for placing the Courtauld Joueurs earlier than the Louvre Joueurs which has fully departed from the baroque line and
is very close to the line in the 1895 portrait of Gustave Geffroy. The Geffroy portrait is accepted as one of the few works by Cézanne that can be dated with the help of external evidence. The character of Cézanne's line in the Louvre Joueurs is also very close to the line in Femme à la Cafetière with the parallel, vertical folds of the dress and the hands. Moreover, according to Gowing, "it shows the same table and cloth" and "in Cézanne such indications are often reliable." Gowing claims that Cooper's grouping depends too much on variable elements in Cézanne's style, such as color and tone, with not enough emphasis on Cézanne's use of line which is a more consistent element.

Since, at best, only approximate dates can be proposed, "based on stylistic criteria that are obviously a matter of individual interpretation," the reader is free to establish his own opinion. The critic's sincerity of feeling or lack of it, is the main difference between Mr. Gowing and Mr. Cooper. Gowing speaks of Cézanne's painting as "a great and personal achievement whose full meaning, though it has been ransacked for styles, is still beyond our measure." Cooper states that "unquestionably Cézanne's work is marred by an element of unfulfillment: one need only consider the enormous number of pictures which went wrong or which he abandoned half finished ... it does affect our estimate of the artist as a whole."
A recent analysis of *Les Jouseurs de Cartes* for purposes of chronology was done by Professor Theodore Reff of Columbia University. Reff assigns a range of dates from 1890-1892 for the five-figure Barnes Foundation version and the four-figure Metropolitan version and 1893-1895 for the two-figure Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions. Reff believes that the "sequence placing the two-figure versions later is more likely correct, since they are more easily linked with pictures of 1895-96." His reason for placing the Louvre version last is because of the closeness in color between it and the 1895 Gustave Geffroy: "It appears remarkably similar ... in its figures emerging from a dark background and its harmony of purples, deep blue, black, reddish brown, and yellow tans ...." This was the same point made by Gowing who also suggested "the connection in colour, in style, and in the character of vision -- between the Louvre version of the *Jouseurs de Cartes* and the Gustave Geffroy." Much can be learned about Cézanne's *Jouseurs de Cartes* series by following closely the words of the experts regarding chronology, and for this reason a detailed discussion has been devoted to this one phase.

Research on the chronology of *Les Jouseurs de Cartes* extends also to the studies, both oils and pencil drawings, because they are poignant indications of Cézanne's creative process as he worked out each composition in the
series. Some of the studies are visual documentations of Cézanne's procedure within the series of paring down to the essential. In presenting the opinions of several writers, namely Wayne Andersen, R. Lobe, Lawrence Gowing, and Adrien Chappius, some overlap on specific studies used by these scholars in making their argument is unavoidable. Nonetheless, it is more advantageous to analyze the issue by author rather than by each study, thus there is some repetition.

Beginning with the Joueurs oil studies, Wayne Andersen singles out two for study, the Le Comte Homme à la Pipe (Illus. 36) and the Worcester Joueur de Cartes (Illus. 37), both dated 1890-1892 by Venturi. In the past, both oils have been acknowledged as studies for figures in the Barnes and Metropolitan Joueurs. Andersen accepts the Le Comte Homme à la Pipe as a study for the Metropolitan Joueurs, but he suggests that neither it nor the Worcester Joueur de Cartes are studies for the Barnes Joueurs. He argues that the reduction of detail between the Homme à la Pipe figure and his counterpart in the Barnes version parallels the reduction process itself between the two three-player versions. The figure in L'Homme à la Pipe appears to be the same one as the standing, pipe smoking spectator in the Barnes and the Metropolitan Joueurs, but Andersen sees it differently. He proposes that L'Homme à la Pipe, probably done after the Barnes work (instead of as a study for it, as Venturi suggests), was a study for the Metropolitan
version. Andersen sees L'Homme à la Pipe as an example of Cézanne's elimination of detail between the Barnes version and the Metropolitan version. Some removals of detail are easy to spot, such as the shelf on the wall with a ceramic pot, the picture hanging on the wall, and the young girl which appear in the Barnes picture but not in the Metropolitan work. Closer examination shows that Cézanne's process of concentration has reduced the fullness of the ochre drapery swag at the right in the Metropolitan version and "the standing figure has moved closer to the players. The entire composition is more boldly expressed as a construction." This is noticeable also in the hat of the man with the pipe in the Metropolitan work, which has been cropped off at the top as the figure is more boldly integrated into the pictorial scheme. This reduction of detail is also seen in L'Homme à la Pipe. There is no button on his vest and his neck scarf is treated less conspicuously. Also the definition of the shoulders and upper arms is less full and curvilinear. He is, according to Andersen, much closer to his counterpart in the Metropolitan picture than in the Barnes. It must be realized, then, that some studies, which have been assumed to be preparatory ones for a particular Joueurs painting, may actually have been painted subsequently as studies for a later Joueurs in the same group. Andersen cites the Worcester Joueur de Cartes (Illus. 37) as an oil study done subsequently to both the
Barnes and Metropolitan **Joueurs.** It was dated by Venturi 1890-1892 and described by him as a study for the central person in the Metropolitan **Joueurs de Cartes.** But, according to Andersen, perhaps it, too, was painted subsequently:

> Although appearing also to be a study, [it] was made after [the Metropolitan **Joueurs**] ... and perhaps from it, for at the left of the figure are horizontal and vertical lines that indicate the standing figure in the full composition.

Two studies in particular, both wash drawings, which have sparked disagreement and even confusion are the Chicago **Joueur de Cartes** (Illus. 38) and the Providence **Joueur de Cartes** (Illus. 39). Neither is catalogued by Chappius. Reff refers to the Providence work, a pencil drawing with traces of watercolor on white paper, as a study, presumably for the player on the right in the Barnes and Metropolitan versions, but he does not include the Chicago pencil drawing with traces of violet, blue and yellow watercolor on paper as a study for **Les Joueurs de Cartes.** Wayne Andersen makes the supposition that both drawings were made after the Barnes picture as studies for the Metropolitan picture. Another pencil drawing (Illus. 40), catalogued by Chappius as a study for the **Joueurs,** is apparently a study for the player on the left of the three-player composition, but "he is placed at the right side of the table, which indicates ... that the study was made before the general composition
of the three-player version was determined.\textsuperscript{318} This is also the opinion of Wayne Andersen who considers the drawing "the earliest in the sequence, probably dating before any of the canvases."\textsuperscript{319} Chappius does not put the drawing in "strict relation to any of the oils ... this drawing could be one of the first of the series."\textsuperscript{320} At least there is some agreement here.

One of the more interesting recent theories concerning the placement of studies as transitional elements between the Joueurs is that developed by R. Lobe in an article written for the \textit{Bulletin of the Rhode Island School of Design}.\textsuperscript{321} He argues that the two-figure versions evolved directly from the multi-figure versions and that some of the pencil studies, long believed to have been executed prior to the Barnes and Metropolitan pictures or at least midway between them, were done after them in preparation for the later group of paintings. Reff, however, does not agree that the two-figure versions could have evolved directly from either the Barnes or the Metropolitan Joueurs, because the former differ from the multi-figure versions in too many ways: by types of models, their positions in the picture, the table itself and the setting.\textsuperscript{322}

Lobe builds his case around two pencil-and-wash drawings, the Providence \textit{Joueur de Cartes} (Illus. 39) and a card player drawing at the Honolulu Academy of Arts (Illus 41). Lobe notes that the figures in both sketches are the same,
but the Providence work is a later and finer drawing. The Honolulu work, probably executed by Cézanne before a posed model, is less sophisticated and marked by a "tighter drawing style, less pronounced and curvilinear rhythms, and [a] more definite system of shadow." The Honolulu drawing also shows signs of reworking, as the outline in the player's back was shifted. In comparison, the back of the figure in the Providence drawing has a more well-defined, higher contour which is reinforced by a thin line of gray wash. Although Lobe notes that many writers relate this better quality Providence drawing closely to the right hand player in the Metropolitan Joueurs by facial features, curvilinear contours on the arm and hat brim and disposition of the table on a subtle left-to-right diagonal, his hypothesis contradicts such a premise. Instead, he argues that the Providence drawing is later than both the Barnes and Metropolitan paintings and is one of several intermediary steps evolving toward the Pellerin painting. He also proposes that the Worcester oil study, Le Joueur de Cartes (Illus. 37) dated 1890-1892 by Venturi, is another modification of a figure done after the Metropolitan Joueurs. He and Andersen are in agreement on this supposition. Furthermore, according to Lobe, both this oil painting and the Providence drawing show a concern with the suppression of strong modeling and the same emphasis on broad forms contained within primary outlines ... formal characteristics [which] describe the Pellerin oil as well ....
In addition to the Worcester oil study, Lobe places two earlier-mentioned wash drawings, *L'Homme au Chapeau* (Illus. 29) and *Le Fumeur* (Illus. 28), both dated 1890-1892 by Venturi, very close in style to the Providence *Joueur de Cartes* drawing. In all three drawings, he directs attention to the repeated contour lines which suggest strong rhythms and are further enriched by diagonal hatchings. Also important are the untouched areas of paper which are read as a "highlighting" of volumetric form. Lobe asserts that, in detail, the *L'Homme au Chapeau* and *Le Fumeur* drawings are closest to their counterparts in the Pellerin painting, and by his reckoning this puts the three drawings and the oil study as intermediary works between the three- and two-player versions. The effect Cézanne gains in the drawings results, says Lobe, in "a remarkable liveliness of surface, a kind of flicker within the main volumes, which links the drawings to the two-player paintings." These qualities are achieved by combining contour lines to create expressive surface pattern, by leaving open areas of paper to read as both volume and light and by applying the watercolor with a delicate touch, particularly in the face of the Providence *Joueur de Cartes*.

Lawrence Gowing considers Cézanne's use of line, the formal value of his art which remains the most consistent, as an important determinant in dating the oil studies for *Les Joueurs de Cartes*. He makes a clear argument, for in-
stance, in dating the Courtauld oil study, _L'Homme à la Pipe_ (Illus. 42), around 1893. It is a study for the card player on the left in the two-figure versions where the model is shown in profile. Cézanne's use of line in the Courtauld work is a continuation of some of the same properties seen in _Madame Cézanne au Fauteuil Jaune_, dated by Gowing c. 1890. Gowing notes that the "increasingly stable design and sculptural treatment, noticeable especially in the folds of the dress, leads on to the series of _Joueurs de Cartes..._" The sculptural treatment is the most important feature discussed by Gowing in his catalogue entry on the Courtauld _Homme à la Pipe_. He describes Cézanne's numerous drawings after sculpture in the Louvre, possibly done at the same time, which show that the artist "may well have taken the very sculptural pose of the body with parallel folds of drapery, cut sharply below the shoulders, from Florentine portrait busts of the fifteenth century. His drawings include two studies [Illus. 43] after the bust of Filippo Strozzi by Benedetto da Maiano, which is of this type." It is because of the consistency in the character and use of line by Cézanne in the Courtauld oil study and in the Courtauld _Joueurs_ that Gowing dates them both 1893.

A small digression on Cézanne's use of line is in order on another point. Cézanne's use of line in the drawings and the oils of the _Joueurs_ is painterly and sketchy without
firm adherence to a single, fixed contour. According to Fritz Novotny, as he is quoted in Chappius, Cézanne devalued the line, the result is a certain rigidity and awkwardness, and a strangely cold quality .... His drawings and water colors are essentially of the same nature as his oil paintings.  

This statement by Novotny is important because it helps explain Cézanne's approach to his drawings, which were not always correct by academic standards. They were never meant by him to be considered line drawings. Cézanne's concern with values was foremost, and the vigorous contrasts of black, gray and white parts in his drawings were more important than strictly defined outlines. This does not mean that outlines played no part in Cézanne's drawings; the outlines are just not defined by a single stroke, but rather by several strokes close together.  

It is my personal opinion that an analysis of Cézanne's use of line and color is useful in establishing a sequence of dating for the series of Les Joueurs de Cartes paintings, because the artist's approach to line and color was very noticeably affected by his increased use of watercolors beginning around 1890. Cézanne's transference of watercolor techniques into his oil painting is a feature so prominent in the Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre versions that it carries them directly into his late style, putting them close to 1895. At the same time, the constructive, "geometric ideal" is too noticeable in the Barnes and Metropolitan
Joueurs to place them later than 1890-1892. While it appears obvious to me that the influence of watercolor as a criterion for judging chronology in the Joueurs series has a sound validity, it is curious that such a criterion did not figure prominently in the arguments for the Joueurs dating of either Gowing or Cooper.334
NOTES

281. Venturi's catalogue raisonné lists fifty-one oils with either signatures or inscriptions by Cézanne.


288. In 1980, Cézanne was at the Jas de Bouffan. In 1891, he was in Aix at the beginning of the year; later Cézanne moved to Paris and installed himself in a studio at 2 Rue de Lions - Saint-Paul. In 1892 and 1893, Cézanne was in Aix, Paris, and Fountainbleau Forest. In 1894, Cézanne was primarily in Paris; he visited Monet at Giverny in September. In 1895, Cézanne was in Paris and Aix, where he rented a hut in the quarry of Bibémus; in November, the dealer Ambroise Vollard held an exhibition in Paris of more than one hundred paintings and watercolors by Cézanne. See Venturi, Cézanne, pp. 166-167 for more information on chronology.


291. Ibid., p. 191


Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, p. 9.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, no. 52

Ibid.

Cézanne began work on Geffroy's portrait at the beginning of April 1895 and continued on a nearly daily basis until mid-June. "According to Geffroy, Cézanne worked on everything except the sitter's face, which was 'left for the end,'" (John Rewald, "Catalog," in Cézanne, the Late Works, ed. William Rubin. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977, p. 385). Another account by Georges Rivière states that Cézanne painted Geffroy's portrait in the art critic's study at Belleville, a Paris suburb, in 1895. (Rivière, Cézanne, le Peintre Solitaire, 1933, p. 146).


Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, p. 5.


Reff, "Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 17.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Although Gowing and Reff agree on dates for the second grouping, they have different opinions on the order of the Joueur painting within that grouping. Reff places the three later Joueur in the order of Pellerin, Courtauld and Louvre ("Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 17), whereas Gowing assumes an order of Courtauld, Pellerin and Louvre for the same grouping (Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, p. 9).

There is much confusion regarding which oils and drawings should be considered as studies for Les Joueurs de Cartes series. One author states that there are fifteen studies of individual figures related to the five Joueurs paintings - five each in pencil, watercolor and oil. See R. Lobe, "French Watercolors and Drawings from the Museum Collection, 1800-1910," Bulletin of the Rhode Island School of Design, LXI, no. 5 (April 1975), p. 20, n. 2. Reff refers to eleven known studies of single players and spectators all made from models. ("Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 104. For other opinions on Cézanne's Joueurs studies see: Reff, in "Cézanne's Cardplayers and Their Sources," p. 116, n. 4; Chappius, Drawings of Paul Cézanne, p. 250; Douglas Cooper, The Courtauld Collection (London, 1954), p. 88.

Venturi, Cézanne - son art, son oeuvre, 1936, p. 197.


Venturi, Cézanne - son art, son oeuvre, 1936, p. 188.

Andersen, Cézanne's Portrait Drawings, p. 37.

Ibid.

Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 250.

Andersen, Cézanne's Portrait Drawings, p. 39.

Ibid.

Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 250.


Reff, "Cézanne's 'Cardplayers' and Their Sources," p. 111.
324 Ibid.
325 Ibid., p. 19.
326 Ibid. (The Providence Joueur de Cartes, L'Homme au Chapeau, and Le Fumeur drawings and the Worcester oil, Le Joueur de Cartes, are the four intermediary works Lobe refers to.)
327 Ibid., p. 20.
328 Madame Cézanne au Fauteuil Jaune, 1890-94 (Venturi 571), Chicago Art Institute.
329 Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, no. 47.
330 Ibid.
331 Ibid., no. 51
332 Chappius, Drawings of Cézanne, p. 13.
333 Ibid., p. 10. Cézanne saw a clear distinction between line and drawing, as he put it to Léo Larguier: "La ligne et le modelé n'existent point. Le dessin est un rapport de contraste ou simplement le rapport de deux tons, le blanc et le noir" (Dimanche avec Cézanne, p. 135). Cézanne did not believe lines existed in nature, but they do in his paintings and certainly in his drawings, although not as an unbroken outline, as already mentioned. As Reff explains it, drawing for Cézanne "played as central a role in the creation of form and space as coloring did, and the two were in fact developed simultaneously" ("Painting and Theory in the Final Decade," p. 49).

334 Reff notes the influence of watercolor techniques in Cézanne's works of around 1895 and 1896, particularly in Portrait de Joachim Gasquet (Venturi 694, Modern Gallery of Art, Prague) and Portrait de Henri Gasquet (Venturi 695, McNay Art Institute, San Antonio). These two portraits were "known to have been executed during relatively brief intervals. The younger [Joaquim] Gasquet's features are formed by strokes so broad and distinct that they resemble watercolor washes, yet there is nothing casual or sketchlike about them" ("Painting and Theory," pp. 15-16). Roger Fry, too, makes note of Cézanne's watercolor methods which were transposed to his oil paintings: "In the chronological sequence of his works, we find his material becomes less and less pastose, his touches more and more liquid and trans-
parent, more like water-colour. The change is gradual .... There are returns to the old impasto, but thin painting certainly predominates towards the end of the century" (Cézanne, p. 65). An earlier portion of this text takes account of Ratcliffe's discussion on Cézanne's glazing techniques as derived from an increased use of the watercolor medium in the 1890's. He presumes a close date for Femme à la Cafetière and the Louvre Joueurs based on a similar effect of glazing by semi-transparent color layers in both works (see pp. 80-81 of my thesis.)
CHAPTER VI  INTERPRETATION

Opinions vary widely on interpretations for the Joueurs de Cartes series, but they are all speculative since Cézanne himself left no clues about the meaning of the works in either his letters or in recorded conversations. Schapiro notes that none of the five Joueurs paintings display the expected aspects of the game nor the "convivial and loud" manner characteristic of peasant card games in Provence. Instead, by intentionally "selecting this intellectual phase of the game -- a kind of collective solitaire -- [Cézanne] created a model of his own activity as an artist"\textsuperscript{335} who had removed himself from a normal social life in order to pursue his work as a "closed personal action" -- dedicated to slow deliberations in choosing each element for his pictures. Thus the sense of pure contemplation on the faces of the card players is translatable to an equally intense meditation in Cézanne as an artist. Although Schapiro stresses the absence of anecdotal features in the Joueurs, he is also the only author who has perceived a subtle characterization of the players. He sees the player on the left as more experienced and assured while the player on the right is more anxious. The latter, hunched over his cards and partially cropped by the frame, confronts a more confident companion, sitting upright and wholly contained within the picture. Even the two hats give clues of characterization:
the left player's hat is tall, with a cocky arched brim; the player on the right wears a hat "soft and battered." Lines are likewise important in this interpretation. The arms of the player on the left rest as stable horizontals on the table while his companion's elbows spread out wider, like the sides of a triangle. The right player's head, more sharply defined in profile, is set against a background of verticals which also emphasize his intense face as he leans more sharply over his cards.

Another art historian, Maurice Raynal, describes the Joueurs series as a favorite theme to which Cézanne "reverted a number of times" because it was emblematic in a personal sense. As a genre scene, according to Raynal, it "reflect[s] a deep and genuine feeling for the soil, and for those who work it and depend on its fruit." Kurt Badt holds an opposite view about Cezanne's attitude towards the peasants of Provence: "He had not the slightest interest in what the peasants did or how they behaved." It is for this reason, according to Badt, that the pictures in the Joueurs series project no feeling about the activities or behavior of peasants. Raynal, to the contrary, perceives the stiff, inflexible poses as Cézanne's sympathetic response to the rude earthiness of the workers. Frank Elgar, without offering a fully developed interpretation, approaches the opinion of Raynal by singling out the "earthy realism" and "rustic simplicity" of the scene as the main
reason for Cézanne's progressive elimination of all unnecessary details and for the very somber color tones.\textsuperscript{340}

Kurt Badt strongly dismisses any interpretation of the \textit{Joueurs} series as genre scenes, arguing instead that they are based on personal symbolism to which Jungian principles are attached. As discussed in an earlier chapter, Badt believes all of the \textit{Joueurs} pictures were derived from the \textit{Ugolino} drawing which represents a Jungian (unconscious) Hell inspired by Cézanne's hatred for his father.\textsuperscript{341} Badt wrote that youthful memories had always played a significant role in Cézanne's painting life, providing his art with themes.\textsuperscript{342} The whole \textit{Joueurs} series, he claims, is inspired by a personal, inner symbolism and is an expression of Cézanne's self-confidence and certainty won by a hard internal struggle. For Badt, the real theme of the \textit{Joueurs} is Cézanne's art, victorious over his father "as a result of bringing it slowly to maturity through hard work" -- victorious over Zola, too, "simply by virtue of the fact that the work which had been pronounced dead continued to exist and grow."\textsuperscript{343} Badt acknowledges that Cézanne introduces different form and design problems in the two-figure versions, but he argues that their derivation is still from the \textit{Ugolino} drawing (Illus. 10). The two players symbolize Cézanne's work and artistic activity, but are given a new setting. Instead of the bare wall in the drawing and the multi-figure versions, there is a window opening into the
outside world, to nature. An important feature in the two-figure versions is the shallower space which Badt regards as Cézanne's attempt to anchor his figures more securely to their space in order to give them greater universal significance expressing "passivity, surrender, absorption, engagement, inner qualities which genius must possess before it can produce any outward creations." The unique aspect of Cézanne's art, by Badt's account, is its portrayal of "the inner state of his ego" while projecting an appearance of intense objectivity.

Theodore Reff, in an article written in 1977, takes an essentially psychoanalytic approach to Cézanne's Les Joueurs de Cartes not too far removed from Schapiro's interpretation given above. In 1977, Reff described the paintings in the Joueurs series as "images of somber, deeply serious meditation," closely related to the Fumeur paintings (Illus. 15, 16, 17). The treatment of the peasant type is similar in both the Joueurs and Fumeur painting series -- they all share a monumental conception, although it is the melancholy mood, even sadness, which relates them closely. In both series, Reff sees this mood as a reflection of Cézanne's own depression as an "aging, increasingly resigned and melancholy artist." In an article written three years later, however, Reff assumes a different approach to the subject of Les Joueurs de Cartes which he states was conceived by Cézanne in
pictorial rather than social or psychological terms. Even the symmetrical disposition of the figures in all five versions reflects a pictorial ideal rather than a symmetry that is supposedly inherent in the opposed position of the players.\textsuperscript{348}

This change in Reff's viewpoint is representative in some degree of the more formalist approach which has been important in the criticism of Cézanne's art and his \textit{Joueurs} paintings. Many Cézanne scholars have bound their interpretations of his work to analyses of his formal inventions and aesthetic principles.\textsuperscript{349}

Cézanne wrote that the achievement of what he called "réalisation" in art depended on both subjective and objective elements -- "the strong feeling for nature ... is the necessary basis for all artistic conception" but it must be accompanied by the objective "means of expressing our emotion."\textsuperscript{350} The subjective element in Cézanne's painting "was asserted as a way of seeing, rather than an imposition of mood ..."\textsuperscript{351} In Cézanne's late style, objectivity in his created images becomes more important -- he endeavors to achieve a different reality for his images by relating them more closely to "the squareness and flatness of [the] canvas."\textsuperscript{352} Cézanne, at the time he painted \textit{Les Joueurs}, realized the importance of objectivity in his work, and in fact sought a self-imposed isolation in order best to apply objectivity. He was also determined to keep his art non-literary. This was true even at the beginning of his career as an artist, and was alluded to by Zola in a letter he
wrote to Cézanne in March, 1860: "What do you mean by this word 'realism?' You boast that you paint only subjects which are devoid of poetry."\textsuperscript{353} Forty-four years later, Cézanne advised Emile Bernard: "He [the artist] must beware of the literary spirit which so often causes the painter to deviate from his true path -- the concrete study of nature."\textsuperscript{354} Both Bernard and Denis praised the non-literary character of Cézanne's later painting and assumed strictly formalist approaches to his art based primarily on the intrinsic problems of composition and formal invention. Denis was not referring specifically to Les Joueur\textsuperscript{s} de Cartes, but to his mature painting in general when he said: "It imitates objects without any exactitude and without any accessory interest of sentiment or thought ... without any literary preoccupation."\textsuperscript{355} The British art critic Roger Fry, translated into English the 1910 article by Maurice Denis which contained the above quotation, and, in 1927, Fry wrote his own full scale formal analysis of Cézanne. Fry's formalist criticism of Les Joueur\textsuperscript{s} de Cartes centers specifically on the Metropolitan and Pellerin Joueurs. Referring to the Metropolitan version, Fry praises the design of Cézanne's painting where there is an extraordinary ... sense of monumental gravity and resistance -- of something that has found its center and can never be moved. And yet there is no demonstrative emphasis on such an idea, it emerges quite naturally and inevitably from a perfectly sincere interpretation of a very commonplace situation.\textsuperscript{356}
Fry acclaims the Pellerin Joueurs as "a purely plastic expression. There is no appeal to any poetical association of ideas or sentiments." This is ironic, concedes Fry, because Cézanne "by purely plastic expression reaches to depths of the imaginative life to which consciously poetical painting has scarcely ever attained."

In 1929, D.H. Lawrence wrote of Cézanne's important contribution to modern art in his affirmation of the concrete and the physical. In Lawrence's opinion the imaginative vision must include physical and intuitive perception and get rid of the intellectual element which Lawrence referred to as clichés, or worn out memories. According to Lawrence, Cézanne fought to get rid of all the clichés and to express the world of substance in intuitive terms, but he did not always succeed. Lawrence states his preference for the two-figure Joueurs, as opposed to the multi-figure ones, because there is less cliché and because the intuitive perception explores by "curving around to the other side ... and not just the front." Lawrence refers to the Metropolitan Joueurs as "just a trifle banal, so much preoccupied with painted stuff, painted clothing, and the humanness a bit cliché." Lawrence's interpretations are bold and blunt -- he believed Cézanne's best pictures were still lifes, but even there "the fight with the cliché is still going on."
Les Joueurs de Cartes have stimulated equally convincing arguments by authors who stress formal analysis, personal symbolism and more general psychological interpretations. None seem sufficient in themselves. The evolution of the five paintings from the most detailed five-figure Barnes version to the ultimate refinement of the Louvre Joueurs could be a studied essay in the whole process whereby Cézanne discarded all cliches that interrupted his act of concentration and realization as an artist. Or, in purely formal terms, Les Joueurs de Cartes can be seen as a synthetic process within one series, toward one final realization in the Louvre Joueurs.

Any creative effort is a reflection of the artist's cumulative self — and, therefore, can never be completely objective. However, it seems to me rather risky to dwell on Cézanne's personal feelings or experiences as bases for making an interpretation of Les Joueurs de Cartes. It is doubtful that Cézanne was projecting any personal meaning into the paintings of this series. This opinion is reinforced by what seems to be a deliberate attempt by the artist to prevent the faces from appearing in any way as revealing studies. Their features are very mask-like, which reduces their singularity as human beings to an image. The remoteness of the Joueurs figures converts them from people evoking any implied meaning as human presences into objects carefully arranged around the prominent barrier of a table.
The viewer is purposefully kept at a distance, a feature which makes it difficult to accept the *Joueurs* paintings as genre scenes of everyday contemporary life. Their reality is, then, pictorial. This interpretation, augmented by the sober objectivity given the human element, embraces the *Joueurs* paintings as figure compositions and as monumentalized still lifes at the same time. A valid interpretation need not involve a search for meaning other than *Les Joueurs de Cartes* as Cézanne's expression of a compelling total image. They represent the discipline of Cézanne's observation directed to the substance of stable, object-forms and their reality as parts in the self-sufficient structure of his composition. Cézanne's approach to *Les Joueurs de Cartes* and to his still life paintings was similar because in both he sought an art of representation in an objective sphere in which he felt self-possession, free from disturbing influences, yet open to sensation.
335. Schapiro, Cézanne, p. 16.

336. Ibid., p. 88.


342. Ibid.

343. Ibid., p. 112-113. An interpretation of confrontation between the two players in the last three Joueurs has been proposed by two authors who, however, see such opposition in different contexts. Jack Lindsay sees the two-player Joueurs as representing two men in a monumental pattern of confrontation. They are "lost in the absorptions of the game, dominated by the cards in which the secrets of fate are written, and yet in the last resort using those cards for their own ends." Lindsay takes important notice of "a richly realized symbolism, which is given great force by the fact that the men, so grandly defined, are common working men" (Cézanne, p. 246). Another author, Richard W. Murphy, has interpreted the last three Joueurs as symbolic of a confrontation between Cézanne and Zola (The World of Cézanne 1839-1906, p. 120). It does not seem likely, however, that these three Joueurs paintings evolved from Cézanne's ruptured friendship with Zola because the sentiments between the two men remained strong, even after the publication of Zola's novel L'Oeuvre in 1886. Nonetheless, the personal symbolism and psychoanalytic interpretation attributed by Badt to the two-figure versions of Les Joueurs de Cartes does include Cézanne's victory over Zola and other unsympathetic critics; see Badt. The Art of Cézanne, p. 112.


This is particularly true in most of the Cézanne literature up to the mid-twentieth century, which had been based on a formalistic approach to Cézanne's art rather than the humanistic one that regarded Cézanne's subject matter in relation to his personal and social context. For example, the Impressionist's frame of reference focused on Cézanne's color, whereas the Symbolists understood Cézanne's formal arrangements as a "function of decorative sensibility .... The Neoclassicists of the 1890's equated Cézanne's art with that of Poussin, ... [whereas, the Cubists] essentially abstract and purely pictorial transformation of Cézanne's model after nature laid the foundation for the formal understanding of Cézanne advanced by Roger Fry" (Judith Wechsler, Cézanne in Perspective, pp. 2-3.).


Gowing, Exhibition of Paintings by Cézanne, p. 8.

Cézanne, Letters, p. 54, Zola to Cézanne.

Ibid., p. 302, to Bernard, May 12, 1904.

Maurice Denis, "Cézanne I," Burlington, p. 213.

Fry, Cézanne, p. 72.

Ibid., p. 73.

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Ibid., p. 91.

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