

# Forum: Modern Art History

## *Albert Gleizes: Cubism and Futurism*

by Alicia Berdan

During the beginning of the twentieth century, two artistic movements with radical views emerged, Cubism and Futurism. Both artistic movements evolved under the influence of many different artists, sub-styles, and art critics. One of those artists was Albert Gleizes, a French native, who expanded the ideas that were brewing in Paris to places outside France through his connections with the Futurists, a group of Italian artists. Gleizes was a Cubist painter who created and expanded on ideas and theories that in his time would create a link between Cubism and Futurism. Gleizes established this link between Cubism and Futurism through his involvement in the Abbaye de Créteil group and his interest in modern technology, simultaneity, Unanimism, and the Fourth Dimension. Cubism was a complex movement that was born out opposition to the late movements of 19<sup>th</sup> century art. The basics of Cubist art set a platform for Gleizes to expand his ideas and artwork into sub-styles of Cubism and make connections with Futurist art.

The birth of Cubism and Futurism dramatically changed the ideas of art conception and visual understanding. The Cubist movement could be defined as the most crucial and “radical artistic revolution since the Renaissance.”<sup>1</sup> Cubism was created out of a need to detach its painters from the classical art of Western painting.<sup>2</sup> The movement became an entirely new language of painting that was defined by using the vocabulary of classical painting, but interpreting visual vocabulary in a new way.<sup>3</sup> When broadly looking at Cubism, “the whole of [it] could be summed up as a research into form, in opposition to the formlessness that had accompanied the triumph of

---

<sup>1</sup> John Golding, *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907-1914*, (New York: George Wittenborn, 1959), 15.

<sup>2</sup> Golding, *Cubism*, 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

Impressionism”<sup>4</sup>, a nineteenth century art movement that dealt with simulating reflected light through paint on a canvas.<sup>5</sup> In the work “Note on Painting” by Jean Metzinger, he gives a description into the points of view on Cubism: “The abandonment of the burdensome inheritance of dogma; the displacing, again and again, of the poles of habit; the lyrical negation of axioms; the clever mixing, again and again, of the successive and the simultaneous.”<sup>6</sup>

Much of the development of Cubism is owed to Paul Cézanne, whose work remained impressionistic, but had a way of integrating surfaces by running together planes in his paintings.<sup>7</sup> In retrospective, Art Historians note Paul Cézanne as being the father of Modernism, and it is no surprise to see his influence in Cubism.<sup>8</sup> Within the general works of Cubism, we can see the “reduction of human anatomy to geometrical lozenges and triangles, as well as in the abandonment of normal anatomical proportions.”<sup>9</sup> Cubist style dealt with the abstraction of an object by the use of planes as a technique and a vital feature.<sup>10</sup> In painting a figure, the Cubists would decompose the figure into angles, shapes, and lines that would show their viewers that “it is possible to paint pictures and portraits in planes and masses without imitation.”<sup>11</sup> There are four distinct tendencies of Cubism (as defined by Apollinaire): scientific cubism, physical cubism, orphic cubism, and instinctive cubism.<sup>12</sup> The writer and critic, Guillaume Apollinaire, grouped Gleizes’ work into the scientific branch of Cubism.<sup>13</sup> Scientific cubism is described as “the art of painting new structures out of elements borrowed not from the reality of sight, but from the reality of insight.”<sup>14</sup> Gleizes would become a part of “salon cubism”, which is noted to be a group of Cubists interested in “fragmentation, repetition and elision of solids and spaces as a means of dissolving forms.”<sup>15</sup> These ideas of reduction and

---

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Peter Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 15.

<sup>5</sup> Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2014. May 16, 2014. <http://www.merriam-webster.com>, Impressionism.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Harrison, *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 185.

<sup>7</sup> Edward F. Fry, *Cubism* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 14.

<sup>8</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 142.

<sup>9</sup> Fry, *Cubism*, 13.

<sup>10</sup> Arthur Jerome Eddy, *Cubist and Post-Impressionists* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1914), 73.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>12</sup> Harrison, *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, 189.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> David Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 87.

different styles of Cubism can be located in many of the techniques of the Futurist painters.

Futurism was a movement that many see as being born of the Cubist style but with “violent ideological principles” that needed guidance from Cubism in order to express those principles.<sup>16</sup> In the 1912 manifesto by Boccioni, he declared about the Futurists, “For we are young and our art is violently revolutionary.”<sup>17</sup> The fundamental purpose of Futurism was to paint the theory of motion by no longer indicating the idea of motion, but showing the motion through overlapping images.<sup>18</sup> In Futurist paintings, these ideas of motion were shown by changing the way we see motion; for example, when the artist painted a horse, the animal was painted with twenty legs instead of four to express its motion of galloping.<sup>19</sup> A Futurist by the name of Marinetti wrote a manifesto called “The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism” in which he defines Futurism by characterizing modern life through the ideas of simultaneity, dynamism, and speed.<sup>20</sup> Marinetti defines the beginning of Futurism through many declarations against a non-modern world: “...Today, we establish Futurism, because we want to free this land from its smelly gangrene of professors, archaeologists, ciceroni and antiquarians... We mean to free her from the numberless museums that cover her like so many graveyards.”<sup>21</sup> The Futurists were the anarchists of art and they wanted to break away from the past styles of art at all costs.<sup>22</sup> They claimed that what they “wish[ed] to produce on the canvas is not an instant or a moment of immobility of the universal force that surrounds us, but the sensation of that force itself.”<sup>23</sup> The Futurist knew and understood that some of their concepts were relative to Cubism and Post-Impressionism, but they declared themselves as being “absolutely opposed to their art.”<sup>24</sup>

These two radical movements in art would bring about great change through not only visual medium but literature as well. Among the artists who would raise these movements up was Albert Gleizes, a French born artist, writer, and theorist who grew up in an age of industrial expansion

---

<sup>16</sup> Golding, *Cubism*, 41.

<sup>17</sup> Herschel B Chipp, Peter Selz, and Joshua C. Taylor, *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 294.

<sup>18</sup> Eddy, *Cubists and Post-Impressionism*, 165.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>20</sup> Harrison, *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, 146.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>22</sup> Eddy, *Cubists and Post-Impressionism*, 165.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

that cultivated new ways of thinking. In fact, much of his life's work and his political views would stem from his early years in college and his military service.<sup>25</sup> Both Gleizes' father and his uncle, Honoré, were talented amateur painters who helped to cultivate Gleizes' interest in the arts.<sup>26</sup> During college, Gleizes' first job was working for his father in his fabric workshop.<sup>27</sup> Despite his reluctance to work in his father's shop, Gleizes reflected upon it in his later years as an "ideal condition for realizing a work of art: a hierarchically organized community of apprentice, companion, and master, in which everyone contributes to the finished work."<sup>28</sup> While working in his father's shop, he met a poet by the name of Rene Arcos, with whom he would work with to create the first of his artistic projects, the Abbaye de Créteil.<sup>29</sup> Before this project came to life at the end of 1906, Gleizes spent almost three years in military service where he developed friendships with several fellow soldiers and artists who would become a part of the Abbaye de Créteil.<sup>30</sup>

After Gleizes left the military, he became acquainted with an artist by the name of Charles Vildrac, who developed the idea behind the Abbaye de Créteil.<sup>31</sup> The Abbaye was founded in 1906 around 10 miles south of Paris and was designed to be "a model for the society of the future, where art would be integrated into communal living, where productive associations were formed by 'free spirits', and where everyone 'lived in the ardour of achievement supported by a perfect communion."<sup>32</sup> The concept of the Abbaye was to create an artistic community in which the artists could live together, share their expenses, and work on their art without being dependent on commercial consideration.<sup>33</sup> In Daniel Robbins' article, "From Symbolism to Cubism: The Abbaye de Créteil" he describes the idea behind this group:

Basic to the Abbaye, "groupe fraternal des artistes," was the desire to remain apart from the commercialism, the corruption and intrigues in the arts controlled by a bourgeois society. Personal ambition was to be non-existent and compromise with the reigning tastes of the State, the ignoble class of art patrons, was a banished possibility. Intending to support the

---

<sup>25</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 1-2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>32</sup> Gunter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1909-1944* (Hamburg: Berghahn Books, 1996), 36.

<sup>33</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 4.

Abbaye community through art, they had to be workers, artisans, thereby fulfilling the goal of art integrated with life.<sup>34</sup>

Gleizes called this project the “one attempt at an awakening of the collectivist conscience.”<sup>35</sup>

The Abbaye de Créteil can be seen as the first link of Albert Gleizes to both Cubism and Futurism. In Robbins’ article, “Sources of Cubism and Futurism”, the writer discusses Cubism and Futurism as being both “distinct, but closely related.”<sup>36</sup> Many of the artists in the Abbaye recognized the origins of their ideas and their works as derivative from Symbolism<sup>37</sup>, which is a late nineteenth century movement that used symbols as an imitation or invention as “a method of revealing or suggesting immaterial, ideal, or otherwise intangible truth or states.”<sup>38</sup> The Abbaye group also recognized that they needed to break from these Symbolist ideas in order “to create a truly modern art.”<sup>39</sup> Around the same time, Italy was going through an Industrial Revolution, much later than France, many Futurist artists like Marinetti, saw Symbolism as an equivalent to Italy’s past.<sup>40</sup> The Futurists rejected Symbolism and embraced their modernity despite the fact that Futurism and modern Italy were born out of the decadence of Symbolism.<sup>41</sup>

A Symbolist poet by the name of Gustave Kahn, at the end of the nineteenth century, revolutionized the idea of free verse in writing.<sup>42</sup> His way of writing opposed classical French poetry and brought about Symbolist poetry, which “sought elasticity and flexibility.”<sup>43</sup> The idea of “elasticity” would be translated later into art through paintings like those by Futurist painter Boccioni and Cubist painter Roger de la Fresnaye.<sup>44</sup> In 1911, the Italian Futurist painter Marinetti “acknowledged his indebtedness to [Kahn’s *L’Esthétique de la Rue*]... as an early source for [modernity].”<sup>45</sup> Kahn would later recognize Marinetti, as well as the pre-cubist group of the Abbaye de Créteil, as early adopters to “free verse.”<sup>46</sup> There is a minor link between

---

<sup>34</sup> Daniel Robbins, “From Symbolism to Cubism: The Abbaye de Creteil,” *Art Journal* 23, no.2 (Winter 1963-1964): 113.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Daniel Robbins, “Sources of Cubism and Futurism,” *Art Journal* 41, no. 4 (Winter 1981): 324.

<sup>37</sup> Robbins, “From Symbolism to Cubism,” 114.

<sup>38</sup> Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, “Symbolism.”

<sup>39</sup> Robbins, “From Symbolism to Cubism,” 114.

<sup>40</sup> Robbins, “Sources of Cubism and Futurism,” 327.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 324.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Robbins, “Sources of Cubism and Futurism,” 325.

Kahn and Albert Gleizes through a friend of Kahn's, the writer Paul Adam, whose book, *L'Art et la Nation*, was the first book published by the Abbaye.<sup>47</sup> The book was published under a seal that was designed by Albert Gleizes.<sup>48</sup> Adam's book "attacked the regime for officially encouraging the wrong kind of art and it emphasized the responsibility of the nation to encourage its true artists."<sup>49</sup>

In 1917, Albert Gleizes mentioned Gustave Kahn in his never-published manuscript entitled "*L'Art dans l'évolution générale; en attendant la victoire*" as a principal influence on the members of the Abbaye as well as himself.<sup>50</sup> In Gleizes' manuscript, he compares "the evolution of painting and literature in France" and recognizes that literature was more advanced at the beginning of the century "because of the persistent and obvious language orientation of the educational system."<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, he professed the importance of another Symbolist writer, René Ghil, and his theories on verse.<sup>52</sup> Ghil had defined his form of verse as "poésie évolutionniste", which was a philosophical idea that you could reduce the "grandiose results of modern investigations" into the most elementary vocal values.<sup>53</sup> Ghil's theories were evidently important to Gleizes because of "[Ghil's] insistence on abstraction of elements" that are reflected in the abstraction of objects in Cubism.<sup>54</sup>

During his life at the Abbaye, Gleizes came under the influence of another member of the Abbaye de Créteil, Alexandre Mercereau, who introduced Gleizes into the artistic circles of the time as well as introducing him to Henri Le Fauconnier and Jean Metzinger.<sup>55</sup> Le Fauconnier would later influence Gleizes' paintings, and together both Le Fauconnier and Gleizes, would become a part of the Cubist movement.<sup>56</sup> Another acquaintance who Mercereau mentioned as a visitor to their circle of artists is Marinetti.<sup>57</sup> Marinetti was a "frequent and sympathetic visitor at Abbaye de Créteil, finding the aims of its members closely attuned to his own."<sup>58</sup> Marinetti

---

<sup>47</sup> Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism," 114.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Robbins, "Sources of Cubism and Futurism," 325.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 326.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 9.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism," 115.

<sup>58</sup> Marianne W. Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," *Art Journal* 28, no. 3 (Spring 1969): 259.

understood Mercereau's importance in growth of modern writing, and had referred to him as "the Central Electric to European Letters."<sup>59</sup> In "From Symbolism to Cubism: The Abbaye of Creteil" Robbins states that "it is not surprising that the father of Futurism [Marinetti], two years before publishing his manifesto in *Figaro*, was attracted to this center where the problems of creating an art suited to the life of the new age were of paramount interest."<sup>60</sup> There is no strong record that Marinetti drew the attention of his Futurist group to the works of the Abbaye, but the Futurist's second manifesto showed influence from the Abbaye's ideas.<sup>61</sup> Through Mercereau's connection with Marinetti, Gleizes' pre-cubist illustrations were shown along side the Italian painter Umberto Brunellschi's works in Mercereau's *La Conque Miraculeuse* show.<sup>62</sup>

After the Abbaye's closure, Gleizes felt a sense of dissatisfaction with his neo-impressionistic style of painting and embarked on a road to Cubism.<sup>63</sup> When Gleizes met Henri Le Fauconnier through Mercereau in 1909, his "internal drama" was overcome after seeing Le Fauconnier's *Portrait du poete, Pierre Jean Jouve*.<sup>64</sup> This meeting "marked the end of his last link with Impressionism. From then on 'lines and volumes, densities and weights, symmetrical balance of one part against another, such were [his] concerns and aspirations'."<sup>65</sup> At this point, Gleizes' work started to transform away from the Impressionistic influence of Pissarro and Sisley, and into a style that showed an admiration for Cézanne's technique.<sup>66</sup> His works moved away from the tonal experiments of Impressionism and his paintings transformed in "a progressively more schematic appearance, their thickening outlines and flat, interlocking shapes often suggestive of cartoons for stained glass."<sup>67</sup>

Gleizes and Le Fauconnier both continued their work with this new emerging style, but they did not make any impact individually.<sup>68</sup> Despite already having met Metzinger, Gleizes did not become interested in his style

---

<sup>59</sup> Milton A. Cohen, *Movement, Manifesto, Melee: The Modernist Group 1910-1914* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2004), 39.

<sup>60</sup> Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism."

<sup>61</sup> Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," 259.

<sup>62</sup> Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism," 115.

<sup>63</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 13-14.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Dorothea Eimert, Guillaume Apollinaire, and Anatoli Podoksik, *Cubism* (New York: Parkstone Press International, 2010), 953.

<sup>67</sup> James Beechy, "Albert Gleizes: Barcelona and Lyon," *The Burlington Magazine* 143 (October 2001): 658.

<sup>68</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 16.

of painting until he read Metzinger's "Note on Painting".<sup>69</sup> From this interest, Gleizes, Le Fauconier, and Metzinger, as well as two other artists Delaunay and Leger, started to meet as a group and discuss their similar styles of painting.<sup>70</sup> From these meetings came the idea that, in order to make a greater impact with their ideas on painting, they needed to exhibit their work together.<sup>71</sup>

Together, they were exhibited in several rooms in the Salon des Independants of 1911, but the viewers rioted because they did not understand this new style of painting.<sup>72</sup> Another riot then occurred at the Salon d'Automne 1911 where the group showed their works that had been developed through the year.<sup>73</sup> Of the works displayed, Gleizes' paintings, *Portrait de Jacques Nayral* and *La Chasse*, were exhibited at the 1911 Salon d'Automne show.<sup>74</sup> The Salon d'Automne 1911 opened many doors for Gleizes, through which he met Raymond Duchamp-Villon and Marcel Duchamp who would play a role in the discussions that led to Gleizes and Metzinger's manuscript, "Du Cubisme".<sup>75</sup> A new alliance was formed from these shows and they came to be known as the Puteaux group who met at the Duchamp brother's house in the Puteaux suburb.<sup>76</sup>

Influenced by both technical enthusiasms and "avant-gardist rivalries" the members of Room 41 of the Salon des Independants of 1911 felt it necessary to stay current on new pictorial innovations as well as take a stance on new ideas in painting.<sup>77</sup> The Futurists were the most vocal group about their new ideas on art, and their ideas were a topic among many of the discussions at the Puteaux group. These discussions led to Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger's idea to write "Du Cubisme"; a response to the manifestoes of Futurism.<sup>78</sup> Both Gleizes and Metzinger felt the need to respond and meet the challenge of the Futurist's statements with "a kind of legislation of the cubist movement".<sup>79</sup>

Understanding that both of these men talked at great lengths about Futurism and their ideas, it is safe to assume that Futurism had an impact on

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>74</sup> Brooke, *Albert Gleizes*, 21.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 5.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>79</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 92.



both of their progressions in painting.<sup>80</sup> Comparing Gleizes' *Woman with Phlox* with his later painting, *The Port*, the viewer can see the effect that Futurist had on his paintings.<sup>81</sup> *Woman with Phlox* is a distinct Cubist style painting. The woman is painted in geometrical shapes much like the environment around her. Her head and arms are still distinguishable, but her body is melding into the background. Each geometrical shape has a sense of volume that makes the painting appear as if it is three-dimensional. In contrast, *The Port* is much more flat in its geometrical composition. But where the shapes lose their dimensionality, they gain a sort of energy and dynamism that seems to be absent in the *Woman with Phlox*. The lines in *The Port* have become more distinct or what the Futurist call "force-lines".<sup>82</sup> *The Port* has become more "modern" and gained a subject matter that includes the industrial city.<sup>83</sup>

The use of modern technology was not just limited to Gleizes' work. The subject of the "machine" was a subject adapted by other Cubist and the Futurist artists in their paintings right before the start of World War I.<sup>84</sup> This change came with the overall idea of being modern; if the machine was now a central idea of modernity, then modern paintings needed to incorporate the machine.<sup>85</sup> The nineteenth century was the age of industrialization in Europe, and it brought about in France a new working class and country filled with over 2,000 miles of train tracks.<sup>86</sup> By the beginning of the twentieth century, technology and machines had expanded beyond the city and into the daily lives of people.<sup>87</sup> Modern science had taken over society through new applications such as electricity, motor vehicles, and chemicals.<sup>88</sup> It was futile for people to ignore this new domestic industrialization, so groups like the Epic Cubist embraced it.<sup>89</sup> Many of the artists in the Puteaux group, including Albert Gleizes, painted factories, smoke, bridges, locomotives, etc. into their works.<sup>90</sup> The Italian Futurists also weaved in the

---

<sup>80</sup> Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," 267.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Robert L. Herbert, "The Arrival of the Machine: Modernist Art in Europe 1910-1925," *Social Research* 64 (Fall 1997): 1275.

<sup>85</sup> Herbert, "The Arrival of the Machine," 1275.

<sup>86</sup> Richard Overy, *The Times: Complete History of the World* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 254.

<sup>87</sup> Herbert, "The Arrival of the Machine," 1276.

<sup>88</sup> Overy, *The Times: Complete History of the World*, 254.

<sup>89</sup> Herbert, "The Arrival of the Machine," 1276.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 1277.

industrialization of Italy into their artworks.<sup>91</sup> They saw the machine as the instrument of their countries upbringing into the twentieth century and the modern world.<sup>92</sup> During the nineteenth century, the Italians took note of the French Revolution and struggled to bring about their own “civil rights and economic freedoms.”<sup>93</sup> Not all of their paintings would deal with the direct object of a machine, but they would use the “pictorial dynamism that expressed the new industrial age” in their works.<sup>94</sup> Russia was another country that came late to the modernization of its government, technology, and civil rights<sup>95</sup>, but the artists of Russia brought about another branch of Futurism that also used the imagery of machines, both new and old, in their paintings.<sup>96</sup>

Simultaneity is a common idea seen among both Cubist and Futurist’s paintings and writings. The term itself can be defined simply as “everywhere at once.”<sup>97</sup> In “Du Cubisme”, Gleizes and Metzinger set out to define the differences between the Cubist and Futurist’s definition of simultaneity.<sup>98</sup> The purpose of Du Cubisme was to clarify the “mental chemistry of Cubism”, which was done by analyzing the “theoretical mind and the brush.”<sup>99</sup> In Du Cubisme, Gleizes and Metzinger’s ideas of simultaneity in Cubism was the thought of “moving around an object to size it from several successive appearances, which, fused into a single image, reconstitutes it in time.”<sup>100</sup> The Futurists’ idea of simultaneity was more rooted in the concept of plastic dynamism.<sup>101</sup> The Futurists wanted their viewer to “live in the centre of the picture” by exaggerating the motions in their paintings.<sup>102</sup> The Italian Futurists dealt with simultaneity in a form likened to the modern city and machines with a concept of immediacy.<sup>103</sup> Dealing with these concepts, the Futurist brought in the artistic visualization of velocity and dynamism.<sup>104</sup> Much of Gleizes’ early works dealt with the

---

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 1278.

<sup>93</sup> Overy, *The Times: Complete History of the World*, 238.

<sup>94</sup> Herbert, “The Arrival of the Machine,” 1278.

<sup>95</sup> Overy, *The Times: Complete History of the World*, 274.

<sup>96</sup> Herbert, “The Arrival of the Machine,” 1280.

<sup>97</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 85.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>99</sup> Marcel Duchamp, Michel Sanouillet, and Elmer Peterson, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 149.

<sup>100</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 92.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 89.

<sup>103</sup> Herbert, “The Arrival of the Machine,” 1277.

<sup>104</sup> Eimert, *Cubism*, 232.

idea of simultaneity seen in the work of the Puteaux group.<sup>105</sup> His painting, *The Football Players*, is dynamic and modern with the idea of movement.<sup>106</sup> A Mexican aristocrat by the name of Geraldo Murillo, also known as Dr. Atl, wrote a review on the Salon des Independants, in which he praised Gelizes' *Football Players* because the men in the painting "seem[ed] to move in a space simultaneously more ample and more in depth."<sup>107</sup> In 1913, Gleizes style progressed into the painting, *The City and the River*, which was "an upbeat, dynamic representation of the modern industrial city."<sup>108</sup> The simultaneity in this painting is dynamic and vital, but it is "diachronic, the old and the new bound together in a harmony grounded in tradition."<sup>109</sup>

The Futurist's ideas on simultaneity showed some resemblance to Jules Romanins' concept of Unanimism.<sup>110</sup> According to Marcel Duchamp, "Gleizes was among the first to see the application of the new methods to the Unanimist scenes", which was a group concerned "with the conflicts between organized bodies of society one against another, or organized bodies of society one against the individual."<sup>111</sup> After seeing the works of the Italian Futurists, Apollinaire writes that their "pictures seem frequently taken from the vocabulary of Unanimism."<sup>112</sup> Marinetti is also tied to Unanimism through the Abbaye de Créteil, which Jules Romains was connected to and often mistaken as a member of.<sup>113</sup> The connections between Romains and Marinetti stem further than just the Abbaye; they were both a part of the previously mentioned writer Gustave Kahn's meetings and Romains' verses were printed in Marinetti's own journal.<sup>114</sup> The Abbaye de Créteil published Romains' first mature statement of ideas in the form of a poetry volume in 1908 called *La Vie Unanime*.<sup>115</sup> This volume would give birth to the movement called "Unanimism."<sup>116</sup> The idea behind Unanimism can be defined as:

The central idea of Unanimism was that collective sentiment, the most salient feature of contemporary life, could be neither focused in one point of

---

<sup>105</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 94.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Mark Antliff, "Cubism, Celtism, and the Body Politic," *The Art Bulletin* Vol. LXXLV, no. 4 (December 1992): 110.

<sup>108</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 95.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Cottington, *Cubism and Its Histories*, 89.

<sup>111</sup> Duchamp, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, 150.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 258.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 258-259.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>115</sup> Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," 260.

<sup>116</sup> Robbins, "From Symbolism to Cubism," 114.

view nor established in any single representative type. The artist's task was to emphasize the dispersive elements of life, to show how individual personality is merged in the multiple life of the group. The emotions of this greater, all encompassing life are more powerful and less circumscribed than those of the elements composing it, for it is simultaneously sum and essence; it stems from all of them and they are animated by it.<sup>117</sup>

The Futurists and Romains both had a similarity in their attitudes towards the new technologies of machines and the increasing speeds at which man could travel.<sup>118</sup> A painting done by Boccioni, *The City Rises* 1910-11, is seen as one of the first Futurist-Unanimist works of art.<sup>119</sup> The painting deals with a "pictorial fulcrum of action with the implied death of the individual and resurgence of a greater, all encompassing vitality", which Romains would refer to as a greater being who is "capable of greater destinies."<sup>120</sup> Severini was another Futurist painter who had Unanimist ideas in his paintings.<sup>121</sup> He had lived in Paris where he stayed relatively aloof of the Futurists in Italy and also denied knowing the "exact significance of Unanimism."<sup>122</sup> But it is known that he visited Albert Gleizes' studio throughout 1911, and it is Gleizes who most likely introduced Servini to the ideas behind Unanimism, if not directly to Unanimism.<sup>123</sup> Many of Gleizes' own works were rarely like the prototypical still life paintings done by Picasso and Braque, but celebrated the "collective activity, manifested in multiple panorama of agricultural labourers, football players, and bathers."<sup>124</sup> These works of Gleizes were thought to have amounted no more than to "a sense of multi-dimensionality" that is imposed on conventional subject matter.<sup>125</sup>

Many scholars have debated over the link between Cubism and our contemporary fascination with the fourth dimension.<sup>126</sup> Apollinaire in his time had referred to the new style of painting by the cubist with the term, "The Fourth Dimension", which he considers "the plastic point of view.... It represents the immensity of the space eternalizing itself in all directions at any given moment.... The Fourth Dimension endows objects with

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," 261.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Martin, "Futurism, Unanimism, and Apollinaire," 262.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 263.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Beechy, *Albert Gleizes*, 658.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Margaret Wertheim, *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace: A History of Space from Dante to the Internet* (New York: Five Continents of Music, 1999), 201.

plasticity.”<sup>127</sup> A group of Futurists in Russia were interested in the ideas of the fourth dimension and noted they had been inspired by the cubist writings of Gleizes and Metzinger.<sup>128</sup> The idea of a fourth dimension is inspired by non-Euclidian geometry, which means to go against classical geometry or to surpass the “rules of linear perspective.”<sup>129</sup> In a 1912 interview, Gleizes stated, “beyond the three dimension of Euclid we have added another, the fourth dimension, which is to say the figuration of space.”<sup>130</sup> The use of a fourth dimension in art was a “powerful rhetorical function” for Cubism and Futurism because they both were trying to go against traditional perspective of painting.<sup>131</sup> In “Du Cubisme”, Gleizes and Metzinger stated, “If we wished to tie the painter’s space to a particular geometry, we should have to refer it to the non-Euclidean scholars.”<sup>132</sup>

Within a time of increasing industrialization, where the machine was changing the world’s landscape, and new political thoughts were redefining nations, Albert Gleizes became a leader in revolutionizing the pictorial image.<sup>133</sup> Gleizes was a link between two innovative movements that were pinned against each other, despite their commonalities. The friends and fellow artists that Gleizes came to know were his trade routes of visual information. Through these people he helped to spread the ideas of depicting modern technology, simultaneity, and Unanimism into different artistic movements. In turn Gleizes found himself influenced by Futurism’s use of movement, dynamism, and technology in their work. Gleizes ideas and interests resonated beyond his artwork and into minds of other great movements throughout the world.

---

<sup>127</sup> Fry, *Cubism*, 116.

<sup>128</sup> Wertheim, *The Pearly Gates*, 200.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Wertheim, *The Pearly Gates*, 202.

<sup>133</sup> Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art*, 294.