Cross-Cutting Identities: William Hogarth, Painter, Print-Maker and Art Theorist

Faculty of Art History, University of Belgrade, Serbia

Monday 28th April 2014

My thanks to Professor Sasa Brajović

Abstract

This major eighteenth-century British artist is a painter of multiple attachments and the lecture will explore the interface between his simultaneous activities. Hogarth became famous as a portraitist and also as a satirist; he painted comedy and penned aesthetic theory. I approach these areas of artistic activity as mutually constitutive commercial projects and ask to what extent the fluid artistic identities that resulted were typical or exceptional in British art of the period.

List of Slides

Hogarth, *The Painter and his Pug*, 1745, oil on canvas, 90 x 69.9cm, Tate Britain, London

Hogarth, *Trade Card*, April 1720, etching & engraving, 7.6 x 10.2 cm, British Museum

Hogarth, Left: *The Punishment inflicted on Lemuel Gulliver*, 1726, etching & engraving, 21 x 32cm; Right: *Burning ye Rumps at Temple- Barr*, 1725/6, etching & engraving, 27 x 31, both British Museum

Left: Hogarth *The Bad Taste of the Town*, 1724 etching and engraving, 13 x 17.5cm. Right: *The South Sea Scheme,* 1721, etching and engraving, cut to 26.5 x 32.7cm, both British Museum

Hogarth, S*outh Sea Scheme*, c.1721

Anon., *The Bubbler's Medley, or a Sketch of the Times,* 1720, etching & engraving, 33.6 x 24.9cm; Anon., *The Brabant Skreen,* April, 1721, etching; Bernard Picart (engraved Bernard Baron), *A Monument to Posterity,* 1721, etching and engraving, 21 x 34.4cm, all British Museum

Hogarth, *South Sea Scheme*, c.1721

Mr. Mitchell, *Three Poetical Epistles*, London, 1731

Jonathan Richardson, *An Essay on the Theory of Painting*, London, 1725 [1714]

Hogarth, *Self-Portrait with Palette*, c. 1735, oil on canvas, 54.6 x 50.8cm, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven

Francis Hayman, *The Artist with his Patron, Grosvenor Bedford*, 1748-9; oil on canvas, 71.4 x 91.4cm (NPG, London)

Hogarth, *An Assembly at Wanstead House*, 1728-31, oil on canvas, 63.5 x74.3cm (Philadelphia Museum of Art)

Pierre Rameau, *The Dancing-Master*, London, 1731; Abbé de Bellegarde*, Reflexions upon Ridicule Volume II,* London, 1739*; Dancing The Menuet* from François Nivelon's*, The Rudiments of Genteel Behaviour,* London, 1738

Hogarth, *The Strode Family, c*.1738; oil on canvas, 87 x 91.5cm (Tate Britain)

Hogarth, *Captain Lord George Graham in his Cabin,* c1745; oil on canvas, 68.5 x 88.9cm (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich)

Hogarth, *The Settlement* from *Marriage à la Mode,* 1743-5; oil on canvas, 70 x 90.8cm (National Gallery of Art, London)

Left: Hogarth, *The Strode Family,* c.1738*;* Right: Hogarth, *The Settlement,* 1743-5*;*

Hogarth, *The Settlement,* 1743-5

Paintings 2-6 from *Marriage à la Mode*

Hogarth, *Marriage à la Mode 1-6,* 1745, each c. 68.6 x 88.9cm (NGA, London)

A Rake's Progress, 1735

A Rake's Progress, 1733-5*,* Sir John Soane's Museum, London

Scene 3: The Rose Tavern Painting 62 x 74cm (Sir John Soane's Museum) Etching with engraving, 35 x 40 cm (British Museum)

Marriage à la Mode 1-6, 1745, each c. 68.6 x 88.9cm (NGA, London)

Mr Dryden, Marriage à la Mode a Comedy, London, 1735

Left: [Samuel Richardson], *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded,* in two volumes*,* Dublin, 1741 and

Right: Henry Fielding, *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, in two volumes, London, 1743

Marriage à la Mode, details, Countess

Marriage à la Mode 1-6, 1745, each c. 68.6 x 88.9cm (NGA, London)

Marriage à la Mode 1-6, etching and engraving by Scotin, Lépicié, Baron and each about 43 x 50cm

Left Beer Street and right: *Gin Lane*, 1751, etching & engraving, each 38.2 x 32.4cm (British Museum)

Hogarth, *Portrait of Captain Thomas Coram,* 1740; 239 x 147.5cm, The Thomas Coram Foundation, Foundling Hospital, London

Charles Grignion after Samuel Wale, *A Perspective View of the Foundling Hospital*, 1749

The Director's Room of the Foundling Hospital (source: Solkin, *Painting for Money*, 1993)

Hogarth, *Moses Brought Before Pharaoh's Daughter*, 1746, 172.7 x 208.3cm, Thomas Coram Foundation, Foundling Hospital, London

Hogarth, *Paul Before Felix,* 1748-50 the Society of Lincoln's Inn, London

Mr Hogarth, *Proposes to Publish*, by SUBSCRIPTION.....

The Analysis of Beauty, London, 1753

Hogarth, *The Painter and his Pug,* (Tate, Britain), 1745

Plate 1: *The Sculptor's Yard* (above) & Plate 2 *The Country Dance* (right) etching & engraving, each 42.7 x 53.2cm (British Museum)

Plate 1: Illustration to the *Analysis of Beauty*

The Settlement and the *Levée* from *Marriage à la Mode,* 1743-5

Slide 1: *The Painter and His Pug*, 1745

Thank you very much for the warm welcome and for giving me this opportunity to talk to you about William Hogarth. What I want to do with you is examine the middle decades of this artist's activities. They start in the 1720s and extend to the 1750s but mostly my concern will be the 1730s and 40s. During these years Hogarth became famous as a painter and as a satirical print-maker. He also emerged as an entrepreneur: unusually, he used the newspapers to advertise his art or to launch subscriptions for new projects. He capitalised on a canvas by turning it *himself* into a print. With William Hogarth then there is a constant, dynamic relationship between print and paint, and I don't just mean print as the reproduction and repetition of a painting. In the 18thc, painting and satirical print-making were distinct activities and quite different in terms of status, subjects and aesthetic codes. Hogarth connects the two. Yet it was difficult to establish yourself as a portraitist, if at the same time you were famous as a satirist, or to receive commissions for history painting when you had turned burlesque into your masthead. In discussing his paintings and prints together, I want to give you a sense of their simultaneity and show how they could even become mutually enhancing. Consequently, there will be an emphasis on the versatility of a British artist in the mid eighteenth-century and of course this begs a question about the expectations of the society he was operating in; the type of market forces to which he was responding . A final point is that highlighting the cross-cut identities of an English painter is to emphasise what recent scholarship has shown: how the art of William Hogarth should be situated within broader, international networks. If his painting is justly celebrated as a British achievement it was also shaped by the cosmopolitanism of 18thc society and culture and conditioned by the cross-channel attachments and movements of its author.

Slide 2: Part 1: Print-Making: Early Graphics: Shop Card, 1720: We to start with an engraver and the creative potential of print. Hogarth later said and that at 20 ‘engraving on copper was [my] utmost ambition’. He had been born into an educated but impoverished family, and he was apprenticed to learn a trade, engraving on silver. By the age of 22 he had switched to engraving on copper and had launched himself as an independent artist cum merchant with a shop. The trade card that you see here (7.6 x 10.2) announces this new direction. It advertises his ability to engrave letters in different ways, to depict figures and use decorative and architectural motifs. In the 1720s in Britain print was everywhere. The medium offered a creative arena, one that was in total expansion. There were daily and weekly newspapers; a brisk trade in prints, with lots of publishers, print shops, dealers and regular auctions where you could buy local and imported works. For a young engraver, print-making offered a commercially viable activity, and one that was directly allied to the arts.

Slide 3: Selection of early engraved works, 1720s: Very quickly then Hogarth moved from engraving on silver to engraving on copper, from producing decorative designs for silver cups or plates to inventing his own imagery. The early choices are telling and include prints for satirical literature, for example, the illustrations for a new luxury edition of Samuel Butler’s satire on the civil war called *Hudibras* which you see on the upper right (‘Burning Ye Rumps in Temple-Barr’, 1725/6) or subjects derived from Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* which you see on the upper left (‘The Punishment inflicted on Lemuel Gulliver’, 1726). On the bottom of this slide are two of Hogarth’s graphic satires. This type of print was independently conceived, and combined text and image in order to critique issues of political and social relevance. The appearance of this type of art can be related to the quite extensive freedom of the press and to the importance of an extra-parliamentary sphere of debate. This type of

printed image was bought in print shops or seen in coffee houses and other public places. They were stuck into books, or pasted onto screens, or walls.

Slide 4: *The South Sea Scheme*, c1721: The subject of this print was the South Sea Bubble. The term referred to the collapse of European financial markets in the autumn of 1720. The collapse followed a period of frenzied speculation: investors had driven up the price of stocks and shares, encouraging high risk trading ventures. The government was being attacked for not protecting the money of individual investors. When the stock market crashed in December 1720, thousands of people lost their money.

Slide 5: Some other contemporary graphic satires on the South Sea Bubble: Hogarth's design joined a busy market for similar printed satires. This is another one: *The Bubbler's Medley, or A Sketch of the Times.* The title is written at the top of the print and as you can see it combines references to many more. Slide 5a: Many of these satires were locally produced, and here is another one: called *The Brabant Skreen*, which indirectly attacks the Prime Minister. Others - Slide 5b: like this one - were imported from the Continent - for the stock market meltdown had European dimensions and the situation generated satirical prints in Holland and France too. This is a French design by Bernard Picart called *A Monument Dedicated to Posterity*, 1721 but it was adapted for the English market and given a new English text.

Slide 6: Hogarth's *South Sea Scheme*: We can now see how Hogarth's print adopts the typical form of a broadsheet - which means a combination of image and explanatory text. Unlike some of the others however, Hogarth's concerns are quite evidently *pictorial*: despite the modest size of the print (only 26 by 32 cm) Slide 6a: it is notable for the predominance of

image over text, for giving the illusion of space and depth, for the disposition of the figures and the use of allegorical ones too. These *pictorial* concerns align the design with some of the more sophisticated graphic satires on the market, Slide 6b: and notably imported ones like this design by Bernard Picart.

Slide 7: Hogarth's South Sea Scheme: A graphic satire in this period is a particularly sophisticated and allusive type of image. It brings together heterogeneous elements, often recycling existing imagery and already printed texts. This inter-referential capacity produces a covert and ironic pictorial dialogue which can underpin the more explicit political or social commentary. This can make teasing out the meanings a long process. We are required to read and to view; to measure the image against other prints and newspapers in order to understand what is meant.

What we find here in a print that attacks the folly of investors is the devil with a scythe on the left mutilating the figure of *Fortune* hanging from a nail; *Honesty* is being battered on the wheel in the centre; *Honour* is being whipped at a post on the right. *Local London* references include: the Guildhall - the centre of the stock market - which is shown on the left, but transformed into 'ye devil's shop'; opposite is the base of the famous Monument to the Great Fire of London except that it is now a monument to the South Sea Bubble. At the back, just visible, is the dome of St Paul's cathedral. Frenzied stock market speculation is referenced in a deliberately ridiculous way, by the merry-go-round in the centre and by the gamblers queuing on the stairs to take part in a lottery where the prize will be a husband. The image is dense, comic and violent, and as one of Hogarth's first graphic satires I think it stakes out the agenda of an ambitious satirical engraver and one who was clearly in the process of becoming a sophisticated graphic artist.

Slide 8: Mitchell *Three Epistles*, 1731: Ten years after this print was published in June 1731 a Mr Joseph Mitchell published a small pamphlet entitled *Three Poetical Epistles* dedicated to three English 'Masters in the Art of Painting'. Among them is 'Mr Hogarth' whom he described as 'An Eminent History and Conversation Painter'. 'You have the Skill to catch the Grace/And secret Meanings of a Face' he writes 'To picture Passions, and, thro Skin,/Call forth the living Soul within.....Large Families obey your Hand;/Assemblies rise at your Command; /Your Pencil peoples where it goes,/And Worlds of new Creation shows'.

As you are know, the hierarchy of genres operating in European arts at the time, meant there was no greater praise for an artist in the eighteenth century then to be called a history painter. But to call Hogarth 'an Eminent history painter' seems fanciful. He had only started to paint in oil 4 years before in 1727, although he had been learning to draw in a small academy since 1720. I should say that in England, at the time, there was no official Academy of Fine Arts, as in France or in Italy, so there was no institutional art education, only a couple of small and informal art schools like St Martin's Lane Academy where Hogarth was attending. There was virtually no state patronage either. Any ambitious schemes for painting originated with private individuals (such as the decoration of ceilings, halls and staircases) and they were usually completed by foreign artists who had come to Britain to work. There was very little patronage from the court and nothing from the Protestant church. So in comparison to France or Italy, there were few national traditions and a prejudice about indigenous talent. This is why to call Hogarth a history painter seems fanciful. The text was written by a friend. It shows how Hogarth was using the press opportunistically, to project himself to the public as a painter, rather than an engraver or a graphic satirist. Mitchell's description of Hogarth as 'a

conversation painter' is more accurate, however. This meant that he was a painter of portraits, and it was a type of art where Hogarth was innovating.

Slide 9: Part 2: Painting Conversations: To go into portraiture in early eighteenth-century Britain was hopefully to travel in the direction of wealth: like the market for prints there was a dynamic market for portraits, driven by the important demand of patrons, whether aristocratic or newly rich, with ready money to spend on what they preferred - paintings of themselves. Like engraving, portraiture was a way of getting rich but the lucrative trade was bringing many foreign trained artists to London. So to succeed and get known as a name, it was crucial to develop a distinguishing style or visual formula.

Furthermore, the prestige being attached to portraiture in England in the early 18thc, can be explained by an important re-evaluation of painting as a respectable pursuit.

Slide 10: Jonathan Richardson *Essay on the Theory of Painting:* is significant. It had been published in 1714 but there had been numerous editions and this one dates from 1725. Richardson lay out an intellectual justification for a branch of painting, which in relation to the hierarchy, had traditionally situated portraiture as one of the more lowly of branches of art. A portraitist, remember, was constrained by the demands of the patron, by the need to produce a 'like' image of the sitter. Furthermore, the type of portrait to be produced was conditioned by cost as well as where and how it would be displayed. In the balance of power, therefore, the artist was usually regarded as a mere face-painter.

In Richardson's influential text, however, painting was allied to the sister arts of history, poetry and literature. Consequently, the art of painting a portrait was understood to be an intellectual process, one that entailed - along with the mastery of anatomy, the ability to use

colour or depict light and shade, to use them *inventively* to enter into the consciousness of the sitter. In extending to portraiture the sort of artistic skills that were typically associated with history painting, Richardson elevated the status of the portraitist above that of the mere face-painter. Thus in turning to portraiture in the late 1720s, Hogarth was now aligning himself with a more elite group than the mechanical engraver. It also meant fashioning himself as a gentleman.

Slide 11: Hogarth, Self- Portrait, c.1735

We can sense of this when we turn to his first but unfinished self-portrait. A painting has superseded the trade card, and a painter who wears a fashionable wig, a white shirt and cravat, and who looks genteel. Hogarth was moving upwards, for learning to paint was the translation of a social aspiration. Portraiture was smarter than engraving, for it meant being around rich patrons and pleasing them, learning etiquette and good manners (Hallett, 2007).

Slide 12: Francis Hayman: *The Artist with His Patron*, 1749-50: We can understand the social implications of this transformation quite clearly in another self-portrait this one by Francis Hayman, who was a friend of Hogarth's. The artist shows himself in his studio in conversation with the patron in the process of painting a portrait. They are dressed as equals, as gentlemen in three-piece suits, stockings and buckled shoes. The studio is both a working space and an elegant place to receive the patrons as guests. It is decorated to illustrate the artist's good taste with painting, sculpture and comfortable furniture. In 1729 Hogarth cemented his new social status as a portraitist in a spectacular way, by marrying the daughter of one of the most famous artists in the country. The young couple lived with the wife's family, in a fashionable residence in London's Covent Garden. Hogarth placed a bust of Van

Dyck over the doorway and turned his studio into a suitable location for his patrons and to show his painted and printed works.

Slide 13: Hogarth, *Assembly at Wanstead House*, 1728-31: to return now to the conversation piece it meant a small group portrait of families or friends gathered together to drink tea, play cards like this one. It is one of Hogarth's first commissioned portraits. The principal sitter is Richard Child - a Viscount but an heir to a banking fortune. The setting is his new and lavishly constructed home, Wanstead House. Richard Child is shown on the far right drinking tea with his two daughters; his three youngest children are on the far left playing with a dog; between them is his wife Dorothy sitting with friends. She turns to look at her husband, holding out one of her playing cards. The family are depicted with a larger group of friends or guests bringing the total number of figures in the small canvas (64 by 76cm) to 25.

Slide 14: Assembly and the South Sea Scheme: The density is not unlike the pictorial effect of the graphic satire we looked at earlier: the composition is broadly demarcated into a crowd with architectural detail, a central spatial narrow regression is contained by the sharp thrust of a wall. In both it is closed across the back but opens out more laterally on the right side. The visual effect of variety and intricacy is similar. The paint though is liquid and textured and this helps emphasise the different, rich surfaces of plaster, paint, tapestry, silver, silk and lace.

Slide 15: Selection of Hogarth's Conversations: This type of small-scale group portraiture was grafted onto continental models, that were Dutch and French in origin, like the types of pictorial satire the artist was interested in. But it had become important in Britain in the 1720s and 1730s largely thanks to Hogarth. Indeed his early fame as a painter was established through the many conversation pieces he painted. The popularity of the format can also be

tied directly to the emergence of a new type of consumer - not unlike Richard Child - the merchant or banker, newly rich or aristocratic. Hogarth's success derived directly from his ability to paint conversations that generated refined identities for his sitters: to depict people interacting according to modern ideals of sociability ie performing their politeness to each other in a group and to us as their spectators through appearances and actions. It is the theatrical aspect of this type of portraiture, or to borrow a term its 'choreographed theatre' (Hallett, 2007) which seems significant: more than other types of portraiture the conversation piece touches on questions of artifice and narrative. The format gives us a sense that we are looking onto a stage and at a performance.

Slide 16: Politeness and Print Culture: Maybe I should say here that the word 'politeness' for historians of 18thc British art has been a key term. It can be defined quite simply as 'the art of pleasing in company' but it actually meant something more complex: it was about espousing and promoting the virtues of *restrained sociability*. Replacing the political zeal or religious bigotry inherited from the civil war and the Revolution with mutual tolerance and understanding.

How to be or act polite generated a mass of printed materials - conduct books, dancing manuals. This is the 'how-to' literature of the 18thc - and many of these illustrated tracts and essays were translated from the French. English polite culture was a derivation of French court culture and it was associated with the emergence of new urban social spaces like the coffee house, the pleasure gardens, the assembly room or indeed in the public areas of a private home.

Slide 17: Hogarth, *The Strode Family*, 1738 In the visual arts the most paradigmatic form of politeness was the conversation piece: dress, action and settings were idealised in order to project their sitters' polite identities. The typical scenario is a group activity that promotes social interaction, drinking tea or playing games like whist. Both were considered to be highly civilised activities for they provided an opportunity to generate a restrained but affective sociability. The example you see here is from the end of the decade: it is a portrait of William Strode, who like Castlemaine, was a banker. This is a larger canvas (87 x 91cm) but the setting is more intimate. Strode is shown sitting at the table, his hand on that of his tutor, inviting him to put down the book and join himself and his wife at the table as an equal, to *partake* in conversation and *share* a cup. The servant pours hot water into the tea-pot; like the tutor he has been drawn into the family structure. Standing on the right is Strode's brother. He turns around to acknowledge the others. Eventually, maybe, he will take his place at the table too. Both family and extended family are therefore gathered together in a single portrait that foregrounds the affective bonds that link individuals together. The theatrical setting is underlined by the curtain in the upper left which has been pulled back to reveal the scene.

Hogarth's great success as a painter of conversations was noted somewhat jealously by another artist: and I quote: Hogarth's 'daily success in painting small family pieces .....with so much Air & agreeableness causes him to be much followd, & esteemed, whereby he has much imployment and [...] to be a master of great reputation.' The words are George Vertue's, the engraver, and he continues somewhat bitterly: Hogarth's conversations were 'done with great spirit, a lively invention & a universal agreeableness.'

Slide 18: *Hogarth: Captain Lord George Graham*, c1744-5

I think this sense of 'lively invention' is clearly on display in the last example I want to use. This unusual conversation piece was probably commissioned by the sitter, an aristocratic naval officer called Graham, who is depicted in the cabin of his new boat, the 60 gun 'Nottingham'. He is dressed theatrically in a hat with a fur-lined velvet cape and is shown smoking a long pipe. A clerk dressed in black sits with an open logbook; a black servant plays the drum behind, a cabin boy sings and the cook brings in the dinner. Yet if the group portrait works to project a moment of conviviality that *unites* five men of diverse social standing, the decorum that underpins the masculinity of the principal figures is placed in tension with the animals and their comic actions: a dog is sitting on its hind legs on the right wearing a wig. His song sheet is propped up against a wine-glass. Another dog sits near the table with an open mouth, as if he too is singing along to the music. Or look again at the cook, who catches our eye as he enters the cabin, and notice how the sauce is trickling out of the platter to land on the neck of the clerk, who hasn't yet noticed.

This incursion of the comic into a conversation piece is detectable in other paintings. They form a sub-group of satirical conversations. In this instance, the proximity of the dog in a wig to the Captain, suggests that he is wearing his master's head-piece. He serves to flout the decorum of his master's appearance and to subvert the apparent naturalness of the group portrait, by highlighting its artifice, as dressed-up performance. The presence of humour in a portrait also flatters the principal sitter; it suggests that Graham can tolerate the wit, the gentle mockery of the self, which in itself becomes a demonstration of his tolerant character. But whether required by the patron, or inserted as an amusing addition by the artist, the use of performing animals or humorous actions points to the mixing of genres, to the meshing together of portraiture with satirical painting, and thus to pictorial categories that more usually were kept apart.

This portrait was finished around 1745. By this time Hogarth had doubled his reputation as a painter of conversations piece that of being an important comic artist. I return then to this idea of cross-cutting identities: of simultaneous activities with antithetical categories. Comic and satirical imagery was a type of art that circulated widely in print. In Britain it was a subject of the graphic arts. The painting of portraits operated in relation to activities that were considered to be intellectual, serious and genteel. Yet Hogarth was producing satirical portraits as we are about to see that he was painting satire that told stories, that looked as if it happened in real locations with real-life characters. But the best way of understanding the intersection of painting and satire, of paint and print is to turn to the ambitious project that had started to exercise Hogarth in 1740s, one that he was working on simultaneously to the portrait of Graham.

Slide 19: Part 3: Satirical Painting/*Marriage à la Mode*: The painting shown here is called *'The Marriage Settlement'* and it's pictorial structure reworks the basic unit of the conversation piece....We can see this better if we look at two together...

Slide 20: *The Strode Family* and *The Settlement*: we can immediately see how the structure is the same: 5 figures on the left, 7 figures on the right; grouped together but varied between standing and sitting, men and women, placed within a shallow box-like space, sharply recessive perspective with a setting which is richly decorated. Except that on the left we have a portrait of the Strode family, and on the right we have a fiction - a set of characters placed in a fictionalized setting. It is also a painting that was one of a set.

Slide 21: The Settlement: The title refers to the agreement being hammered out between a city merchant dressed in red holding his glasses and an aristocrat with a bad foot. One is marrying his daughter into the nobility; the other needs the money that will come with the dowry, but is pointing to his family tree for he has not forgotten his illustrious ascendants. The children of the two men are depicted on the left. But their backs are turned to eachother. The girl plays with her ring and is already in conversation with a lawyer; the son turns to look at himself in a mirror; he is dressed in an elaborate French way. The dogs are chained together at his feet and they signify the forced nature of this marriage. The painting is the first in a series of 6: its function was therefore to set up a narrative; to introduce characters and to begin to qualify their identities through appearance, action, and setting.

To follow the story as it unfolds:

Slide 22: Episode 2...brings us several months into the marriage....and both son and daughter are exhausted. It is the early morning, the home is messed up, the servants are only just going to bed, bills are unpaid and the clerk leaves in despair; the daughter yawns having spent the evening playing cards with some boisterous guests; her husband, has stumbled back home from his night out. The dog is sniffing the lace cap in his pocket. The strange smell that attracts it shows that it belongs to another woman. Their separate lives already suggest that they have little in common....

Slide 23: In Episode 3.. we see the young husband visiting a quack, a type of artisanal doctor, to seek a medical remedy, and no doubt for a sexually transmitted disease. The dingy surroundings contrast with the splendour of his home and he sits close to his mistress, a young girl, who seems barely more than a child.....

Slide 24: Episode 4...is called the 'Levée' and the focus is on the Countess who is entertaining her visitors as she gets dressed. She is attended by a hairdresser who is curling her hair in the French fashion. The lawyer has become very much a part of her life. Their proximity should be taken as an indication of their intimacy. The title of his reading is a scandalous book. Around her are weird friends or groupies making or listening to music with odd or exaggerated appearances...

Slide 25: In Episode 5....It is night and the Countess has met up with her lover - the lawyer - but she has been surprised by her husband. There has been a fight with swords and the husband has been mortally wounded. He stands dying while the lawyer-lover leaves through a back window in his dressing gown; on the right, the forces of order are arriving....

Slide 26: Episode 6.....The double tragedy is completed. The Countess sits in a dramatically changed setting, one that is less rich and luxurious, more bourgeois - a shift that is indicated by the furniture and the Dutch rather than French paintings on the wall. Widowed, her reputation has been tarnished by her love affair, she has poisoned herself. Her father removes the ring, the nurse takes the child - who is crippled for we see his in irons - the poverty of the household is signalled by the famished dog who jumps onto the table to steal the food.

Slide 27: Seen together the six paintings: produce a pictorial narrative with a contemporary subject. The appearance of *Marriage à la Mode* in London in 1745 was clearly a novelty. Nobody was painting like this. At the same time it signalled a personal iteration. It was a repetition of a pictorial mode that Hogarth had made his own. This was Hogarth's third pictorial sequence: the first had appeared in 1732, and the title was *A Harlot's Progress*.

Slide 28: *A Harlot's Progress*: The Harlot was a six-part story about the rise and fall of a London prostitute. It was painted first but they were lost in a fire. All we have now are the prints. These became best-sellers and they stimulated numerous commercial spin offs that included

Slide 29: The *Harlot* in Print Culture: printed commentaries, pantomimes and new and pirated editions of the images.

Slide 30: A Rake's Progress: was the sequel and it focussed on another type familiar in contemporary society - the Rake - or a dissipated and misguided man who squanders his wealth and finishes in the mad house. Like the Harlot it started as a series in paint:

Slide 31: *A Rake's Progress*: Prints: Hogarth then copied each painting into an engraved print adding verses to help tell the story.

Slide 32: *The Rose Tavern* in Paint and Print: The prints were sold together as a set. Both the *Harlot* and the *Rake* sold continuously throughout the 1730s and 1740s. Their fame not only established Hogarth as *the pre-eminent* social satirist, but also as an inventor of a new type of pictorial satire. This was during the 1730s, the same decade that he emerged as a celebrated painter of conversation pieces.

Slide 33: *Marriage à la Mode:* 6 paintings: If the Harlot and the Rake had prepared the public, 10 years had elapsed. The new serial project brought changes. The Progress title has been dropped for a fashionable French one and the subject has accordingly changed. The theme is still the dissolute behaviour in contemporary society this time though it is societies

upper echelons and the middle class, who are obsessed with social emulation. The basic unit of the series is a conversation piece and the sequence of identically sized images is used to stage - just like the Harlot and the Rake - a progress towards a tragic end. The pictorial narrative exploits theatrical devices and literary techniques and is filled with references to contemporary London life. Hogarth's aim was to produce in paint an idea of an individual's existence that was consistent with experience - one that evolved through time and in relation to a series of lived effects.

Slide 34: Literary Sources: This is why it is important to understand the connections with stage - the title was taken from a play by John Dryden. But we should also understand the visual appearance of this Marriage a la Mode in relation to the novel, a new literary form which had developed by the early 1740s: Slide 35: Novels and notably in the work of Samuel Richardson, who published *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* in 1740 and Henry Fielding, whose *Joseph Andrews* appeared in 1742. In a similar manner to the novel, the episodic structure of *Marriage a la Mode* incited the viewer to judge actions from a variety of standpoints and within a continuous narrative flow.

Slide 36: detail of the girl: For example, if we follow a single protagonist - the daughter who appears in 5 of the 6 paintings, each one stages a version that is recognisable, yet at the same time presents her differently as a changed individual. As we follow the sequence, she assumes a range of feminine identities: from the innocent to the libertine, to the woman of authority who presides over her group to the vulnerable, and lastly to the dying

Slide 37: Frenchness and Luxury: Yet if the narrative mode resembles the structure of the novel, the series is not just a painted equivalent of a literary genre. The separately framed

scenes function as stand alone pictures that establish a temporary hiatus, turning each image into a world unto itself. We also constantly look backwards as we drawn forwards to measure and assess, so that our understanding of the characters is reached sequentially as the layering of experience. And then there is the identity of the paintings as luxury commodities. These panels are self-consciously pictorial and resolutely painterly. The colour is intense and the forms highly detailed. The method not only serves to characterize the lifestyles of the protagonists but it situates the images within the trade for similar luxury goods, notably imported French paintings. Hogarth designed and marketed *Marriage a La Mode* as richly crafted, unique decorative products in a private sale that was organised by the artist in his studio, but only once the designs had been issued in print.

Slide 38: Six prints: The prints of *Marriage a la Mode* sold too as luxury items, as 'fine' engraved reproductions. Each one carried the title and their number in the set, a reminder to the viewer that there was a sequence to respect. This time, instead of engraving the paintings himself. He commissioned the prints and travelled to Paris to find the engravers, choosing not just one but three of the best. At the time French engraving was considered to be the most sophisticated on the market. Thus ideas of luxury, whether thematized in the materiality of the works or configured as the pursuit of wealth, underpin in multiple ways this painted and printed satire on the leisured lazy classes of British society. There are significant and complex patriotic dimensions to this: luxury, cosmopolitanism, Frenchness are being used to sell work and at the same time to castigate contemporary social types for their French taste and their misguided actions at a time when the political context of the mid 1740s was one where Britain was unofficially at war with France and fearing a French invasion on the south coast.

Slide 39: Part 4: History and Theory: I mentioned at the outset of this lecture that I wanted to explore the art of William Hogarth in terms of its multiple attachments. This is why I have been exploring the intersections between the paintings and the prints and the portraits and the satire. For the final part of this lecture, I want to move forward to the early 1750s and to a strand of his activities not yet discussed: the painting of history to which I will add briefly the writing of art theory.

By 1753 William Hogarth had become the most famous British artist of the day - a 'figure of influence' (Paulson, 1993:3) in the London art world. The stream of paintings and prints had made him rich. But in the early 1750s some of the new prints he was selling had taken on a more explicitly didactic dimension. An example would be *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane* which were published as a pair in 1751.

Slide 40: *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane*, 1751: These prints were cheaper and simpler than *Marriage a la Mode*. The designs were not produced in paint beforehand. They offered stark contrasts and brutal imagery, dealing with the social effects of drinking or the consequences of crime. Prints like these were polemical and like the early graphic satires: they were designed to be stuck up and seen by a wider public than the rich patrons of *Marriage a la mode*.

Alongside this sort of work, however, there is another strand of painting that had developed out of the small group portraits. The conversations of the 1730s had given way to more imposing paintings, such as the grand manner portrait of Thomas Coram [Slide 41: Portrait of Thomas Coram, 1740] the successful sea captain who at the time was building a Foundling Hospital to save some of London's abandoned children. Hogarth became a governor of this

hospital when it opened in 1746 (Slide 42: The Foundling Hospital, Engraving) Furthermore, he organised a group of artists to design a group of paintings on Old Testament themes that would hang in the Director's room (Slide 43: Photograph: Director's Room). The subjects chosen were relevant to the Hospital's purpose.

Slide 44, Hogarth, Moses, 1746: Hogarth's contribution to the Foundling Hospital was this one - *Moses Brought Before Pharoah's Daughter* and it depicts the moment when Moses is handed over to the Egyptian princess, shown here gesturing towards the child with an outstretched hand. The point for us of course is that a painting like this marked a significant departure away from comic art and contemporary themes. This was large-scale history painting - this work is over one and a half metres high and just over 2 metres wide. In 1746, straight after *Marriage a la Mode*, it was the largest work on canvas that Hogarth had ever produced. Furthermore, it was immediately followed by another painting – this time one that was 3 metres high and 4 metres wide.

Slide 45: This was *Paul Before Felix* (1748-50). This painting was commissioned by a law society in London and it still hangs in their dining room. It was an important commission and it helped consolidate the new direction. The subject is again taken from the New Testament and it depicts St Paul pleading his case before Felix, the roman governor. History painting – like this - was the most serious branch of painting that an artist could produce. It demanded knowledge of the relevant biblical passages and an awareness of how they had been treated before, and notably by the great masters of the past. This is all to say that by the mid 1750s, we are dealing with an artist who has a complicated status. His most recent achievements in paint indicate that he was distancing himself from comic themes and contemporary subjects. His history paintings speak of intellectual ambitions that seemed to sit awkwardly on the

shoulders of an artist whose stature for many had been gained with satirical subjects, which were considered to be antithetical to the values associated with elevated public art.

Slide 46: Advert for the subscription of the Analysis: With this in mind I want to look briefly as his aesthetic tract called the *Analysis of Beauty* which he wrote to define and analyse beauty - as the title suggests. Interestingly, the announcement of the project in the newspaper was also used to advertise the prints of the *Moses* and *Paul* paintings. Writing offered Hogarth a new form of self-presentation. The artist was now becoming an author, presenting himself in language, preserving himself through word.

Slide 47: Analysis of Beauty: Title-page and contents: When we turn to the text Hogarth used a long Preface to connect himself to history, to past masters and to famous art theorists. To talk about beauty in art he says - - and I quote 'requires a practical knowledge of the whole art of painting...and that too to some degree of eminence'. He continues quoting from Michelangelo, Raphael, Rubens and Vasari, Lomazzo, du Fresnoy and de Piles. His quotations demonstrate a close working knowledge of his sources. Yet in alluding so concretely to the history of the visual arts he is asking questions of a more philosophical nature: what is beauty in painting? What sort of forms produce it? Is beauty a universal principle? And if he highlights central questions, the purpose is to flag up the lack of satisfactory answers. As an aesthetic tract Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* signalled an important shift to understanding beauty within an empirical framework - as a pleasurable effect that was experienced. It was also one of the few texts from this time to have been written by an artist, and directly in relation to the act of drawing, composing and painting.

Yet the *Analysis* was not specifically addressed to other artists. Above all, Hogarth tells us that he is writing for the general public. Too often, he says, beauty has been considered an essence, defined as the 'je ne scais quoi' of painting (the words in French are Hogarth's). In other words it was believed that beauty could not be taught because it came to the painter as a gift from the hand of God. Hogarth's aim, on the contrary, was to show that beauty could be defined as a formal principle and used in a systematic way.

After this lengthy preamble with brisk concision Hogarth propels us straight into his theory. The central principle that constitutes the beauty of a form is variety - and it is 'variety' which is prominently displayed on the title-page: beauty, understood as variety, is actualised via the serpentine line; visualised as a snake but controlled by fitness and order - hence the geometry of the triangular form. Beauty, therefore, is analysed by Hogarth as the principle of the curving, moving, changing line. As the text of the *Analysis* unfolds, these two principles - variety and intricacy - become the key terms in his aesthetic system.

We should understand the *Analysis* as a rationalization of his own artistic practice. We can actually track these pictorial interests backwards for the 'line of beauty' had been a subject that had been exercising the artist for a while.

Slide 48: Hogarth, Self-portrait with a Pug, 1745: The first appearance of the serpentine line was in a *Self-Portrait* painted in 1745. Here Hogarth depicts himself elegantly attired in a silk dressing gown and soft hat, generally reworking an established iconography that artists used to represent themselves, of the portrait within the portrait. The labelled serpentine line snakes across the surface of the palette, significantly close to Shakespeare and Milton - a reference to

Paradise Lost which would return on the title-page of the *Analysis*. Hogarth also took the unusual step of adding two engravings to help explain his ideas:

Slide 50: *Analysis*, Engravings: On the part of an artist this may not seem unusual, except that essays on the visual arts were resolutely discursive. There were rarely illustrations and certainly none that resembled anything like this. In offering a simultaneous visual exposition of precepts he was stating in the text, the engravings help clarify theory, making it graspable in sight. They also functioned as attractive commodities in their own right. He was exploiting a commercial demand for his prints in order to enhance the appeal of his text, for they are *more* than mere illustrations. They were decorative items that could be framed and placed on a wall.

This is one of the key points I want to make about the *Analysis*: its peculiar status as a *hybrid* cultural form: it is art historical & philosophical yet straightforward and didactic, for it seeks ground with the curious rather than the specialist. It is a treatise that offers an unusual medley of text and image; it is both pictorial and schematic.

Slide 51: *Anaylsis*, Plate 1: The illustrative plates operate like graphic satires by networking heterogeneous forms. Plate 1 contains a dense network of quotation and scholarly reference. Fragments from Raphael, printed caricature sketches, antique sculptures and among them the most famous are used to define beauty. But the ways in which they are represented suggest that the statues have been transplanted to a statuary's yard and they are copies for sale. They also seem to be comically alive: Apollo on the right appears to gesture to Venus in the centre, while on the left a young man sidles up to Antinous. All over, the image is a witty *bricolage* combining the high and low – the antique with the caricatured, the real and the made (the

parsley leaf and the chair leg). What the print allows us to see is how in the eighteenth-century 'beauty' was becoming an expanded category: how it was also encompassing a variety of everyday objects, traditionally beyond the concerns of the visual arts. This is why the *Analysis* has been described as an aesthetic tract with practical applications (Hallett 2000). In many ways it was a hand-book that was designed to promote good taste. Yet if it has this domestic and private feel, and if it was committed to an 'aesthetics of everyday life', it was written by an artist who was offering a particular way of seeing and understanding the world.

Slide 51: *Settlement* and the *Levée* from *Marriage à la Mode*: A last point to make about the *Analysis* is in relation to the paintings: to understand the serpentine line as the pictorial fulfilment of aesthetic concepts - variety and intricacy - that had been actualised through in paint and print and through the consistent use of sets. If we return to scenes the *Marriage a la Mode* we can see how the movement of a serpentine line is snaking through space. It carries the eye from the left to the right, moving forwards and backwards but curving around, thematizing variety in the multitude of expressions and actions. Yet the intricacy is controlled by the geometric structure of the room, by the series of vertical and horizontal frames and windows.

Furthermore, serial designs ask us to move between images, to move on and also to turn back, to search out causes and motives. Variety is active viewing as well as the cluster of intricate images; characters whose actions are always contingent, whose identities always the result of previous choices. This suggests that the aesthetic concept of variety allows for the pictorial representation of experience in a holistic way as change, movement and

transformation. In conclusion, then Hogarth is using his art to translate a concern with morality that is a difficult pursuit, rather than a clear choice.

A