THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

MODERNISM

EDITED BY

VINCENT SHERRY

This *Cambridge History of Modernism* is
the first comprehensive history of modernism
in the distinguished Cambridge Histories
series. It identifies a distinctive temperament
of "modernism" within the "modern" period,
establishing the circumstances of modernized
life as the ground and warrant for an art
that becomes "modernist" by virtue of its
demonstrably self-conscious involvement in this
modern condition. Following this sensibility from
the end of the nineteenth century to the middle
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across pan-European and transatlantic locations,
the forty-three chapters offer a remarkable
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scholars of modernism provide analytical
narratives of its literature, music, visual arts,
architecture, philosophy, and science, offering
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VINCENT SHERRY is Howard Nemerov Professor in the Humanities and Professor of English at Washington University in St. Louis. A prominent scholar of modernism, he is the author of *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (2015), *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (2003), *James Joyce's Ulysses* (1995, 2005) and *Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and Radical Modernism* (1993). He has also written *The Uncommon Tongue: The Poetry and Criticism of Geoffrey Hill* (1987) and edited the *Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the First World War* (2005).

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Contributors

NORA M. ALTER, Temple University
TIM ARMSTRONG, Royal Holloway College, University of London
MATTHEW BEAUMONT, University College London
C.D. BLANTON, University of California, Berkeley
RACHEL BLAU DUPLESSIS, Temple University, Emerita
TOBIAS BOES, University of Notre Dame
WILLARD BOHN, Illinois State University, Emeritus
HOWARD J. BOOTH, University of Manchester
RONALD BUSH, Oxford University, Emeritus
STEVEN CONNOR, Cambridge University
STANLEY CORNGOLD, Princeton University
NICHOLAS DALY, University College Dublin
MAUD ELLMANN, University of Chicago
RUBÉN GALLO, Princeton University
ANDRZEJ GASIOREK, University of Birmingham
MILES GLENDINNING, University of Edinburgh
DANIEL HERWITZ, University of Michigan
DAVID JAMES, Queen Mary, University of London
CATRIONA KELLY, Oxford University
STEPHEN KERN, Ohio State University
LUTZ KOEPNICK, Vanderbilt University
COLLEEN R. LAMOS, Rice University
MICHAEL LEVENSON, University of Virginia
BEN LEVITAS, Goldsmiths College, University of London
BENJAMIN LEVY, University of California, Santa Barbara
MARINA MACKAY, Oxford University
VICKI MAHAFFEY, University of Illinois
LAURA MARCUS, Oxford University
LEO MELLOR, Cambridge University
CRISTANNE MILLER, SUNY Buffalo
MARK MORRISSON, Penn State University
MICHAEL NORTH, UCLA
MARJORIE PERLOFF, Stanford University, Emerita

JEAN-MICHEL RABATÉ, University of Pennsylvania
LAWRENCE RAINEY, University of York
JED RASULA, University of Georgia
DAVID RICHARDS, University of Stirling, Emeritus
RONALD SCHLEIFER, University of Oklahoma
ROBIN G. SCHULZE, University of Delaware
VINCENT SHERRY, Washington University in St. Louis
AMANDA SIGLER, Erskine College
JAMES SMETHURST, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
DAVID TROTTER, Cambridge University
MARK WHALAN, University of Oregon
EMILY O. WITTMAN, University of Alabama

Acknowledgements

The image of the individual "modernist" striving to "make it new": around and against that figure looms usually the specter of cultural institutions working to "keep it old." Whatever truth there may be in this picture, the history of modernism encompassed in this volume could not have been accomplished without the extraordinary resources of a number of major institutions and the exceptional dedication of individuals serving within those organizations. The work of collection and preservation that occurs as the mission of such institutions – the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, the *Modernist Journals Project* at Brown University and University of Tulsa, to name just a few – is now part of an institutionalization of modernism itself as a subject of academic study. As the Modernist Studies Association signals by its title, there is a sense of collective enterprise in this endeavor nowadays, and this feeling provides a sense of energy and direction to scholars working diversely across its fields. That is the institution – at its best a community of interests not just shared in being the same but shared between individuals – that I want to acknowledge most sincerely here. This community, loose and even virtual as it may be, seems to me to be the effective center as well as the true future of modernist studies. In ways little and large, sometimes subtle and often striking, I have benefited from gifts so far beyond the scope of mentioning specifically that I must let this general expression of recognition and gratitude serve, and stand.

More specifically, and immediately: to the personnel of Cambridge University Press. Ray Ryan, as senior acquisitions editor, has been indefatigable and invaluable as always, and his assistant Caitlin Gallagher maintained the day-by-day work circulating with cordial efficiency. Managing the production, Victoria Parrin has been a true collaborator, adapting my own vision of the book to available possibilities. The task of copy-editing a volume of this

magnitude has been done with good humor as well as great skill by Damian Love.

Where a *Cambridge History* assumes longevity of relevance as one of its standard-setting aims, volumes in this series have also taken legendarily long to produce. And so it is remarkable again that it has taken scarcely five years to move from envisioning this volume to producing it. Speed is of course no absolute value, but it is important that the many chapters of a work of this size not seem to belong to significantly different critical-cultural time zones. That no corner was cut in this process magnifies my gratitude, first of all, to those helping me at Washington University in St. Louis. The staff in the English department, especially Kelly Camerer and Meredith Lane, proved the truth of their indispensability to everything we do, and in their usual myriad ways. To the graduate students who worked with me on this volume I also owe an immense debt: to Aileen Waters at the beginning of the process and Sam Smith at its end and, in the long middle, as every contributor to the volume will know, to Courtney Andree, who checked the facts on everything from quotations to historical sources. It is a truer history for her work.

"That no corner was cut in this process": I quote myself with the rueful humor no doubt shared by the contributors, who bore up admirably well under the sometimes strenuous pleasures of editorial interactions. And so I wish to acknowledge finally the generosity which these scholars demonstrate – in taking on this work in the first place; in adapting themselves to my initial design and offering adaptations to it from their own resources of knowledge and judgment; and for doing it all so well. It is not customary to inscribe formal dedications to volumes of this kind; if provision could be made for this one, it would be given to those whose work occurs within.

Acknowledgement for all works of visual art requiring it is provided with the image and in this volume's list of illustrations. Quotations from print media are being used in line with the "fair use" standard of critical, educational, and interpretive purposes.

Chronology

1886   Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil.*
        Stéphane Mallarmé, *Poésies.*
        Home Rule Bill for Ireland rejected by House of Lords.
        Britain annexes Upper Burma.
        Statue of Liberty opens.
1888   Vincent van Gogh, "Night Café."
1889   Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* performed in London.
        British South Africa Company launched.
        Eiffel Tower completed.
1890   Knut Hamsun, *Hunger.*
        Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, *Axël.*
        Émile Zola, *La bête humaine.*
        Henrik Ibsen, *Hedda Gabler.*
        Hermann Bahr, *Zur Kritik der Moderne.*
        James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (vol. 1).
        William James, *Principles of Psychology.*
        The dismissal of Bismarck.
        US Census Bureau declares the frontier closed.
1891   Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles.*
        Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (book edition).
        Rudyard Kipling, *The Light that Failed.*
        First international copyright law.
        Franco-Russian entente.
        Fall of Charles Stewart Parnell in Ireland.
1892   Maurice Maeterlinck, *Pelléas et Mélisande.*
        Douglas Hyde, "On the Necessity for De-Anglicising the Irish
        People."
1893   Sarah Grand, *The Heavenly Twins.*
        George Egerton, *Keynotes.*
        Paul Laurence Dunbar, *Oak and Ivy.*
        Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets.*
        Henry James, *The Real Thing and Other Tales.*
        Oscar Wilde, *Salomé.*
        Arthur Symons, "The Decadent Movement in Literature."
        W.B. Yeats, *The Celtic Twilight.*
        Edvard Munch, "The Scream."
        Théâtre de l'Œuvre founded.
        World Exhibition in Chicago.

Van Gogh retrospective in Amsterdam.
Formation of the Independent Labour Party in Great Britain.
Second Home Rule Bill introduced by Gladstone.
The four-wheel car of Karl Benz invented.
Auguste and Louis Lumière invent the cinematograph.
1894   George Bernard Shaw, *Arms and the Man.*
Claude Debussy, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune.*
The quarterly journal, the *Yellow Book*, launched.
The conviction of Alfred Dreyfus for treason.
Accession of Tsar Nicholas II.
1895   Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage, The Black Riders and Other Lines.*
Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure.*
H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine.*
Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest.*
Arthur Symons, *London Nights.*
Gustav Mahler, *Resurrection Symphony.*
The trial of Oscar Wilde.
Roentgen's discovery of X-rays.
Guglielmo Marconi invents telegraphy.
Invention of the motion picture.
1896   Anton Chekhov, *The Seagull.*
Alfred Jarry, *King Ubu.*
Oscar Wilde, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol.*
Arthur Symons founds *Savoy.*
First modern Olympiad, Athens.
First commercial motion picture exhibition in New York.
The Curies discover radium and plutonium.
1897   Anton Chekhov, *Uncle Vanya.*
Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds, *Sexual Inversion.*
Bram Stoker, *Dracula.*
Rudyard Kipling, "Recessional."
Yellow Book ceases publication.
Founding of the Austrian Secession artistic movement.
Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.
Basel Program for resettlement launched by First Zionist Congress.
Famine in India.
1898   H.G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds.*

Émile Zola, "J'Accuse."

National Gallery of British Art (Tate) opens.

Moscow Arts Theatre founded.

USA declares war on Spain over Cuba.

First Zeppelin built.

1899   Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness.*

Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature.*

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening.*

Henry James, *The Awkward Age.*

Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden."

Beginning of the Boer War (1899–1902).

1900   Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams.*

Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim.*

Henri Bergson, *Le Rire.*

Death of Oscar Wilde.

Death of Friedrich Nietzsche.

"Boxer Rebellion" in China.

1901   Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks.*

Henri Bergson's *Laughter* translated into English.

August Strindberg, *The Dance of Death.*

Nobel Prize in Literature established.

Death of Queen Victoria.

First wireless communication between the USA and Europe.

1902   André Gide, *The Immoralist.*

August Strindberg, *A Dream Play.*

John Atkinson Hobson, *Imperialism.*

F.T. Marinetti, *La conquête des étoiles.*

William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience.*

Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Lord Chandos Letter."

Isadora Duncan begins touring in Europe.

Edwin Porter's film, *The Great Train Robbery*, premieres.

1903   Samuel Butler, *The Way of All Flesh* (posthumous).

George Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman.*

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk.*

E.D. Morel, *The Congo Slave Trade.*

Georg Simmel, *The Metropolis and Mental Life.*

Camera Work magazine founded by Alfred Stieglitz.

Irish National Theatre Society founded.

Wright brothers' first airplane flight.
Emmeline Pankhurst founds the Women's Social and
Political Union.
1904   Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo.*
John Millington Synge, *Riders to the Sea.*
Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard.*
Opening of Abbey Theatre in Dublin.
Beginning of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05).
Panama Canal opens.
1905   Oscar Wilde, *De profundis* (posthumous).
Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth.*
Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.*
Stefan George, *Algabal.*
Richard Strauss, *Salome.*
W.E.B. Du Bois initiates the "Niagara Movement."
Fauvist exhibition in Paris.
First movie house opens in Philadelphia.
Albert Einstein proposes special theory of relativity.
The Irish nationalist party, Sinn Fein, is founded.
Serious uprisings across the Russian Empire, followed by the
October Manifesto granting civil rights (e.g., an end to preliminary
censorship).
Industrial Workers of the World union organized in Chicago.
1906   Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle.*
San Francisco earthquake.
Atlanta race riots.
Liberals sweep election in Britain.
1907   Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution.*
Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent.*
Henry James, *The American Scene.*
Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams.*
John Millington Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World.*
Picasso, "Les demoiselles d'Avignon."
Cubist exhibition in Paris.
August Strindberg founds the Intimate Theatre in Stockholm.
1908   Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford) founds the *English Review.*
Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence.*
Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy.*

R.A. Scott-James, *Modernism and Romance*.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo* (posthumous).

Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso, first cubist paintings.

Jacob Epstein, figures for the British Medical Association.

Henry Ford produces first Model-T Ford.

1909 Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*.

Ezra Pound, *Personae*.

William Carlos Williams, *Poems*.

F.T. Marinetti, "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism."

Arthur Schoenberg, *Five Orchestral Pieces*.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Robie House.

Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev produces Les Ballets Russes in Paris.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded.

Suffragist Marion Wallace Dunlop begins first hunger strike; force-feeding begins in British prisons.

1910 E.M. Forster, *Howards End*.

Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*.

First Post-Impressionist Exhibition in London.

Igor Stravinsky, *The Firebird*.

Marinetti delivers "Futurist Speech to the English" in London.

W.E.B. Du Bois founds *The Crisis*.

Antoni Gaudí, Casa Vila, Barcelona.

Death of Leo Tolstoy.

Death of Edward VII, accession of George V.

Great Migration of African Americans begins.

Mexican Revolution begins.

1911 Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*.

Frederick W. Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management*.

Hans Vaihinger, *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*.

The Freewoman founded by Dora Marsden, under the patronage of Harriet Shaw Weaver.

Der Blaue Reiter group forms in Munich.

First English translation of Nietzsche's *The Complete Works* published.

The Copyright Act of 1911 extends copyright to fifty years after author's death.

Roald Amundsen reaches the South Pole.

First flight across the USA.

1912   Claude McKay, *Songs of Jamaica* and *Constab Ballads*.

George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*.

Wassily Kandinsky, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*.

May Sinclair's *Feminism* published by the Women's Suffrage League.

F.T. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature."

Russian avant-garde manifesto *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste* published.

Marcel Duchamp, "Nude Descending a Staircase."

Wyndham Lewis, "Kermesse."

Poetry (Chicago) magazine founded.

Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition in London.

Sinking of the *Titanic*.

Beginning of the Balkan Wars (1912–13).

1913   D.H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*.

Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*.

Robert Frost, *A Boy's Will*.

Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*.

Blaise Cendrars, *Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France*.

Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools* and *Les peintres cubists*.

Igor Stravinsky, *Le sacre du printemps*.

Jacob Epstein, "Rock-Drill."

The New York Armory Show.

Omega Workshops established by members of Bloomsbury Group.

The Freewoman becomes *The New Freewoman*.

Russian Futurist Manifesto published.

Rabindrinath Tagore awarded Nobel Prize.

Suffragette demonstrations in London.

Niels Bohr proposes his Atomic Model.

1914   James Joyce, *Dubliners*.

Robert Frost, *North of Boston*.

Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons*.

Ezra Pound (ed.), *Des Imagistes*.

Blast magazine founded (first issue).

Miguel de Unamuno, *Mist*.

Mina Loy, "Aphorisms on Futurism" and "Feminist Manifesto."
The Egoist magazine founded (formerly *The Freewoman/The New Freewoman*).
Little Review founded.
Margaret Sanger coins the term "birth control."
Outbreak of the First World War.

1915   Virginia Woolf, *The Voyage Out*.
D.H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*.
Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier*.
T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" published in *Poetry* (Chicago).
Djuna Barnes, *The Book of Repulsive Women*.
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*.
Amy Lowell (ed.), *Some Imagist Poets* (first annual).
Ezra Pound, *Cathay*.
Dorothy Richardson, *Pointed Roofs* (vol. 1 of *Pilgrimage*).
Vladimir Mayakovsky, *A Cloud in Trousers*.
Kazemir Malevich, "The Black Square."
Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*.
D.W. Griffith, *The Birth of a Nation*.
Others magazine founded.
Second (and final) issue of *Blast* published.
Armenian genocide.
Battle of Gallipoli.
First transcontinental telephone call connects New York to San Francisco.

1916   H.D., *Sea Garden*.
James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.
W.B. Yeats, "Easter, 1916" (composed; published in 1921).
Guillaume Apollinaire, *Le poète assassiné*.
Henri Barbusse, *Under Fire*.
D.W. Griffith, *Intolerance*.
First Dada performances at the Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich.
Albert Einstein, *General Theory of Relativity*.
Margaret Sanger opens the first birth control clinic in New York.
Easter Rising in Dublin.
First Battle of the Somme.

1917   T.S. Eliot, *Prufrock and Other Observations*.

Mina Loy, *Love Songs to Joannes.*
Guillaume Apollinaire, *The Breasts of Tiresias.*
Amy Lowell, *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry.*
May Sinclair, *Tree of Heaven.*
Leonard and Virginia Woolf found Hogarth Press.
Carl Jung, *The Unconscious.*
Sigmund Freud, *Introduction to Psychoanalysis.*
V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism.*
Marcel Duchamp, "Fountain."
Revolution in Russia.
USA enters First World War.
Ernest Rutherford splits atom.

1918   Rebecca West, *The Return of the Soldier.*
Tristan Tzara, *Dada Manifesto 1918.*
Edith Wharton, *The Marne.*
Wyndham Lewis, *Tarr.*
Van Wyck Brooks, "On Creating a Usable Past."
Guillaume Apollinaire, *Calligrammes.*
Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians.*
Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems* (posthumous).
Little Review begins serialization of *Ulysses.*
Aleksandr Blok, *The Twelve.*
May Sinclair is the first to use the term "stream of consciousness"
in relation to literary studies.
First Dada evening in Berlin.
First World War Armistice.
Votes for women aged thirty and over in Britain.
Proclamation of Weimar Republic and Czechoslovak, Yugoslav,
and Polish states.
Influenza epidemic.

1919   T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent."
Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio.*
John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace.*
Bauhaus founded at Weimar by Walter Gropius.
Treaty of Versailles.
League of Nations created.
Prohibition Act passed by US Congress.
Founding of American Communist Party.

Amritsar Massacre in India.

Division of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Turkish War of Independence/Greco-Turkish War begins (ends in 1922).

1920   D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love.*

George Bernard Shaw, *Heartbreak House.*

Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley.*

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise.*

Jessie Weston, *From Ritual to Romance.*

Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence.*

Wilfred Owen, *Poems.*

Katherine Mansfield, *Bliss and Other Stories.*

Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street.*

Eugene O'Neill, *The Emperor Jones.*

Georg Lukács, *Theory of the Novel.*

Dial magazine founded.

Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.*

Paul Klee, "Angelus Novus."

Robert Wiene, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.*

American women gain suffrage.

1921   Luigi Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author.*

John Dos Passos, *Three Soldiers.*

Marianne Moore, *Poems.*

Anna Akhmatova, *Anno Domini 1921.*

Arnold Schoenberg develops twelve-tone method of musical composition.

Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, *New York Dada* magazine founded.

Pablo Picasso, "Three Musicians."

Charlie Chaplin, *The Kid.*

D.W. Griffith, *Orphans of the Storm.*

Little Review drawn into obscenity trial over publication of *Ulysses.*

Irish Free State founded.

Non-Cooperation Movement starts in India.

Alice Paul founds National Woman's Party in USA.

1922   T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land.*

James Joyce, *Ulysses.*

Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room.*

Edith Sitwell, *Façade.*

Sinclair Lewis, *Babbit.*
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Beautiful and the Damned.*
Claude McKay, *Harlem Shadows.*
Eugene O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape.*
James Weldon Johnson (ed.), *The Book of American Negro Poetry.*
Osip Mandelstam, *Tristia.*
e.e. cummings, *The Enormous Room.*
Bertolt Brecht, *Drums in the Night.*
Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sonnets to Orpheus.*
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus.*
Boris Pasternak, *My Sister Life.*
Fritz Lang, *Dr. Mabuse.*
Friedrich Murnau, *Nosferatu.*
Founding of *Criterion.*
Death of Marcel Proust.
Founding of the British Broadcasting Company (BBC).
Opening of Tutankhamen's tomb in Egypt.
Benito Mussolini assumes power in Italy.
USSR established.
Irish Civil War begins (ends in 1923).
1923   Mina Loy, *Lunar Baedeker, Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose.*
Wallace Stevens, *Harmonium.*
Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Duino Elegies.*
Vladimir Mayakovsky, *About That.*
Jean Toomer, *Cane.*
William Carlos Williams, *Spring and All.*
Jean Cocteau, *Thomas l'imposteur.*
Italo Svevo, *Zeno's Conscience.*
Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture.*
W.B. Yeats awarded the Nobel Prize.
Proclamation of the Turkish Republic.
Collapse of German currency.
1924   Marianne Moore, *Observations.*
E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India.*
Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain.*
André Breton, *Surrealist Manifesto.*
T.E. Hulme, *Speculations* (posthumous).
Death of Franz Kafka.

First Labour government elected in Britain.
British Empire exhibition in London.
Death of V.I. Lenin.

1925   Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*.
Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans*.
Willa Cather, *The Professor's House*.
Alain Locke (ed.), *The New Negro*.
W.B. Yeats, *A Vision*.
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*.
Theodore Dreiser, *An American Tragedy*.
Ezra Pound, *A Draft of XVI. Cantos*.
Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time*.
Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (posthumous).
Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*.
Dmitri Shostakovich, *First Symphony*.
Sergei Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin*.
Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*.
Scopes trial, Tennessee.
Mussolini declares himself dictator of Italy.

1926   Langston Hughes, *The Weary Blues*.
Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*.
Ezra Pound, *Personae*.
Hugh MacDiarmid, *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*.
Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Lolly Willowes*.
Vita Sackville-West, *Passenger to Teheran*.
Franz Kafka, *The Castle* (posthumous).
William Faulkner, *Soldiers' Pay*.
T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.
Jean Cocteau, *La Rappel à l'ordre*.
Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West* (English translation; original *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* first published in two vols., 1918 and 1923).
Marina Tsvetaeva, *Poem of the Mountain*.
General Strike in Britain.

1927   Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*.
Ernest Hemingway, *Men without Women*.
Marcel Proust, *Le temps retrouvé* (posthumous).
Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man*.

James Weldon Johnson, *God's Trombones.*
Laura Riding and Robert Graves, *A Survey of Modernist Poetry.*
E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel.*
transition magazine founded.
First issue of film journal *Close Up.*
Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time.*
Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion.*
Walter Benjamin begins *The Arcades Project.*
Jacob Epstein, "Madonna and Child" (sculpture).
Al Jolson, *The Jazz Singer.*
Fritz Lang, *Metropolis.*
Charles Lindbergh flies *The Spirit of St. Louis* from New York to Paris.

1928   W.B. Yeats, *The Tower.*
D.H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover.*
Virginia Woolf, *Orlando.*
Bertolt Brecht, *The Threepenny Opera.*
James Joyce, *Anna Livia Plurabelle.*
Aldous Huxley, *Point Counter Point.*
Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness.*
Federico García Lorca, *The Gypsy Ballads.*
Claude McKay, *Home to Harlem.*
Sergei Eisenstein, *October.*
Enfranchisement of women over twenty-one in Britain.
Television broadcasts commence in USA.

1929   Robert Bridges, *The Testament of Beauty.*
Robert Graves, *Good-bye to All That.*
William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury.*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms.*
Claude McKay, *Banjo.*
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (English translation).
Nella Larsen, *Passing.*
Jean Rhys, *Quartet.*
Elizabeth Bowen, *The Last September.*
Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own.*
Joan Riviere, "Womanliness as a Masquerade."
Thomas Mann awarded the Nobel Prize.

Second Surrealist Manifesto.

Museum of Modern Art in New York opens.

Wall Street Crash; Great Depression begins.

1930 W.H. Auden, *Poems.*

Hart Crane, *The Bridge.*

Evelyn Waugh, *Vile Bodies.*

Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities* (vol. 1).

F.R. Leavis, "Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture."

William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity.*

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents.*

Death of D.H. Lawrence.

Suicide of Vladimir Mayakovsky.

1931 e.e. cummings, *Viva.*

William Faulkner, *Sanctuary.*

Tristan Tzara, *L'homme approximatif.*

Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870–1930.*

Samuel Beckett, *Proust.*

Benito Mussolini and Giovacchino Forzano, *Napoleon: The Hundred Days.*

Salvador Dalí, "The Persistence of Memory."

Fritz Lang, *M.*

Britain abandons the gold standard.

1932 W.H. Auden, *The Orators.*

Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Voyage au bout de la nuit.*

John Dos Passos, *1919,* vol. I of *U.S.A.* trilogy.

Elizabeth Bowen, *To the North.*

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World.*

William Faulkner, *Light in August.*

Joseph Roth, *The Radetzky March* (translated into English in 1995).

Ernest Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon.*

Langston Hughes, *The Dream Keeper.*

Louis Zukofsky (ed.), *An "Objectivists" Anthology.*

F.R. Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry.*

Q.D. Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public.*

Scrutiny magazine founded.

John Galsworthy awarded the Nobel Prize.

Bertolt Brecht, *The Mother* premieres in Berlin.

Socialist realism declared in the Soviet Union.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt elected US president.

Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to make solo flight across the Atlantic.

1933 Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*.

T.S. Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*.

James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way*.

Hitler comes to power in Germany.

1934 Zora Neale Hurston, *Jonah's Gourd Vine*.

T.S. Eliot, *After Strange Gods*.

Wyndham Lewis, *Men Without Art*.

Ezra Pound, *The A.B.C. of Reading*, *Make it New*.

Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*.

Henry Miller, *The Tropic of Cancer*.

Nancy Cunard (ed.), *Negro: An Anthology*.

Luigi Pirandello awarded the Nobel Prize.

1935 T.S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*.

W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, *The Dog Beneath the Skin*.

Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*.

Marianne Moore, *Selected Poems*.

Rural Electrification Administration and Works Progress Administration created in USA.

Harlem riot.

Italian invasion of Abyssinia.

Nuremberg Laws passed in Germany.

1936 Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*.

Michael Roberts (ed.), *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*.

Dylan Thomas, *Twenty-Five Poems*.

W.B. Yeats (ed.), *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*.

Piet Mondrian, "Composition in Red and Blue."

Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times*.

International Surrealist Exhibition held in London.

BBC television commences broadcasting.

Spanish Civil War begins (ends in 1939).

Berlin Olympics held.

1937 W.H. Auden, "Spain, 1937."

David Jones, *In Parenthesis*.

Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering*.

Virginia Woolf, *The Years*.
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.
Wallace Stevens, *The Man with the Blue Guitar*.
Bryher, *Cinema Survey*.
Pablo Picasso, "Guernica."
Mass-Observation begins in Britain.
The Great Terror begins in Russia.

1938   Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Poetry*.
Elizabeth Bowen, *The Death of the Heart*.
George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*.
Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*.
Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities*.
Jean Cocteau, *Les parents terribles*.
Sergei Eisenstein, *Alexander Nevsky*.
Leni Riefenstahl, *Olympia*.
Munich crisis.
Kristallnacht (the night of broken glass) – attacks on Jews across Germany.
Osip Mandelstam dies in the Vladivostok Transit Camp.

1939   James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*.
Thomas Mann, *Lotte in Weimar*.
Death of W.B. Yeats.
Beginning of the Second World War.

1940   Paris falls to German occupation.
Suicide of Walter Benjamin.

1941   John Crowe Ransom, *The New Criticism*.
Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts*.
Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage* premieres in Zurich.
Vladimir Nabokov, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*.
Death of James Joyce.
Suicide of Virginia Woolf.
Suicide of Marina Tsvetaeva.
Germany invades the USSR.
USA enters the Second World War.

1942   Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (posthumous).

1945   Gertrude Stein, *Wars I Have Seen*.
H.D., *Tribute to Angels*.

Second World War ends; atomic bombs detonated in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

1946   United Nations convenes for the first time.

1947   Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus.*
Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment.*
Partition of India.

1948   Georg Lukács, *Thomas Mann.*
F.R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition.*
T.S. Eliot awarded Nobel Prize.
Partition of Palestine and the founding of the state of Israel.
Gandhi assassinated.

1949   Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex.*
Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music.*
People's Republic of China declared.
Apartheid instituted in South Africa.

1950   Charles Olson, "Projective Verse."
Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude.*
Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination.*

1952   Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man.*
Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks.*

1953   Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* performed in Paris.

1954   First public celebration of Bloomsday in Dublin.
Vietnamese army defeats French at Dien Bien Phu.

1955   Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* published in English.
Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita.*

1958   Boris Pasternak awarded Nobel Prize.

1960   Death of Boris Pasternak.

1966   Basil Bunting, *Briggflatts.*
Death of Anna Akhmatova.

1969   Samuel Beckett awarded Nobel Prize.

Introduction: A History of "Modernism"

VINCENT SHERRY

In one received understanding, "modernism" emerges as a working term only in the teaching cultures of postwar universities in England and (especially) America. According to this understanding, "modernism" earned its currency as a word mainly in those academic settings, where it offered itself chiefly as a term of convenience, providing a departmental curriculum with course titles or doctoral dissertations with historical frames. In those college classrooms and library studies, "modernism" is supposed to have exerted a neutral, mostly descriptive, non-controversial and certainly non-polemical function – at least at its inception. This is not an accurate understanding, and the history it outlines is wrong. The word "modernism" is circulating noticeably and in fact clamorously at the turn of the twentieth century. It emerges already and first of all as a fighting word, being fraught from the start with strident and contestable claims about the meaning of the experience of history in general and contemporary history in particular. This is the historical moment for which "modern" has recently been accepted as a designation and "ism" its newly challenging, and increasingly challenged, intensive. Such is the power of the denominator, in fact, that this *Cambridge History of Modernism* frames its broad historical subject through the word itself. "Modernism" provides the point of reference in this Introduction because it centers a debate about the meaning of being "modern," especially in the inflection which the additional "ism" attributes to it, and because this controversy frames many of the critical issues and interpretive questions that are most cogent to the body of work that is brought under its heading. The debate is lengthening now into its second (actually third) century. In a fashion at least mildly appropriate to the temporal imaginary of its subject, this Introduction will move through this period counterclockwise as well as clockwise – from the beginning of the twenty-first century to the end of the nineteenth – by entering in medias res.

"What is 'Modernism'?" So opens the annual Presidential Address at the English Association meeting in London in 1937. The interrogative mood dissolves quickly as the speaker, the Very Rev. W.R. Inge, turns to the etymology of the word he has pronged between those inverted commas:

> The barbarous Latin word *modernus* (from *modo*, 'just now') occurs first in the sixth century, in the grammarian Priscian, and Cassiodorus, an official of Theodoric. In the twelfth century it was applied to the Nominalists by the Realists, and Roger Bacon called Alexander of Hales and Albert *duo moderni gloriosi*; even Thomas Aquinas was called a Modernist by the Platonists and Augustinians. During the Renaissance it was applied to the new humanistic ways of thought. In the seventeenth century a 'middle age' was intercalated between 'ancient' and 'modern'. Our own age will perhaps some day be called the middle age, unless they prefer to call it 'the meddle and muddle age'.[1]

The after-dinner humor concluding this first paragraph does not obscure a skepticism edging into enmity, which is manifest in that opening blast at the babbling Latinity of the early Dark Ages. Obviously motivated for attack, the philological learning in this overture includes nonetheless a precise understanding of the specific inflection of the Latin radical, which is indeed the root of the issue for Inge. *Modo*, as the *Oxford English Dictionary* informs him, means something narrower than an adjectival understanding of "recent" or "current"; it finds its meaning as a temporal adverb, telling the time of an action occurring not simply "today" or even "now" but *"just now."* So, *modo* enters into late antiquity as a most timely register of a temporality pressured by an immense sense of eventful change: a special present, a brink of time, a precipitous instant, all in all, a crisis time. These several associations move to the acutest register in the twentieth century through the addition of the suffix "ism," which adds a self-conscious awareness to this special experience of the "modern" moment, turning the uncertainty of instantaneous time into not just a feeling but an idea, maybe even a faith or belief in this condition of constantly disruptive change.

The special motive and pressure for Inge's riposte comes then from the modern context of the twentieth, the assignably "modern," century, which, in his fearful apprehension, is realizing the meaning of a word introduced into late Roman antiquity as the original indicator of crisis time. The notion of "just now" has been lived out indeed in a century already divided into decades with names and nicknames, ranging from the dynastic to the dynamic, from Edwardian to Roaring. Most important, an instant-by-instant difference in the actual experience of historical time lives out – and in – the

rhythms of an unprecedented and accelerating pace of change in the history of material cultures. Accordingly, the imaginative experience of temporality moves beyond one of crisis time to one of time itself in crisis: a formerly natural, apparently gradual time of diurnal days and seasonal rounds has been sliced ever more finely and grandly by the developing mechanisms of chronometry, which have worked in ways little and large – from the division of the globe into twenty-four equal time zones to the parsing of micro-times within a supposedly seamless instantaneity – to unsettle temporal measurement itself. It is the feeling of free-fall within these conditions that most unsettles critics like Inge. And so his and their attacks, which are more like counterattacks in the sense that they are manifestly reactive and panicky, tend to deflect from the source of their profounder dread to images of the predictably ridiculous, say, in the characterization of "modernist" sculpture as "figures apparently suffering from elephantiasis or acromegaly" or "modernist" painting as "zigzags" crisscrossing "a woman with green hair."[2] No, it is not about the mannerisms, odd or otherwise, that are attached to "modernism" as its characterizing styles, which, in any case, are much too various to conform to any one version. No, it is about time: it is about this new experience of vertiginous instants in which "modernism" is most self-consciously involved, and it was about time, in the minds of those identified with this sensibility over the long turn of the twentieth century, that works of art constitute themselves in awareness of time and the changing conditions of time in their work. So, if the feeling of crisis time and time in crisis was undergone first in Inge's history in the final collapse of classical culture in the sixth century, it is, now in the fourth decade of the twentieth, implicitly but insistently – and recognizably, in the currency of this word "modernism" – the present condition of things.

The decade-by-decade chronology in the twentieth-century history of modernism begins of course with the "fin de siècle," where the French nomenclature frames an interval with an equal degree of self-consciousness about its own special time. Accordingly, in the archaeologies of the twentieth-century uses of this word, cultural historians usually find the foundational source of "modernism" in the later nineteenth century, specifically, in the histories of European and especially French Roman Catholicism.[3] This "modernist movement" included an effort at updating the formulations of traditional church doctrines and, most important, at understanding the history of these doctrinal positions as historically determined and, so, as relative and changeable. And so it is clear that the "just now"-ism of the modernist sensibility was scored into the founding

principles of this religious movement, too. What needs to be recognized, however, is that this ecclesiastical "modernism" was not the inaugural form of the word in European usage. Roman Catholic "modernism" was echoing developments in the broader cultural histories of Europe, where the term "modern" was already flourishing in contemporary continental milieus with that charged and often fraught sense of a special present, of crisis time and time in crisis.

Through the last two decades of the nineteenth century, cognates of the term "modern" were appearing with increasing frequency in Italy and Spain, in Germany and Austria, in Denmark and Scandinavia and Russia. Primary bibliographies display a range of periodicals and magazines, novels and anthologies of poetry as well as discursive works, which feature the word "modern" in the title. This flourish occurs with special intensity in Germany, where the pressures of modernization were occurring in the most accelerated form in Europe. German journals include *Die Moderne*, *Moderne Blätter*, and *Freie Bühne für modernes Leben*, while monographs particularize this "modern" condition in a number of specifically topical considerations: *Das sexuelle Problem in der modernen Litteratur* (1890), for example, or *Der Übermensch in der modernen Litteratur* (1897), and already in 1890 in *Zur Kritik der Moderne*. The increasing frequency of this word indicates a sense sufficiently self-conscious as to mean, in every relevant way, "modernism."

What is equally remarkable in continental Europe and, as Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane have pointed out, especially in Germany, is the sudden lapse of interest in the "modern," which occurs just as the supposedly "modern" century has turned. In 1909, for indicative instance, Samuel Lublinski titles his monograph *Der Ausgang der Moderne* (*The Exit of the Modern*).[4] Similarly, in Italy, where the federation of the "modern" (as opposed to classical or Roman) state in 1870 coincided with the energies of a much-promulgated modernization: these developments of political and cultural history crested toward the century's end as their moment or realization, when, however, a change of terms occurs and, as Luca Somigli succinctly notes, "the label of '*decadentismo*' has come to identify much of what in other traditions is described as 'modernism.'"[5] The Spanish variant on this pattern appears in *modernismo*, which, as a synonym of "modernity," centers an intensity of debate in the years approaching the turn of the century. In that process, however, and especially after 1900, *modernismo* was always disaggregating into a composite topic in cultural and literary history, where the still uncertain associations of the term look backward as well as forward for its markers and come to include Parnassianism,

Symbolism, Decadentism, even pre-Raphaelitism.[6] This backward-turning aspect in the term emerges in Latin America as a point of strong reaction "around the turn of the last century," as Rubén Gallo notes in this *History* in his chapter on "modernism" in Spanish America. Here a "once" but no longer "controversial verse became the rallying cry of a new movement called *post-modernismo* (not to be confused with postmodernism), which called for a poetic renewal and a new aesthetics."

The sense of crisis time and time in crisis in "modernism" thus clusters around the century's turn as its likeliest temporal environment. As Frank Kermode has written about the end-and-beginning feeling of the turn of centuries, it is at this (recurring) point in history that a sense of instability is at its most intense.[7] In this understanding, the feeling of unease is as urgently uncertain as it is necessarily brief. There are other ways of explaining the brief but intense life of the turn-of-the-century "modern," however, which involve the more particular history of the century then ending on the European continent. Recalling this history may allow us to understand some of the reasons why "modernism" fades as a critical descriptor for subsequent cultural histories on the continent even while it gains strength as a counter of value and center of attention from the beginning through the end of the twentieth century in Britain and America.

Continental Europe had known crisis times in the century then ending with an intensity worth remembering. If we understand revolution in its profoundest dimension as an effort of returning to some radical version of human sociality and, in effect, beginning history anew, we can see that the pan-European revolutions of the period extending from 1789 through 1848 or 1851 witness a continuing and increasingly desperate attempt at this renovation of historical time. This impetus finds a signature, original formulation in the new calendar of revolutionary France, which renames the months of the calendar year as the most explicit sign of the imaginative aspiration for a new time. It is not just those measures of temporality that are being renamed. Time itself is being reinvented as a dimension of novel possibility in the future perfect tense of visionary history. The manifest failure of this ambition is scored into the title of Karl Marx's 1852 documentary memoir of revolutions lapsing now across Europe as well as in France: *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. There is a specially condensed, bitter eloquence here. Where the word from the revolutionary calendar of republican France echoes ahead to the next Bonaparte, we hear the token of a new future closing down around a name that is not just recurring and so dynastic but institutionalized: by the end of this phrase, as by the end of the

period the title frames, the quality of improvisational time in revolutionary temporality has all too obviously run down. This history of disappointed as well as expectant time converges as a complex sensibility, then, toward the turn of the century, when the force of this precedent history charges that otherwise arbitrary marker. This memory bears all too evident witness to the fact that a moment of round-numbered chronology may not be the circumstance of some apocalyptic transformation. And so the verbal token of crisis time – conveying not just the expectation of change or renovation but the feeling of an acute present, a preoccupation with and in a brink instant, of living in a Now explicitly different from a Then or even a Next – is let go with the feeling of crisis fatigue for which this history is prequel and explanation. In France, indeed, where the history of failed revolutions is perhaps most acute, the French cognate for "modernism" has never enjoyed any strong purchase as a term of interest or denominator of value in literary and cultural history, as Jean-Michel Rabaté points out in his chapter on Proust and Gide and Larbaud in this *History*. Such is the power of the word, it seems, that it has been displaced from the cultural histories in which its meaning has been made most starkly real.

But not unrealized: the radical meaning of "modernism" is readily and necessarily applicable to the cultural productions of the countries covered in this *History*. In the work of many different and in fact changing and emerging nations (Russia and Ireland and Austria among them), the strong sense of the root meaning of the word is not at all attenuated: it is extended, diversified, even intensified. This work occurs under the rubric of the term more enduringly in Britain and North America, where the sense of crisis time and time in crisis does not include the events and memory, all in all, the form of historical consciousness, which put pressure on the sense of the word on continental tongues. So, in English, "modernism" operates as a denominator for a more chronic pattern of consciousness and a more diachronic experience of history. This is not to say, however, that the word abides in English in the quiet of consensus understandings in the long and lengthening era of the transatlantic midcentury. In the entity of faith or belief that this suffix makes of the modern condition, "modernism" suggests not just the awareness but the acceptance of crisis time as the abiding time of the modern century. And the fight over this idea flares up first as the end of the previous century begins.

In 1891, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Thomas Hardy produces a phrase that will echo across the turn of the century as a resonant expression of crisis time and its contemporary discontents: "the ache of modernism." Hardy's narrator

uses this phrase to describe the feeling Tess experiences in seeing a vision of days winding away into a future that is at once infinite and diminishing, an eternity that is both meaningless and menacing.[8] This is a vision of time future as time indeterminate, as time unblessed and unbound from the covenants of eschatology, all in all, as time detached from the patterns of traditional biblical significance. Indeed, the insignificance of traditional time provides a new significance, a new critical condition. And "modernism" is the word for this condition. In Tess's vision, the experience of time is suspended ever in a moment that recurs without meaningful sequence or consequence, where the root of the "just now" meaning of "modernism" includes the even more challenging sense of "only now" or "no more than now." Tess stands thus in the exceptionality of her own instant as a radical "modernist." And while her experience is historically grounded and broadly shared (her feelings are "those of the age"),[9] her vision stands for the sense of a present that is an isolated and radicalized piece of time, being at once full of itself and emptied of precedents or destinies. This is the modernism that hurts, and, in view of the whole "age" that shares this feeling, there is a lot of pain to go around. The hurt may be located most indicatively where older, accustomed understandings of time are confronted by an assignably "modern" one, which includes not just the diminishment of the post-Enlightenment idea of progressive history but the intensification of the feeling of existence in the sheerest of instants, in a phrase, the emergent menace of existentialism. So, "modernism" already enfolds the complexity of a fully and doubly measured sense, which includes the promise and the disappointment of the futurity Tess views in advancing but diminishing days. The deep time of "modernism" is this counter-rhythmic condition, which runs through the commentary on either side of that turning century.

"The Ache of Modernism": in 1897, the phrase is already resonant and still provocative enough to provide the title for an essay in *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*. In this venue, one might expect George Northcroft to complain about Hardy's already well-known apostasy, but he concentrates instead on the meaning of his title phrase for this particular historical moment. "We are too much the children of the hour to be untouched by it," Northcroft admits, and reiterates: "It is widely felt, and in many cases keenly. It is more than a literary fashion. It is a striking phase of the temper of to-day." The "to-day" that Northcroft is marking is implicitly but irresistibly the short and shortening day of the end of the century, when a particularly "modern pessimism" and "modern sadness" attends the art of that "modern writer" and all those "modern novelists" that provisions "the public library of any

modern city." Repeating "modern" with an insistence equal to its frequency in that reiterative bibliography of German periodicals on or about the same year, Northcroft consolidates his self-consciousness about the condition to which the word refers, expressing the sense of the "ism" suffix in this conspicuous refrain. And this is a "modernism" that hurts just where Hardy feels it most keenly, that is, where the art of this self-consciously "modern" moment produces "no *lasting* satisfaction."[10] The cultural value being threatened shows clearly in the title of the next article in this issue of the journal: "*Lasting* Happiness."[11] The impermanence that is scored into the root meaning of radical "modernism" is a condition equally of threat and opportunity, where an improvisatory "modern" is always allied with a sense of disintegration, so that the message of this mercurial instant includes also and inevitably a hermeneutic of decay.

Those are the threats against which R.A. Scott-James attempts to defend his "modernism" in the first book-length work of literary criticism to carry the English word in its title: *Modernism and Romance* (1908). He moves the meaning of the first of his title words toward the side of improvisatory opportunity. He puts "modernism" on the plotline of a "romance" novel of history that is driven to ever-better ends by a Progress-minded ideology. In this way, Scott-James's book offers an inaugural form of a one-sided but defensive construction of "modernism" that will continue to be heard for at least a century longer. This early instance is indeed a radical form. So hard is Scott-James pushing this single-minded idea of Progress-minded modernism, he reads even the novels of a late imperial age, Conrad's most conspicuously and in fact preposterously, as testaments to the assertion "that our civilisation so far from being very old is really in its infancy."[12] All of this effortful work represents an attempt to counter the negative inflection of its Latin radical, the "passing moment" sense of its "just now" meaning, which is more than an inference insofar as it has already found a timely habitation and alternative name: "Decadence."

This sensibility flourished (if "decadence" can be said to flourish) in the English as well as the continental fin de siècle. This last decade before the last century of the millennium provides an initial, defining instance of the idea of crisis time or time in crisis that "modernism" denominates. This so-called "decade of Decadence" provides a primary, paradigmatic location of the imaginative time of "modernism" as a verbal concept. And it is a measure of the threat presented by this negative side of dissolving time – told and tolled in the countdown letdown of Northcroft's self-consciously "modern" time – that Scott-James has to counter it so strenuously. This work extends

past his chapter "The Decadents," which includes a single- and bloody-minded denunciation of that group, and into the strenuous efforts of passages like this:

> It is a wearisome tale to tell ... He is happy indeed who does not understand what I have sought to suggest rather than to explain ... if he has not felt these and all the other parts of our over-developed community shaking and shivering in self-conscious postures, groaning in the agonies either of actual physical pain or the self-imposed torture of affectation, then he belongs to the happy few who have not been compelled to witness the "ache of modernism."[13]

Readers still familiar with the art and literature of the fin de siècle recognized the type characters of *décadence* in this *mise-en-scène*. Their febrile exhaustion, more specifically their *over*ripe ("*over*-developed") condition – these figures repeat the trope of civilization at its decaying-before-dying end that recurs among Decadent writers from Théophile Gautier on. Scott-James's *tableau mordant* revives it all, and all for his own strenuous purpose – to make these figures alien to the optimist's "modernism," which he is trying to cure of the "ache" Hardy's phrase preserves still in the nerve it touches. The pain of decaying time remains a constitutive element of this modernism even – or especially – as Scott-James works so hard to alleviate it.

This archive of turn-of-the-century writings restores some of the fullness of the discursive work being performed with and through "modernism." In this original force field, the verbal radical generates the primary terms of the relevant debate, which swings between the opposite possibilities of its twofold sense. These root meanings may be attenuated in due course, even in short course, but, even when renamed and rehabbed in the longer durée of its ongoing use, the core ideas will continue to apply.

In shorter course, those potent signifiers of instability and diminishment are shifted into an increasingly indeterminate range of dangers which, in their variety, preserve some of the original negativity but diffuse its particular threat. So dispersed, the meanings of "modernism" do not so much constellate as conjure up many (or any) convention-dismaying qualities, which, lacking specificity, come quickly enough to be tolerated, even fondly tolerated, and so accommodated. Already in 1913 in *The Athenaeum*, for early instance, the author of "Modernism at the Albert Hall" asks "liberal-minded men" to look past the evidently "dangerous tendency" in some of the work on view, which includes cubism and futurism as well as post-impressionism, and recognize that "this revolution, if it is a real revolution, cannot be checked." The use of "revolution" in this article, which includes the

intensifying repetition of the word, includes a history of political revolutions in Europe that has been rewritten and reoriented in English, it seems, into a promissory cultural rebirth. Recognized as inevitable, needing thus to be allowed, this specifically cultural revolution is accommodated now, in the closing note of the piece, as "the immediate herald of a new Renaissance."[14] So, in 1917, in the American journal *New Opinion*, the worst that can be said about the impresario of the original Parisian production of Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps*, which earned far worse for its recognizably or assignably "modernist" quality in 1913, is: "Jean Cocteau, the daring modernist poet."[15] So in 1925, in a review of Marianne Moore's poems in the American *Dial*, a magazine already sided with a poetics identifiably and also nominally "modernist," William Carlos Williams can write to this evolving consciousness of popular acceptance: "modernism is distressing to many who would at least tolerate it if they knew how. These individuals, who cannot bear the necessary appearance of disorder in all immediacy, could be led to appreciation through critical study."[16]

The "critical study" that Williams asks for is the activity necessary to accommodate the quality of "difficulty" that comes increasingly to be attributed to "modernism." This "difficulty" needs to be understood as an attributed, not a synonymic or intrinsic, condition, and so denaturalized. It may be understood best in terms of the uses and motives it serves in a cultural economy broader than one reader's, one viewer's, one listener's experience.

While landmark works of modernism – from Schoenberg's to Joyce's to Kandinsky's – create perplexity even for their most assiduous critics, the assigning of "difficulty" to this work also serves as a simpler equivalent – a euphemism – for the more challenging "difference" the works of modernism may register from conventional styles of representation. In fact, "difficulty" represents a quality of experience or a category of value that a number of modernists pointedly contest, seeing it as a misplaced understanding about what a work of art is or can do. "Never explain," T.S. Eliot is said to have said, providing that cryptic motto for this authorial advice for remaining cryptic. The elusiveness – the irreducibility – of an art identified as "modernist" may locate the essential difference it presents to mass-educated notions. In a cultural history that has witnessed a burgeoning growth in the extent of "general" education, which emphasizes basic comprehension as the aim or merit of its activity, a standard-issue art will be regarded as a conveyer of content, as a statement of reducible truths. An art that presents, however, rather than *re*presents: such is the motive and means of work identified as

"avant-garde," which, often staged as an art of its own event, its own making or happening, defines the moment of its occurrence as the limiting but signifying condition of its existence. In its own ideation, at least, it cannot be converted into something else: there is no *revisiting* of some putative referent or anterior (let alone ulterior) meaning; the presentation of sheer experience locates the ground and warrant of the "special present" this radical form of modernism defines and occupies – however briefly. And brevity is the condition of the dozens and even hundreds of avant-garde phenomena in early and midcentury modernism, where their go-and-come-and-go pattern manifests the quality of the transitory in the core meaning of "modernism."

The displacement of this essential difference into "difficulty," however, is one of the chief means by which mainstream cultures first acknowledge and tolerate products identified as "modernist." What happens for a mass-educated readership applies as well to public consumption, to modernism as an increasingly mass-consumed product. This process is given a motivated pressure in the understanding of critics such as Theodor Adorno, who sees the threatening expressions of this avant- or radical modernism being con-verted by a master capitalist class into the commodities of a "culture indus-try," which stylize the difference and, converting it into the acceptable, ultimately the desirable, neutralize its danger.[17] Whether one accepts the explicitly Marxist terms of Adorno's analysis, one of the subplots in the cultural history of the 1920s witnesses this growing acceptance of "modernism" as a term and reference, and this development spurs the countermotioning efforts of artists and critics to hold onto the difference "modernism" constitutes in the more radical manifestations of avant-garde attitudes and practices.

Sheldon Cheney writes of the increasing pressure of this normalization of difference in the wryly titled "America Shakes Hands with the Modernists," in 1926, in a piece of cultural commentary in *The Independent*. "The proprietor of a small gallery that became one of the pioneer footholds of the modernists in America recently said to me: 'The landslide has come; the town has gone modern. There isn't even the fun of a fight any more.'" The fun of the fight of the difference this advocate of "modernism" is already nostalgic for has been quieted by the cultural production of modernism in one of the major New York museum shows, which provides the occasion for this piece. "For those who have been accustomed to consider modernist art merely a symptom of abnormality or eccentricity on the part of a few detached artists," Cheney rues humorously but pointedly, the once "unusual, the

eccentric thing, modern art has become the normal accepted thing in New York."[18] Here the cultural institution converts the challenge of the "unusual" or the "eccentric" into the classificatory logic of an exhibition, where docents or academics will explain and so normalize it. Already in 1924, on the other side of the continent, at the University of Washington, Elias Thornleif Arnesen has submitted a doctoral dissertation, "Modernism and Literature," which offers an earnest attempt to pull the immensities of the two title words into a reductive understanding; one senses the subtleties of understanding a good deal less than the pressures of reduction.[19] Against such pressures Robert Graves and Laura Riding will push back with the emphases they make in 1927, in *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, which confronts the "plain reader" as the primary opponent, indeed the establishing antagonist, of their ideal "modernist" poet.[20] Graves and Riding are clearly seeking to reclaim the oppositional elusiveness of this poetry, of which they find plenty in the poems they choose to illustrate this understanding of the "modernist" impulse, Riding's own most noticeably and so most of all.

Three decades later, as a young American poet, Donald Hall had a conversation with the critic who had done the most in the interim to put the literature of transatlantic, Anglo-Irish and Anglo-French modernism into the classrooms of American and English universities: Edmund Wilson, author of *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870–1930* (1931). The tête-à-tête occurred at a party being given at Harvard by Harry Levin, who was using Wilson's book as a critical frame for a course that covered most of the writers it featured: Eliot and Joyce and Yeats, Stein and Valéry and Proust. Attempting to ingratiate himself with "the master," Hall conspicuously delivered the word "modernist" as a sign of his knowingness about things current. Wilson exploded, angrily but incoherently, about that "filthy and disgusting word." Being sure "modernist" could not be "the offending word," and attempting to regain the advantage, Hall repeated it: Wilson blew up again, even more angrily.[21] While no other report of the incident seems to have survived, it stands nonetheless as a parable and indeed a parabolic account of the rising and falling fortunes of "modernism" in the previous – and, in fact, subsequent – three decades.

As the currency of the term "modernism" was increasing, it was also working in the service of its own institutionalization, which the more radical understandings of modernism would perforce oppose. Obviously enough, Wilson hadn't used it in his book, perhaps because he sensed those incipient pressures of institutionalization, which he would resist as a point of his own cultural politics. He had become more committed as a Marxist in the decade

of the Great Depression, making explicit a set of political attitudes and values that were at least implicit in this formative critical book. There is indeed a residual if not polemical commitment to the principles of transformative revolutionary change in political history, not just literary history, in *Axel's Castle*.[22] The influence of Wilson's book was so great that his own personal politics exerted a profound effect on subsequent generations' understandings of a politics of modernism. Indeed, surprising as it might now seem, and as Robert Spiller notes in a retrospective essay in *The Nation* in 1958 (the year of Hall's encounter with its author), its prominence in university curricula helped to create an environment in which "a love of Eliot, Joyce, Proust, and Yeats seemed compatible with radical politics."[23] In a midcentury American university culture, this "radical" energy was strongly and particularly leftward leaning, but, in any absolute sense, a radically "modernist" cultural revolution did not have a prescribed politics. The absolute Now could point Left or Right on the metaphorical spectrum of political opinion if not backward or forward on its figurative clock. In any case, the memory of radical modernism in the avant-moment of its own revolutionary making is working through Wilson's book in ways little and large, subtle and striking.

The battle over the status of this memory will be one of the primary issues centering the discursive work being performed through "modernism" in the postwar decades. Although the word is doing some work in the university worlds of the 1950s, it is spreading widely only by the later 1980s. Yet the three decades of the sixties, seventies, and eighties witness a consistent and consecutive engagement not just with the word but with the intellectual and political issues implicit in it. This colloquy may be represented best at the focal points of the turns of decades. Here, as a measure of the pressure the term is exerting, some of the major voices of literary criticism and cultural commentary are working its root meanings toward contemporary circumstances, where the new inflections often turn on the recognition that, whatever "modernism" means, it is no longer new, for its referent is dead.

In 1960, Harry Levin gave a talk at Queen's University in Canada that would be reprinted a number of times in subsequent years: "What Was Modernism?" The past tense of the verb in the title indicates all too clearly that its predicate nominative has passed into history, an historical fact that ramifies through this midcentury commentary as a formative orientation and issue. As a kind of tuning fork for this commentary, Levin opens his lecture with a humorous but rueful anecdote of "The Picasso," now the name of a posh "modern" apartment building in Manhattan. "Picasso," he reminds his auditors, has only recently appeared as a signature under images of "rootless

transience," of "collapsible stairways" and "rooms without floors."[24] This imagery focuses Picasso's own signature version of the most volatile qualities of modernism in its radical sense, all in all, of the incandescent impermanence that is at once the insignia and the stimulus of its most breathtaking inventions. Now, however, "The Picasso" is obviously as secure as the building behind it and as definite as the article in front of a name that has become a common noun. And so Levin moves between a record of that development and a compensatory effort to locate the moment of an original, singular or proper "modernism" in history – a center of definitional, legitimating attention, which would properly occupy the consciousness of scholars. For Levin, this is the era flowing into and through the years of the First World War, where crisis time and time in crisis were all too manifestly apparent. In this location he is able to claim – more accurately, reclaim – the original and now it seems aboriginal moment of the special present, of crisis time and time in crisis. This "interval," he observes assertively, "thought of itself in the present tense ... Ernest Hemingway's first book of stories was aptly entitled *In Our Time*, and its grasp of immediacy was heightened by ... His intensive concentration on the instant." "Whatever the language," Levin concludes, "the meaning is imminence; and that 'nowness' is a precondition of the search for newness."[25] The point of significant interest is not so much the correctness of that placement of modernism in or around the war years, which would be contested and reasserted repeatedly over the next half-century. What seems most noteworthy is the ambitious precision of the effort to find that center of reference; so to locate an epicenter of activity in this original force field of "modernism"; so to repossess an energy that appears now to be an erstwhile force, its cultural production an increasingly archival record.

There is an essential tension between living the history of "modernism," that is, and outliving it: this tension is inevitable in a verbal concept that has the idea of a radical present as its core sense. The tension is generative already in this still early moment of the long midcentury establishment of the canon of "modernist" art for university curricula, when that era of putatively revolutionary activity has become an area of academically organized study. Fairly or not, though fairness is not the issue here, the later institutionalization of the term will come to stand for the institutional quality of its referent, which, for a revolution, let alone a revolution for the sake of the impermanence of its own moment, seems contradictory at best. In this respect, it is at once indicative and prescient that Levin should be compelled to defend his "modernism," especially in the radical meaning he has

recovered for it, against "its Post-Modern attackers."[26] As Steven Connor notes in the Epilogue to this *History*, the generation of "postmodernism," both as word and era, concurs with and is spurred by – it may also serve to spur – the development of "modernism" as a working term in the institutional language of university study and book publishing into and through the 1980s. In a longer view of cultural history, as Connor also shows, many of the now typical features of postmodernism can be read as an extended echo of attitudes and practices that are recognizably, even adamantly, "modernist." What we can see here, in an even longer view, is a vying for the authority of an original, legitimating force of a Just Now moment – in 1968 as well as 1914 – where the once revolutionary energy of "modernism," muted in its university work, would be revived now in unrest in those universities, as experienced and told in the cultural histories of the 1960s in England and the Americas as well as on the European continent, especially France.

This current circumstance is also encouraging the recognition that the innovative energy of "modernism" is a matter of finished history, although, as a function of the core meanings of the word, the admission continues to be interestingly and significantly difficult. It lives on as an issue in the odd combination of diminuendo and bravado in the title of Irving Howe's landmark volume of 1970: *Decline of the New*. Howe's opening essay, "The Culture of Modernism," radicalizes the meaning of "modernism" as a "catastrophe" that is "unique" in history but, he claims adamantly, has not passed into history: this "catastrophe," he warrants, is "the experience of *our age*." Whether or not the art of the late 1960s looks like that of the 1910s, its establishing circumstance, Howe wants to say, is the same. Such is the power of this idea of a perpetual threshold moment in history, so prepossessed is Howe by the notion of chronic catastrophe, that he has obviously memorized but misremembered the formulation Virginia Woolf so famously gave it nearly a half-century earlier: "'On or about December 1910 human nature [Woolf wrote "character"] changed.'"[27] Yet it is a manifest fact to Howe that the convention-dismaying energy of an avant-garde modernism has been assimilated to mainstream culture in the same way that his sometime fellow-traveling Marxist Adorno has emphasized. This is the concern he worries recursively throughout the essay. It leads him nowhere near the extremity of Marxist critique that Georg Lukács formulated a decade earlier in his polemical essay "The Ideology of Modernism," which presents the word as a malicious contradiction: here "modernism," no revolution of its own or anyone else's, represents in fact a counter-revolutionary force,

all in all, a reaction formation to the energies of emancipated "potentiality" (his word for Progress) in European socialism; it presents a bourgeois obstacle right – wrong – from the start.[28] Nonetheless, the disappointment Howe cannot help but announce in the failure of the historical avant-garde locates a growing point of the postmodernist critique that is emerging simultaneously with and not independently from it.

At the beginning of the next decade, in prefatory acknowledgements dated "January 1981," Howe is included among the formative influences on Marshall Berman's *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. This book resumes where Howe left off: Berman makes an impassioned attempt to live the history of modernism forward from the point at which Howe feared it had ended. To do so, Berman makes a move that is intellectually ambitious but tactically simplistic, a measure all in all of the difficulty of the project and the urgency of a solution. The effort gains particular significance in terms of the existing history of the criticism of "modernism," which he recapitulates, and recapitulates at just that moment when "modernism" is about to emerge and flourish as a term in the discursive as well as analytical work of the decade.

Berman takes the paradox in the verbal concept of "modernism" – the improvisatory energy, the force of decay – and their elaborated consequences – the technical inventiveness, a refusal of futurity – and shifts these oppositions into the schemes and tropes of a dialectic that is explicitly Marxist (his main title is a phrase from Marx) and implicitly but insistently Hegelian. Progress, the resolving value in Scott-James's early account of "modernism," once again provides the compelling conceptual force. In developing this argument, Berman turns the word "modernism" into an historical protagonist, a virtual character who is propelled by motivating aims and directive values and so, in the process of realizing these, faces situational difficulties, experiences global setbacks as well as local successes. This dramatic narrative emerges with the eloquence of a believer in Berman's book, drawing it a great deal of critical attention. If his simplifications come from the fact that he has forgotten that "modernism" is first and last a word, his narrative character "modernism" also represents his defiance of the historicity of "modernism" as a verbal concept: for him, the story of its referent is far from over. Indeed, in the subjunctive mood of Berman's report, in the imaginative grammar of his political commitment, the ideology of Progress that is inseparable from "modernism" must and will be spoken, in the future perfect tense, as its promissory consequence. Extending the memory of his "modernism" back to romanticism, then, he sends it forward as well in

the last passages of his "Introduction": "I want to bring the dynamic and dialectical modernism of the nineteenth century to life again," he begins his peroration, so "that going back can be a way to go forward: that remembering the modernisms of the nineteenth century can give us the vision and courage to create the modernisms of the twenty-first." [29]

The decade opened by this book ends with the publication of a volume that features "modernism" in its title (the first of those we've considered in the postwar era to do so): *The Politics of Modernism*, a posthumously published collection of essays and lectures by Raymond Williams. The framing piece, his recent (1987) talk "When Was Modernism?", offers a nearly thirty-year-old echo and variation to the "What Was Modernism?" question of 1960, but it also launches a stronger, more pointed riposte to the dramatic exaggerations in Berman's particular history of "modernism." So well-known is this account, in fact, Williams does not refer to it by name – although the editor of this retrospective collection makes a point of picking through a lot of its negative press in his "Introduction."[30] In the talk itself, Williams counters Berman's hyperboles, in particular the distended temporalities of the Progress plot for "modernism," by returning attention to the word, which is spurred not just by the currency it has earned in the intervening years but also by the inflation of sense that Berman both initiates and typifies. Thus Williams carefully establishes the "just now" meaning in the root as he follows the modulating sense of this verbal concept from its beginnings in late Latinity through a now nearly millennium-and-a-half lifecycle. Williams brings this long story of the "just now" moment to its meaningful use for the period stretching from the 1890s to roughly midcentury; he emphasizes how the extraordinary range and pace of change over these years stimulated the intense consciousness about time that lies in the inherent idea of the word: here, then, is the "when" for which his "modernism" is the proper denominator.[31] But his tightening of the borders of its historical reference also coincides with a narrowing of its political possibilities. One of the strongest points in Williams's critique of any idea of a revolutionary or progressive and evolving "modernism" goes to the same fact that Levin and Howe and a lot of the commentators have already confronted in the years when the word is earning its sense. "Modernism" is becoming a subject of academic study just as the era to which it refers is ending, and the idea of crisis time or time in crisis, lived out as the very claim on currency is outlived, seems to loop back from the circumstantial belatedness of the commentators into the motivating values of its subject. In this force field of acquired associations, "modernism" includes associations very close to the

received order of things, so that any "anti-bourgeois" associations are indeed long gone.[32] Any putative involvement of "modernism" in dynamic change – cultural as well as political – is effectively questioned. Williams certainly interrogates those notions.

This narrative line through four decades of midcentury scholarship follows a commentary that shows a predominance of Marxists, but not because Marxists owned – or opposed – "modernism" in any instrumental way. Rather, the time-mindedness of its verbal concept is critical to the story unfolding in the history to which Marxists bring their own political interests. And so the essential, definite, specifically temporal sense of the word is furthered, contested, and confirmed, and confirmed as it is contested, in a criticism committed equally to longer- and shorter-range stories of historical change. These issues are simplified considerably in some of the slogans to which the consciousness of modernism is routinely reduced, say, "Make it New" (not written by Pound in fact until the mid-1930s, a date which might locate the moment when modernism is beginning to be made Old). Nonetheless, the idea of transformational change in cultural and political histories as well as in works of aesthetic invention remains in place as a frame of reference and a standard of value in a proliferating work on "modernism," which occurs through the turn of the next century.

Here, Marxist or not, Berman's view of the future proves to have been prescient. His pluralizing of "modernisms," in the remarkable tour-de-force finale to that book, was particularly prophetic. He already forecasts the reorienting work that Peter Nicholls will formalize in his 1995 volume, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide*.[33] In multiplying the number of "modernisms" across cultural histories as well as cultural geographies, Nicholls's book provides a foundation for the soon-to-be-called New Modernist Studies, which will extend the frame of temporal reference for the Old Modernism as well as diversify its personnel. The forward slash of *Modernism/Modernity*, the journal of a Modernist Studies Association formed in 1999, points the referent of its first word into the future tense perennial of its second. In this wise, in gesturing to the emergence of contemporarily "modernist" work on the African continent and the Indian subcontinent, Berman was also already bringing into focus an interest in global modernisms that has now grown under various rubrics. These range from the problematic principle of "uneven development" to the directing premises of scholars like Susan Stanford Friedman, who see an experience of "modernism" as intrinsic to the historical progressions and lifecycle of any cultural history and, so, decisively and even polemically pluralize the noun. What is occurring in a

larger sense is a conversion of a mostly exclusionary idea, where the "ism" or "ist" of the "modern" requires the decision of an individual sensibility, to an inclusive notion, where, beyond any cenacle of chosen or choosing ones, an entire historical period may be called "modernist."[34] Given the temporal significance of the root of the word, there is a constant, often productive tension between "modernism" as the *circumstance* of the modern and the *sensibility* of the modern, and much of the best recent scholarship turns this difference into a frame of reference and framework of analysis that is highly productive.

These developments also reveal impetuses not so abstract, and a memory of the particulars of the instigating history may help to put some of the motivating interests of recent work into intellectual – and political – perspective. The consolidation of interest in "modernism" from the late 1970s through the late 1980s focused interest, predictably, on the then "usual suspects." "The Men of 1914" – Pound, Eliot, Joyce, and Wyndham Lewis – provides as a referential phrase a site of passage between modernisms new and old. The fact that three of those four men – Pound, Eliot, Lewis – maintained political commitments at odds with anything like Berman's model of tolerantly progressive politics was certainly disconcerting to the institutionalization of "modernism" in university culture, which, at least in its transatlantic sphere, tended to go more rather than less "liberal." A counterturn occurred, and the political trials of "modernism" were pursued and fueled in the 1990s with energy commensurate with earlier efforts to suppress those truths. By diversifying its personnel, however, by multiplying its subsidiary or contributory "isms," all in all, by extending its temporal longevity, the "M" word earned its reprieve, and, newly spoken, offered a rubric renewed for a new era of "modernist studies," which, to switch the plurals, is now the "study of modernisms."

The title for this *History* remains in the singular, but not as a gesture of constriction or reaction to those developments in the history of criticism. Rather, the singular provides a means of maintaining a focus no less radical for remaining true to the root sense of the word, whose representative expressions are indeed multiple. Its brink-instant sensibility is associated necessarily with the ever-accelerating conditions of change in the circumstances of urban modernity, but it is essential to maintain the difference between "modern" (or "modernization") and "modernism," which, in turn, refer to the chronological location of the twentieth century (with its dynamic of change) and a special, ramifying self-consciousness about living in these specific conditions. *The Cambridge History of Modernism* uses its title term

thus to identify a distinctive temperament of "modernism" within the "modern" period, establishing the circumstances of modernized life as the ground and warrant for an art that becomes "modernist" by virtue of its demonstrably self-conscious involvement in this modern condition. This involvement dramatizes itself in the expression of a sensibility, the practice of an attitude, and, while the effects or metrics of its presence will vary necessarily from art to art and genre to genre, there will be a steady effort in these essays to discern this special identity of "modernism" as a particular (if diversely manifested) state of artistic and cultural mind. This "mind of modernism" may be invoked variously as sensibility, temperament, disposition, attitude, outlook – a range that indexes the extensive import of the special awareness we designate as "modernism" and that suggests as well something of the protean consciousness this *History* will document in its multiple centers of attention.

As already indicated, advance signals of this sensibility appear at specific points of mid-late nineteenth-century European culture, especially in France; the essays in this *History* follow it as it grows and changes in pan-European and transatlantic contexts, while developments in imperial and late imperial histories are reflected in representative postcolonial settings. The historical coverage moves between 1890 and (for reasons that have to do with space limitations and current uncertainty about end-dates) roughly 1970. There is of course a tapering effect at the ends of that historical spectrum. In the four major sections of this *History*, there is an increasing preponderance of attention to literary modernism in particular; unlike painting or sculpture or music, literature requires translation or at least multilingual knowledge to exert its influence, and it gains greatest emphasis here, among other reasons, because it serves to assert and test the internationalism that is understood commonly to be the establishing circumstance of artistic modernism (the importance of translation warrants a chapter in this *History*). In the comprehensive logic this volume follows from its initial sections, however, the emphasis on literature occurs within an understanding of "modernism" that presents this sensibility in its most widely working expressions, which include major developments in music, philosophy, psychology, and sociology, theoretical as well as practical science, painting and sculpture, and also the allied arts of architecture and urban design.

In any comprehensive account of "modernism," its dominance as a category moves in tension – sometimes amiable, sometimes not – with its various, constitutive, subsidiary "isms": Symbolism, imagism, futurism, vorticism, Dadaism, surrealism, expressionism, etc. These groups will not be

the subjects here of separate, dedicated chapters; they form a composite subject in a single chapter, which presents the evolving avant-garde of modernism in a kind of vertical profile across the early midcentury. These movements may differ considerably from each other in their visual and literary signatures, but they join in expressing the intensified faith of their adherents in particular programs of artistic attitude and practice and, as such, demonstrate the "just now" idea of modernism as an aesthetic sensibility and expression. As advance-guards in cultural history, moreover, these movements locate the action of modernism in a signal time, a signature tense – a present intensified with the sense of the break it is making from the past and the breakthrough it makes to a future. At this core of modernism as a sensibility, a temporal imaginary dominates its consciousness, and for this reason, among others, the first of the four sections that organize this *History* is "Modernism in time."

"Modernism in time," "Modernism in space," "Modernism in and out of kind: genres, new genres, and composite genres," and "Modernism in person, modernism in community": the titles for the four sections of this *History* divide further in accordance with the frames of reference and the kinds of inquiry they organize.

Featuring time and space, the first two sections identify categories of perception and understanding that are fundamental to the sensibility of modernism. These headings also situate the expressions of this sensibility in the times and spaces of twentieth-century modernity. "Modernism in time" begins thus with a consideration of time as a subject of scientific and philosophical discussion as well as aesthetic representation, then moves this temporal imaginary in the complementary directions of the "avant-garde" and the "primitive" in the second and third chapters, then follows this sensibility through the historical locations which the consecutive decades mark. Similarly, in "Modernism in space," an opening essay on the science and sociology as well as the philosophy and aesthetics of space leads to chapters which feature the sensibility of modernism in visual and spatial media but also, necessarily, in the spatiality of urban modernity in various locations and modalities. In the larger frame of global space, newly imaginable with the closing of frontiers, the concluding chapter of this section follows modernism into Latin American locations, where, in no peripheral instance, interaction between New and Old Worlds reveals an autonomously powered extension and refinement of continental sensibilities in Latin American locations.

The third and fourth sections feature the forms in which a consciousness of modernism reorganizes existing systems of thinking about individuality

and sociality as well as types and kinds in aesthetic representation. In sum, "Modernism in and out of kind: genres, new genres, and composite genres" connects the major inventions in the traditional genres of artistic expression to equally experimental thinking about categories of identity in the established taxonomies of cultural systems – gender and race as well as art and advertising, politics and technology. As a signal of existing divisions overcome, an essay on "Literature between media" in the middle of this section indicates the space between older forms of literature and newer media of transmission as a signal site of modernism's improvisatory work with genre and media. This section opens thus with an essay on the *Gesamtkunstwerk* or total work of art, which, as it developed first in Wagnerian opera, expanded the thinking about the genres of aesthetic experience, seeking to combine visual and aural materials in a newly enriched synthesis: this is the impulse followed in its many turns and counterturns in subsequent chapters across that range of cultural production. Where this third section focuses on the forms of organization external to the persons of modernism, the fourth, "Modernism in person, modernism in community," provides an account of some of the most significant individual figures in its history, who are seen both from the outside in and the inside out. An opening essay on Freud and Freudianism sets out the terms of then new and revolutionary notions of the person, which, among other things, unmade and remade a nineteenth-century idea of the liberal individual as an autonomous rational agent. This is the premise compelling developments in conceptions of the woman, or re-conceptions of the already New Woman, who has appeared in the third section of this *History* as a newly constituted agent of her gender and now, in the second essay of the fourth section, becomes the subject who registers best some of the developing pressures on an older idea of individuality. These new ideas also set the pattern for the interactions of the characters of modernism in the rest of the essays in this section. The featured artists and critics – even the forty-five followed here are intended not as a comprehensive but a representative selection – are offered as case studies of modernism in person, but also in groups, here in groups of three. One figure in these trios sometimes provides an unexpected point of resemblance with the other two and so, in the triangulated pattern, may offer a newly revealing view on each of those in the group. They may also be seen thus as individuals developing as artists in relation to the main lines of a modernism that is evolving with them and that is embodied in the works of the artists with whom they are associated in the individual chapters and, in large, in this section as a whole.

As the "Epilogue" indicates in its subtitle, "Modernism after postmodernism," modernism's long history is lengthening beyond the compass of this volume. Developments in cultural zones far from those associated with the generative grounds or staging areas of early mid-twentieth-century "modernism" do not need that term to be legitimated, however, and time will tell what those names should be. In any case, the critical activity on "modernism" promises longevity equal to the vitality of inquiry in the pages that follow. May this *History* take its place – whether provocation or cornerstone – in the work of Modernisms New and Old: the modernism of a twentieth century lengthening into a modernist study of many decades to come.

Notes

1 The Very Rev. W.R. Inge, D.D., K.C.V.O., "Modernism in Literature," The English Association Presidential Address, 1937 (London: The English Association, 1937), 3. The series includes titles by T.S. Eliot, W.P. Ker, Stanley Baldwin, E.M.W. Tillyard, and other highly visible figures of political and literary cultures.

2 Ibid., 3.

3 A good account of this history comes from Marvin R. O'Connell, *Critics on Trial: An Introduction to the Catholic Modernist Crisis* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1994).

4 Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," in Bradbury and McFarlane (eds.), *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature* (1976; repr. London: Penguin, 1991), 19–55 (at 38–40).

5 Luca Somigli, "In the Shadow of Byzantium: Modernism in Italian Literature," in Vivian Liska and Astradur Eysteinsson (eds.), *Modernism*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), vol. II, 911–30 (at 922).

6 Nil Santiáñez, "Great Masters of Spanish Modernism," in David T. Gies (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Spanish Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 479–99.

7 Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (1967; repr. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), passim.

8 Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, ed. Simon Gatrell and Juliet Grindle (Oxford University Press, 2005), 140.

9 Ibid.

10 George J.H. Northcroft, "The Ache of Modernism," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 120 (September 1897), 671–73.

11 Ibid., 673 ff.

12 R.S. Scott-James, *Modernism and Romance* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1908), 234–35, in chap. 14, "The New Romance," 214–35.

13 Ibid., 33. One measure of the persistence of Hardy's phrase in Scott-James's understanding of modernism shows where it provides the title of one of the most cogent reviews of his book: in *Current Literature*, 45 (July 1908), 48.

14 "Modernism at the Albert Hall," *The Athenaeum*, 4474 (July 26, 1913), 92–93. This review is signed "X."

15 "The Cubist Collaborators who have Galvanized the Russian Ballet into New Life," *Current Opinion*, 63 (October 1917), 249.

16 William Carlos Williams, "Marianne Moore," *The Dial* (May 1925), 393. This discursive and sometimes promotional piece presents itself as a review of Moore's *Observations*, also published by the Dial Press.

17 See Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Coming (London: Verso, 1986).

18 Sheldon Cheney, "America Shakes Hands with the Modernists," *The Independent*, 116 (June 19, 1926), 717.

19 Elias Thornleif Arnesen, "Modernism and Literature," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Washington (1924).

20 Laura Riding and Robert Graves, *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* (London: Heinemann, 1927), passim.

21 Hall relayed this account in a letter of July 28, 1987 to Wilson's recent biographer, Lewis M. Dabney, who recounts it in *Edmund Wilson: A Life in Literature* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 159.

22 I've reconstructed this context for the writing of Axel's Castle in *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 15–19.

23 Robert Spiller, "The Influence of Edmund Wilson: The Dual Tradition," *The Nation*, February 22, 1958, 164.

24 Harry Levin, "What Was Modernism?", in Levin, *Refractions: Essays in Comparative Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 16.

25 Ibid., 286.

26 Ibid., 292.

27 Irving Howe, *Decline of the New* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1970): "The Culture of Modernism," 3–33, esp. 5–8.

28 Georg Lukács, "The Ideology of Marxism," *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* (1957), trans. John Mander and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), 17–46.

29 Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982), 35–36. The conceptual agenda of the book is represented in its "Introduction," 15–36.

30 Raymond Williams, *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, ed. Tony Pinckney (1989; repr. London: Verso, 2007); Pinckney engages forcefully with Berman's premises in his "Editor's Introduction: Modernism and Cultural Theory," 1–29, esp. 13–15.

31 Williams, "When Was Modernism?", in *The Politics of Modernism*, 31–34.
32 Ibid., 34–35.
33 Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
34 See, for example, Susan Stanford Friedman, "Periodizing Modernism: Postcolonial Modernities and the Space/Time Borders of Modernist Studies," *Modernism/Modernity*, 13/3 (2006), 425–43, and "Planetarity: Musing Modernist Studies," *Modernism/Modernity*, 17/3 (2010), 471–99.

MODERNISM IN TIME

As a special consciousness of the present, "modernism" involves understand-ings of time, which, in turn, provide a resource for some of the richest innovations associated with it. "Modernism in time" takes its place thus as the first section of this *Cambridge History*. It opens with an essay that follows the concepts of time as these evolve through the turn of the century in the discourses of scientific and philosophical inquiry as well as the practices of literature and art. This temporal sensibility finds some of its most conspicu-ous and controversial expressions in the "avant-garde" and "primitive" inflec-tions of modernism; opposite but complementary, these two directions of imaginative temporality provide the subjects of the second and third chap-ters. The next four chapters locate the "time-mind" of modernism in succes-sive decades – not only have cultural historians modeled the chronologies of modernism one decade at a time, many of the modernists themselves located and identified themselves historically in terms of ten-year intervals, most notably the teens and twenties. The decade does not span a generation, let alone an era, but it is at once large and small enough to be a period or even a micro-period with its own period feeling.

Framing these manifestations of the time-mind of modernism, the first chapter of this section follows some of the developing conceptions of temporality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Swift, extensive, manifold: changes in the metrics and so in the ideas and experi-ences of time have as their consequence a clear and even acute self-awareness

about temporality. For these reasons, among others, a heightened knowledge of living in a particular moment of historical and experiential time becomes available as the establishing circumstance of the sensibility of twentieth-century modernism. Most notably because most boldly, the "avant-garde" names its forward place in time as well as in space, while the "primitive" is no less remarkable in the assignably retrograde motion it makes in its pursuit of interest and value. At opposing ends of the temporal spectrum, these two sensibilities stand as defining extremities of the time-mind of modernism. Each of those poles is constituted of course by individual sensibilities and conflicting interests, whose motive values may range from revolutionary to imperial, and Chapters 2 and 3 populate the consciousness of those subjects with the variety and particularity of their expressions in the real time of history.

The subsequent chapters work with the decades and phases that provide the particular spots of time, the frameworks of Now, in the history of cultural modernism. These micro-histories begin with a turn of the century that goes longer than usual, extending not from 1899 to 1901 but from 1890 to 1910 or, in a tapering way, to points still earlier and even a bit later, too. New recognitions of the relativity of temporal measurement are playing with and pulling against the fixity of indicators like a round-numbered chronology, so that, even – or especially – as an arbitrary marker, the century's end is extended as an interval of awareness; it offers a staging area and establishing ground of a specifically modernist consciousness. The next two chapters mark the time and times of the teens and twenties, turning the first of these decades around the watershed event of the Great War of 1914–1918 and the second on – or about – 1922. Of course the war takes its place as a milestone and turning point in the history of modernity: the technology that offered the emblem and instrument of historical progress was now twisted to work in the service of hitherto unimagined, indeed unimaginable, destruction. Yet the years preceding and following the war emerge in this account as a little history of multiple turns, so that the war may be seen not as an instigating so much as a focusing or symbolizing event in the special history of the crisis times of modernism. And where 1922 takes its place as the *annus mirabilis* of cultural production in most standard histories of literary and artistic modernism, it also provides a point of perspective on the rest of a decade framed already and first of all – or second of all, by the second year – with a sense of its own special present. The artists and thinkers who identify themselves with this decade are charged with an awareness of something coming to term, an awareness that served in turn to make the rest of the decade at once

expectant and retrospective. The monumental accomplishments of that year, let alone of that decade, seemed to amount to nothing less than a critical mass of "modernism," even if it wasn't called that at the time, and for that reason, understandable as it is, many of the early histories of literary and artistic modernism ended their stories in 1930. That frame has been breaking open as the major development in the scholarship of modernism over a very long turn of the twenty-first century, which has taken modernism into ever later days. So the last chapter of this section follows a feeling of "late" modernism from the 1930s into and through the Second World War, providing a carefully qualified chronology for "lateness" and situating this idea historically and theoretically.

Modernist Temporality: The Science and Philosophy and Aesthetics of Temporality from 1880

TIM ARMSTRONG

When you come to feel the whole of anyone from the beginning to the ending, all the kind of repeating there is in them, the different ways at different times repeating comes out of them, all the kinds of things and mixtures in each one, anyone can see then by looking hard at any one living near them that a history of each one must be a long one. A history of any one must be a long one, slowly it comes out of them from their beginning to their ending, slowly you can see it in them the natures and mixtures in them, slowly everything comes out from each one in the kind of repeating each one does in the different parts and kinds of living they have in them, slowly then the history of them comes out from them, slowly then any one who looks well at any one will have the history of the whole of that one. Slowly the history of each one comes out of each one. Sometime then there will be a history of every one. Mostly every history will be a long one.[1]

In Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans* – completed in 1911, but only published in 1925 – narrative time takes on a new shape, unfolding through a series of overlapping near-repetitions. Stein's huge book involves both the application of her method of the "continuous present" and a radical slowing of narrative time, so that it becomes a landscape across which her characters move at an often agonizing pace, like early travellers wandering across the vast face of America. The continuous present involves the establishment of a relation between syntax and temporal philosophy: to write the same sentence again and again with minor variations, slowly moving on, opening up questions, repeating and answering them, expanding marginally, is to anchor the reading experience in accordance with Stein's view that we can only live in the present; indeed, a particular version of the present. The summational overview and sweeping temporal perspectives of the nineteenth-century novel were working in the prolepsis of a future perfect tense that is, now,

largely abandoned,[2] but so too is the notion of the uniqueness of the Paterian moment crystalized by art, since the slow pace and repetitiveness obviate such intensity.

To be sure, Stein does move her narrative on abruptly at times, and does coordinate blocks of time. But we can more readily conceive of such shifts not as offering a temporal overview, but rather as a skipping and refocusing at different points in the surface of the text. Stein's typical mode of perspectivization is the aphoristic generalization in the present or imperfect tenses prefaced by "Sometimes" or "Many" or "Some": "There are many that I know and always more and more I know it, they are all of them repeating, they are all of them in some way resembling one to others of them" (351). Indeed, "some" is a key word of *The Making of Americans*, indicating a relation between the many and the one that constantly de-individuates and renders action in time as a relation to the type. The causal order is replaced by the statistical, a distribution: the realm of the imperfect is habit rather than action, of "such a one" rather than the explosive moment celebrated by early avant-gardes. For Stein, temporal relations are bound up with how we conceive the person, the family, nation, and ultimately history; but they also involve style, the way we conceive the sentence; and indeed the way that her 925-page novel is an investment of the reader's time.

This brief consideration of an exemplary modernist text alerts us to some of the complexities of the issue of temporality (and more could be said on the subject of Stein's relation to cinema and psychology). Perhaps the most obviously modernist aspect of Stein's procedure is that it reveals what we often take for granted: that all novels, whether by Jane Austen or Charles Dickens, configure time and space around the encoded set of assumptions that Mikhail Bakhtin was, a few decades later, to label the "chronotope." In a range of texts written in the period 1910–45, time becomes the subject of radical experimentation, whether it is the "slow time" of Stein's text and of others creeping up to the borders of the world war (Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*) or the scrambled, pathological time of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* or Woolf's transfigured moments in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

As Stein herself explained in "Composition as Explanation" (1926), there is good reason for this heightened consciousness of time.[3] Modernism exists in relation to a series of crises in the understanding of time. It inherits the nineteenth-century view of modernity as the aggressive surpassing of past achievement, in which the pace of change is speeding up; but it also shares with late Victorian literature an apocalyptic or degenerative imagination

linked to that speed. The temporal imaginary of modernism thus includes clockwise and counterclockwise movements, emphasizing both the master narrative of advance and a contrarian understanding of regression. It exists, as a historical movement, between two wars – one a catastrophic interruption, the other an anticipated return of catastrophe. It responds to new understandings of time in terms of physics and mathematics, to the psychological investigation of the human sense of time, and to the technologies of transmission and storage that inform the modern world. In what Henry Adams called "the new multiverse," time can never easily be the abstract Newtonian continuum in the modernist text; it is discontinuous, interrupted, overloaded.[4] As a result, the time of modernism is a matter of competing and often knotted accounts of what time is, whether we are considering individual temporal experience over the short or long term, or the collective shapes in time we call society and history.

Technology and Time

That time is measured by the ticking of clocks seems self-evident. But it was not, of course, always so: the day and year are part of a "natural" rhythm, but hours and weeks and seconds are human interventions, the product of measurement technologies. The rationalization of space and time associated with Enlightenment thought is realized in the nineteenth century's technological advances. Prior to 1850, time was usually set locally by the sun. But the advent of the paired systems of railway and telegraph wire both required and enabled national time regimes: timetables meant synchronized clocks. More generally, technology encouraged the tabulation of time, and its equation with productivity: in industrial management (Taylorism and Fordism); in the mobilization plans that kick-started the First World War; and in personal regimes that stressed its efficient use. A set of world time zones centered on the Greenwich Prime Meridian was gradually agreed upon at international meetings in the period between 1884 and 1913 (with the French finally acceding to the anglophone hegemony via a signal from the Eiffel Tower in 1913).[5] Telegraph and radio time-signals thus enabled a tele-time coordinated across continents. But it is also important to note that many parts of the world and many peoples remained outside this global regime: what Leon Trotsky labeled "uneven development" is an important aspect of modernism, and is reflected in its negotiation between different understandings of time, some coded as attractively "primitive," relaxed, and non-instrumental.

Other new technologies reinforced the sense of intensified time, stretching and compressing, storing and relaying its contents. The photograph, phonograph, and movie could perpetuate the image, voice and characteristic gestures of your grandmother; the telephone (as Proust noted in a famous passage) could transmit a semblance of her voice across space-time – though one disconnected from actual presence, ghostly and thin. The radio could create a model for instantaneous connection, energizing a distant mass audience, a possibility that attracted the Italian futurists, Ezra Pound, and others.[6] The simultaneist programs of Robert and Sonia Delaunay and other early modernists reflect this sense of instantaneous transmission, imagining a mediatized co-presence of the "now."

For the individual, hurried through the day by the newly mass-produced wrist-watch, a speeded-up world is part of the pace of intellectual and social change characteristic of modernity. The demands involved were linked by Max Nordau and other popular thinkers to both excitement and overload: the thrills of train, car, plane, or jazz music; but also a sense of the individual as externally mandated by job, scheduling, and the pace of the city. The heroine of Henry James's *In the Cage* lives according to the rhythms of the telegraph office – her life regulated by the attentions of her manager, the customers, procedures – but she also becomes expert in the scheduling of assignations and the exciting pulse of adultery; so much so that she can enter the lives of people outside her own class and "correct" their schedules. Her elliptical moment of time in a park with the upper-class lover is constrained and emptied of content, but nevertheless testifies to the uneasy knitting of timelines and momentary intensities in the newly mediatized world.[7]

One of the paradoxes of modern temporality is that it is both more regulated *and* more subjective; or, rather, that a fracture develops between the inner and outer determinants of time. To take one example: just as psychology – and the novel, in the impressionistic writings of Conrad, James, and others – develops a new sense of the richness of temporal experience in sensory constructions shifting from moment to moment, technological modernity "captures" time in the technology of the cinema, and re-represents it to the modern subject as a form of automaticity, which mirrors many of the fundamentals of modern experience. The modern self is opened up to memory's florid abundance in Proust, and at the same time is locked into a narrative perceptual mechanism in cinematic mimetic melodrama. These opposing forces focus the attentions of the Weimar cultural theorists Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer, for whom cinema potentially creates a heightened attention to the cutting and flow of time, but

also represents an alienated existence. The narratives of modern literature explore in a similar way the relation between mimesis and its disruption.

If we apply such thinking to the novel, we might notice an increasing divergence between the stress on the subjectivity of temporal experience and the abstract temporal mechanism of the text. This double rhythm is visible in Bloom's stylistic pilgrimage in *Ulysses*, in which we are both inside his mind and inside Joyce's proliferating plans (the voyage of Odysseus; the history of English prose; the physiology of a tired body). Similar multiplicities of narrative time are found in John Dos Passos's trilogy *U.S.A.* In the main narrative sections, we are locked into a retrospective present-tense narration, devoid of a future tense, a conveyer-belt advance toward a closed future that, as Jean-Paul Sartre suggests, no human being could endure in reality.[8] The other narrative modes of *U.S.A.* suggest competing constructions of temporality: the brisk journalistic summaries of the lives of public figures; the flow of mass media in the newsreels; and the highly subjective and largely uncontextualized fragments of time (essentially Dos Passos's own memories) in the "Camera Eye" sections – all of which exist beyond the possibilities of integration. The "Camera Eye" presents a sense of time that moves from an opening childlike subjectivity to a mature sense of historical forces, which eventually aligns it with the novel as a whole in a focus on the Sacco and Vanzetti campaigns. The resulting narrative thus presents a series of fractured perspectives on time as it relates to agency, reflecting the competing narratives of modernity.

Psychology and Perception

The psychology of the late nineteenth century, in the work of Wilhelm Wundt and others, focused on the way in which the senses actively construct a world, including our sense of duration: the question, for example, of how long a "moment" is in mental life. In *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), William James popularized the notion of an embodied "stream of thought" or "stream of consciousness" (he used both phrases), and offered an authoritative summary on the experience of temporality. Time, for James, is not a unitary moving point; in his descriptive metaphor, which is also a conceptual metaphor, it spreads itself out over a fuzzier space created by the perceptual apparatus, in which precognition, attention, the processing of experience, and perceptual after-images mix. For James the sense of time is born out of an interaction between the material of experience – its intensity and strangeness or familiarity – and the mechanisms of perception in the nervous system and brain; it is produced by the rising, overlapping, and falling away

of brain processes.⁹ This is the time suggested by his student Stein in *The Making of Americans*: "suggested" because essentially a virtual presence, located somewhere between an implied consciousness and the powers of language to mimic its flow; attached to characters but not quite of them.

James drew on the work of Henri Bergson, whose time philosophy was deeply influential in the first two decades of the century (his more popular impact in English came with translations and London lectures in 1910–11). Bergson, too, undermines the notion of the segmented instant: the present involves "a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future."¹⁰ Moreover, in his explanation of human actions in the present, the whole of an accumulated past – the past as compressed into our experience, habits, knowledge – is brought to bear in the cutting edge of the present, where human action breaks free from immediate causality. "Duration," the human experience of time, is in this understanding a vital "multiplicity," a living flow. Bergson's vitalism is important (as Jonathan Crary and others have suggested) because it represents a continuation of the tradition, arguably originating in Schopenhauer, which makes the process of life, and of embodied thinking, central to philosophy.¹¹ The turn to rhythm in the savage strumming of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913) is vitalist in this sense, seeking, like the jazz that became fashionable in the period that followed, to subordinate music to dance, and to the rhythms of the body.

Bergson's thinking enters modernist literature via a number of routes. Through the work of T.E. Hulme – who was for a period a disciple – it remained an element, even if officially rejected, of imagism's and vorticism's sense of the literary act as a dynamization of the moment. More generally, Eliot's historicism, and Pound's selective plundering of the past, share a similar sense of its presence – a far cry from Italian futurism's rejection of *passéism* and "museum culture," but nonetheless a view of the past which puts it to work *now* rather than seeking to give it value for itself.

More diffusely, the focus on everyday life and the mind's movement in time via reverie and anticipation, the loosening and binding of time in boredom and habit, become more consciously treated in the work of the generation that read James and Bergson. Bergson validated modernism's explorations of the ebb and flow of consciousness, its alternation between moments of tension and relaxation. As Bryony Randall notes, "Bergson's theories suggest that we approximate the authentic temporality of human consciousness of duration not only through contemplation of the aesthetic but also through such every-day states of (in)attention as daydream and impatience."¹²

Sue Zemka proposes that the stress on the moment in modernist studies represents a circular argument: "Classical modern novelists tell their stories to readers and critics who have already decided the issue in favour of the moment."[13] Zemka argues in contrast that the nineteenth-century investment in the "moment" – at its most intense in Pater – becomes an edgier focus on the "instance." That often seems right in terms of the inheritance of literary impressionism: for Woolf, the "moment" can be the saving of life for art; but it can also be a grotesque fixation, imbued with the traumatic intensity she associated with her own childhood experience. But it is precisely because of the sense of the uneven nature of perceptual engagement with the world (and, for Pater, its distance behind the wall of the senses) that what can be rescued from the flow of time remains important for modernism. In the notion of the "epiphany" and its cognates, the modernist text concerns itself with the Paterian inheritance of an aesthetic distillation of crystalline moments in which time in its living truth can be held in contemplation.

This particular emphasis does not mean that the epiphany is not negotiated against the background of slower processes. Here is a moment from *Dawn's Left Hand*, the tenth volume of Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, a text that was often accused of sacrificing temporal structure for mimetic flow:

> Taking her place, she felt more than the usual familiar sense of everlasting-ness that came forward in her at the moment of sitting down to table with beloved people, and stayed until the breaking forth of conversation drove it into the background. Here it was, blissfully beating its wings in the disgrace-ful room and coming this time not only from the past but from past and future alike; for ever.[14]

This is both epiphany and annunciation; the dark dove descends on the shabby restaurant in which the lovers are "alone, in endless time," and from which the disguised first-person narrator constructs the map of a life. But Richardson's commentary on time here is revealing. Miriam's lover Hypo is described in masculinized Bergsonian terms: "A man achieving, becoming, driving forward to unpredictable becomings, delighting in the process."[15] At the same time, the narrator makes clear that it is the depth of Miriam's "Living" and essential individuality, a woman's time, that he cannot under-stand; both the everyday being that is redeemed in her vision and the episodic sequence of memories which makes up their relationship. In this way, Richardson's characters as well as her readers make their way blindly through time, not as a transparent medium but as a struggle to extract meaning and intensity from duration.

The task of individualizing human time is nowhere more apparent than in the genre of the short story. Departing from the temporal expectations of the conventional novel, the fragmentary, partial narration of the short story carries within it an inherent set of questions about the framing of time: what shape can it take? If we open Katherine Mansfield's *The Garden Party* (1922), different stories ask what it is like to live in the frozen but slowly opening time of mourning after a tyrannical father dies ("The Daughters of the Late Colonel"), or what it is like to be forced to think of your last dance when you go to your first ("Her First Ball"). We explore the times of sexual frustration ("The Stranger"); of childhood ("The Garden Party"); of old age looking back over a life ("An Ideal Family"); of alienated labor ("Life of Ma Parker").[16] In all these cases, analysis opens up time to individual investigation; it becomes a phenomenology.

A further element in the understanding of psychological time – again related closely to historical and technological developments – is the idea of temporal wounding or trauma. As theorized by Freud, trauma results in an encrypting of memories in secret moments of frozen or fixated time within individual psychology; these are detemporalized in that they cannot readily be restored to coherent sequential narrative. Such pathologies of time enter modernism via such texts as Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Here, most famously, the "idiot" Benjy's world is one of temporal co-presence, where any moment in his life can lead us to another – though not without a certain logic, as, say, when he obsessively returns to memories of his lost sister and avoids other moments, not least the memory of his own castration.[17] In Faulkner's novel, the Compsons all suffer temporal pathologies: Quentin, with the desire to stop or fold time (incest, the smashed watch, suicide); Jason, with the desire to make lost time yield its material wealth. This manifold crisis of time takes on a historical dimension, too, which includes the sense of temporal trauma particular to the post-bellum American South, all in all, those feelings of profound decline from the past and inexorable loss in the future. Southern cultural time, like Benjy's, is traumatized.

In "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), Freud similarly generalizes trauma to a whole generation affected by the Great War, for whom mourning cannot easily cease. The "Time Passes" section of *To The Lighthouse* deals with the war by reducing time to a pure flow in which the human is evacuated to the margins – though it is always present as a trace in the articles of the decaying holiday home. Here the death of Mrs. Ramsay and others can be narrated in asides and subordinate clauses, which place them at the uncertain edge of narrative consciousness, where the hurt that has

occurred at earlier times is only later dealt with by the survivors. The imminent fall of the house – compared by Woolf to a feather in the balance – thus comes to signal the precariousness of human history, constructed on the border of a barely thinkable catastrophe.[18]

These examples tell us that time is never simply individual or psychological; it is, as Paul Ricoeur insists in *Time and Narrative*, negotiated in an interpersonal and collective manner. The cultural specificity of time was one focus of much early twentieth-century anthropology. According to Benjamin Lee Whorf, himself influenced by Einstein, the experience of time in different cultures was bound up with their worldview and language, so that, for example, the Western sense of discrete events and time as an abstract entity is not shared by the Hopi. Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, defining time as "the fourth dimension of space," provides a parallel way of recognizing the competing social encodings of time in narrative.[19] Faulkner's texts represent an investigation of particular temporal formations in this mode: the sense of foreclosure that permeates the South's narratives; the incestuous closure of time. Eliot's incantations of time in *Four Quartets* (1943) – largely written against the background of the Second World War – involves a fantasy of collective return to a timeless religious order in which beginnings and ends might be equated. And – to take a late modernist example – Patrick White's novel *The Aunt's Story* (1948) ends with its heroine, Theodora, again on the verge of war, stepping off a train in the middle of America to re-enter the time of nature itself, of biological life and decay, where a historical past and future are abandoned.

Overlapping Temporalities in Science and Mathematics

Psychology and anthropology, considered as paradigms for the modernist reconceptualization of time, often found allies in science. Science had been for some time questioning Enlightenment understandings of space, time, and perception. Ronald Schleifer unites some of these strands when he writes, "Modernism is precisely when, in history, narrative, and science, the possibility of a view from nowhere, the possibility of forgetting time and temporality by reducing it to spatial figures ... is lost."[20] The fact that physics – in the shape of Relativity and, later, quantum theory – supplies revolutionary ways of understanding time in the period is well known. Recovering the cultural context of its production and reception may help us to recognize the work of other relevant disciplines, including mathematics, in generating this understanding.

Einstein's idea of Special Relativity appeared in a short paper in 1905, building on the work of Ernst Mach and others; the more revolutionary General Relativity followed in 1913–16. Following the huge publicity given to the British astronomer A.S. Eddington's vindication of Einstein's prediction of the bending of light rays in 1919, an understanding of the General Theory was disseminated to a popular audience by J.W.N. Sullivan, Eddington, Bertrand Russell, and others.[21] A number of modernist writers read accounts of Einstein, but the profundity with which they absorbed the new scientific ideas is debatable; popular references to Relativity tend to misunderstand it as relativism. It is perhaps better to speak of the cultural correlatives of Relativity rather than direct impact. The musical preoccupation with the sequence and the combinatory space of the chromatic scale in the serialism (or twelve-tone composition) of the Second Viennese School after 1921, for example, involves a shift toward combination as a focus, the abandonment of the dominant reflecting this new decentered world. But most readers understood that Relativity places the absolute of the Newtonian worldview into question, making it something constructed from a series of judgments as to sameness and difference. Rather than solid objects moving through space (with accompanying notions of causality), Einstein's physics sees a series of events formalized in the complex mathematics of tensor analysis. Equally revolutionary was another of Einstein's famous four 1905 papers; "On a Heuristic Viewpoint Concerning the Production and Transformation of Light" extended the work of Planck in providing the foundation of quantum physics, suggesting that the atomic event – and thus time itself – could only be understood statistically.

Pure mathematics also reconceived temporality, in the shape of the analysis of the mathematical basis of the number line or continuum. Since the Greeks, Zeno's paradox had implied an insoluble conflict between understandings of the point and the idea of motion. With the revolutionary work of Richard Dedekind and Georg Cantor in the 1890s, which developed the idea that an infinity of numbers lay between any two numbers, that tension was resolved – in a way that Bertrand Russell's comments in *Mysticism and Logic* (1917) on the Cantorian "paradox of Tristram Shandy" spell out:

> One of them, which I call the paradox of Tristram Shandy, is the converse of the Achilles, and shows that the tortoise, if you give him time, will go just as far as Achilles. Tristram Shandy, as we know, employed two years in chronicling the first two days of his life, and lamented that, at this rate, material would accumulate faster than he could deal with it ... Now I maintain that, if he had lived for ever ... no part of his biography would

have remained unwritten. For consider: the hundredth day will be described in the hundredth year, the thousandth in the thousandth year, and so on ... This paradoxical but perfectly true proposition depends upon the fact that the number of days in all time is no greater than the number of years.[22]

This formulation has consequences for how we think about the encyclopedic and intensive texts of modernism: in *The Making of Americans*, *The Man Without Qualities*, *Ulysses*, and *Pilgrimage*, narrative time is slowed, allowing the mapping of tiny events through a kind of algorithm. Time in *Ulysses* aspires to a global shape: the protagonist as agent, plotting his path through the world (the staple of realism) is replaced by a sense of Bloom's existence within a complex, ever-shifting pattern, moving through a collection of time-worlds, which are determined by age, custom, history, and language, even bodily state; in which the gesture toward "mythical time" can more readily be seen as exposing a lack of coherence rather than suggesting the integration that Eliot proposed in "Ulysses, Order and Myth." *Finnegans Wake*, with its circular progress and doubled hourglass motif, gestures toward an in-Finn-ity of fallen language and temporal co-presence ("Damadam to infinities!").[23]

Time was also referred to in popular science as a "fourth dimension." Theories like those advanced by C.H. Hinton in *The Fourth Dimension* (1904) often remained a kind of inspiring metaphor, most easily realized in artworks that strain – like cubism or the cinema of Eisenstein – at the dimensional aspects of representation.[24] In literature, while the fourth dimension is thematized in science-fictional works, the impact of non-Euclidian geometries is more subtle, providing metaphors for dislocation in Eliot and others. A late version of the multidimensionality approach to time is J.W. Dunne's *An Experiment with Time* (1927), a work of popular science that went through several editions (no doubt often unread, like Stephen Hawking in our own time).[25] Dunne's turgid work, in which temporal flow becomes an overlapping series of moments of temporal extension, analyzed in terms of a fourth-dimensional observer, is bolstered by references to Relativity and (later editions) quantum physics, but is in large part disguised spiritualism – his starting point is the idea that premonition in dreams is widespread, and his conclusion is the existence of the soul. The linkage of such ideas to the occult extends back as far as George Eliot's *The Lifted Veil* (1859), one example being C.A.E. Moberly and E.F. Jourdain's account of a visionary time-shift back to Marie-Antoinette's time at Versailles, in *An Adventure* (1911), a reissue of which was sponsored by Dunne.[26] In the understanding of time proposed by spiritualist texts, as in the theory of trauma, the past interpenetrates the present, haunting, transmitting messages, acting on us.

Dunne's work is sometimes said to have had its impact mainly in science fiction, but in fact it had some influence on the late modernism of the 1930s. The writers of the "New Apocalypse" – an important late modernist grouping in the UK, including J.F. Hendry, Henry Treece, Nicholas Moore, and related writers like David Gascoyne – were interested in his work, which went along with the mysticism of Yeats and the religious timelessness of Eliot's "Burnt Norton." Robert Graves and Laura Riding read Dunne, and Graves's "On Portents" makes Riding a complex super-observer, one for whom ordinary laws of succession (the logic of development that produces the concept of modernity) can be overcome:

> If strange things happen where she is,
> So that men say that graves open
> And the dead walk, or that futurity
> Becomes a womb and the unborn are shed,
> Such portents are not to be wondered at,
> Being tourbillions in Time made
> By strong pulling of her bladed mind
> Through that ever-reluctant element.[27]

A *tourbillon* is, here, a kind of vortex (historically, it is a complex balance in a watch designed to offset the effects of gravity; gravity is what Riding had been subject to in her 1929 leap from a window). The notion of "finality," which was associated with the charismatic Riding in the 1930s by the grouping around her, also has the flavor of Dunne's work: moments such as birth and death are outside the sequence of time, as is a hypostasized observer at the infinity-point of regression.

Narrative and the Shapes of Collective Time

As we observed at the outset in discussing Stein, new understandings of time generated new narrative modes in the period of modernism – a fracturing of chronotopes that begins with the Victorians. Writers in the period began to reconceive narratives that refuse the proleptic point of view and any easy linearity. According to Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford, a narrative faithful to human contingency will proceed in the idiosyncratic mode with which you remember the story of your neighbor's greenhouse:

> We agreed that the general effect of a novel must be the general effect that life makes on mankind. A novel must therefore not be a narration, a report. Life does not say to you: in 1914 my next door neighbour, Mr. Slack, erected

a greenhouse and painted it with Cox's green aluminium paint ... If you think about the matter you will remember, in various unordered pictures, how one day Mr. Slack appeared in his garden and contemplated the wall of his house. You will then try to remember the year of that occurrence and you will fix it as August 1914 because having had the foresight to bear the municipal stock of the city of Liège you were able to afford a first-class season ticket for the first time in your life. You will remember Mr. Slack – then much slimmer because it was before he found out where to buy that cheap Burgundy.[28]

The traumatic date of August 1914 is also a marker here, and features in Ford's novel *The Good Soldier*, which loops back and forth through time, crossing its traces with apparent contradiction; providing readers with a key detail like the suicide of a main character only as an afterthought. The gap between story or timeline and the weave of the narrative (between *fabula* and *syuzhet*, to use the terms developed by Russian formalists in this period) opens radically as the narrator's psychology becomes as much a focus as what happens.[29]

Paul Ricoeur observes that time often becomes the subject of the modern novel, rather than just its medium.[30] Early theorists of modernism, including Walter Benjamin and Erich Auerbach, were quick to recognize the construction of temporality as an imaginative subject for modern literature: Benjamin wrote of the contrast between the storyteller, unfolding a tale against the background of a collective understanding, and the novelist, constructing his own sense of order; Auerbach provided an influential analysis of the depth of psychological time in Woolf, again contrasted with the serene surface of the epic.

But the question remains, as we have seen with Woolf, of how such a sense of individuated time intersects with collective, historical time. Although his novel was drafted before the war, Ford took care in the last revisions of *The Good Soldier* to weave its magic, recurring personal tragedies around one particular day on different years – August 4 – which is especially highly charged as a historical marker, being the day of British entry into the war in 1914. It also takes in such historical cruxes as the rise of Protestantism in Europe. Historically speaking, time has often formed a coherent shape: that of the Christian or other eschatologies, in which we move from creation to incarnation to apocalypse, and in which the present moment is often seen as one of crisis. While modernist texts are informed by the "long" time of the expanded, Darwinian worldview (the time of Wells's *The Time Machine*, for example), and while many modernists reject any teleological history, as the

theorist of decline Max Nordau himself did in *The Interpretation of History* (1910), others nevertheless resort to modified eschatologies: the "Decline of the West" written into the quasi-eugenic theories of Spengler; the three stages of consciousness in Edward Carpenter (reflecting the schemes of earlier thinkers like Joachim, Vico, and Comte); cyclic theories of historical recurrence, crisis points, and the coming of avatars of the kind developed by Yeats in *A Vision* (1925); or progressive or crisis narratives linked to a historical dialectic derived from Hegel and Marx.[31] Eliot's notion of the "dissociation of sensibility" in the seventeenth century is another example of a mythic history: a version of the fall into the bleakness of modernity.

In this sense, the crisis of Time as conceived in the period of modernism must be related closely to the history of the period: the stuttering of the decline of the Victorian sense of progress; the catastrophe of the Great War and war's eventual return; the expansive economics of the 1920s. The period between the wars saw a flurry of futurological writing, responding to the pace of social and technological change. The Today and Tomorrow series, published by Kegan Paul between 1923 and 1931, involved over a hundred titles on topics ranging from the Future of Science to the Future of Sex to the Future of Swearing. H.G. Wells's *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933) represented one culmination of these efforts. But the series foundered in the early 1930s, as hopes for the future were displaced by a feeling of crisis. The sense of historical apocalypse becomes particularly intense for thirties writers, for whom the collapse of the bourgeoisie and the coming of war is a constant preoccupation, generating a distinctive rhetoric of malaise, fugue, and coming night. Dystopian fiction by George Orwell (*1984*, 1949), Storm Jameson (*In the Second Year*, 1936), and others imagined futures darkened by fascism and war. In *The End of This Day's Business* (written in 1935), Katherine Burdekin imagines a future (the year 6250) in which gender relations have simply been reversed, men becoming the passive and decorative objects of feminine condescension.

Time in the modernist text is thus ultimately bound up with the stuttering of a modernist project in the 1930s. The excitements of simultaneity and speed, of a relativized universe, and of a carefully individualized time-sense: all of these come to grief in the collective struggles of the Second World War, the historical catastrophe of the Holocaust, and the threatened mass extinction of the Cold War. Various late modernisms go underground, with the coming of the war, re-emerging in the 1960s and 1970s, in some cases. Postmodernism arguably has a less intense relation with temporality, but nevertheless we can see the legacy of modernist time-experiment in a range

of later culture, whether it is Kurt Vonnegut's hero in *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), "spastic in time," or films like Christopher Nolan's *Memento* (2000), and Gaspar Noé's *Irréversible* (2002), which has a character reading Dunne's *An Experiment with Time* in its opening sequence – a book which, as we noted, synthesized modernism's distinctive preoccupation with the non-linear nature of human time.

Notes

1 Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans* (1925; Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 1995), 183.

2 See Mark Currie, *About Time: Narrative, Fiction and the Philosophy of Time* (Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

3 Gertrude Stein, "Composition as Explanation" (1926), in *Look at Me Now and Here I Am: Writings and Lectures 1909–45*, ed. Patricia Meyerowitz (London: Penguin, 1971), 21–30.

4 Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, ed. Ernest Samuels (1918; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), chap. 31.

5 Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 14.

6 Timothy C. Campbell, *Wireless Writing in the Age of Marconi* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

7 Henry James, *In the Cage* (London: Duckworth, 1898), esp. chap. 17.

8 Jean-Paul Sartre, "John Dos Passos and *1919*," in Barry Maine (ed.), *John Dos Passos: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1998), 167–75.

9 William James, *Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (New York: Henry Holt, 1890), vol. 1, 635.

10 Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.H. Paul and W.S. Palmer (1896; New York: Zone, 1988), 138.

11 Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 54–55.

12 Bryony Randall, *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 57.

13 Sue Zemka, *Time and the Moment in Victorian Literature and Society* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 202.

14 Dorothy Richardson, *Pilgrimage*, 4 vols., x: *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931; London: Dent, 1938), vol. IV, 221.

15 Ibid., 120.

16 Katherine Mansfield, *The Garden Party and Other Stories* (London: Constable, 1922).

17 William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (London: Cape, 1929).

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18 Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (London: Hogarth, 1927).
19 Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).
20 Ronald Schleifer, *Modernism and Time: The Logic of Abundance in Literature, Science, and Culture 1880–1930* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 111.
21 Michael Whitworth, *Einstein's Wake: Relativity, Metaphor, and Modernist Literature* (Oxford University Press, 2001).
22 Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1917), 90–91.
23 James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 19.
24 See Linda Dalrymple Henderson and Bruce Clarke (eds.), *Modernism's Fourth Dimensions* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, forthcoming).
25 J.W. Dunne, *An Experiment with Time* (London: Faber and Faber, 1927). Four editions appeared by 1936.
26 C.A.E. Moberly and E.F. Jourdain, *An Adventure* (London: Faber and Faber, 1931).
27 Robert Graves, *Complete Poems*, vol. 2 (Manchester: Carcanet, 1999), 63.
28 Ford Madox Ford, *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance* (London: Duckworth, 1924), 180–81.
29 Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion* (London: John Lane, 1915).
30 Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 3 vols. (University of Chicago Press, 1984–88).
31 See, e.g., Warwick Gould and Marjorie Reeves, *Marjorie Joachim of Fiore and the Myth of the Eternal Evangel in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, rev. edn. (Oxford University Press, 2001); Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (Oxford University Press, 1967).

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Ahead of Time: The Avant-Gardes

JED RASULA

Almost as pervasive as the usage of "surrealism" as a synonym for bizarre or casual, reference to the "avant-garde" has rendered it ubiquitous but vague. Insofar as *avant-garde* generally means "out there," "inventive," or "unique," it reflects – however fitfully – the historical legacy of the avant-gardes, plural. The avant-gardes are verifiable initiatives for the most part, coextensive with the heyday of modernism. While modernism is itself a historically expansive designation, when coupled with the avant-garde it designates the period roughly from 1890 to 1940. It is beyond the scope of this essay to assess the theoretical debate concerning the parameters of the term "avant-garde," as well as the legitimacy of its application in the period under review – a debate long dominated by Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974), which privileged Dada as paradigmatically avant-garde in its critique of the institutional autonomy of art in bourgeois society. The sheer multitude of other vanguard *isms* complicates without necessarily invalidating Bürger's thesis.

Despite the fact that references to the avant-garde generally include a shortlist of *isms* (a characteristic roster includes cubism, expressionism, futurism, Dada, surrealism), there has been no systematic attempt to enumerate all the avant-garde movements by name. A tantalizing footnote in Henri Meschonnic's *Modernité modernité* (1988) lists fifty-one in alphabetical order, from 1886 to 1924, though some, like "findesiecleisme," are Meschonnic's invention, and "vers-librisme" might be better termed a tendency.[1] One thing Meschonnic's list makes clear, though, is how small many of the movements were. Some, like Fernando Pessoa's sensationism or Jean Crotti's Tabu, were one-man "movements." Others, like rayonism in Russia, involved a half-dozen at most – a reminder that, before it spread from Zurich to Berlin and Paris, Dada was basically a workshop of six with a few accomplices. Such numbers reveal the "avant-garde" as an umbrella term sheltering local initiatives. However, the umbrella overshadows the contentions within – and rivalries between – groups. As a portmanteau term, for example,

"Russian futurism" encompasses cubo-futurism, ego-futurism, the mezzanine of poetry, centrifuge, and 41°, with varying degrees of dispute among them.

The avant-garde association with *isms* is based on the assumption that these are organized movements intent on securing some aesthetic beachhead by means of strategic aggression. But where modernism is concerned, a significant predecessor does not quite fit the formula: Wagnerism was a far-reaching cultural convulsion impinging upon all the arts, agitating them with the prospect of a supervening "total artwork" (*Gesamtkunstwerk*). For dancer Isadora Duncan, Richard Wagner embodied "the entire revolt and all the feeling of an epoch."[2] The spirit of revolt was inherited by the avant-gardes, which shared with Wagner a common enemy in the facile self-assurance of the bourgeoisie – not so much as a political class, but as a symptom of cultural inertia. Wagner's aspiration to reunite the arts in the model of a Hellenistic festival provided a model of the future as a return to the past, a model sometimes retained by figures associated with the avant-garde, like Ezra Pound and Guillaume Apollinaire. For the most part, though, vanguard movements were like weathervanes pointing steadily into a future emancipated from the past. And the future welcomed all the arts, privileging none. Apart from a few cases, Serge Fauchereau observes in the most comprehensive available survey of the avant-gardes, "It is remarkable that the preponderance of art movements in the early twentieth century were invested in all the creative domains."[3] Wagnerism is the current that promoted the avant-garde as an initiative to transform all the arts and join them in common purpose.

When Hugo Ball, a founder of Dada, reflected on his group's journal, *Cabaret Voltaire*, he noted that contributors included people associated with cubism, futurism, and expressionism; but he didn't use the term avant-garde. Instead, he characterized the journal as "the first synthesis of the modern schools of art and literature."[4] In fact, such general terms as "the modern schools," "modern trends," or "tendencies" were commonly used by journalists and artists alike. Artists frequently shared Baudelaire's wariness of the term "avant-garde," which he attributed to a French "weakness for military metaphors . . . a sign of natures that are not themselves militant, but are made for discipline – that is to say, for conformity."[5] Baudelaire sensed the danger of the orthodox, and the avant-garde is by definition a group. Or is it? The association of the avant-garde with group activities attests to its political origins, as when Karl Marx acclaimed the Paris Commune of 1848 the vanguard of future social developments. Artistic avant-gardes differ, however, insofar as they've generally been composed of individuals momentarily

united in common cause – with the stress on *individual*. As Harold Rosenberg surmised, "An individual can be an innovator, but there is no such thing as an avant-garde individual."[6] However, it can be said that the avant-garde has served as a form of social organization dedicated to nothing less than the individuality of its members; and this may be the primary contributing factor in the brevity of so many vanguard movements, as individual initiative rapidly outpaced the consensus-building requisite to collectively organized activity. That Marinetti looms so large in futurism, like Breton in surrealism, suggests that individuality prevailed even in cases when the individuals in charge were committed to group solidarity.

The balance of individual and collective is concisely rendered in the brief prospectus circulated at the first exhibition of the artists' collective *Die Brücke* in Dresden, 1906: "With faith in evolution, in a new generation of creators and appreciators, we call together all youth. And as youths, who embody the future, we want to free our lives and limbs from the long-established older powers. Anyone who renders his creative drive directly and genuinely is one of us."[7] The calamity of the Great War decisively accentuated the generational profile. In Kurt Pinthus's preface to his landmark postwar anthology, *Menschheitsdämmerung*: "Expect," he informs the reader about the contents, "poetry characteristic of the youth that has the actual right to be called the young generation of the last decade because it has suffered the most from our age, protested the wildest and cried out with passionate fervency for a more noble, more humane human being."[8] Though not all movements so blatantly aligned themselves along generational lines, the avant-garde was felt to have patricidal implications. Symptomatic is Marinetti's rhetorical claim in the Futurist Manifesto that "the oldest of us is thirty" (he was a few years past that). "When we are forty, others who are younger and stronger will throw us into the wastebasket," he adds. "We want it to happen!"[9] Marinetti kept on propagating futurism, and recruiting younger talent, to the end of his life. Perhaps with such an ungainly lesson in plain view, Breton was disinclined to append surrealism to youth; in fact, by adopting a name from Apollinaire's neologism, he was tacitly tipping his hat to a revered elder.

Futurism was launched, as Symbolism had been in the same newspaper, by a manifesto not identified as such (although Marinetti had already issued it as a manifesto in an Italian flyer). The prologue to "Le Futurisme" – added to the manifesto when published in *Le Figaro* on February 20, 1909 – famously recounts the wreck of Marinetti's automobile (a Fiat, before the company embarked on mass production along Fordist lines). But there's a telling shift in vocabulary from the Italian original to its French reprise. After an evening

of enervated fin-de-siècle decadence, Marinetti and his friends are roused by the sounds of automobiles outside, inspiring their own mythic plunge into the unknown with their "machines renâclantes." These machines had been beasts in the Italian original, "belve sbuffanti," the snorting (or panting) beasts of subsequent translations. What's the difference? A snorting beast is a throwback to the Symbolist milieu in which Marinetti's poetic sensibility was honed, and in which his journal *Poesia* was a belated stakeholder. The purring machines of the *Figaro* version, on the other hand, leave all that behind – and as the bulletin points of the manifesto itself spell out, the avant-garde presents itself as a blade cleaving *now* from *formerly* with the decisive stroke of the executioner. Marinetti's clarion cry, "Let's murder the moon-light," was an unambiguous gesture of extermination.

Marinetti issued a steady stream of flyers and broadsides, pamphlets and books. He also pioneered the art of the confrontational public appearance, taking futurism on the road with the resources of an art brigade before that concept was deployed in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. In provincial towns throughout Italy, the first cars anybody encountered were likely to be futurist agit-prop vehicles announcing a *serate* with a shower of leaflets. So, with futurism, then, the avant-garde acquired a brand name. Marinetti aspired to make futurism as universally recognized as a commercial product. The outpouring of futurist documents was an industry unto itself. And while futurism pioneered the avant-garde art of self-promotion, inspiring other movements in a slow rolling thunder, Marinetti's constant proselytizing generated anxiety and enthusiasm in equal measure on the part of aspirant vanguards outside Italy.

Wyndham Lewis issued the vorticist *Blast* as London's answer to futurism in 1914, and in Paris Apollinaire momentarily aligned himself with the Italian cause. In Lisbon, *Portugal Futurista* (1917) succeeded the two issues of *Orpheu* (1915), marking a short-lived congregation in which we find Fernando Pessoa and some of his heteronyms. But the avant-garde here, as in much of Eastern Europe, was not well informed of Italian futurism and took from it a vague incentive to adopt modern subject matter (like the abundance of commercial slogans in a modern shipping port, in "Manicure" by Mário Sá-Carneiro, published in *Orpheu*'s second issue). Following out such "influences," it becomes clear that, from the perspective of secondary capitals and even more remote locales, there was no clear delineation of the avant-garde movements competing in the major metropolitan markets. So in Lisbon, for instance, the simultaneism of Blaise Cendrars could appear indistinguish-able from futurism. Addressing the Ultraist movement in Spain, Andrew

Anderson notes, "The most obvious area where the impact of Futurism can be observed is in the choice of subjects for poems: aeroplanes and airports, transatlantic steamers, locomotives, automobiles and trams, big-city life, skyscrapers, urban streets and suburbs, cinemas, jazz bands, electric light, guns and explosives, the telegraph, radio transmission, factories, sport and athletes."[10]

In Russia, the term "futurism" was not promoted by the avant-garde, but press notices attributed the term to many new movements arbitrarily, a confusion that was repeated in a still vague public understanding. While we now readily think of Khlebnikov and Kruchenykh as prototypical futurists, the Russian public in 1913 would have identified futurism with the enormously popular Igor Severyanin, who crooned his verses to operatic tunes while brandishing a white lily – a far cry from the spoon in the buttonhole of his yellow shirt for which Mayakovsky was known. When Marinetti came to Russia in 1914, he was disappointed to find himself embraced by fashionable society, while some of the Russian futurists denounced him and refused to attend his public events. The editorial orientation of the journal *Enchanted Wanderer* (1913–16) was still preoccupied with Symbolism, yet it nonetheless printed work by members of the opposing ego-futurists and cubo-futurists, blurring sectarian rivalry in the public eye while suggesting that anything "futurist" was merely updating familiar tendencies. The futurists themselves published yearbooks, almanacs, and anthologies instead of periodicals, and their plethora of titles and limited print runs did little to solidify the public profiles of the bickering clans. The ego-futurist group, for instance, issued nine almanacs in 1912–13, bearing such titles as *The Alwayser*, *Sky Diggers*, and *Shattered Skulls*, although "almanac" may be a misleading designation for publications no bigger than sixteen pages. The Mezzanine of Poetry in Moscow issued three almanacs in 1913: *Vernissage*, *A Feast During the Plague*, and *Crematorium of Common Sense*. The Centrifuge group, also in Moscow, profiled itself in *Brachiopod* (1914) and *The Second Centrifuge Miscellany* (1916). The emphasis on hand-crafted collaboration between artists and poets using the cheapest materials meant that print runs were very low: three hundred copies were printed of the inaugural volume of the Hylaea (or cubo-futurist) group, *A Trap for Judges* (1910). *Te li le* (1914), in which poets Velimir Khlebnikov and Aleksei Kruchenykh collaborated with artists Olga Rozanova and Nikolai Kulbin, was issued in an edition of fifty, while more commercial efforts like the *Impressionists' Studio* edited by Kulbin (1910) ran to a few thousand. In striking contrast to the exorbitant publicity campaigns of Italian futurism, futurism in Russia was an umbrella term for a sprawl of clans.

Apart from a few conspicuous cases – futurism and surrealism – avant-gardes tended to be coterie affairs. An obscurantist chauvinism regarding capitals, especially Paris, has left us with a bias against "minor" and peripheral movements, although the very principle of the avant-garde as social category should preclude such a reductive approach. Furthermore, delayed access to archives due to the Cold War means that a thoroughgoing canonization of certain vanguard scenes appeared to have wrapped up the subject before 1989, and we're still only slowly assimilating the significance of devětsil in Prague, zenitism in Zagreb and Belgrade, among many others – although even Western movements like stridentism in Mexico have been overlooked. Marinetti was able to rally a quasi-military cadre of futurists, thanks in part to his personal wealth, but in the annals of the avant-garde the norm was more modest. The colorful, belligerent rhetoric of vanguard manifestos suggests someone on a soapbox with a bullhorn, verbally hooking all comers by the crook of the neck. That hectoring impulse rings true where Italian futurism is concerned, but most vanguards lacked Marinetti's means, so what could be gained by such abusive rhetoric? What sort of cultural heft could be at play behind, say, the 1924 "Martín Fierro Manifesto" of Oliverio Girondo in Buenos Aires? Rather than using powerful weapons to pummel the unwitting public, such smaller manifestations deploy blunt rhetoric (the smaller the dog, the more frantic the bark). From the constrained locales of Bucharest or Łódź, vanguard operatives sought cosmopolitan contact and validation from elsewhere. Again and again we find that signatories of bold manifestos announcing new movements are few in number, working with little more than personal resolve. From stridentism to zenitism, a few participants sufficed to make a vanguard. Even in a metropolis like London, only seven artists participated in the first vorticist show at the Doré Galleries in June 1915. The Muscovite movement Donkey's Tail was largely a husband and wife affair (Larionov and Goncharova). Synchromism was an alliance of two American painters, Stanton MacDonald-Wright and Morgan Russell. Was there another paroxyste besides Nicolas Beauduin? Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro was the sole exponent of creationism, as editor of its journal *Création* and self-appointed theorist.

As these and other examples suggest, the avant-garde aura of a *movement* can misleadingly imply a multitude. It may be more fruitful to understand "movement" by way of Gertrude Stein. In her lecture on "Portraits and Repetition," she speaks of movement not with reference to anything like an avant-garde movement, though it applies: "If it were possible that a movement were lively enough it would exist so completely that it would not be

necessary to see it moving against anything to know that it is moving." To which she adds, pointedly, "This is what we mean by life."[11] If anybody was *of* the avant-garde, it was Stein, though she signed no manifestos. Yet her case typifies much that is associated with the avant-garde, inasmuch as she was a fervid associate of Picasso, and among the earliest beneficiaries of cubism in her own compositional practice. Parsing the passage quoted above, what we call avant-garde could be understood simply as *singularity*, yet such an epithet summons the ghost of the garret, that nineteenth-century composite of *flâneur*, bohemian, and *poète maudit*, placeholders of the antiquated sensibility twentieth-century vanguards struggled to leave behind.

The modernist avant-garde inherited many of its initiatives from the bohemian milieu of nineteenth-century artists, who were not disposed to present themselves as a solid front – *as* "avant-garde," that is. So, the linking figures tend to be individuals, like Alfred Jarry, whose writing, personality, and antics (memorably chronicled by Roger Shattuck in *The Banquet Years*) effortlessly signify *avant-garde*, even though Jarry was *sui generis* in the extreme. Similarly, Marcel Duchamp's originality proved irresistible to Dada and surrealism, neither of which he actually joined. Picasso lived a thoroughly bohemian existence in the ramshackle Bateau Lavoir in Montmartre, issuing no proclamations and making no claims outside of his art. Yet, as his contemporaries understood, any functional notion of the avant-garde was inconceivable without reference to cubism.

Apollinaire – friend and ally of Picasso since 1905 – responded to futurism as a well-heeled encroachment on cubism, the "rigorous discipline" of which he contrasted with the Italians' "arbitrariness, despite their explanations and manifestoes."[12] Apollinaire was himself an indefatigable orchestrator of talents and movements, and somewhat ruefully admitted his own role in putting the aspiring futurists in touch with Parisian artists and, in effect, aiding their cause. He's another one of those figures that personifies the avant-garde without being a signatory to any group. He inherited and amplified the instigation of *vers libre* when he removed the punctuation from his book *Alcools* shortly before its publication in 1913. As an art critic, he promoted fauvism, cubism, orphism, aided and abetted the interest in "primitivism," and invented the word *surrealist*. And in the year before his death, he issued a manifesto in all but name, "The New Spirit and the Poets," which provided Le Corbusier with the title of his purist journal *L'esprit nouveau* and, more widely, provoked a "return to order" in postwar French arts across the board. Apollinaire also inspired the little magazines *SIC* (ed. Pierre Albert-Birot), *Nord-Sud* (ed. Pierre Reverdy), and *Surréalisme* (ed. Yvan Goll).

It is perfectly understandable, then, that the first chapter of Ramón Gómez de la Serna's *Ismos* (1931) is on "Apollinerismo."

The avant-garde was never the exclusive provenance of the isms, however. Its spirit could be programmatically encoded even without conspicuous vanguard affiliations, as in the early film theory concept of *photogénie*. In *Bonjour Cinema* (1922), Jean Epstein declares: "The photogenic is conjugated in the future and in the imperative. It does not allow for stasis."[13] In context, of course, Epstein was legible as a figure of the avant-garde not only in his advocacy of experimental cinema – which in his case went hand in hand with an adoration of commercial film stars – but also because his books were published by Éditions de la Sirène, a publishing venture in which Blaise Cendrars was heavily involved. Like Robert McAlmon's Contact Editions, or the Bauhaus book series, the progressive aesthetic of Sirène was easily placed.

Art galleries promoting the most challenging art likewise distinguished themselves as sanctuaries of the avant-garde. Considering the variety of venues for the dissemination of "the modern," however construed, the international avant-garde had a solid and conspicuous foundation from before the Great War into the thirties, in fact, in a system linked by galleries and publications. Alfred Stieglitz's promotion of avant-garde tendencies in his 291 Gallery and in *Camera Work* is a model of activism, combining patronage with participation while resisting the impulse to advocate anything more specific than the "modern movement" in general. Picasso's first American show was at 291, and Gertrude Stein's first American publication was in *Camera Work*. And while Stieglitz approved of cubism, he saw it as part of a larger whole. His advocacy of artistic innovation is comparable to that of Herwarth Walden in Berlin, who also had a gallery and a long-running magazine, *Der Sturm*. Walden is often associated with expressionism, but the longevity of his enterprise meant that he promoted successive generations of vanguard artists and writers, blurring any definitive identification with a particular movement, encompassing the *Blaue Reiter* and *Brücke* artists, futurism and cubism, and eventually Dada and constructivism.

The exhibiting organizations and individual art exhibitions played a variable role in the dissemination of the avant-garde. Where an exhibition was mounted as the presentation of a movement, like "Les peintres futuristes italiens" at Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in February 1912 (before moving on to over a half-dozen other major cities), its affiliations were conspicuous. By contrast, the Armory Show in New York in 1913 was so massive and heterogeneous that its notoriety as an avant-garde provocation derives mainly from the European work new to Americans (mostly post-impressionist) that galvanized

the press, headlined by Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase." The Armory Show is an example of what may be called the accidental avant-garde: that is, a case in which public reception (outrage) selectively enlarges some element of the whole. The culmination of this legacy may be seen, inversely and perversely, in the "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Munich in 1937, a comprehensive profile of the modernist avant-garde presented as evidence of commercial swindle and aesthetic malfeasance.

In Nazi Germany and in the USSR, artists could be persecuted on the most casual presumption of vanguard credentials, while in other circumstances a bid to be taken as avant-garde could be misconstrued or indifferently received. *Façade* is a case in point. Arranged by the trio of Sitwells, with music by William Walton, this cascade of proto-Dada poems, enunciated at astonishing velocity to fashionable dance rhythms, is a model of How To Do "avant-garde" by people whose class seemed to render them ineligible for the task. As a result, *Façade* is unfairly overlooked by those who fawn upon the *Lautgedichte* of Cabaret Voltaire. But the avant-garde as we know it could barely exist without the longstanding commitment of wealthy participants like Marinetti, Picabia, and Stieglitz, or impresarios like Sergei Diaghilev, whose 1913 production of *The Rite of Spring* has benchmark status. But is it avant-garde? The same could be asked of the 1917 Ballets Russes production of *Parade*, with music by Satie, sets and costumes by Picasso, and book by Cocteau. Everything Diaghilev's company took on was oriented to fashionable high society, but this was also a period when the Comte de Beaumont was regularly recruiting the avant-garde to spice up his parties, and when Man Ray became the go-to fashion photographer for wealthy Parisians. Much work remains to be done on the interdependency of the avant-garde and the beau monde of Paris, as well as the support elsewhere of wealthy patrons like the art collector Sergei Shchukin in Moscow. By 1914 Shchukin had bought over fifty works by Picasso and even more by Matisse, all accessible in his house to members of the avant-garde. One of the "ferroconcrete" poems in Vasily Kamensky's collection *Tango With Cows* (1914) provides a template of the galleries in Shchukin's home.

Contact with the avant-garde provided some frisson for the Parisian elite, and refined cosmopolitans like Count Harry Kessler were at home with artists and politicians alike, but the shock tactics of the avant-garde generally worked as a *cordon sanitaire*, keeping at bay all but those committed to the cause. If there's one title that epitomizes avant-garde truculence, it's "Slap in the Face of Public Taste" by the Hylaea group, published in Moscow in 1912. Another vaunted provocation is "Why We Paint Ourselves: A Futurist

Manifesto," by Mikhail Larionov and Ilya Zdanevitch, which appeared in the glossy commercial magazine *Argus* in 1913. Photographs of the face-painting phenomenon were included in the manifesto and in press coverage.

The avant-garde reform of cultural practices extended beyond art to everyday life. To that end, Mina Loy issued "Auto-Facial-Construction" in 1919, calling for "a fitting aesthetic revelation in our faces."[14] Béla Balázs, in *Visible Man* (1924), one of the earliest theoretical treatises on cinema, would celebrate the magnified face as a veritable rebirth of human nature. "Would not life be lovelier if you were constantly overjoyed by the sublimely pure concavity of your wash bowls? The tubular dynamics of your cigarette?" wondered Loy.[15] A photograph of Loy wearing a thermometer for an earring reveals her sartorial flamboyance, and clearly signals the demi-monde of *la bohème*. The seeming continuity between nineteenth-century Bohemia and twentieth-century avant-gardes is misleading, however, not only because the futurists and Dadaists and surrealists avoided easy sartorial identification, but because they understood themselves to be addressing their adversaries on equal class footing. The *déclassé* characteristics attributed to figures like Arthur Rimbaud derived from lifestyle, not birth. "As the readiness with which it lent itself to commodification showed, bohemian marginality was often all too central to the modern world in which it arose," Daniel Cottom observes of a phenomenon it shares with the avant-garde.[16] But modernist avant-gardes shed the characteristic traits of the bohemian artist-as-vagrant. "They are artists, but they don't have long hair, broad-brimmed hats, or any such imitations," wrote Max Brod of the exhibiting group of Czech artists known as The Eight in 1907. "They dress in a regular way, they have got over Bohemianism."[17]

For the most part, in fact, members of the avant-garde were as fashionably attired as Larionov and his face-painting allies. David Burliuk even posed in a top hat to set off his decorated cheeks. Because the opposite of singularity is conformity, the vanguard is usually regarded as antagonist of the bourgeoisie – slapping their figurative faces while painting their own. While this makes some sociological sense, it's arresting to consider photographs of artists and writers associated with the avant-garde, nearly all of whom are dressed like upstanding members of the middle class. Take the futurists in Paris for the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery exhibition in 1912 (Figure 2.1): with their bowler hats and greatcoats, spats and canes, Marinetti, Russolo, Carrà, Boccioni, and Severini could be members of the diplomatic corps, as could the surrealists photographed during a dream session at the Bureau for Surrealist Research in 1924. Likewise for the artists eyeing their own

2.1 Futurists, attired: photograph of futurists in Paris in 1912.

aggressive exhibition at the International Dada Fair in Berlin in 1920. Even in candid snapshots in which the subjects are pointedly goofing off – Hans Arp with lolling tongue who, with Hans Richter, hoists Tristan Tzara aloft – they're always dressed for the country club. In the annals of the avant-garde there are exceptions, of course, but it was part of the impact of their art that dissidence was not brandished as personal affect. A newspaper caricature of Marinetti leaning bravely into the cascade of fruit and vegetables flung by the crowd reveals him nattily attired in coat and tail – combat gear accentuating his pledge to murder the moonlight and denounce the tango and *Parsifal*.
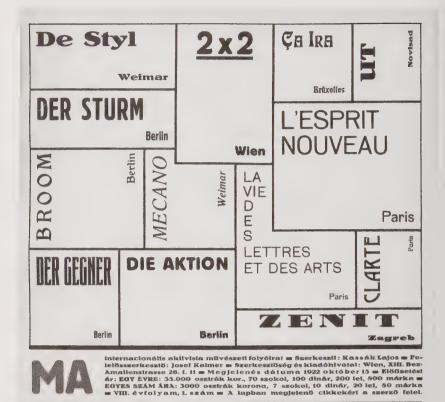
"Aesthetic modernism has many gods," writes Alois Martin Müller, "it is a polytheistic complex; and like the Olympian gods, the gods of the avant-garde make war on one another."[18] And like the Olympians, he might have added, war is always accompanied by love, and love by monstrous offspring. Each of the more prominent vanguard movements shaped these rivalries in their own distorting mirrors, so futurism denounced Symbolism, and sur-realism rebuked Dada as adolescent prank. Manifestos were the weapons of choice in these internecine affairs, but the manifesto as a form had a legacy. The rhetorical power and historical consequence of *The Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels cast a political slant over the genre for decades after its

publication in 1848. It's only with hindsight that key artistic statements of the nineteenth century have been understood as manifestos.

A manifesto in every sense but name was James McNeill Whistler's "Ten O'Clock Lecture," inveighing against "purposeless copying" by painters. Delivered in London by the artist in 1885 and repeated in other cities, it was published in numerous editions, and translated into French by Mallarmé. Jean Moréas's "Le Symbolisme" was published in *Le Figaro* on September 18, 1886, but it was not accorded the status of a manifesto until it appeared in *Les premières armes du Symbolisme* in 1889; here, the term "manifeste" is strictly descriptive, distinguishing it from the other documents (*chronique* and *lettre*) in the same volume. The title of Stieglitz's "Plea for Art Photography in America" (1892) is accurate: polite to a fault, Stieglitz's petition was nevertheless the first in a series of challenges to prevailing assumptions about the subordinate status of his chosen medium, and twenty years later his journal *Camera Work* was alarming the photographic community because of its unmistakable avant-garde affiliations. These texts induce a manifesto-effect (a term meant to evoke the "reality effect" of Roland Barthes). They are among numerous examples of the avant-garde spirit prior to its definitive association with the manifesto, which was a direct consequence of futurism. "Futurism taught everyone how the manifesto worked," writes Martin Puchner, "and all subsequent movements would profit from this lesson."[19]

The production of manifestos was the paradigmatic gesture of avant-garde movements. But the mission orientation of manifestos can be easily misconstrued: despite their forceful, unremitting rhetoric, these are not legal charters but impromptu banners, not membership pledges but registrations of enthusiasm and momentary commitment. Puchner's characterization of the manifesto form as a combination of "performative intervention and theatrical posing" strikes the right note for a genre beholden to potentiality, always "claiming an authority it did not yet possess."[20] A peculiar aspect of the avant-garde manifesto, though, is that it was a promissory note with no intention of paying interest, let alone paying down the principal. The rhetorical volatility of the manifesto was itself the payoff. The manifestos themselves, being resourceful and unique, obviated the need for further proofs and demonstrations. This is evident in the preponderance of anthologies consisting largely or exclusively of vanguard manifestos. These anthologies reveal not only how indispensable such proclamations were for avant-garde movements to manifest themselves *as* movements, but also how manifestos inexorably perpetuated more of the same. In the long run,

a manifesto's claims nagged like the flapping rubber of a burst tire, but the avant-garde could motor on with indifference, since *the long run* was never part of the original equation. A manifesto is basically an anarchist pledge, intent on demolishing a state of affairs, while refraining from filling the gap with any but the most improbable solutions. Indicatively, Dada brought an initial phase of manifesto rhetoric to full term, taunting the public with a vexingly reversible logic: "I write a manifesto and I want nothing, yet I say certain things, and in principle I am against manifestoes, as I am also against principles."[21] After the purgations of Dada, it was possible for manifesto rhetoric to renew itself in the constructivist programs for achievable goals – or so it seemed. Pledging to abandon "art" for social production was an improbable renunciation for an artist, but such pledges abounded in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution.

If the movements themselves seem beyond enumeration, the roll call of avant-garde magazines is even more challenging, so just parsing the tilting blades they spin is a quixotic aspiration. (The volume of *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* devoted to Europe is 1,200 pages.) It's imperative, though, to get a feel for the terrain by turning the pages of these magazines. The familiar Anglo-American reluctance to peruse alien documents rests too comfortably on a surfeit of native genius: after all, with Stein, Joyce, Pound, and dozens of others wagging the familiar tongue, there's little incentive to submit to so much apparent chatter from abroad. But this linguistic xenophobia obscures a crucial dimension of the avant-garde: namely, that it was interlingual, and thoroughly semiotic. To survey the contents of avant-garde journals like the Hungarian *Ma* (Figure 2.2), the Italian *Noi*, or the Dutch *Mécano* – let alone the trilingual *Vešč' Objet Gegenstand* – is to apprehend not only the preponderant role of the visual but also the proximity of other languages. The *Little Review* and *transition* regularly printed non-English texts without accompanying translation, and the surrealist *London Bulletin* occasionally printed work in French. Georges Bataille's *Documents* helpfully provided English summaries of its articles. And German expatriate surrealist Wolfgang Paalen published the bilingual (French and English) *DYN* in Mexico. The networking basis of the international avant-garde is evident in the advertising grid found in various journals. It was within this network that a maverick like Kurt Schwitters could make a mark. Although photographs of his artwork were common in journals, he also pioneered the concrete poem, a medium perched at the interface between languages. Theo van Doesburg's "X-Beelden" poems, along with the productions of his Dada alter ego, I.K. Bonset, also contribute to an initiative that, in

2.2 Imaging the inter-lingual: advertisement in Hungarian avant-garde journal *Ma*.

the hands of the Hungarian artist-poet Lajos Kassák, became known as "Bildgedicht," a practice abundantly represented in his journal *Ma*. These practices reflect the fact that visual works of various provenance facilitated international contact between the avant-gardes, overcoming the obvious linguistic barriers – although, to be sure, multilingualism was an operational norm in Europe.

The trilingual publication *Die Kunstismen / Les ismes de l'art / The Isms of Art* written by El Lissitzky and Hans Arp (1925) serves as a banner placed at the summit of the avant-garde at its moment of maximum visibility and international influence (Figure 2.3). Apart from the briefest characterizations of the movements, it is a strictly visual portfolio, proceeding in reverse chronology from 1925 to 1914, with the headings: Film, Constructivism, Verism, Proun,

2.3 Ahead, in reverse: cover of *Die Kunstismen / Les ismes de l'art / The Isms of Art*.

Compressionism, Merz, Neo-Plasticism, Purism, Dada, Simultanism, Suprematism, Metaphysicians, Abstraction, Cubism, Futurism, and Expressionism. *Kunstismen* makes little pretense of neutrality: it's a manifesto in pictures, an artistic credo by two artists complexly embroiled in the movements they enumerate.

A similar act of self-orientation, enlarged to panoramic proportions, had been compiled in 1922 by exiled Hungarian artists Lajos (or Ludwig) Kassák and Lázsló Moholy-Nagy: their *Buch neuer Künstler* (Book of New Artists) traversed the same ground as *Kunstismen* but pointedly refrained from naming any isms whatsoever except in Kassák's preface. Affirming the value

of art "based on the laws of potentiality" ("den Gesetzen der Möglichkeit"), Kassák summarized futurism, expressionism, cubism, and Dada as preludes to the "new era" of construction.[22] Dating it May 31, 1922, Kassák was signaling an allegiance to the recently concluded Congress of International Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf, where Theo van Doesburg (of *De Stijl*), Lissitzky, and former Dadaists Hans Richter and Raoul Hausmann, among others, strenuously objected to the proceedings and attempted to form a Constructivist International – in effect, an avant-garde filibuster protesting whatever seemed merely "progressive."

Buch neuer Künstler and *Kunstismen* were unique genealogical flares sent up by members of the avant-garde, arguing for its relevance and international scope. The profile would subsequently be taken up a decade later by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., with the famous diagram he produced for the cover of the exhibition catalogue *Cubism and Abstract Art*, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This was the opening move in an institutional custodianship of the avant-garde that has prevailed ever since at venues around the world. As museums have cast their own shadows over the past and over each subsequent vanguard initiative, so all subsequent avant-gardes have been colored with the long and lengthening historical memory of the impulse they demonstrate.

Notes

1 Henri Meschonnic, *Modernité modernité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 60, note 56.

2 Isadora Duncan, *The Art of the Dance*, ed. Seldon Cheney (New York: Theatre Arts, 1928), 105.

3 Serge Fauchereau, *Avant-Gardes du XXe Siècle: Arts & Littérature 1905–1930* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 13. My translation.

4 Hugo Ball, *Flight Out of Time: A Dada Diary*, ed. John Elderfield, trans. Ann Raimes (New York: Viking, 1974), 65.

5 Charles Baudelaire, *My Heart Laid Bare and Other Prose Writings*, ed. Peter Quennell, trans. Norman Cameron (New York: Vanguard Press, 1951), 189.

6 Harold Rosenberg, "Collective, Ideological, Combative," *Art News Annual XXXIV: The Avant-Garde*, ed. Thomas B. Hess and John Ashbery (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 75.

7 "Brücke Program," *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. Rose-Carol Washton Long (New York: G.K. Hall, 1993), 23.

8 Kurt Pinthus, *Menschheitsdämmerung: Dawn of Humanity, A Document of Expressionism*, trans. Joanna M. Raytch, Ralph Ley, and Robert C. Conard (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994), 29.

9   F.T. Marinetti, "Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," *Futurism, An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 53.

10 Andrew A. Anderson, "Futurism and Spanish Literature in the Context of the Historical Avant-Garde," in Günter Berghaus (ed.), *International Futurism in Arts and Literature* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 159. For a compendium of such enthusiasms on an international scale, see Jed Rasula and Tim Conley (eds.), *Burning City: Poems of Metropolitan Modernity* (Notre Dame: Action Books, 2012).

11 Gertrude Stein, *Lectures in America* (New York: Random House, 1935), 170.

12 Guillaume Apollinaire, *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews 1902–1918*, ed. Leroy C. Breunig, trans. Susan Suleiman (New York: Viking, 1972), 256.

13 Jean Epstein, "Magnification and other Writings," trans. Stuart Liebman, *October*, 3 (Spring 1977), 9.

14 Mina Loy, *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger L. Conover (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996), 165.

15 Mina Loy, "Gertrude Stein," *The Transatlantic Review*, 2/4 (1924), 430.

16 Daniel Cottom, *International Bohemia: Scenes of Nineteenth-Century Life* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 280.

17 Derek Sayer, *Prague, Capital of the Twentieth Century: A Surrealist History* (Princeton University Press, 2013), 180.

18 Alois Martin Müller, "The Last Parade," insert sheet to the reprint edition of El Lissitzky and Hans Arp (eds.), *Die Kunstismen* (Baden: Lars Müller, 1990).

19 Martin Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-Gardes* (Princeton University Press, 2006), 73.

20 Ibid., 5, 89.

21 Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," in Robert Motherwell (ed.), *The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology* (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1951), 76.

22 Ludwig Kassák and L. Moholy Nagy, *Buch neuer Künstler* (Baden: Lars Müller, 1991), unpaginated preface.

At Other Times: Modernism and the "Primitive"

DAVID RICHARDS

The characteristic shared by all modernists, and all modernisms in their eclectic variety, was a sense of being (in Perry Meisel's term) "belated," as coming "at the end of history."[1] The compulsion to start again, to "Make it New," to discover or recover an origin, *the* origin, of art and to kick over the traces of a history that had somehow taken a wrong turn, led many modernists to seek renewal in the "primitive": the catchall term comprising non-Western peoples and their cultural products (with the exceptions of Japan and China). Arthur Clutton-Brock, in an editorial on "The 'Primitive' Tendency in Modern Art" for the influential *Burlington Magazine* in 1911, expresses this sense of belatedness with a near-religious appeal to the redemptive capacities of the primitive: "So nowadays we have grown stale in art; we try to do too much, and waste our powers upon what is not essential. Our own past is a burden to us, not because its art was bad, but because . . . we feel the same need in art as the Christians felt in morals to begin again from the beginning."[2] Hermann Bahr, writing three years later, picks up the messianic tone: "We ourselves have to become barbarians to save the future of humanity from mankind as it now is. As primitive man, driven by fear of nature, sought refuge within himself, so we too have to adopt flight from a 'civilization' which is out to devour our souls."[3] Many of the key features of primitivism are already in place in these two short statements: a turning away from 500 years of European art as the model of artistic and cultural endeavour and a turning toward cultural others for renewal. Primitivism refutes the grand historical narrative of modernity with its assumption of a progressive teleology, but this undoubtedly traumatic breach is also accompanied by the possibility that new identifications could become possible. Modernism's identification with the primitive, and all its cognate terms (barbarian, savage, uncivilized), was also a refutation of civilization's dominant ideologies (capitalist, patriarchal, bourgeois).[4]

"Opening up to difference" was not achieved without considerable deformation. The primitive was an imperialist discursive construct and despite primitivism's rhetoric of renewal, it nonetheless drew upon and participated in the same assumptions and exotic fantasies of otherness that stoked imperial imaginations. Likewise, "primitive" signified an undifferentiated mass of peoples and cultures ranging from Africa to Oceania, without any substantive difference or distinction, all sharing a similar if not identical primitive state. The effect on the subjects of empire was to render them without history, cultural specificity, or agency. Similarly, the primitive artifacts that so stimulated modernism were very rarely understood or accorded their proper function and meaning in their own right; the iconic African mask, for example, was invariably designated as sculpture when, in its indigenous context of dance and ritual, it is more properly an element of choreography. In any event, the objects that were the talismans of primitivist renewal were neither fairly exchanged nor freely given but were the loot of imperial theft. In short, and with a few notable exceptions, modernists mistook a colonial for a primitive subject.

To seek to renew an exhausted culture with a primitive alternative is a motive as ancient as culture itself; what makes modernist primitivism different from its predecessors is the greatly increased variety and accessibility of primitive models that nineteenth- and twentieth-century global empires made available. The 1851 Great Exhibition in London gathered together for the first time the various peoples of the British Empire and their cultural artifacts and displayed them on a monumental scale. While its ostensible ambition was to celebrate British global hegemony, the exhibition also exposed visitors to an unprecedented range of non-Western cultural products. As a consequence of his involvement in designing and staging the exhibition, the architect and designer Owen Jones published *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856), which was for William Goodyear, writing in the 1890s, a "veritable bible of reference ... to English and American decorators, the cultivated amateur in aesthetic matters, and the professional architect."[5] Significantly, the book contained a section on "Savage Tribes," where Jones argues that European design is in need of renewal from outside and that "savage tribes" offer "the principles of the very highest ornamental art."[6]

Other European capitals, Paris and Berlin most notably, followed London's lead. In Paris, the Palais du Trocadéro was built to accommodate the 1878 World's Fair on the site of the hill of Chaillot, where the 1867 World's Fair had been held. By 1882 the Trocadéro became the Musée d'Ethnographie (later the Musée de l'Homme) and housed the burgeoning collection of

artifacts brought to France by expeditions to Africa and elsewhere. Live exhibitions of colonial peoples could be viewed in the Bois de Boulogne's Jardin d'Acclimatation, and wild animal importers exhibited individual Africans. By the time of the Exposition Universelle in 1900 (again held at the Trocadéro), the public appetite for the primitive could be satiated by elaborate ethnographic exhibits, including a reconstruction of a Dahomey settlement complete with the severed heads of executed slaves.[7] By the end of the century, tribal artifacts had become a major part of the collections of European metropolitan museums; in Germany, Dresden Zoo became famous for its popular reconstructions of Indian, African, and Samoan villages, and the ethnographic museums of Dresden, Hamburg, and Berlin greatly increased their collections of tribal art.[8] For example, in 1886 the Berlin Museum of Folk Culture held a collection of almost 10,000 African tribal objects; a remarkable haul in view of the fact that Germany had begun its policy of colonization in Africa only two years before.[9] Commercial artists and advertising agencies also recognized the exotic appeal of the primitive, adapting tribal forms for commodified images of mass consumption. It is, perhaps, in this broader context of both expansive museum expositions and displays and the commodified exotic of mass culture that the modernists' engagement with the primitive should be placed: the avant-garde's rarified – "aestheticized" – response to a ubiquitous and increasingly popular image from consumer and civil culture.[10]

It was at the Trocadéro's Exposition Universelle of 1889 that Gauguin was first exposed to Tahitian artifacts, and when he travelled to Tahiti two years later, the effect was a complex mingling of exoticism, atavistic longing, and sexual gratification. Yet however much Tahiti contributed to Gauguin's self-fashioning of the modernist myth of the artist as primitive, Tahiti did not fundamentally change his art. Certainly, his style marked a radical departure from the models offered by European history of art, and his subject matter – Tahitian people (usually women and often naked) and Tahitian artifacts (often religious and usually monumental) – presented new subjects for a European painter, but otherwise there is little that is "Tahitian" about these paintings. Tahiti is merely the subject of representation, and, in that respect, Gauguin's Tahitian pictures differ little from exotic and erotic nineteenth-century French Orientalist images of Middle Eastern harems, except that Gauguin adopted a post-impressionist rather than a realist style. Tahiti exists on the "other side" of the canvas, as it were, and the viewer gazes in through a post-impressionist lens: nowhere do Tahitian artistic forms transform that vision nor do they impinge upon the manner of the rendering. Such

presentations of savage subjects, novel as they might have been, did not constitute the "renewal" offered by the primitive. Rather, the substantial challenge to primitivists was to effect a more radical transformation of the modes of representation through primitive style and morphology.
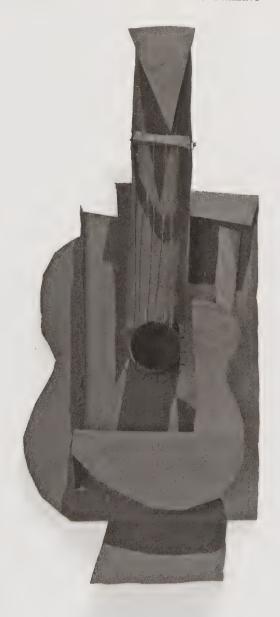
That radical transformation did not begin in Tahiti or elsewhere in the primitive/colonial world but in a familiar location: in June 1907, Picasso visited the Trocadéro's collection of African masks (see Figure 3.1). This famous (or infamous) encounter with African artifacts has been marked out as the moment when African art entered more fully into the consciousness of the modern European artist. Picasso had been at work on a large canvas depicting five naked prostitutes on display on the stage of a brothel. In May or early June, he seems to have completed the painting in its first form, in which the prostitutes' heads were painted to resemble archaic Iberian stone sculptures. After the visit to the Trocadéro, "Les demoiselles d'Avignon" was reworked and he remodeled some of the prostitutes' facial features to resemble the African masks he had seen. The painting depicts female sexuality as crude and aggressive, and to emphasize this Picasso has three of the women wearing African masks. The painting has always been controversial, originally for its frank sexual content and dramatic use of line and color, but more recently for its problematic representation of debased female sexual aggression and for the assumptions the painting seems to express about the savage nature of African culture. The result is a vision of female sexuality that is made to converge with primitive fetishism. In "Les demoiselles d'Avignon" the masks are emptied of any original cultural significance other than their usefulness to Picasso as an emblem of savage sexuality. The art historian and Picasso expert William Rubin captured a sense of the primitive shock of "Les demoiselles," when he wrote that the picture conveys "something that transcends our sense of civilized experience, something ominous and monstrous such as Kurtz discovered in the heart of darkness."[11] This view seems to be borne out by Picasso's own atavistic responses to the Trocadéro masks, as reported in a conversation with Malraux some years later: "For me the masks were not just sculptures. They were magical objects ... intercessors ... against everything – against unknown, threatening spirits ... They were weapons -- to keep people from being ruled by spirits, to help free themselves. If we give a form to these spirits, we become free."[12]

Yet despite the questionable associations of female sexuality and African savagery, the painting is a major achievement in another sense. Picasso's innovation was to go beyond the figurative representation of the primitive

3.1 Art as a system of signs: Grebo mask.

and to rework African forms into the practice of painting itself. The representation of the masks and bodies appears broken into simplified two-dimensional parts juxtaposed in a near-abstract composition that renders the scene uncompromisingly angular and unfamiliar. African techniques of rendering spatial planes became the stylistic medium for the

3.2 Art as a system of signs: Picasso, "Guitar." © 2016 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

painting: a new visual language of planes and facets arranged in a complex relationship of related viewpoints, which connect both an abstract and a mimetic style. The masks were not only used by Picasso to express his ideas about female sexuality and its closeness to dominant notions of the primitive, they also transformed the way in which he looked at form and painted space.

While never escaping the atavistic undertow, the current of primitivism shifted after "Les demoiselles" away from Gauguin and toward an exploration of the methods for revolutionizing style.[13] "Les demoiselles" is the greatest landmark of Picasso's *period nègre* (1906–09), and its experiments with style led to Picasso's prolonged collaborations with Georges Braque, the creation of the "moment" of cubism, and, so too, to the irrevocable transformation of modern art. Yet this familiar art historical narrative was repeatedly rejected by Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Picasso's friend and patron, whose Parisian gallery was the "cradle of cubism." For Kahnweiler, in the characterization of Yve-Alain Bois, "The formal affinities between African art and Picasso's painting in 1907–8 are illusory," that is, the African influences are merely "morphological": simple quotation or copying of form without a deeper understanding of its meaning. Kahnweiler insisted upon a profound difference between primitivism as mere style and primitivism as sensibility, finding an example of the former in the work of Vlaminck, whose art "certainly shows the influence of the *appearance* of African sculptures, but not the slightest understanding of their spirit." For the influence to be substantial and to pass beyond appearances to become real, it had to extend beyond the morphological to the structural.[14]

Kahnweiler was very clear about precisely when this crucial turn occurred. It came in 1912, five years after "Les demoiselles" was finished, and it was born out of a "collusion" between a Grebo (African) mask in Picasso's possession and his cubist paintings and paperboard sculptures of a guitar.

> The discovery of [Grebo] art coincided with the end of analytical cubism. The period of investigation of the external world was over. The Cubist painters now meant to represent things by invented signs which would make them appear as a whole in the consciousness of the spectator, without his being able to identify the details of the sign with details of the objects "read."[15]

Kahnweiler's point is not that the guitar resembles the mask – that is the illusion of appearances that Vlaminck was guilty of – but that Picasso's study

of the mask helped him to understand that both mask and painting are made of arbitrary signs.

> These painters [Picasso and Braque] turned away from imitation because they had discovered that the true character of painting and sculpture is that of a *script*. The products of the arts are signs, emblems, for the external world, not mirrors reflecting the external world in a more or less distorting manner. Once this was recognised, the plastic arts were freed from the slavery inherent in illusionistic styles. The Grebo masks bore testimony to the conception, in all its purity, that art aims at the creation of signs.[16]

The conceptual character of primitive art was to be found, then, not in its exotic morphologies, nor in its shocking manipulations and deformations of proportions, but in the realization that art was like a language: a syntactic arrangement of arbitrary signifiers. A tube for the sound hole, a tube for an eye, and if not tubes, why not nails, or wine bottles, or jam jars, or anything? The Grebo mask had confirmed for Picasso that illusionistic naturalism was most definitely not the point, but rather that a picture could be composed of arbitrary signs, which sustain its coherence through its own internal proto-linguistic syntax without reference to an external world of mimesis.[17] As Rosalind Krauss has it, just as "words operate in the absence of their referents; indeed they can be said to outrun the limits of those referents," so too do visual signs.[18]

However, Picasso was neither the first, nor the only one, to have experienced an epiphany at the Trocadéro. In the introduction to his extremely influential book, *Abstraction and Empathy* (1908), Wilhelm Worringer claims that while visiting the Trocadéro at Easter 1905, he was suddenly taken by a state of "spiritual intoxication," which he attributed to the onset of the "urge to abstraction." Worringer's subject in *Abstraction and Empathy* is an alternative history of art, which is deeply indebted to Alois Riegl's innovations in art history: the importance of "style," abstract decoration and ornamentation, and *Kunstwollen*, the "will to form." Worringer's thesis is that the driving compulsion that underpins art is fear. To primitives, the world is a terrifying, threatening, and uncontrollable space of nature: "He stands so lost and spiritually helpless amidst the things of the external world, because he experiences only obscurity and caprice . . . that the urge is so strong in him to divest the things of the external world of their caprice and obscurity in the world-picture."[19] Filled with "cosmic anguish," the primitive artist does not seek a naturalistic representation of those forces that threaten, but seeks escape in the order offered by abstraction. Abstraction allows the suppression of the space of nature: it is space "which links things to one another" in

overwhelming multiplicity; it "is the one thing it is impossible to individualise." "All endeavour was therefore directed toward the single form set free from space." Abstraction, Worringer argues, following Riegl, consists of "setting things as individual material phenomena not in space, but in the plane": transforming depth relations into plane relations created human order from natural disorder, purifying, separating out, and controlling the environment. "In the necessity and irrefragability of geometric abstraction he could find repose"; "it was the only absolute form that could be conceived and attained by man."[20]

Abstraction lies very deep, indeed: it is the primal *Kunstwollen*, the origin of all art, born out of cosmic anguish and the spiritual dread of the space of nature. The opposite of abstraction, as the binarism of his title indicates, is "empathy"; if abstraction is the product of "cosmic anguish," then "empathy" gave rise to naturalism in art. Naturalism's empathy readmits space as the connectedness of all things, and rejects the plane of abstraction as alienation from a world that naturalism wishes to embrace. The history of Western art shows the eclipse of abstraction by naturalism, and the triumph of empathy over anguish, but the urge to abstraction not only "stands at the beginning" but "remains the dominant tendency" at a "high level of culture" among certain peoples outside Europe, where a connection still exists with the primitive in the persistence of the "purest regular art form" – "this highest abstract beauty."[21] Worringer goes further, dismissively countering Theodor Lipps's widely accepted axiom that "aesthetic enjoyment is objectified self-enjoyment," with his own remarkable deconstructive formulation that "our aesthetics is nothing more than a psychology of the Classical feeling for art."[22] Step outside that naturalistic aesthetic tradition bequeathed us by the "Greeks and other Occidentals," Worringer advises, and it is possible to rediscover in the aesthetics of others the inorganic and crystalline arts of abstraction. Here, the history of art is essentially a history of "style," or rather "styles," either abstract or naturalistic. The emphasis solely upon style "liberated" modernism from materialist historiography and from geographical restraint: contemporary modernists could seek the inspiration of abstraction across time and cultures, guided only by their sensitivity and their ability to recognize abstraction when they saw it.

It would be difficult to underestimate the influence of Worringer's theories on emerging expressionist painters like Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and the Dresden expressionist group *Die Brücke*, Emil Nolde, Kandinsky, and the *Blaue Reiter* group. The art historian Carl Einstein leaned heavily on Worringer's work for his own *Negerplastik* (1915), as did the British art critic

Herbert Read. Emerging modernist movements found analogies to the primitive "urge to abstraction" in their own anxieties about modernity, incessant warfare, and the terror of the space of the city. Worringer's work not only sanctioned a sense of "affinity" with the artworks of others, particularly from Africa and the South Seas, but also energetically proposed a realignment of Western aesthetics, not as objectified pleasure, but as culturally and historically determined discourse that could be remade, altered, and made whole again by attention to the abstract aesthetics of non-Europeans. But *Abstraction and Empathy* and the work that followed, *Formprobleme der Gotik*, also presented a universal theory of art as style that was increasingly antagonistically dichotomized between pristine primitive abstraction and decadent civilized naturalism, with a growing emphasis upon the desirability of abstraction's dehumanizing distance from human subjectivity. It is a dichotomy that the Nazis would fold into their Spenglerian aesthetic of rejuvenating barbarism and opposing "pure" to "degenerate" art. It is cruelly ironic that the intellectual godfather of German expressionism also provided support to its nemesis.[23]

Worringer's primitivist theories also found an audience among English-speaking modernists; T.E. Hulme, the poet and critic, and founder of imagism, claimed to be the first in England to have discovered Worringer. He explored the implications of Worringer's ideas for literature together with the members of the Poets' Club (1908) and the coterie of proto-modernist writers who met at the Café Tour d'Eiffel (1910), which included Ezra Pound, F.S. Flint, Edward Storer, Francis W. Tancred, Joseph Campbell, and Florence Farr. Hulme claimed to have arrived at many of Worringer's conclusions before he read *Abstraction and Empathy*, arguing in particular that the modernist interest in primitive abstraction and geometric art signaled a more comprehensive rejection of the values of rational humanism that underpinned Greek and Renaissance art; he nonetheless acknowledged that his essay on "Modern Art and its Philosophy" was "practically an abstract of Worringer's views."[24] Worringer helped Hulme articulate a wider modernist refutation of humanism that was increasingly right-wing and fervently anti-romantic: an "undisguised *contemptu mundi*," as Joseph Buttigeig has it, that was deeply influential for both Pound and T.S. Eliot.[25] For Hulme, Worringer's primitive geometric abstraction was a search after "an austerity, a *perfection* and rigidity which vital things can never have," which discards any notion of progress, and subordinates man "to certain absolute values"; it was a mark of "disgust with the trivial and accidental characteristics of living shapes."[26]

Indebted though it was to Worringer, Hulme's intervention in the British literary and artistic scene was nothing if not timely, for, as Virginia Woolf famously remarked, "On or about December 1910, human character changed." The catalyst for such a momentous transformation was an exhibition mounted by Roger Fry at the Grafton Galleries in London, entitled "Manet and the Post-Impressionists," which included works by Manet, van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso. Gauguin's Tahitian paintings were, according to Marianna Torgovnick, the hit of the show and sparked an interest in the primitive that was sustained by the *Athenaeum* publication of Fry's important essay "The Art of the Bushmen" (which was read by Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, E.M. Forster, and T.S. Eliot, amongst others) and by the second Post-Impressionist Exhibition two years later, which was dominated by Picasso and Matisse, "the most aggressive and innovative primitivizers."[27] Despite the confusion and derision the primitivists provoked in their audience, by 1914 Clive Bell could confidently declare that "[most] people who care much about art find that of the work that moves them most the greater part is what scholars call 'Primitive.'"[28] And the sculptor Henry Moore would later announce, "Once you'd read Roger Fry the whole thing was there."

Fry's writings on primitive art – the Bushman essay was followed by essays on "Negro Sculpture" and African, Aztec, and Islamic art, and by his major work, *Vision and Design* (1920) – cover some familiar ground. There is the familiar Hulmean contempt for the traditional version of art history: "What a right little, tight little, round little world it was when ... Greek art, even in Roman copies, was the only indisputable art, except for some Renaissance repetitions!"[29] Fry also joins Picasso in asserting the conceptual character of primitive art; the primitive artist "does not seek to transfer a visual sensation to paper, but to express a mental image which is coloured by his conceptual habits." And again, the primitive was not a threat to Western art but a "stimulus" to "regain its power to express emotional ideas," and "to get back to that ultra-primitive directness of vision" that had been lost to formulae and dogmatism. But while he regarded African sculpture as "greater ... than anything we produced even in the middle ages," he nonetheless finds it "curious that a people who produced such great artists did not produce also a culture in our sense of the word."[30] Fry's laudatory writings on primitive art are heavily freighted with Social Darwinist prejudices, as Torgovnick characterizes them: "a virtual encyclopedia of colonialist assumptions."[31] He makes no cultural distinctions at all: art from Africa is either "Bushman" or "Negro," and nowhere does he explore its provenance

or function.[32] The main purpose of primitive art is its role in bringing about the next cycle of renewal in Western culture.

Although the impact of the primitive on the visual arts was complex, its imprint was at least visible, as style if nothing more. Literary primitivists had no such comparable models of primitive literary style to aid their efforts at renewal of the literary text. While it could be argued that D.H. Lawrence's primitivism comes closest in spirit to Gauguin's celebration of primitive sexual emancipation, the literary primitivism that was analogous to Picasso's transformation of sensibility involved a much more nuanced and entangled set of negotiations.

T.S. Eliot was the principal modernist poet to engage with this conceptual primitivism, but his engagement was filtered through secondary sources: anthropology, cultural theory, even the classics. For example, in 1920 he wrote a review of a performance of Gilbert Murray's translation of Euripides' *Medea* at the Holborn Empire. Murray was a leading figure of the group of classical scholars known as the Cambridge Ritualists (including Jane Ellen Harrison, F.M. Cornford, and A.B. Cook), who effected an epistemological shift in the perception of the ancient world. Their work drew very heavily on new discoveries in archaeology and anthropology, particularly the works of James Frazer, and gave rise to a primitivist vision of the classical world, as Fredric Jameson has it, of "culture[s] of masks and death, ritual ecstasies, slavery, scapegoating, phallocentric homosexuality [which was] utterly non- or anticlassical [with] some of the electrifying otherness and fascination" of the world of savages.[33] Although Eliot disliked Murray's translation, for which he reserved one of his harshest criticisms – he had "blur[red] the Greek lyric to the fluid haze of Swinburne" – he clearly felt it to be an important moment in the progress of the primitive. What began as a negative review of a translation of a Greek play becomes a tour de force of name-dropping as Eliot demonstrates his very extensive reading in anthropology and cognate new disciplines: Frazer, E.B. Tylor, Ribot, Janet, Freud, Bergson, Harrison, Cornford, Cook, Durkheim, Robertson Smith, and Wilhelm Wundt are all enlisted into Eliot's vision of a wide-ranging and multidisciplinary primitivism.[34]

Eliot repeatedly turned to Frazer's *The Golden Bough* as a source of primitive information, most prominently in *The Waste Land*; for him it was the arch example of "the mythical method," which, he "seriously" believed, would make "the Modern world possible for art."[35] But in spite of Eliot's championing of Frazer, there was one name listed in the review that was of even more significance to Eliot: "M. Lévy-Bruhl, with his Bororo Indians

who convince themselves that they are parroquets."[36] Eliot read Lucien Lévy-Bruhl as a student at Harvard in 1913, in tandem with Frazer, providing him with a theoretical framework upon which he could hang the primitive materials that *The Golden Bough* supplied in abundance. For Lévy-Bruhl, anthropological data demonstrated primitive psychic structures rather than Frazerian cultural evolution. The Bororo people mentioned in the review refers to a central Brazilian tribe whose members, it was reported, believed themselves not to be human beings but a species of parrot. "Primitive mentality sees no difficulty in the belief that such life and properties exist in the original and in its reproduction at one and the same time. By virtue of the mystic bond, a bond represented by the law of participation, the reproduction is the original, as the Bororo are the araras [macaws]."[37] In Lévy-Bruhl's formulation, "civilized" mental operations are founded upon perceived differences in the way objects are apprehended, whereas "primitive" mentality relies upon the distinctions of the ideal qualities inherent in objects.

In an earlier review of 1916, Eliot discussed the significance of the Bororo as being "capable of a state of mind into which we cannot put ourselves ... the mystical mentality ... plays a much greater part in the daily life of the savage than in that of the civilized man."[38] The Bororo occupy a crucial role in the development of Eliot's primitivist thinking, not only as an emblem of prelogical mentality or savage cognition, or as a type of archaic religious consciousness, but as an alter ego of the modern poet. Lévy-Bruhl's notions of the mental characteristics of primitive peoples – their distinctive capacities for "polysynthetic perception," "collective representation," and "mystical participation" – enabled Eliot to make the much wider claim that "the prelogical mentality persists in civilized man, but becomes available only to or through the poet."[39] In a further review of 1924, Eliot asks a rhetorical question: "Is it possible for art, the creation of beautiful objects and of literature, to persist indefinitely without its primitive purposes?" The poet's purpose is to bring this repressed consciousness to light and "to purify the dialect of the tribe," since, uniquely in modernity, the poet still retains the primitive faculty, like the Bororo, of living in metaphor.[40] As David Spurr and David Chinitz, among others, have argued, Eliot's anthropologically inspired model of a highly integrated primitive society underpins his notions of the ideal Christian community, expressed in *After Strange Gods*, in which the poet has the significant role of sustaining and strengthening the communal sensibilities expressed in myths and rituals; a vision of an ideal society that, for Eliot, is under constant threat from – if not already destroyed by – modernity. If the primitive stands for that archaic purity, then the opposite is

the Jew, characterized as a freethinking, "half-educated or ill-educated," peripatetic, heterogeneous figure, bringing "chaos and futility."[41]

Although many have understandably baulked at Eliot's anti-Semitism, by the end of the second decade of the twentieth century few would have dissented from his valorization of the primitive. There were some notable exceptions. James Joyce, like Eliot, read Lévy-Bruhl with great attention: they met in Copenhagen in 1936, and Lévy-Bruhl admired *Ulysses* greatly.[42] Indeed, Joyce's main narrative design, blending myth and history, touches on the same ground of primitive consciousness as Lévy-Bruhl and the primitivists. Similarly, Joyce's engagement with Vico's cyclical view of history, with its eternal return to an original state, brought him to a comparable kind of primitivism, if by a route very different from other modernists. But Joyce chose to celebrate the figure of the wandering, freethinking Jew as his major protagonist in *Ulysses*, while Haines, the English folklorist and primitivizer of the Irish, is despised by Stephen Dedalus as condescending and stupid. Lévy-Bruhl is even parodied several times in *Finnegans Wake*.[43] Statements such as "What England did in Ireland over the centuries is no different from what the Belgians are doing today in the Congo Free State" colored his view of primitivism:[44] that "the primitive" invariably signified "the colonized." Joyce refused to ignore the transcription of colonized as primitive: an elision that lies at the centre of the primitivist enterprise. So, while Eliot took his anthropological reading at face value as unalloyed accounts of the primitive, Joyce was much more circumspect, maintaining a critical distance and parodying anthropology as a discursive construction rooted in colonization.

The surrealists would seem to have been outright primitivists too; André Breton repeatedly employed familiar primitivist metaphors, claiming, for example, "The eye exists in its savage state ... the wild eye that traces all its colours back to the rainbow."[45] Likewise, his obsession with fetishistic objects or the practice of automatism, which seemed to him to take him back to an original primitive mental state, were key elements in surrealism's ambition to achieve the "absolute reality" of the resolution of dream and reality.[46] Yet the surrealists also emphasized the colonial contexts of primitivism, mounting anti-colonial exhibitions in Paris. The first, in 1931, titled "The Truth about the Colonies," coincided with the official colonial exposition and displayed tribal objects, sculptures, and photographs festooned with Marxist slogans. The second, five years later at the Galerie Charles Ratton, was a less polemical affair, losing the activist slogans, but including European objects alongside African, Oceanic, and American artifacts in a group labelled "European Fetishes" in an attempt to unsettle viewers and to provoke a

realization that the civilized West shared many so-called primitive beliefs with non-Europeans. This project of "intercultural analogies" marked surrealists' very different approach to primitivism as they turned Picasso's idea of the conceptual character of tribal objects on its head, valuing instead their "bricolé heterogeneity." As Hal Foster has it, "These primitivists welcomed 'the unclassified, unsought other' neither as 'mediators' nor as answers to western aesthetic problems; their significance lay in their transgressive power to disrupt."[47]

For the surrealists, the primitive was but the external manifestation of a repressed subconscious, what Freud would call "the oceanic feeling,"[48] unrestrained by reason, the real, by civilization. Surrealists owed an acknowledged and considerable debt to the emerging field of psychoanalysis, but Freud did not return the compliment: he disliked modern art in general, was "utterly indifferent" to fauvism and cubism, and regarded the surrealists as "complete fools."[49] The provocative subtitle of Freud's foundational text, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, established early a primitivist agenda for psychoanalysis. Freud takes his primitive examples almost entirely from Frazer's *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910), but he radically transforms the discursive parameters of the primitive to include compulsion, ambivalence, impulse, obsessional neurosis, projection, and the Oedipus complex. Not to kill the totem animal and to avoid sexual intercourse with members of the opposite sex of the totem clan "must be," Freud writes, "the oldest and most powerful of human desires."[50] Taboos encode ambivalent psychic impulses "corresponding simultaneously to *both* a wish and a counter-wish," and thus there exists a "psychological agreement between taboo and obsessional neurosis."[51] The original taboo is to be found in the Oedipus complex, the metanarrative of incestuous fears and desires, which is "the beginnings of religion, morals, society and art."[52] Throughout his text, Freud oscillates between his conjectural "Prehistoric man" or "primal horde" and anthropological accounts of living peoples as if they were coeval, thus creating a "temporal uncoupling" (to use Greimas's term) of the primitive and the primal, the contemporary and the prehistoric, in which the archaic and the modern bleed into each other until it becomes difficult to distinguish between times and places, the living and the dead. I have been arguing that primitivism misrepresents people's actual social or political situation as colonial subjects in order to rededicate them as primitive. Primitivism also deprives them of any kind of cultural specificity, or history, or place other than the most vague of generalizations: African, Negro, Bushman. Freud effectively accomplished the final translation of the

primitive: they are taken out of time. Time was no longer history, but a psychological event, and the real subject recedes ever further into an atemporal haze in which, to adapt a phrase of Sabine Hake's, the primitive is repressed in order to construct a theory of repression.[53]

Primitive fever affected a wide spectrum of cultural life, high and low, from popular novels and empire expositions to avant-garde ballet. *Tarzan of the Apes*, which Edgar Rice Burroughs described as "a personification of the primitive man, the hunter, the warrior,"[54] was a phenomenon spawning nearly twenty-five best-selling novels and fifty films in the two decades after its publication in 1912. So too, Stravinsky's primitivist ballet, *Le sacre du printemps* (1913), was an immediate *succès de scandale* and the "rage of fashionable society."[55] Until the 1980s, primitivism was widely regarded as having achieved the goal set for it of reviving "belated" Western culture. This view could only be sustained, however, by an unquestioning acceptance of the aesthetic goals of high modernism, whose pursuit of the ideal of autonomous art paradoxically reinforced dominant ideologies and worldviews while claiming to transform them. The desire to relocate primitivism within a wider postcolonial critique centered on a major exhibition of modernist and primitive artworks at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1984. This magnificent exhibition displayed works by Picasso, Braque, Emil Nolde, Amedeo Modigliani, Constantin Brancusi, Max Ernst, Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, the fauves, and Giacometti, alongside the Zuni, Inuit, Dogon, Baule, Dan, Yoruba, Fang, Kota, Kongo, and Oceanic artifacts that had inspired them.[56] Yet the exhibition was greeted with widespread scorn and anger; the focus of discontent was the exhibition and catalogue's subtitle, which encapsulated the curatorial assumptions informing the exhibition: *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*. As became evident from the modern and tribal juxtapositions on show, "affinity" was an obfuscating fiction: "appropriation," "plagiarism," or even "theft" would have been better, more accurate epithets of the relationship between primitivism and the tribal.

Notes

1 Perry Meisel, *The Myth of the Modern: A Study in British Literature and Criticism After 1850* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), cited in David Spurr, "Myths of Anthropology: Eliot, Joyce, Lévy-Bruhl," *PMLA*, 109/2 (1994), 266–80 (at 267).
2 Arthur Clutton-Brock, "The 'Primitive' Tendency in Modern Art," *Burlington Magazine*, 19 (1911), 226–28 (at 228); cited in Colin Rhodes, "Burlington

Primitive: Non-European Art in the Burlington Magazine before 1930," *Burlington Magazine*, 146 (2004), 98–104 (at 100).

3 Hermann Bahr, "Expressionism," in Charles Harrison and Paul Woods (eds.), *Art in Theory: 1900–1990, an Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), cited in Mary Gluck, "Interpreting Primitivism, Mass Culture and Modernism: The Making of Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*," *New German Critique*, 80 (2000), 149–69 (at 163).

4 See Hal Foster, "'Primitive' Scenes," *Critical Inquiry*, 20/1 (1993), 69–102 (at 76), and "Postmodernism in Parallax," *October*, 63 (1993), 3–20 (at 20).

5 William H. Goodyear, *The Grammar of the Lotus: A New History of Classic Ornament* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, 1891), 3, quoted in Antonia Lant, "Haptical Cinema," *October*, 74 (1995), 45–73 (at 52).

6 Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856; repr. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1982), 13; quoted and discussed by Lant, "Haptical Cinema," 52.

7 Patricia Leighten, "The White Peril and L'Art Negre: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism," *Art Bulletin*, 72/4 (1990), 609–30 (at 611).

8 Gluck, "Interpreting Primitivism," 157–58.

9 Marianna Torgovnick, "Making Primitive Art High Art," *Poetics Today*, 10/2 (1989), 299–328 (at 306, 311).

10 Gluck, "Interpreting Primitivism," 153; Rhodes, "Burlington Primitive," 99.

11 William Rubin, quoted in Lawrence D. Steefel, "The Neglected Fruit Cluster in Picasso's 'Les demoiselles d'Avignon'," *Artibus et Historiae*, 13 (1992), 115–20 (at 119).

12 John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, vol. II: *1907–1917* (New York: Random House, 1996), 24; William Stanley Rubin, *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*, 4th print edn. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1988), 255.

13 Leighten, "White Peril," 622; Richardson, *Life of Picasso*, 24–26.

14 Yve-Alain Bois, "Kahnweiler's Lesson," trans. Katharine Streip, *Representations*, 18 (1987), 33–68 (at 38).

15 Ibid., 53.

16 Ibid., 40.

17 Rosalind Krauss, "The Motivation of the Sign," in Lynn Zelevansky (ed.), *Picasso and Braque: A Symposium* (New York: MOMA, 1992), 261–86 (at 262); Partha Mitter, "Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery," *Art Bulletin*, 90/4 (2008), 531–48 (at 535).

18 Krauss, "Motivation of the Sign," 262.

19 Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. M. Bullock (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 18, 22.

20 Alois Riegl, quoted ibid., 40, 36.

21 Ibid., 17, 15.

22 Theodor Lipps, quoted ibid., 7, 123.

23 W. Wolfgang Holdheim, "Wilhelm Worringer and the Polarity of Under-standing," *Boundary 2*, 8/1 (1979), 339–58 (at 342).

24 Joseph A. Buttigieg, "Worringer Among the Modernists," *Boundary 2*, 8/1 (1979), 359–66 (at 360); Holdheim, "Wilhelm Worringer," 343.

25 Buttigieg, "Worringer Among the Modernists," 361.

26 T.E. Hulme, *Speculations* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1927), 53–54; cited by Buttigieg, "Worringer Among the Modernists," 361.

27 Torgovnick, "Making Primitive Art High Art," 301–2.

28 Gluck, "Interpreting Primitivism," 150.

29 Roger Fry, "Negro Sculpture at the Chelsea Book Club," in Jack D. Flam and Miriam Deutch (eds.), *Primitivism and Twentieth-Century Art* (1920; repr. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 145.

30 Roger Fry, quoted in Rhodes, "Burlington Primitive," 103.

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48 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930) in *Civilization, Society and Religion*, Penguin Freud Library vol. xii, trans. James Strachey, ed. Albert Dickson (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1991), 252–60.

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50 Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (1913), trans. A.A. Brill (London: Routledge, 1919), 32.

51 Ibid., 35–36.

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53 "The literary text is repressed in order to support a theory of repression." Sabine Hake, "Saxa Loquuntur: Freud's Archaeology of the Text," *Boundary 2*, 20 (1993), 146–73 (at 172).

54 Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes* (1912; New York: Ballantine, 1983), 97; also quoted in Torgovnick, "Making Primitive Art High Art," 305.

55 Gluck, "Interpreting Primitivism," 167.

56 Torgovnick, "Making Primitive Art High Art," 309.

The Long Turn of the Century

VINCENT SHERRY

"On or about December 1910, human character changed."[1] So Virginia Woolf dated a change in understandings of character in literary fiction that cultural historians of modernism have marked as a defining moment of the modernist sensibility. For the time-mindedness of modernism lives most acutely on – and about – moments of change. Her remark locates one turning point in the story of a consciousness that consists mainly, indeed, of turning points. Whether we identify this turning point as 1895, with the trial of Wilde and the beginning of the last half of the last decade before the last century of the millennium; or 1900, with the turn of that century; or 1910, with the end of the Edwardian decade in England and, especially in December 1910, with the opening of the Post-Impressionist Exhibition in London by Woolf's friend Roger Fry; or 1914, with the outbreak of the Great War; or 1922, in the *annus mirabilis* of modernist cultural production: the sensibility of modernism can be associated meaningfully with all of these dates and yet be confined to none of them. What these various chronologies of modernism share is their focus on a particular moment, or, to change the descriptive but not conceptual metaphor, the line through time that each of them draws. This line – imagined of course but all the more powerful for that – depicts an essential temperament in the sensibility we call "modern*ism*": an intense presentiment of living in a Now distinguished self-consciously and strongly from a Then, in a moment charged with awareness of itself as a moment. Of those various chronologies of essential modernism, however, the turn of the century – especially if we think of it as a long turn of the century, extending, say, from 1890 or so to 1910 or even a few years beyond – may tell the story most formatively, and not only because it comes first but because the sense of change we correctly associate with modernism was concentrated in the change the century's turning marks.

In his discussion of endings in historical imaginaries as well as literary fictions, Frank Kermode has written incisively about the propensity of

centuries' ends for a sense of developmental unrest.[2] The years clustering around 1900 witnessed a volume and quality as well as a pace and recognition of change that is staggering, even in retrospect, let alone in contemporaneous experience. Much of this acceleration drew on the accumulating force of technological invention, which altered the experience of everyday life even through a stratified society. The production of electricity for mass distribution; new systems of public transportation; new media, ranging from the invention of telephony to the development of the mass cultural outlets of cinema and phonography; radio, extending its range through wireless signaling; the first successful air flight in 1903, following on the first four-wheel car in 1893 and its subsequent mass production by Benz and Ford. If the automobile and airplane are the most obvious vehicles of a culturally sanctioned "conquest of space" in the Progress mythology of the nineteenth century, the successful explorations of the North and South Poles in 1909 and 1911 enclosed the globe as a known terrain, removing the hinterland from an actual place and relocating it perhaps as an understanding of consciousness, which, in 1900, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud offered his own way of exploring. And where those technological developments are registered still in retrospect as shocks, the story of cultural and artistic history is told most revealingly as a series of shocking provocations. There was *The Yellow Book* (first competing and then merging with *The Savoy*), running its elegantly scandalous *cartons* from 1894 through 1897 from London, a period which saw the trial of Wilde in 1895 and, in the same year, the publication of Hardy's immediately scandalized novel *Jude the Obscure*. In 1902, William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* shifted the basis of faith from the revealed truth of religious texts to the lived truths of individual experience. In 1905, in Germany, Isadora Duncan's first "modern dance" performances overturned the established standards of classical ballet. Anarchism emerged as a center of energy and attention with the publication of Sorel's *Réflexions sur la violence* in 1908, the same year as Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday* and the year after Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, the two novels that feature the anarchist as a now-established character. Marinetti's Futurist Manifesto was proclaimed in Paris in 1909, the same year and the same place as Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, where, in 1910, Stravinsky would stage his *Firebird Suite*. The Russian modernist outdid its daring in 1913 with his *Rite of Spring*, which spurred a public riot, a response that makes this event the signal incident in the widening rift between accepted convention and artistic invention in these years. And through these decades, in pan-European as well as transatlantic spheres, there was the emergence and flourishing of women's movements for

suffrage and other political rights. This turmoil provided one sign of the times that may have turned one way in 1910, for Woolf, but that was turning and went on turning, even convulsively turning, through these several decades.

Perhaps the most profound change in these changing times was a change in the way time was told. The establishment of the Prime Meridian at Greenwich in 1884 pulled the entire globe into view in a spatial imaginary based on the division of the earth into twenty-four equal time zones. Its map stood before a viewer now – in any travel or telegraph office – as the world-picture of progressive temporality: an emblem of a steadily progressing effort in the Western world to rationalize public time in a linear series that bespoke the underlying, ramifying values of controlled and directed forward move-ment. Of course there were temporal holdouts – various areas of Europe and the Americas hung stubbornly to the odd status of being nine minutes slower, say, or twelve minutes faster than the established average of its 1/24th of the earth. Yet the victory of rational public time was announced in effect in 1912 at the International Conference on Time in Paris, and, a year later, mass-distributed when a wireless telegraph transmitted the first uniform time signal worldwide.[3]

This development of uniform public time is taken rightly to account for the extraordinary energy in literary and artistic and philosophical modernism to locate and develop the alternative dimension of internal, private, idiosyn-cratic time. These projects ranged from Bergson's understanding of the time of the *durée* to William James's modeling of the "stream of consciousness," which, as internalized time measures, defy the divisions of external, public, rational time. Bergson and James tell time from the inside out, conceiving the most meaningful experience of time as moments of feeling that flow, swell, and ebb as the unique life of particular, personal emotion. Jamesian and Bergsonian models provide the frameworks for our understanding of the motive pressure and effected value of any number of the cultural produc-tions of modernism – from the sensationalizing of the pictorial representa-tions of kinetic time in futurist painting and sculpture to the multiple temporalities of cubist canvases to the inward monologues of Woolf and Joyce, Musil and Proust and Mann. In a larger frame of reference, the world-picture of uniform rational time also helped to pull some of its opposite values into focus: as Tim Armstrong observes in his essay in this section, the world-map of Greenwich Time made it increasingly clear that "many parts of the world and many peoples remained outside this global regime: what Leon Trotsky labeled 'uneven development' is an important

aspect of modernism, and is reflected in its negotiation between different understandings of time, some coded as attractively 'primitive,' relaxed, and non-instrumental," an awareness reflected in this volume in David Richards's survey of the "primitive" as a locus of complex cultural production, which stands as a complement to the accelerated temporalities of a cultural avant-garde, an ahead-of-time sensibility, which is surveyed in turn in this volume in Jed Rasula's chapter on this pan-European and transatlantic phenomenon. Moving counterclockwise as well as clockwise, the temporal consciousness of modernism takes the long *durée* of the century's turn as a special, indeed an exemplary, site for the work of a modernism that takes self-consciousness about time as its establishing awareness.

This heightened awareness of time includes a special sensitivity to the cultural work being done through the conceptual metaphors being used to describe the experience of time. These metaphors carried the heavy weight of cultural values already institutionalized: the tropes of advance, whose numerology was provided by the rational calculus of Greenwich Mean Time and whose values included not just development and accumulation but amelioration. Socially progressive views, which, in a rough but ready sorting, move to the liberal or "left" end of a political spectrum, are presumed to be the fellow-travelers of the artistic attitudes of modernism. Here, in the presumptive understandings of many scholars, the technical inventiveness of an identifiably modernist artistry will align itself perforce with equally progressive political values. The fact that this is not the case – and, over the longer story of the cultural history of modernism, manifestly not the case – has spurred interest more recently in conceptions of modernism as an inherently reactionary, countermodern sensibility, where the proclivities of certain modernists for fascism in the interwar period demonstrate this tendency most evidently. This critique reaches its deepest memory and furthest implication where it is extending a Marxist commentary, in which critics such as Theodor Adorno and Fredric Jameson, extending the legacy of Georg Lukács, see the cultural productions of modernism emerging from the middling position of a European middle class, whose antipathy to socialist futures would eventuate in the end in the reactionary formation of fascism. An interesting and significant feature of this Marxist analysis shows in an oblique and elliptical but nonetheless clear understanding of a politically progressive dimension to the technical experimentation of modernism in the early years of the century, which, in this understanding, is lost as a result of the social catastrophe of the Great War of 1914–18 or as a function of post-revolutionary developments in Stalinist Russia but retained in effect as a

better memory, if lost possibility, in the subsequent history of modernism.[4] As a related consequence, in the scholarship on the politics of modernism in particular, a certain paradox of provocation takes its powerful and effective place. In this critical discourse, modernism is acknowledged as technically advanced and forward-looking, experimental and so progressive, while a reactionary politics may be assigned either to personal compromises of this original energy or to enveloping historical forces. Where this contradiction needs to be explained, a certain form of intellectual mourning is endorsed, a mood of political dismay is sustained, so that the commentary may at once sympathize with "the modernist project" (understood as progressive by intention) and condemn a regrettable political retrograde, inevitable or not.[5]

While such political positioning is certainly relevant, and is taken up in the third section of this volume in Andrzej Gasiorek's chapter on the politics of modernism, it is important not to read history backwards and project those later developments into the motive interests of the earlier time, when the binary tropes of "progress" and "regression," "advance" and "atavism," will not have acquired the meanings and associations of subsequent political history. Allowing for the retrospective view in any history, but attempting to look at the turn of the century in its own terms, we may see the more complex, interesting interaction between a sensibility of cultural modernism and the circumstances of an "advancing," technological modernity. In a sort of resisting reciprocity, in a defining instance of its preoccupation with understandings as well as experiences of time, the consciousness of modernism engages that dominant value of advance with an equally strong interest in its antagonist, one whose signal status also deserved a capitalized term: Degeneration.

Named in German in 1892 by Max Nordau, translated into English in 1895 (it was reissued in England alone in eight large commercial editions before 1900), *Degeneration* was discussed with urgent concern in a broadly pan-European and transatlantic discourse. In this moralized colloquy, spokespersons of the public cause of a Progress mythology promulgated its gospel even as they revealed its mostly unspoken, otherwise unspeakable, anxieties. These are the susceptibilities that a literature of major record will identify as the secret but commensurate dread of this narrative of progress: reversion. These anxieties were expressed in public culture most vividly perhaps in the pseudoscience of phrenology, the sizing and rating of skull-size and skull-shape, which were taken as the measure not only of individual intelligence but also of (unequal) racial development. The appeal of this pseudoscience increased in fact across the turn of the century, that milepost of supposed advance.

The crucial point to mark about this discourse of degeneration is that the decline it abhorred so strongly, in voluble screed after voluble screed, represented no static force; it was an enemy forcefully at work in the present. As Nordau himself concedes, the very advance he champions has worked to overwhelm the human species and force it, in the signal location of the modern city, to revert to increasingly primitive formations. In this oblique but extreme and revealing perception, the advance of urban modernity is actually the engine of regression.[6] So, in the literature of this intimate fear, the secret but terrible truth of human reversion describes the direction of history and the truth of the times. This is the literature of a modernism that is marked by a self-conscious understanding of its own cultural temporality. In the literature that provides the acutest register of this time, reversion does not emerge as the putative opposite to the value narrative of advance, which would be attained through the proliferating technology of a progressive history. Rather, this backward turning is an impulse inseparable from the methods and mechanisms of that advance. This is a literature that may be termed "modernist" in the radical sense of the root meanings of that word: the *ism* of the *modern*, the special awareness of today, a heightened and self-conscious sense of the present, all in all, an imaginative understanding of the times and of time and of the ways in which culture tells time and gives meaning to its experience of time. This is the modernism of radical critique, the modernism of a modernity against itself, which owns no small bibliography in the lengthened archive of modernist cultures and which, in a historically informed understanding, shows the turn of the century as a formative location.

Thomas Hardy provides his version of this contrarian understanding already in 1891, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, in the vision of time that Tess recounts to her suitor Angel Clare: "And you seem to see numbers of to-morrows just all in a line, the first of them the biggest and clearest, the others getting smaller and smaller as they stand further away; but they all seem very fierce and cruel and as if they said, 'I'm coming! Beware of me! Beware of me!'" The promise of a future improving through these unwinding "numbers of to-morrows" has been belied with a "cruel" irony indeed. This is the untoward truth Hardy's narrator assigns to Tess's specific historical location, her particular cultural sensibility, in the follow-up paragraph, where he speaks through the personage of Clare:

> He was surprised to find this young woman – who though but a milkmaid had just that touch of rarity about her which might make her the envied of

her housemates – shaping such sad imaginings. She was expressing in her own native phrases – assisted a little by her sixth-standard training – feelings which might almost have been called those of the age – the ache of modernism.[7]

Where Tess "had just that touch of rarity about her which might make her the envied of her housemates," so exceptional would she be, too, among her classmates. It is the most outstanding student of "sixth-standard training" who has gained this vision of the cruelest time. Tess is the favored, forward point of a widely working force of social modernization, of progressive general education, which has served to constitute in her the consciousness of its opposite quality – not human betterment through a progress chronology but a fearful apprehension of an unimproved future, indeed, an ever-worsening circumstance. This is the sensibility Hardy denominates so strikingly as "the ache of modernism." Here the word that has assumed all the values of progressive modernity, from its use in the culture wars of the French Catholic Church in the mid-late nineteenth century, is turned to speak of its other side, which is, in fact, its ineluctable opposite. Here the improvement the numerical series assumes in the cultural narratives of an already standardized "modernism" is turned to the hurt that occurs when the promise is sensed not only as belied – the century now ending shows no substantial melioration – but reversed, where the disappointment expands into the image of a history ever worsening. This adverse understanding is the consciousness of a profounder modernism, of a modernity against itself, all in all, of the modernism that hurts.

Admittedly, Hardy's is a grimly committed misery, but the terribly personal story that provides the force and form of so much of his writing is representative in this respect of a temperament that extends across the century's end. Still, it is exceptional rather than general, modernist in sensibility rather than (just) modern in chronology, but it occurs through the rest of the 1890s sufficiently often to achieve the coherence of a substantial understanding. Consider the familiar fiction of H.G. Wells's signature novel of the time-mind of the fin de siècle, published in the same year as Hardy's *Jude*: *The Time Machine*, where this vessel of futuristic modernity brings the time-traveler, at his ultimate destination, face to face with the images of contemporary decay in the figures of the Decadent Eloi (obviously modeled on the person and images of the Decadent artist Aubrey Beardsley) and body to body with the bulks of an inveterate degeneration in their underground brethren, the unlovely Morlocks. Similarly, in Bram Stoker's

Dracula (1897). There is a heavy emphasis here on a progressive technology of writing in the personal communications of the characters: they write simple longhand, then shorthand dictation, then resort to the relatively newfangled mechanism of the typewriter, and move, finally, to the manifestly magical apparatus of the "phono*graph*" (this emphasis preserves the place the device holds in this series of *writing*). There is a history in miniature of technology in this evolving series and, in sum, and especially in the latest device of the phonograph, it represents an intended weapon against the horror of human reversion that the vampire typifies. The technology fails in that campaign but, in a set of climactic scenes, where the awful story of the vampire's advance is kept secret within the recording device, it is identified substantially with the secret it keeps and so with the untoward, unspeakable horror of its supposed opposite.

Unspeakable, in another way, is the truth of this complex and contradictory modernity within modernism. This quality has not been much emphasized in earlier histories of modernism, but the lack of adequate representation may provide a measure of the threat it presents to conceptions of "modernism" that have been increasingly institutionalized and mainstreamed. Here, in the critical narratives establishing the canon of literary modernism at midcentury, the technical inventions and artistic improvisations of this literature were seen in the main as an extension of the experimental temper in liberal modernity. Many factors underlie this emphasis, including the need to make the sensibility of modernism conform to the standards of value being promulgated in the postwar universities of Europe and America. Here the famed "difficulty" of its artistry might not only be studied and explained but, in the process, be understood in accordance with the standards prevailing there. And so a liberal or neoliberal attitude in postwar academe listened attentively to the critical story being told in a piece of literary criticism which, in this pedagogical history, had the status of a de facto textbook: Edmund Wilson's *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870–1930* (1931). The first literary history of a very long turn-of-the-century modernism, Wilson's account committed the imaginative energies of the modernists he studied to a narrative of cultural advance that spoke as powerfully from his own political sensibility as it did, later, to the temperaments of postwar academe. As Robert Spiller indicated in 1958, *Axel's Castle* created an intellectual environment in which an admiration for the likes of Eliot and Joyce, Proust and Yeats (four of Wilson's six featured authors), was virtually identical with a commitment to progressive politics.[8] This critical understanding may have changed somewhat over the last few decades, perhaps with the turn of a further century drawing attention to the

earlier one as a formative location. Nonetheless, those midcentury misreadings are part of the genetic legacy of a modernism that has turned like the turn of the century between opposite possibilities of cultural value, being open to the immense dimension of technical possibility in a new century of technological improvisation and yet equally skeptical about the valorization of the narratives of advance and growth – above all, the value of futurity unquestioned. The critical heading under which Wilson placed the energies of experimental advance in his modernism is "Symbolism," and that is the term and concept that has carried the heaviest weight of preconceived value in the critical narratives of modernism written after his time and, as it turns out, before. From the turn of the twentieth century through the turn of the twenty-first, this notion of "Symbolism" carried forward an ideology of modernism, particularly in Anglo-American literary criticism, that may have revealed its significance most tellingly in what this term and concept was attempting to keep at bay.

Arthur Symons's *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899) presented the first compendium in English literary criticism of the major writing of the European fin de siècle. Under this title, Symons's book would be hailed for more than a century as the hallmark volume for the inception as well as the understanding of poetic modernism. It is essential to remember, however, that this book represents an expansion and retitling of Symons's 1893 essay, "The Decadent Movement in Literature." This precedent text reveals an internal history and substantial complication to Symons's otherwise single-minded valorization of "the symbolist movement." Recognizing the significance of these two terms in his work shows what was at stake, what the motives and implications were, in this primary displacement in the critical vocabulary and understanding of modernist poetics.

"The Decadent Movement in Literature" takes "Decadence" as the comprehensive identity for the most important work in the fin-de-siècle period. In this cultural narrative, "Decadence" serves as a term equally for a historical era and an imaginative attitude, which emerged jointly from a sense of the lateness of contemporary time. Thus, in Symons's words, "Decadence" demonstrates "all the qualities that mark the end of great periods, the qualities that we find in the Greek, the Latin, Decadence: an intense self-consciousness, a restless curiosity in research, an over-subtilizing refinement upon refinement, a spiritual and moral perversity." In literary expression, this *"maladie fin de siècle"* shows its symptoms in a style that Symons represents in critical metaphors of decay that may be fancifully various but are always strongly turned: here a verbal texture "high-flavored and spotted with

corruption," there a "disease of form," everywhere the signs of "a civilization grown over-luxurious, over-inquiring, too languid for relief of action, too uncertain for any emphasis in opinion or in conduct."[9]

Without specific reference to this earlier essay, and without much variation of the authors he chooses to demonstrate his signal word, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* presents the epochal phenomena of his earlier construction as "something which is vaguely called Decadence." Symons now faults this term as being "rarely used with any precise meaning"; accordingly, he is replacing it with "Symbolism," though, to be sure, not much is gained in the area of "precise meaning" for this term, which, like its referent, stands for open signification above all. For the work of words in this Symbolist poetry defies any notion of traditional symbolization. Here the Word is unfixed from prescriptive significance; the verbal surface of the poem opens as a staging area of creative meaning, procreative significance. These functions may well have been features of the poetics of Decadence, but they were not isolated and radicalized as categories of action or value, as they are in this second turn, in this renaming. Here Symons claims that the poetic word of Symbolism will replace "a visible world [that] is no longer a reality," serving in the same way as a portal to an "unseen world" that is "no longer a dream."[10]

Despite the opposing of those two poetic impulses in Symons's account, the poetic coteries originally associated with *décadence* and *symbolisme* actually overlapped in their original location, in fin-de-siècle Paris. As Patrick McGuinness has documented, the two terms were conferred, in turn and even simultaneously, on the same authors. These appellations were brandished equally as weapons and blazons in the contests for dominance between individual talents seeking the greater strength of a group, even as their members routinely changed sides. In the longer run, and largely because of greater aptitudes in self-promotion, the writers identified at one moment as Symbolists claimed that greater strength, and took on the mantle of advanced-guard philosophers of artistic novelty. Both as a reason and a result of this history, in "the Symbolist version of events" that become the dominant story, "Symbolism attains the status of a theory," as McGuinness correctly puts it, "whereas Decadence is perceived as a mood."[11]

As a "philosophy" or "theory," Symbolism tends to live somewhat independently of the actual poems associated with it, and so carries a sense of creative possibility for a new literature. Indeed, like the word of the Symbolist(e) poem, "Symbolism" is a counter of possibility, being tied to no established understanding of symbolization and untied from any specific

poetic activity at all. In subsequent literary histories, in the origin stories of poetic modernism in particular, "Symbolism" serves to conjure up nothing less than the immense dimension of possibility that is associated with modernism itself. Contrarily, in the certain and concrete terms of Symons's own critical tropes, Decadence centers a declaratively emphatic "mood," which captures a sense of endings rather than beginnings, and so needs to be separated from those legends of potentiality that attend the understandings of modernism. As an overview of the Parisian fin de siècle suggests, however, "Decadence" and "Symbolism" need to be understood as categories of literary polemic rather than adversarial characters in the actual practice of writing. Which is to say: there was an intense sense of possibility and novelty in the air, but it was not detachable from the feeling of current civilization being at its end and a concomitant sense of dissolution in norms ranging from the literary to the moral, where this sense of dissolution provided the circumstance for writing as well as theorizing some of the boldest of the new poetries. For reasons ranging from the political to the moral, subsequent literary critics and historians elaborate and radicalize and polemicize the difference, turning *symbolisme* into the better angel of its erstwhile twin, its increasingly disapproved double.

The token power of *symbolisme* may be accounted for in good part, then, by the pressure of the term it is attempting to suppress. An advance indicator of this threat, and an early example of the process of subverting it by renaming it, comes in the first years of the decade ending with the first publication of Symons's book. It appears already in the set of revisions that Oscar Wilde performed on the first published edition of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890, 1891). Wittily, certainly cynically, Wilde is already manipulating the sensitivities that attend the term *décadence*, which owned a signal role in the first version. He is responding to reviews, which turned their dislike of his particular story into a more explicit and intense contempt for the general sensibility of Decadence, of which the novel was designated a most objectionable representative. Thus, in referencing the literary convention that lies behind the infamous "yellow book" that Lord Henry has given Dorian (as guide to his downfall), he changes "the French school of *Décadents*" to "the French school of *Symbolistes*." In descriptive details that make this fatal book indistinguishable from Huysmans's *À Rebours*, the work Symons would call "the breviary of the Decadence,"[12] the language is otherwise substantially unaltered across a long paragraph of rich depiction. Wilde then complements this shift from *"Décadents"* to *"Symbolistes"* with another winking change, which alters a "dangerous novel" in 1890 to a "wonderful novel" in 1891.[13]

The change of the keyword alone makes for an absolute difference in the attributed value and assigned character of its referent. In his uniquely guileful way, however, Wilde takes back more than he gives away in this exchange. The chapters he adds for the later version surround that now missing word with an array of evidence as readily assignable to "Decadence" as that word itself remains persistently unsaid. He builds up a milieu of conventionally identifiable "Decadence" in the company and settings of Dorian's experience even while the words that dare not speak their names – "Decadence" no less than "homosexuality," which were of course routinely identified in conventionally moralized accounts – go unspoken. In doing so, he reveals the subsidiary power and heavier menace of the "Decadence" that "Symbolism" nominally, but only nominally, overrules. And so Wilde establishes in advance the character of the enemy and threat, which Symons – and later critics – would be suppressing in that term.

And so it is telling that W.B. Yeats, the poet most readily associated with "Symbolism" in poetic modernism in English, reveals the decisive force of the sensibility of Decadence in the formation of a "new poetry." Representing the conditions and principles of this "new poetry" in 1898, Yeats moves with the usual caution around the fraught word – "I see, indeed, in the arts of every country those faint lights and faint colours and faint outlines and faint energies which many call 'the Decadence,' and which I, because I believe that the arts lie dreaming of things to come, prefer to call the autumn of the body" – and then proceeds to implicate "Decadence," whether it is renamed or euphemized, into the essential temper of the significant poems to come. The autumnal body of this new poetry is the literary signature of "a crowning crisis of the world," which Yeats specifies further in his recasting of the ascent narrative of a conventional Progress mythology. Here, at the turn of this next century, at the dawning of the supposedly modern age, at "the moment when man is about to ascend, with the wealth he has been so long gathering upon his shoulders," Yeats intervenes, reversing the direction of conventional progressiveness in the assertion that this is in fact "the stairway he has been *descending* from the first days."[14] Here is Yeats's own version of a now recognizable turn-of-the-century sensibility, which turns clockwise and counterclockwise at the same time: this is the special time of a modernist decadence, where a novel prosody for the modern century is coming out of an imaginative apprehension of declining times.

This clockwise counterclockwise motion provides the imaginative conceit of a novel that stands in literary history as the most searching and disturbing record of contemporary constructions of temporality: Joseph Conrad's *The*

Secret Agent (1907). Conrad bases his story on a historical event, recalling an anarchist plot on the Greenwich Observatory in the mid-1890s but restaging this maneuver in his "simple tale," as he coyly subtitles it, by putting the bomb in the hands of a personage known then under the generic heading of "simpleton." Stevie, the "idiot" brother of the protagonist's wife, is presented in ways stark and oblique as the most livid image of the "degeneration" discourses currently circulating in England as well as the continent. Stevie takes his place in the construction of thematic value in this book as the record, in effect, of the double time of modernism, all in all, of an imaginative understanding of time turning backward as inexorably as forward. More: the anarchists who have in view the primary site of Greenwich Mean Time are targeting not only the values but the measures by which the schemes of temporal rationalism are being implemented in a system of global modernization, which is also or most of all an imperial dominion.[15] Its ideological guise – the Progress narrative used to sanction the conquests of empire – is double-timed constantly in the novel. The legends of progressivity play against the evidence of reversion that Stevie presents and also, most of all, against the presence and effect of the conventions of literary Decadence, which are at work and in play throughout Conrad's text. All in all, there is an imaginative understanding of cultural time in the novel that is profoundly and revealingly at odds with the Progress ideologies that dominate public life at the turn of the century.

Take this representation of the British Empire as a grand systemic organization. In line with general precedent in the conventions of Decadence, this is a global and historical imaginary that, in its decline, registers the presentiment of downturn in history in its most indicative and consequential measure. As a record of his inwardness with the system he is also critiquing, Conrad records this condition as a function of a language otherwise deployed to support or celebrate its institutions. Here, in this vignette in the imperial capital, he plays with and overplays the idiolect of imperial order:

> The Assistant Commissioner, driven rapidly in a hansom from the neighbourhood of Soho in the direction of Westminster, got out at the very centre of the Empire on which the sun never sets. Some stalwart constables, who did not seem particularly impressed by the duty of watching the august spot, saluted him. Penetrating through a portal by no means lofty into the precincts of the House which is *the* House, *par excellence* in the minds of many millions of men, he was met at last by the volatile and revolutionary Toodles.[16]

The intensives which Conrad scores into this passage and underscores on his own – "the very centre," "*the* House, *par excellence*" – raise the level of esteem

in a mock-hyperbolic way and so destabilize the verbal surface as a record of credible value. The linguistic ritual of empire, which the narrative language seems to be serving so assiduously, is a verbal ceremony that goes wrong in the actual words. A constantly sardonic verbal comedy, there is also a special entropic quality: a pomposity hollowing itself out in a tonal prosody of inflation and diminishment. In "the volatile and revolutionary Toodles," for most conspicuous instance, the polysyllabic Latinity dovetails into the diminutive name in a rhythm of expansion and contraction that also mimics the sense of a great political institution in decline. It is, all in all, an august inanity. Or, an Augustan inanity, insofar as the "august spot" provides a memory of the dynasty most closely associated with the turn in Roman history from Republic to Empire, a process to which the decline of Rome is conventionally attributed and with which the emergence of a first literary Decadence is usually synchronized. That long story may be retold as a British history in miniature in this passage, where the linguistic wit formalizes the obsequies of imperial ambition in its extension and distension, swelling up like those ameliorating narratives of progressive advance and breaking down in ways remembered by the Decadent, the heckler.

Conrad, as an instrument in the mercantile empire from his years in the British Merchant Service, understood how the Progress ideology, which provided the writ and warrant of imperial expansion, also constructed the character of colonized peoples. These were pre- or subhuman beings, who, in this calculus, would benefit from the profiteering enterprise of commercial empire. As his depiction of the symbol and center of the British Empire registers in the last passage, however, he understood the profounder disquiet with that ideology. If, as Nordau's influential understanding conceded, a sort of super-evolution has occurred with the accelerating rate of change in the progress of urban modernity and, instead of improving humankind, has overwhelmed the human species and revealed an inherent weakness that leads to a reversion to more primitive types, an exhaustion of and by the Progress mythology can be seen to be displaced into the identities assigned to colonized peoples. The representation of these peoples, as the supposed but failed beneficiaries of that ideology, may be recognized as a presentiment of empire falling apart from within as well as without. This understanding clarifies the particular intensity of contumely and rebuke being visited on colonized populations. And it provides a range of reference and a dimension of full resonance for the phrase uttered by Kurtz as the last words of the imperial dream, at the end and verge of a European commercial empire in Africa, where "the horror, the horror" registers the failure of the

imperial mission of "civilizing" the "brutes" in "exterminating" them and so, too, reveals the fictiveness of that mission in the first place.[17]

An empire dying of its own establishing ideal is a conceit lodged in the genetic material of literary and cultural Decadence. It is not a contradiction but a revealing coincidence that the size of the European imperial domain was growing (inordinately) through the same years that literary and cultural Decadence was being established: it is the loss of moral authority in the gaining of terrain, not any material diminishment, that provides the provocation and spur for the end-of-empire-days feeling that the sensibility of literary Decadence represents. This imaginative understanding shows most powerfully in a geography of imperial space, one in which an expiring Europe rules uneasily over a distant, primitive hinterland of untrammelled vitality. This is the phantasm Thomas Mann registers in *Death in Venice* (1912), where, walking by a cemetery in his hometown in a Germany which is understood to be a necropolis no less than the Venice he will die in, his protagonist Aschenbach "saw a landscape, a tropical quagmire beneath a steamy sky – sultry, luxuriant, and monstrous – a kind of primordial wilderness of islands, marshes, and alluvial channels; saw hairy palm shafts thrusting upward, near and far, from rank clusters of bracken, from beds of thick, swollen, and bizarrely burgeoning flora," when, after a longer cavalcade of zoomorphic phantasmagoria, "the vision faded, and with a shake of the head Aschenbach resumed his promenade along the gravestone cutters' fences."[18] An imperial nation as a cemetery, ruling with an increasingly failing hand over an ever-burgeoning terrain, Mann's Germany is living out the double rhythm that is the signature feeling of a long turn of the century, a presentiment lengthening into the days just before the First World War, where this countermeasure is scored into the temporal imaginary of a modernism that takes this double idea of generation and contraction, of thrashing expiry, as the rhythmic figure for its own self-conscious awareness of the times.

So, in the special temporality of poetry, in a section of "Und Drang" (1911), Ezra Pound turns the usual sense of "modernity," which, so named, frames a specially heightened awareness of the present time, into the special time of his own imaginative, poetic understanding:

> How our modernity,
> Nerve-wracked and broken, turns
> Against time's way and the way of things,
> Crying with weak and egoistic cries!

> All things are given over,
> Only the restless will
> Surges amid the stars
> Seeking new moods of life,
> New permutations.[19]

The plaint in these verses, which is no complaint, is that the "surges" of the "new" in human history are wearing us down. Or, clockwise, that any forward-looking inventiveness is instinct with a debility – "nerve-wracked and broken." Thus Pound defines a counter-positive quality in his understanding of the work of this "modernity," which "turns" at the turn of the verse "against time's way and the way of things." Framing its own "turn" technically as well as thematically, and so self-consciously, Pound's is an exemplary modernism, but it is also and especially a modernity against itself, a particularly modernist *décadence*, which tracks as a counter-positive fashion in elaborating its "new permutations."

"Decadence, Gautier suggests, expresses the inner logic of a modernity which has reached the terminal point in a cultural parabola already traced by ancient civilizations."[20] Thus Peter Nicholls redraws a figure that could be centered indicatively at the turning of the twentieth century. Here, if the apex is positioned at 1900, the two sides of the curve describe motions that could be assigned the values of backwardness and forwardness jointly. Thus the consciousness of modernism rises – or falls – only as it coincides with a lowering – also a heightening – recognition of the steady, intensifying, even inexorable presence of its alleged antimatter, those tendencies toward regression that are shown most visibly in the art of primitive modernisms, say, in the visual and musical arts, in early cubism and Stravinsky. This reverse turn includes a descent quest that is also a darkening adventure of history, where, in 1914, with a technology advanced to previously unimaginable levels of destruction, the consciousness of this profounder modernism will find its apotheosis.

Notes

1 Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (London: Hogarth Press, 1924), 4.
2 Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (1967; repr. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
3 Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880–1918*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
4 See Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 33–34, 254; Fredric Jameson,

A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present (2002; repr. London: Verso, 2012), 134–36.

5 A useful roundup review of the critical work dedicated to the deliberation of this apparent paradox of an aesthetically progressive poetics and a socially reactionary politics – William Chace, Raymond Williams, Alastair Hamilton, and Fredric Jameson – is provided by Marjorie Perloff in "The Politics of Modern Poetry," a review of Cairns Craig's *Yeats, Eliot, Pound, and the Politics of Poetry, in Contemporary Literature*, 25/1 (1984), 88–92 (at 88). The otherwise unresolvable quality in this problem can push critics to extreme solutions: in *The Sense of an Ending* (110–11), for instance, Kermode dissolves the evident discrepancy of aesthetic experimentation and reactionary politics by asserting "that the radical thinking of the early modernists about the arts implied, in other spheres, opinions of a sort not normally associated with the word radical. It appears, in fact, that modernist radicalism in art – the breaking down of pseudo-traditions, the making new on a true understanding of the nature of the elements of art – this radicalism involves the creation of fictions which may be dangerous in the dispositions they breed towards the world." A good overview of the critical problem comes in "The Politics of Modernist Form," *New Literary History*, 23/3 (1992), 675–90, where Marianne DeKoven rehearses the various claims that are made for the politically revolutionary and socially progressive dimensions of modernist technical and formal experimentation (677). DeKoven notices that the work of female modernists seems more readily identifiable with the convention-dismaying efforts of a liberating political ideology than, say, Pound, Eliot, or Joyce (680–81).

6 Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, trans. anon. (first English edn. 1895; repr. New York: Appleton, 1905); see esp. chap 4, "Etiology," 36–39.

7 Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, ed. Simon Gatrell and Juliet Grindle (Oxford University Press, 2005), 140.

8 Robert Spiller, "The Influence of Edmund Wilson: The Dual Tradition," *The Nation*, February 22 1958, 164.

9 Arthur Symons, "The Decadent Movement in Literature," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, November 1893, 858–69 (at 858, 859, 866).

10 Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, (1899; repr. London: Archibald Constable, 1908), 6, 4.

11 Patrick McGuinness, "Introduction," in McGuinness (ed.), *Symbolism, Decadence, and the Fin de Siècle: French and European Perspectives* (University of Exeter Press, 2000), 1–3.

12 Symons, *Symbolist Movement*, 139; J.-K. Huysmans, *Against Nature*, trans. Margaret Mauldon, ed. Nicholas White (Oxford University Press, 1998); the title may also be translated as "Against the Grain."

13 Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Norton Critical Edition, ed. Michael Patrick Gillespie, 2nd edn. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 254, 104, 268, 121. Hereafter reference will be made parenthetically to this edition as *PDG*, which, besides including both the 1890 and 1891 versions, reprints some of the reviews of the first edition: see esp. "A Study in Puppydom," from *St. James Gazette*, 352 ff.

14 W.B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan, 1961), 190–93. Emphasis added.

15 A comprehensive account of the history and consequences of the establishment of Greenwich Mean Time comes from Adam Barrows, *The Cosmic Time of Empire: Modern Britain and World Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). Barrows's account of *The Secret Agent* (102–12) emphasizes the conflict between the artifice of the rationalized standard and the organic rhythms of Conrad's experience in the merchant marine, which, if desirable, are represented now as inaccessible.

16 Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale* (1907), ed. Michael Newton (London: Penguin, 2007), 162.

17 Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Norton Critical Edition, ed. Robert Kimbrough, 3rd edn. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 68, 51.

18 Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice* (1912), trans. Michael Henry Heim (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 5.

19 *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound*, ed. Michael King (New York: New Directions, 1976), 169–70.

20 Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 45.

The 1910s and the Great War

MARK MORRISSON

Though the 1920s represent a high point of modernism, it was not entirely hyperbolic of Virginia Woolf to observe that "On or about December 1910, human character changed."[1] In Europe and North America, early modernism was noticeably entering the public sphere by around 1910. As various as that modernism was, "it" had noticeably arrived and even enjoyed a few brief years of success and notoriety before the outbreak of the most shocking bloodbath humanity had yet experienced. If we understand modernism as a significant expression of the transformations at which Woolf's conceit gestures, we must come to terms with the extent to which the Great War quickly reshaped that nascent modernism in ways that would resonate well into the 1920s.

Though this *Cambridge History* volume highlights the non-linear and historically fluid developments of modernism across time and space, I examine the events of a brief time period in this chapter. During those few years, the war drew what many experienced as a definitive dividing line between the past and the present. Samuel Hynes argues that the extreme violence and devastation of the war essentially "changed reality," not least for his main subject, the British: "That change was so vast and so abrupt as to make the years after the war seem discontinuous from the years before, and that discontinuity became a part of English imaginations. Men and women after the war looked back at their own pasts as one might look across a great chasm to a remote, peaceable place on the other side."[2]

In Hynes's account, that "radical discontinuity" happens as a result of the war.[3] But *avant-guerre* modernism suggests that discontinuity, rupture, and thematic or aesthetic violence were already strong features of European and American culture *before* the great conflagration. Moreover, while dark irony was a dominant note in much war literature, there was a significant literature – even modernist literature – of the war that was not defined by irony. In order to understand what difference the war made to modernism, we

must look at a few years in Europe and the United States that were critical to the history of modernism.

During the period from 1910 through the first shots of the Great War, rapid modernization could exhilarate or disorient or even threaten the social order. Political liberalism lurched uneasily toward its twentieth-century progressivist basis as Asquith's government laid the foundations of the modern welfare state, along the way curtailing the power of the House of Lords after the death of Edward VII, while Woodrow Wilson instituted a national income tax and radically reformed banking by creating the Federal Reserve in 1913. Yet the British government proved incapable of meeting other demands for modernization increasingly loudly voiced by labor unions, suffrage societies, and Irish republicans.[4] Wilson made little progress toward ending economic or social inequality or establishing internationalism and freedom of dissent, and free speech was greatly reduced during his presidency. But scientific and technological breakthroughs astounded, as Soddy and Rutherford explained radioactivity, new X-ray tubes transformed the medical profession, and new and ever-faster modes of transportation made the world seem much smaller and more knowable. New technologies allowed the proliferation of movies, musical recordings, mass-market magazines, and national brand consumer products. Even if governments and social mores had not kept pace, these technological developments felt singularly new, modern, life-changing.

"Modernization" and "modernism" are not identical, of course. "Modernism" connotes a self-consciousness about the modern condition – and it, too, was in full swing during the immediate prewar period. This remarkable efflorescence of modernist literature and art shows that the institutional infrastructure for modernism had finally reached the critical mass it needed to allow modernists and audiences to interact in a mutually transforming way. With its exhibition and gallery networks, periodicals, book publishing initiatives, bookstores, public readings, performance venues, and the like, modernism had, essentially, arrived, reaching a point of public viability in the United States and Western Europe. It had its impresarios – Roger Fry, Ezra Pound, Mabel Dodge Luhan, Amy Lowell, Sergei Diaghilev, F.T. Marinetti, Walter Pach, and many others – and its prewar scenes in London, Paris, Berlin, Milan, New York, St. Petersburg, and Moscow as well as Tiflis (Tiblisi), Tokyo, Chicago, and Barcelona. Modernism was, seemingly, everywhere. Its rhetorical contempt for the multitudes and for the mass-market economy that entertained and sustained them was already in evidence, but such slogans as the *Little Review*'s "making no compromise with the public

taste" also shrewdly positioned modernism within a commercial culture that advertised products as symbols of lifestyle and identity.

Many of these institutions – such as *Blast, Poetry and Drama, The Masses*, the Rebel Art Centre, and the Omega Workshops, to name but a few well-known examples – did not survive the war. Others, such as the *Little Review* and the Abbey Theatre, carried on, though they were moving in new directions by the 1920s. And new cultural movements sprang up in the 1920s, of course. But their sensibilities were different. Futurist technophilia was tempered by the bleak vision of wounded soldiers returning from a technologically superpowered war. Dada emerged as a direct response to the war's horrors. A generation of artists would die in the trenches or find their work and their careers completely changed by their experiences. As Pound memorably put it, "There died a myriad, / And of the best, among them, / For an old bitch gone in the teeth, / For a botched civilization."[5] As Vincent Sherry shows, the language of anglophone modernism – of Pound, Eliot, and Woolf – marks a response to the disintegration of the values and culture of liberal England.[6] Modernism would continue after the war, and its genre-blurring, experimental creativity would continue, but the meaning of the ruptures and transformations wrought by modernization would be radically different.

Avant Guerre

As a concept, or as a set of related aesthetics or sensibilities, "modernism" did not spring into being in 1922, or 1914, or 1910, or any other single year. Nonetheless, the period between the publication of F.T. Marinetti's "Manifesto of Futurism" on the front page of *Le Figaro* on February 20, 1909, and Austria's declaration of war on July 28, 1914, witnessed the public impact of modernism across Europe and the United States. This history may be witnessed most vividly in the pairing of aesthetic inventions and institutional innovations.

In 1910, London experienced its first major public recognition of continental modern art. Returning to London after a period as a curator of paintings at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where he tried desperately to reform the museum's acquisitions and exhibition strategies,[7] key Bloomsbury art critic Roger Fry took advantage of the slow winter season to launch the exhibition "Manet and the Post-Impressionists" at the Grafton Galleries. British audiences had scarcely come to appreciate the French impressionism that was already a half century old when Fry offered them

"post-impressionist" art – a term he coined for the work of artists such as Cézanne, van Gogh, and Gauguin (who had all died years before the exhibition opened) and a younger generation that included Picasso, Matisse, and Signac, among others. Most importantly, Fry conveyed a sense of modern art as a coherent movement with an appreciable aesthetic capable of engaging contemporaneity. While most critics were openly hostile, using terms such as "pornography" and "sickness of the soul" to describe the art, the exhibition ran until January 1911.[8] Fry's Bloomsbury friend Desmond MacCarthy noted that the exhibition's intention was "no gradual infiltration, but – bang! an assault along the whole academic front of art."[9] That attack was received by many critics as a blow to the historical foundations of civilization itself.

Across the Atlantic, just two years after Fry's show closed, Walter Pach's "International Exhibition of Modern Art" – more commonly remembered as "The Armory Show," due to its location in the National Guard armory at Lexington and 25th Street in New York City – displayed some 1,300 works by over 300 artists, ranging from Cézanne to Marcel Duchamp. As with Fry's exhibition, critical recoil indicated how revolutionary and unsettling this event was perceived to be. An art critic from the *New York Times* memorably quipped that Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)" resembled "an explosion in a shingle factory," and former US president Theodore Roosevelt allegedly proclaimed upon walking into the exhibition, "That's not art!" Yet the show sold 205,000 tickets, with some 87,000 people attending in New York, and over 100,000 at the Art Institute in Chicago. A significant, though much smaller, crowd of 17,000 turned out for its final stop in Boston. Fifty years later, Lloyd Goodrich, director of the Whitney Museum, proclaimed, "No single event, before or since, has had such an influence on American art."[10]

The Armory Show presented the most advanced wing of international modernism to American audiences. Take, for example, Duchamp's iconic painting "Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)." It was seen as an example of cubism and futurism, though it had been rejected by the Parisian cubists from the exhibition of the Société des Artistes Indépendants in 1912, and Duchamp never considered himself a futurist. The painting draws together the geometric vocabulary of analytic cubism, the dynamism of Italian futurism, and Duchamp's own appropriation of two significant technologies of the period: chronophotography and the X-ray. Linda Dalrymple Henderson notes the importance of nineteenth-century French physiologist Étienne-Jules Marey's "chronophotographie géometrique" technique, which used dots and lines to create a linear record of the movement his photographs tracked,

noting that Duchamp's paintings of the period "add a new X-ray-related element to [his] continued exploration of transparency and cutting: stripping and nudity."[11] His Armory Show painting used its technological inspiration to unite the tensions of internal and external worlds, time and space, into a single aesthetic perception.

5.1 Time in space: Duchamp, "Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2." © 2016 Succession Marcel Duchamp/ADAGP, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

While the Armory Show was winding down in Boston, the first perform-
ance of Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps* by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes
at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on May 29, 1913, nearly caused the
audience to riot. The object of the audience's outrage varies according to
the teller, with some feeling that the show was an affront and others
defending it from ridicule. While the dissonance of Stravinsky's score and
the bold and brutal choreography by Nijinsky were remarkable, the event
itself, with its provocation of the audience, has come to define modernism
for some critics. As Modris Eksteins explains,

> From the setting in the newly constructed, ultramodern Théâtre des
> Champs-Élysées, in Paris, through the ideas and intentions of the leading
> protagonists, to the tumultuous response of the audience, that opening night
> of *Le Sacre* represents a milestone in the development of "modernism,"
> modernism as above all a culture of the sensational event, through which
> art and life both become a matter of energy and are fused as one.[12]

As the preceding chapter on the avant-garde has shown, such provocations
and audience involvement were not simply a feature of the postwar period.
The Italian futurist F.T. Marinetti, the self-styled "caffeine of Europe," was a
master of such incitements, deliberately agitating audiences to riot at "futur-
ist evenings."

Not all of the prewar energies of modernism and the avant-garde were
expressed in headline-grabbing events, however. Yeats, Conrad, Proust, and
Joyce had been writing a recognizably modernist literature in Europe for
some years: experimental in form, self-conscious about its genre, probing the
contours of the psyche, blurring the boundaries between realism and sym-
bolism, at times gesturing toward a twentieth-century mythopoesis. In
addition, as John Timberman Newcomb shows, American poets (such as
Stephen Crane, E.A. Robinson, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Charlotte Perkins
Gilman) had resisted the genteel traditions of American poetry for two
decades. Gertrude Stein's masterpiece of modernist parataxis, *Tender Buttons,*
was published in June 1914 by Greenwich Village vanity press, Claire Marie,
just in time to catch summer readers. The slim volume looked traditional
enough, but Stein's experiments in poetry were anything but that. The lists
of objects and lack of discursive connections (or metrical regularity of any
sort) in *Tender Buttons* made its poetry a heightened play of language that was
virtually unrecognizable to prewar audiences as poetry at all.

That same year, after ten years of rejection, Joyce finally saw *Dubliners*
reach print. The collection had languished for so many years that Joyce had

continued to write stories, completing the collection's masterpiece, "The Dead," by 1907. The bleak and detailed portrayal of urban poverty and futility in *Dubliners* reflects the era's strain of naturalist fiction, but the stories display some features of the modernist writing for which Joyce would be known in *A Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses*. After the three first-person childhood stories, the collection experiments with free indirect discourse. By the last piece, "The Dead," we have the character-in-voice of "Lily" punctuating the narrative with her characteristic idioms and expressions:

> Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet. Hardly had she brought one gentleman into the little pantry behind the office on the ground floor and helped him off with his overcoat than the wheezy hall-door bell clanged again and she had to scamper along the bare hallway to let in another guest. It was well for her she had not to attend to the ladies also.[13]

The later stories in *Dubliners* also demonstrate Joyce's synthesis of detailed realism and symbolic structures, with early attention to mythic elements provided by Christianity and Frazer's *Golden Bough*. Even Joyce's further experiments with narration, such as the newspaper headlines that structure the "Aeolus" chapter of *Ulysses*, had antecedents in *Dubliners*, where "A Painful Case" features a newspaper account in its narrative.

Boldly innovative as their *texts* were, neither *Dubliners* nor *Tender Buttons* departed from the traditional book *form*. But modernist and avant-garde practices in the visual arts were influencing print culture as well. One especially striking example is the 1913 collaboration between the (Swiss-born) French poet Blaise Cendrars and the (Ukranian-born) French artist Sonia Delaunay-Terk, *La prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France*.

Cendrars's poem is a significant contribution to avant-guerre modernism, with its free verse and variable line length and its radical temporal and spatial dislocations. The speaker, in the company of a Montmartre prostitute, traverses time and space on the Trans-Siberian railroad (Paris, Ephesus, Moscow, "48,000 miles away from where I was born"[14]), and frequently breaks the frame of its voyage narrative. But the poem's major contribution to modernism was not simply its textual pyrotechnics; Cendrars's collaboration with Delaunay-Terk produced a strikingly innovative example of the modernist "artists' book" genre.[15] Comprising four sheets of printed paper glued together to form a square over six feet high, with Cendrars's poetry printed down one side in colored type and Delaunay-Terk's abstract watercolors painted down the other, the copies of the book also made a spatial statement consonant with its far-ranging travel text. When stacked end to

end, the copies were to attain the height of that icon of Parisian modernity, the Eiffel Tower. The book boldly challenges the traditional relationship of verbal text to image. Johanna Drucker notes, "In its closed form, this work is folded into a parchment wrapper painted by the artist, and it only functions as a readable 'book' when it is fully open, defying the codex form by its graphic flatness and large-scale presence."[16]

The publication and promotion of *Prose du Transsibérien* in autumn 1913 also tells us much about the prewar institutions of modernism. It was an early example of an eventually common arrangement by which modernist books were published through the efforts of a periodical,[17] and Cendrars and Delaunay then utilized two seemingly contradictory marketing strategies to promote their artists' book. They limited the first edition to 150 numbered and signed copies,[18] thus adopting what later became a common modernist strategy to create a collector's market for modernism through planned scarcity.[19] But the mass-market promotional culture of the period suggested their second strategy: as Perloff explains, the book's publication in 1913 "was preceded by a flurry of leaflets, subscription forms, and prospectuses."[20] A modernist poem probing the limits of spatial and temporal coordinates becomes a material object of both scarcity and broad-ranging marketing, available only for a moment, as glitzy and on display as the Eiffel Tower, symbol of the promotion of Paris as the epicenter of modernity.

While the Symbolist roots of modernist poetry go well back at least to mid-nineteenth-century France, the legacy of the prewar period of anglophone poetry would endure most notably through the aesthetic invention and institutional innovation of imagism. This new poetic "movement" – though "brand" might be the more appropriate word – arose in the context of modernist culture's most significant point of intersection with promotional capitalism: the magazine. Roger Fry's Post-Impressionist Exhibitions in London and the Armory Show in New York demonstrated British and American awakening to modern art in the years preceding the war, while modernist literature was also beginning to make increasing claims on public attention. Periodical publication allowed modernism to participate in the tactics of exclusivity – the writers published in little magazines that consolidated group identities and served as arbiters of taste and delineators of the truly modern – and in the expansive dynamics of a buzzing and rapidly expanding consumer market for print culture. Advertisers used magazines to mobilize desire for specific brands, whether of household cleaning products, cigarettes, or literature, and advertising revenues made even modest magazines financially viable. Periodicals were an increasingly dominant form of

print culture, following on the late nineteenth-century "magazine revolution," which encouraged readers to define themselves in terms of commodities.[21] The immediate prewar years witnessed a range of new periodicals espousing literary modernism.[22]

While numerous varieties of modernist literature appeared in prewar periodicals, imagism emerged from the essentially local dynamics of the London literary scene. Nonetheless, it rapidly spread abroad through the periodicals and used the driving force of modern print culture – the logic of advertising appeals – to offer a modernist poetry that could distinguish itself from the limitations of Georgian poetry, the technofetishism of Italian futurism, and even the Symbolist legacy that still animated much modernist verse. It took its place in a force field of diversified modernisms. The year 1912 saw Marinetti lecturing on futurism in London and futurism spreading as far as Russia. In that same year, Fry mounted the second Post-Impressionist Exhibition in London, this time including more British painters, while Harriet Monroe launched *Poetry* in Chicago. Concurrently, Harold Monro edited the *Poetry Review* and founded his Poetry Bookshop in Bloomsbury as a place not only to browse and buy poetry but also to attend readings, and Edward Marsh convinced Monro to bring out the first of the so-called *Georgian Poetry* anthologies. Monro, ever optimistic about poetry's relevance to mass audiences, proclaimed in his first editorial in the *Poetry Review*, "Poetry is said to be unpopular – generally by those who dislike it themselves. Good poetry is as much read now as at any time since the invention of printing, and bad poetry is read a great deal too much."[23]

A crucial point to mark about the experimental temper of this prewar period is that even an identifiably mainstream poetic like Georgianism was being read as an expression of some of the same innovative energies as those of early literary modernism. While some writers of the 1920s would dismiss Georgian poetry as conservative, lark-lover effusions, it was seen as excitingly modern in 1912, when the vernacular language of John Masefield echoed to the iconoclastic daring of Rupert Brooke, who could write a sonnet about – yes – sea sickness ("Channel Passage").[24] As D.H. Lawrence would put it in a review of the first volume, "We are awake again, our lungs are full of new air, our eyes of morning. The first song is nearly a cry, fear and the pain of remembrance sharpening away the pure music. And that is this book."[25] The healthy sales of the early *Georgian Poetry* anthologies[26] seemed to confirm Monro's sense in *Poetry Review* and his new magazine, *Poetry and Drama* (1913–14), that there was a market for modern poetry. Pound, H.D. (another recent American transplant to London), and the

English poet Richard Aldington took notice not only of Monro's enterprises but also of Marinetti's successes in self-promotion, and decided to try their hands at shaping the public reception of their own poetry.

So, what did imagism contribute to modernist poetry? Essentially, without adopting the strident publicity stunts of a Marinetti, it combined the marketing strategies of the modern periodical, which brought advertiser and consumer together like no other institution of the period, and a perceptibly novel poetic technique. Indeed, the juxtaposition of images without a discursive or narrative apparatus or self-consciously "poetic" language replicated the logic of the modern product advertisement.[27] Imagist poetry worked on the economies and juxtapositions of the vibrant image and became itself a brand name in the market of modernism.

Pound described the poetry he and H.D. were writing as "Imagiste" (perhaps the quickly dropped French ending was originally intended to give the movement the flair of the continental avant-garde) and began promoting the term in print in 1913. As H.D. described it, Pound more or less invented her as "H.D. Imagiste" in the British Museum tea room as he decided to send her paradigmatic imagist poem, "Hermes of the Ways," to Harriet Monroe – it was published in the January 1913 number of *Poetry*. As for articulating what imagism meant in an editorial comment in the March 1913 issue of *Poetry*,[28] Pound avoided the form of a manifesto, like those Marinetti had turned out with some regularity to articulate a group identity and program for futurism. He struck his own famously independent note by listing "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste":

Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something.
Don't use such an expression as "dim lands of peace." It dulls the image. It mixes an abstraction with the concrete. It comes from the writer's not realizing that the natural object is always the *adequate* symbol.
Go in fear of abstractions. Don't retell in mediocre verse what has already been done in good prose.

There were many targets in these prohibitions: the "natural object" might well have been a swipe at Marinetti; the attack on abstractions and mediocre verse also dismissed a great deal of English verse, where the excesses of late romanticism in Georgian poetry showed the senescence of Symbolism in its English habitations. But the first line, "Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something," was advertising orthodoxy of the period.

As in the case of Cendrars and Delaunay's *Prose du Transsibérien*, Pound's first effort at an imagist anthology, *Des Imagistes*, was brought out first in February 1914 as a special issue of a magazine: Alfred Kreymborg's *The Globe* (and only later as a book volume in March 1914). *Poetry* had already become the American magazine outlet for imagism, publishing not only Pound's statements but also his early imagist poetry ("In a Station of the Metro" appeared in the April 1913 issue) and that of H.D. *The Egoist* would be the British mouthpiece for Imagism.

"In a Station of the Metro" serves as well as any of the early imagist poems to demonstrate imagism's rejection of the discursive, meter-bound, and self-consciously poetic diction of Victorian verse.

> **In a Station of the Metro**
> The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
> Petals on a wet, black bough.

Approximating the 5/7/5 syllable count of the traditional haiku form, the poem evokes rather than describes the experience of coming out of a metro station in Paris.[29] In doing so, it also reveals a modernist poetic impulse toward parataxis that can be seen in the early works of Pound, H.D., Aldington, and William Carlos Williams, and that persists in anglophone poetry through Gary Snyder and into the present.

Pound's interests were turning elsewhere, however, as he lost control of the brand in squabbles with Amy Lowell, who published three further anthologies under the title *Some Imagist Poets* in 1915, 1916, and 1917 (they did not include Pound). Pound was also collaborating with Wyndham Lewis on *Blast*, the first issue of which, in retrospect, can be seen as the culmination of the prewar avant-garde in London. This is the magazine that best illustrates the immediate impact of the war on anglophone modernism.

The War

The event commonly seen as the spark that set Europe aflame was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary) and his wife, Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, by Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip. By the end of July, Austria had declared war on Serbia, and by the end of August, a network of secret alliances and nationalist and imperialist aspirations had locked all of the major combatants (other than the United States) into the bloodiest war yet seen. The dark side of modernization was evident, as the war made use of

the machine gun, chemical warfare, weaponized aircraft, the tank, and the mass mobilization of soldiers. Modern hygiene and medicine kept many soldiers from dying of disease, but the war nevertheless claimed some 17 million military and civilian lives, with another 20 million wounded. The Spanish Flu pandemic that followed (1918–20) quickly highlighted the limits of modern medicine and the dangers of modern global mobility, with 500 million people infected, some 50 to 100 million of whom would die from the virus. By the end of the decade, four empires had fallen, as Eliot would famously intone in a litany of collapsing imperial capitals in *The Waste Land:* "Falling towers / Jerusalem Athens Alexandria / Vienna London / Unreal."[30] In one of his most quoted lines, Yeats would tersely sum it up: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold."[31]

Wyndham Lewis's *Blast* would be ever marked in literary history by its proximity to these military "blasts" of August 1914. Whatever difference exists between military and artistic firepower, its first issue was nonetheless the quintessential prewar modernist avant-garde manifestation in Britain. It approached the multimedia disruptive power of Cendrars and Delaunay's collaboration, just as it hinted at the brutal brilliance of the premiere of *Le sacre du printemps*.

Launched on July 1, 1914, *Blast* promoted "vorticism," a British avant-garde positioning itself polemically against both the incursions of Marinetti's Italian futurism and the homegrown art world of Roger Fry's Bloomsbury as well as virtually the entire Victorian age. Included in *Blast* 1, Lewis's drama *Enemy of the Stars* managed to swipe at complacent British audiences, inject a modernist primitivist and gothic strain into its few short pages, intervene in philosophical debates about Stirnerian Egoism and the limits and constraints placed upon the self by society, and style the modernist artist as a figure thriving upon the promotional culture of the period. Perhaps more telling than the agonistic struggle between the irreconcilable demands of the play's dyad – Hanp and Arghol – was the "Advertisement" page inserted early in the play and followed by images of several of Lewis's artworks before the text of the play resumed. The "advertisement" functions more as a statement of an art invigorated by modern promotional culture than of a specific stage direction. Like advertisements of its era, it evokes through abstract associative connections – the spectacle of "some bleak circus" joins the visual culture of fashion advertising more dynamically than the more restrained imagist poetry of the period could. "Enormous youngsters, bursting everywhere through heavy tight clothes, laboured in by dull explosive muscles. full of fiery dust and sinewy energetic air, not sap ... Black cloth cut

somewhere, nowadays on the upper Baltic."[32] The alliteration and abstraction of phrases such as "packed with posterity" evoke – as advertising does, as modernism does – rather than describe, while the last phrases offer a kind of product commentary that is otherwise oddly placed in so severely imagined a scene. Most of the rest of the first issue of *Blast* lived up to its promise of shocking a complacent British audience to its core. One of Rebecca West's strongest early fictions, "Indissoluble Matrimony," contributed as much as *Enemy of the Stars* did to the manifestos' combative polemics, portraying the agonistic arena of a bourgeois marriage between a misogynistic husband, aptly named "George" (to goad British self-righteousness), and his sensual, artistic, racially mixed, and sexually aggressive wife, Evadne. The play's violence and primitive energy culminate in George's believing he has murdered Evadne, only to end up defeated and held in the arms of his sleeping wife, who presumably does not even notice his attempt to drown her: "He undressed and got into bed: as he had done every night for ten years, and as he would do every night until he died. Still sleeping, Evadne caressed him with warm arms."[33] The issue also included early chapters of what would become *The Good Soldier* by Ford Madox Ford; some poetry by Pound, who was trying on a more active and aggressive poetic demeanor more fitting for the visual avant-garde of vorticism than for Lowell's *Some Imagist Poets* anthologies; and a great deal of strong artwork in varying cubist-, futurist-, or post-impressionist-inspired art by Lewis, Edward Wadsworth, Frederick Etchells, William Roberts, Jacob Epstein, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Cuthbert Hamilton, and Spencer Gore. Many of these artists were among the first generation of British artists still largely trained at the venerable Slade School to open themselves up to the continental avant-garde's often violent assaults on figuration and traditional moral or aesthetic subject matter of art.

While the prewar modernism of *Blast* 1 could draw upon and even celebrate the dynamic agonism of modern life, the naïve romanticization of violence would be impossible to sustain, even if vorticism could powerfully capture or even participate in the aesthetics of real war. Yes, vorticist visual art may have lent itself to engaging with the agonistic feeling of war, and Edward Wadsworth, one of the chief vorticist painters, was enlisted during the war to supervise the "dazzle painting" camouflage of over 2,000 warship hulls. But *Blast*'s second (and final) issue, the July 1915 "War Number," could not in fact have been more different from its flamboyant prewar predecessor. The soldierly khaki cover (as shocking by contrast to the pink of the first issue as that color was originally meant to be) and the shifting polemic toward the Kaiser and Germany, all in all, a more subdued sense of

oppositionality, signified the difficulty vorticism would face in the war years. Lewis would note the problem in a brief article continuing his fight with Marinetti and with Christopher Nevinson, who had sided with the futurists during Lewis's prewar battles over control of the London arts scene: "Marinetti's solitary English disciple [Nevinson] has discovered that War is not Magnifique, or that Marinetti's Guerre is not la Guerre." He then goes on to criticize the dearth of good war literature.[34] Perhaps the most striking contribution in *Blast* 2 was "Vortex Gaudier-Brzeska (Written from the Trenches)." The French sculptor and key vorticist attempted to insist on the aesthetic principles of his abstraction even in the face of war:

> THE BURSTING SHELLS, the volleys, wire entanglements, projectors, motors, the chaos of battle DO NOT ALTER IN THE LEAST, the outlines of the hill we are besieging. A company of PARTRIDGES scuttle along before our very trench.
> IT WOULD BE FOLLY TO SEEK ARTISTIC EMOTIONS AMID THESE LITTLE WORKS OF OURS.[35]

This brave and complex assertion was tragically undermined by what followed it: the announcement of Gaudier-Brzeska's death in a charge at Neuville St. Vaast on June 5, 1915.[36] For all intents and purposes, vorticism was dead. Gaudier-Brzeska and T.E. Hulme would both be killed in the war. Even some of the Italian futurist sparring partners for Lewis and his circle did not survive; Umberto Boccioni was drafted into the Italian army and died during a training exercise on August 17, 1916.

Blast now looks like the culmination of the trajectory of the immediate prewar years in the London art world, with the war itself fragmenting, blunting, or destroying the promise of a truly vibrant scene. The centenary exhibition *A Crisis of Brilliance* (at the Dulwich Picture Gallery in 2013) highlighted the chilling impact of the war on a promising generation of young modern artists in Britain. The title of the exhibition derived from a comment by Slade School professor of drawing Henry Tonks, who thought that the wartime generation of Slade School students – Stanley Spencer, Paul Nash, C.R.W. Nevinson, Mark Gertler, David Bomberg, and Dora Carrington – represented the Slade's last "crisis of brilliance." All of these painters' careers were started by their time at the Slade and tied to various exhibitions of the prewar London avant-garde, but all were affected by the war more than by any other event. Nevinson, who had fallen out with Lewis and Pound by signing Marinetti's futurist manifesto, "Vital English Art," was an ambulance driver early in the war and eventually an official war artist. He

5.2 Vorticism at war: dazzle camouflage.

contributed a vorticist-looking illustration, "On the Way to the Trenches," to *Blast* 2, but began to move away from modernist painting styles, and his career went into decline after the war. Indeed, all of these painters were unable to realize the potential of their prewar artistic careers. Gertler and Carrington eventually committed suicide, and Nash turned to nature for inspiration in his paintings as a result of the war. As the war clearly darkened triumphalist prewar narratives of scientific and technological progress, it also further shaped another dimension of modernism that was emerging well before 1914: a fascination with the alternative spiritualities and epistemologies offered by occultism or esotericism. Many modernists – from Yeats, Butts, Pound, Eliot, H.D., Joyce, and Lawrence, to Kupka, Duchamp, Crowley, Aldous Huxley, Breton, Ithell Colquhoun, and a substantial portion of the postwar surrealists – had deep fascinations with or even direct investments in occultism, for reasons too diverse to characterize here.[37] The effect of the war on modernist occult writings was dramatic, and several key texts of the 1920s had their genesis in the war years. In 1917 Yeats and his wife Georgie Hyde-Lees began the automatic writing that not only produced his occult magnum opus, *A Vision* (1925, revised 1937), but also shaped much of his greatest poetry. Mary Butts's *Ashe of Rings* (1925) and Aleister Crowley's *Moonchild*

(written in 1917, published in 1929) both re-envisioned the Great War in terms of a magical or spiritual battle of the forces of light against those of darkness. Indeed, Pound's *Cantos* and Eliot's *The Waste Land* can be read fruitfully in the context of occult interpretations of war.[38]

Ultimately, the war instilled in modernist esoteric and decadent imaginings a visceral sense of apocalypse. But the occult revival and the public fascination with visions of apocalypse and the eschaton predated the beginning of hostilities. Indeed, historian Philip Jenkins argues that this apocalypticism went hand in hand with rapid modernization:

> From the late nineteenth century these [apocalyptic] ideas experienced a worldwide vogue, as believers tried to make sense of the sweeping changes they witnessed around them – the collapse of old social assumptions, the rise of gigantic cities and mass society, and the spread of seemingly miraculous technology. Across cultures and denominations, the resulting mood of expectation was peaking just as the war began.[39]

Each of the major combatant countries had its own interpretations of the war as the battle at the end of times. In the United States, Billy Sunday and other religious leaders described combat between Hell (with the Kaiser as the Beast) and the forces of Heaven, while Germany's Ludwig Ganghofer would describe England as "Babylon, the great Whore."[40] Moreover, prewar apocalpyticism was already vitally present in the avant-garde of the *Blaue Reiter* and German expressionism. As Jenkins puts it: "Apocalypse was a German literary and artistic genre."[41]

Before and especially during the war, this specific end-of-times sensibility might well be seen as a component of the modernist sense of a crisis of time, and, ultimately, of modernism's ongoing critical engagement with notions of Decadence. Perhaps the most compelling modernist synthesis of esotericism and apocalyptic thinking during the war was the 1916 novel *The Green Face* (*Das grüne Gesicht*), by Austrian/German occultist and modernist writer Gustav Meyrink, who was published alongside many expressionists and has often been compared to Kafka. Though appearing during the war, *The Green Face* is set prophetically in a postwar Amsterdam steeped in the ethos of Decadence: a soul-destroying emptiness, "nervous exhaustion," and world-weariness of which the war seems more a culmination than cause. In the "horrors of peace," Mammon rules, muscle-power displaces the intelligentsia,[42] and sex shows and "Zulu circuses" provide amusement for the bored. The novel's protagonist, the engineer Hauberrisser, lives in a postwar urban landscape that Meyrink imagined would be defined by dislocated intellectuals

and disillusioned refugee inhabitants. Meyrink portrays a grim peace betrayed by "stony-hearted politicians of all races who were determined to say their immortal piece at the permanent peace conference which was discussing the securest way to bar the stable door now that the horse had bolted for good."[43] He portrays the true cost of the war as unredeemable alienation. As one character explains, "The War split mankind into two, and neither half can understand the other. Some have seen Hell open up before them and will bear the image within them for the rest of their lives; for the others it was just so much newsprint."[44]

Turning away from the resources of politics and public culture, *The Green Face* offers up esoteric initiation as a structure for containing the dire collapse of civilization. The esoteric order that guides Hauberrisser calls for a renewal of language that might have fascinated a Joyce or Jolas in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. But, keeping with its esoteric vision, such a language would convey an inner voice that would yet restore communal connection: a "mysterious language with new words, which are beyond error or even uncertainty . . . a revelation of the truth in the light of which error vanishes because our thoughts are rings that are no longer separate, but have linked together to form a chain."[45]

Such a vision of a new language can only be achieved, however, through an apocalypse ushered in by the war. Amsterdam faces destruction of biblical proportions: by hurricane, a swarm of locusts blown in from Africa, and tornados that fill the air with coffins, corpses, and vegetation, and that pull down the twin bell towers of St. Nicholas's. The "New Jerusalem" ushered in by this destruction culminates in a modernist rupture of the boundaries of time and space, syncretic myth and urban realism, mind and body. What follows is a harbinger of the modernism to come in the 1920s. Hauberrisser's bare urban room becomes an Egyptian temple with Isis (Hauberrisser's lost innocent Eva) in fresco and in reality on her throne:

> he saw the wooden floorboards and at the same time they were the stone flags of the temple . . . He touched the whitewashed wall with his hand, could feel its rough surface and yet at the same time knew without mistake that his fingers were stroking a tall, gold statue, which he believed he recognised as the Goddess Isis sitting on a throne.[46]

This syncretic modernist vision appealed powerfully to the postwar sensibility and succeeded wildly on the literary market, selling 90,000 copies in its first year.[47]

Aftermath

While the war took its toll on modernist institutions as well as on the lives of individual writers and artists, modernism was also being recalibrated as a sensibility as a postwar world faced the challenges of demobilization, economic uncertainty, and a devastating influenza pandemic. The immediate postwar era saw early responses to war in modernist fiction many years before the definitive modernist war novels would be published in the later 1920s. Rebecca West's first novel, *The Return of the Soldier*, which dealt with the prevalent malady "shell-shock," was published in 1918; Romain Rolland's *Clérambault* and John Dos Passos's *Three Soldiers* were published in 1920 and 1921, respectively. Ernst Jünger's *Storm of Steel* would be published in its first version privately in 1920. But most of the important anglophone novels and memoirs of the war did not appear until later in the 1920s – Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* novels beginning in 1924 and extending to 1928, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1925, and, still later, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Aldington's *Death of a Hero*, Liam O'Flaherty's *Return of the Brute*, Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and Robert Graves's *Goodbye to All That*.

Poetry had followed a different trajectory than fiction, however. The war had seen a remarkable boom in verse. If Meyrink had used a wartime vision of apocalypse to critique, essentially from within, the modernist fascination with Decadence, and had turned to esotericism and myth to provide a structure for the recovery of innocence and atemporal meaning, readers in England turned to the much more traditional fare of Georgian poetry for its bold rejection of the fragmentation admired approvingly by Decadents. And Georgian poetry struck a popular chord with nationalist British audiences at the beginning of the war. As Vincent Sherry argues, "The Georgian response to the war exhibits a quasi-religious significance. The innocence it reclaims will undergo a sort of baptism by fire, which, in turn, will authenticate and indeed consecrate the condition of innocence that this poetic temperament takes as its mainstay."[48] Rupert Brooke's 1914 sonnets gave voice to a pastoral sentimental view of Englishness that many soldiers (or at least the officers) felt they were going off to defend in 1914.[49] Brooke himself did not face combat or write about actual trench experience, as Sassoon, Owen, and Rosenberg did. These other poets offered a lyric realism about trench warfare, which included negative and darkly ironic visions of actual violence and the motivations behind the war, all of which strikingly undermined the naïve romantic nationalism of Georgian poetry.

The popularity of Brooke's poetry, and of poems such as John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields," published later in 1915, helped bring on a significant poetry revival that lasted until around 1919.[50] As that poetry boom waned, some modernists found their prewar aesthetics insufficient for the devastated world they faced. As Richard Aldington explained in his first postwar volume, his earlier imagist book "consisted of short-hand notes" that would be of little interest to the fellow soldiers to whom he wished his wartime poems to appeal.[51] Among the new poetry magazines published immediately after the war, Thomas Moult's *Voices* (1919–21) explicitly placed both modernist and Georgian poetry alongside that of returning soldiers. Readers encountered angry and disillusioned "voices," such as that of Frederick Branford (a flight lieutenant permanently disabled in the Battle of the Somme). Branford's "The Secret Treaties," for instance, lamented the soldiers' willingness to be swayed by the corrupting *words* of the war's advocates: "We sprang, to win a New Jerusalem. / Now is our shame, for we have seen you fling / Full sounding Honour from your lips like phlegm, / And bargain up our soul in felonies."[52]

Branford's poem is a soldier's evocation of Pound's "botched civilisation" in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, and is a no less powerful statement of Pound's postwar indictment of the betraying language that brought the world into a self-destructive war. In the fourth section of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, Pound lambasts the public school Latin phrases that elevated as civilized values the causes for which soldiers were enlisted: "THESE fought, in any case, / and some believing, pro domo, in any case," undermining their previously assumed moral certitude with the repetition of "in any case." The Horatian ode whose lines – "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori" – were used to enlist soldiers are here rearranged to further negate their appeal as a rebuttal, almost an act of vandalism: "Died some pro patria, / non 'dulce' non 'et décor.'" As in Branford's poem, and even in Wilfred Owen's famous rejection of the Horatian lines as "the Old Lies," in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* the language of the war becomes that of deceitful leaders:

> believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving
> came home, home to a lie,
> home to many deceits,
> home to old lies and new infamy;
> usury age-old and age-thick
> and liars in public places.[53]

Pound's rage at "old men's lies" speaks to a sense of the betrayals of the language and logic of English liberalism by the politicians who entered into

secret treaties that committed millions to slaughter. Vincent Sherry identifies this sense of betrayal as an animating critical agenda of several major modernist writers of the 1920s – Woolf, Eliot, Joyce, and Pound.[54] The challenge to Western political and intellectual traditions did not only register in modernist art and literature, moreover. In his room in Vanessa Bell's and Duncan Grant's Bloomsbury hideaway at Charleston in 1919, John Maynard Keynes shaped a modernist macroeconomics in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. That year, Freud would begin to draw together psychoanalysis and aesthetics with his theorization of the uncanny and, reflecting the immense loss of life in the war, add a death drive to his model of the mind in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). The effects of the world-shaking events of the 1910s would live into the next decade.

Notes

1 Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (London: Hogarth Press, 1924), 4.
2 Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (London: Pimlico, 1992), xi.
3 Ibid.
4 George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England* (New York: Putnam, 1980).
5 Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, in *Personae: The Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1971), 191.
6 See Vincent Sherry, *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (Oxford University Press, 2003).
7 See Christopher Reed, *A Roger Fry Reader* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 235–37.
8 Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 47.
9 Desmond MacCarthy, "The Art Quake of 1910," *The Listener*, February 1, 1945, 123–24.
10 Quoted in James Panero, "The Armory Show at 100," *New Criterion*, December 2012, www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-Armory-Show-at-100-7494, accessed July 15, 2013.
11 Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *Duchamp in Context* (Princeton University Press, 1998), 11, 10.
12 Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 16.
13 James Joyce, *Dubliners* (London: Grant Richards, 1914), 216.
14 See Ron Padgett's translation in Blaise Cendrars, *Complete Poems* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 15–29.

15 Mary Shaw, *"Un coup de dès* and *La prose du Transsibérien:* A Study in Contraries," in Marija Dalbello and Mary Shaw (eds.), *Visible Writings: Cultures, Forms, Readings* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 135–50 (at 143).

16 Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books* (New York: Granary Books, 2004), 51.

17 Cendrars and Emil Szittya (a pseudonym for Adolf Schenk) began publishing a radical journal, *Neue Menschen* or *Les hommes nouveaux,* which also served as a small press for experimental book publications.

18 Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 3.

19 See Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

20 Perloff, *Futurist Moment,* 7.

21 Richard Ohmann has styled this new kind of cultural production the "magazine revolution." See Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996), 340.

22 For a useful sampling of key modernist magazines of the period, see the *Modernist Journals Project* at www.modjourn.org or Mark Morrisson, *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences, and Reception, 1905–1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001).

23 Monro, "Preface," *Poetry Review,* 1 (January 1912), 3–4.

24 Robert Ross, *The Georgian Revolt, 1910–1922: Rise and Fall of a Poetic Ideal* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), 99–101.

25 D.H. Lawrence, "The Georgian Renaissance," *Rhythm,* 2/14 (March 1913), Literary Supplement, xvii.

26 Ross records that, by the end of 1919, the first *Georgian Poetry* anthology was in its thirteenth thousand, the second in its twelfth, and the third in its eleventh – very strong sales figures indeed for a poetry anthology (*Georgian Revolt,* 107).

27 See Morrisson, *Public Face,* 95–109; and Timothy Materer, "Making It Sell! Ezra Pound Advertises Modernism," in Kevin J. H. Dettmar and Stephen Watt (eds.), *Marketing Modernisms: Self-Promotion, Canonization, and Rereading* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 17–36.

28 "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste," *Poetry,* 1/6 (March 1913), 200–06.

29 *Personae,* 109. To increase the new poetic's audience and intellectual validity, Pound explained the genesis of the poem in a note in the *Fortnightly Review,* September 1, 1914, 465, 467.

30 T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land,* in *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), 67.

31 W.B. Yeats, "The Second Coming," *Yeats's Poetry, Drama, and Prose,* ed. James Pethica (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 76.

32 From Wyndham Lewis, "Enemy of the Stars," *Blast*, 1 (1914), 51–85 (at 55).

33 Rebecca West, "Indissoluble Matrimony," *Blast*, 1 (1914), 98–117 (at 117).

34 Wyndham Lewis, "The Six Hundred, Verestchagin and Uccello," *Blast*, 2 (1915), 25–26 (at 25).

35 "Vortex Gaudier-Brzeska (Written from the Trenches)," *Blast*, 2 (1915), 33–34 (at 33).

36 *Blast*, 2 (1915), 34.

37 For examples outside of the formidable scholarship on Yeats and the occult, see Leon Surette, *The Birth of Modernism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats, and the Occult* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993); Leon Surette and Demetres Tryphonopoulos (eds.), *Literary Modernism and the Occult Tradition* (Orono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 1996); M.E. Warlick, *Max Ernst and Alchemy: A Magician in Search of Myth* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); or the more broadly focused work on surrealism by Nadia Choucha and Celia Rabinovitch.

38 See Surette, *Birth of Modernism*.

39 Philip Jenkins, *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* (New York: HarperCollins, 2014), 137.

40 Ibid., 140–41.

41 Ibid., 147.

42 Gustav Meyrink, *The Green Face*, trans. Mike Mitchell (Sawtry: Dedalus, 2004), 15.

43 Ibid., 16.

44 Ibid., 50.

45 Ibid., 59.

46 Ibid., 214–15.

47 Mike Mitchell, *Vivo: The Life of Gustav Meyrink* (Sawtry: Dedalus, 2008), 190.

48 Vincent Sherry, "First World War Poetry: A Cultural Landscape," in Santanu Das (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 38.

49 The definitive account of this phenomenon remains Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1975).

50 Ross, *Georgian Revolt*, 244–45, n. 22.

51 Richard Aldington, *War and Love* (Boston: Four Seas Press, 1919), 5.

52 Branford, "The Secret Treaties," *Voices*, January 1919, 14.

53 Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, 190–91.

54 See Sherry, *Great War*.

On or About 1922: *Annus Mirabilis* and the Other 1920s

MICHAEL LEVENSON

1922 has been long marked as the *annus mirabilis* of modernism, and though any notion of a miracle year is no more than convenient myth, it does have the virtue of giving provisional shape to a map of the decade. Joyce's *Ulysses* appeared in February; Eliot's *The Waste Land* in October. Their salience in any account of the twenties justifies attention to the year. In the last two generations, as acts of recovery have widened, the privilege accorded to two masterworks began to accommodate a diversity of other texts, objects, and events. 1922 was also the year of Claude McKay's *Harlem Shadows*, Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, and Katherine Mansfield's *The Garden Party and Other Stories*. Then, alongside the literary productions, stood Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* and Lang's *Dr. Mabuse*, and Mussolini's dash to power in Italy.

Other years can make miracle claims of their own: we can't go far resting on accidents of the calendar. But the advantage in beginning with 1922 is that many of the year's works displayed intersecting forms and intellectual contents that give sharper outline to the movement of modernism. These works registered the effects of both the devastating war and the first acts of recovery from it. In some ways, the most surprising feature of 1922 is the scale of ambition. After the unprecedented violence, not only were careers resumed, but also the challenges of modernism were extended, and the canvases of experiment enlarged.

Writers, artists, and musicians were conscious of a rapidly changing history – a point crisply made in Eliot's early appreciation of Joyce in the essay "*Ulysses*, Order and Myth," where he laid out terms of understanding that would persist over many decades. Joyce used Homer's *Odyssey* as parallel to one day's events in 1904 Dublin. Eliot was among the first to emphasize this exemplary technique:

> In using the myth in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must

pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.

These are strong stiff judgments, which amount to a theory of 1922, applicable not only to Joyce's work but quite clearly to *The Waste Land*, which also depends on the "continuous parallel" between past and present. Once literature relied on narrative, but now, thanks to Joyce's "discovery," narrative has become obsolete. The effect, according to Eliot, is an end to the history of the novel, at least among those capable of grasping the change: "Mr. Joyce has written one novel – the Portrait; Mr. Wyndham Lewis has written one novel Tarr. I do not suppose that either of them will ever write another 'novel'. The novel ended with Flaubert and with James."[1] With a deft sharp stroke, Eliot announces a rupture in the history of forms.

The claim of literary synthesis and epic reach runs through the essay. Joyce spoke of *Ulysses* as an "encyclopedia," and so might Eliot's poem be described. The ranging through the cultural past, the allusion to many other texts, the use of multiple languages, accents, dialects, and, above all, the generality of the encompassing myths – for Eliot, the grail quest to redeem the waste land, and for Joyce, Odysseus' long-delayed return to home – suggest the inclusiveness of universality. Before the war, much of the provocation had come on the micro scale. With the advent of imagism, Pound had written: "It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works."[2] The symbol of Symbolism, like the impression of impressionism and Joyce's own prose-poetic epiphanies, had offered similar ideas of self-sufficient particulars, basic elements of significance that could stand without elaboration. The movement from burnished particles to grand syntheses, which represents one of the most notable phases of the postwar years, recurs through 1922. Picasso's turn from "analytic" to "synthetic" Cubism follows a related course, a change from the disassembly of bodies and objects, to their reconstitution. By 1922 these post-analytic images include a series of mothers, mothers and children, and families, restored to bodily integrity and intactness (for instance, "Portrait of Olga," "Women Running on the Beach," and "Mother and Child").

The aim toward the epic and encyclopedic, however, did not bring an end to local and historical embeddedness – an issue at stake in both *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*. Eliot emphasized the recovery of order from disorder; this is what the "mythical method" can achieve; it can redeem the modern

world from anarchy. But as closer glances show, both works break the frame that Eliot prepares for them. Their myths are shot through with details resistant to grand pattern. The "mythical method" stands in unsteady relation to a caustic realism. The question goes beyond a double facing toward the local and the general, and broaches central issues of modernist literary meaning. Most visible in the antic style of the later *Ulysses* – with long lists extending interminably, and excess detail appearing as a value in itself, but also in the shower of fragments in *The Waste Land* – the works challenge any secure framework of interpretation. Both authors worried about their reception. Indeed, they were right to worry: many early responses denounced the literary chaos. Eliot's notes to *The Waste Land*, like Joyce's several schemata for *Ulysses*, were attempts to forestall charges of anarchy. But now that we no longer assume "unity" as an unquestioned literary value, readers are better placed to see the force of contingency, of stray or accidental turns in the writing. Much of the historical impetus of 1922 came not through new forms of meaning, but through refusal of the need to mean at all, at least to mean within the comfortable resources of paraphrase.

More was at stake than such formal defiance. Equally important was the interrogation of selfhood, subjectivity, and character. As Eliot approached the writing of *The Waste Land*, he discussed the difficulty of writing a long poem in the modern age. One solution, proposed in his essay on Blake, would be to break up the verse with the sound of many voices – this as a way to avoid the threat of a deadly consistency. This technique is indeed what he adopts for his long poem. Already in its first few lines, *The Waste Land* multiplies tones, accents, and languages, generating one of its central difficulties: the profusion of points of view, whose relationships often remain inscrutable. Such vocal polyphony appears in many works of the period, becoming one signature of postwar literature. Joyce too exploits the polyphonic method, both in the larger architecture that divides among the three leading characters, Leopold and Molly Bloom and Stephen Dedalus, and also in the perspectival shifts among those who crowd through Dublin, above all in the central episode, "Wandering Rocks." In so many works of the prewar years, for instance in Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" and Ford's *The Good Soldier*, the project of fiction had appeared as the struggle of an individual narrator to comprehend the mystery of another. The shift from monological to polyphonic narrative, though certainly not uniform, is arresting in itself and carries strong implications for the turning course of modernism.

When Virginia Woolf was still projecting the novel that would become *Jacob's Room*, she sketched her plans in her notebook.

I think the main point is that it should be free.
Yet what about form?
Let us suppose that the Room will hold it together.
Intensity of life compared with immobility.
Experiences.
To change style at will.[3]

These telegraphic phrases capture the ambitions of the twenties, with their emphasis on openness and variety, values that Woolf had been developing in her short fiction of the previous few years. What the notebook entry tellingly ignores, but what will become crucial in the unfolding novel, is precisely the question of character. Where is Jacob in the novel that bears his name? Where do we now locate the individuality that prose fiction had confidently delineated for two centuries? The telling stroke in *Jacob's Room*, which opened the way to all of Woolf's experiments of the twenties, was the refusal of character as nucleus, as a determinate structure of attributes and motives, desires and deeds. "Jacob" is a proper name with a constantly shifting set of relations and qualities. When Woolf writes that the novel will be held together by the "Room," she refers not only to the physical spaces that the fiction constructs; more significantly, she means the varying contexts that mediate selfhood: we all come encased in surroundings. Jacob's interior is merely glimpsed: he comes into being through the views, and fantasies, of others, more object than subject. If he escapes the clarity of definition, this is only fitting, because, in the words of the narrator, who is also absent-present, "It is no use trying to sum people up." After all, "Nobody sees anyone as he is."[4]

The emptiness at the center of *Jacob's Room* has a deeper resonance for the moment of 1922. Jacob's death in the war is the consummation of his elusiveness. The apparently bathetic last question of the narrative – what to do with his shoes? – is a question that must have been asked many millions of times in postwar Europe. Through all of her risky formal experiments of the twenties, Woolf's fiction will be haunted by the raw *content* of death in war. And for those who hadn't been in the fighting, part of the agony of mourning was the incongruity between sudden death and the routines of everyday life. Early in Woolf's next novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, we read of a "Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite, killed," where the quick rhythm of the commas captures the interruption of such death.[5]

It's fair to say that the devastations of world war were too vast and epoch-shifting to serve as a *theme*. Like the sense of modernity itself, the war

became a background condition for everything imagined in its shadow. Its effects were varied, and often indirect, as in the brief telling references to pacifism in *Ulysses* or the curt self-appraisal of Eliot's "Gerontion": "I was neither at the hot gates / Nor fought in the warm rain / Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass."[6] Elsewhere, the trauma of war is brought unnervingly close to the violence of modernist technique. Ford Madox Ford's tetralogy, *Parade's End*, approaches the war slowly, but when it reaches the trenches and battlefields, the novel avails itself of the technical resources that Ford and Conrad had refined through many years. Here, the protagonist Tietjens ventures into the devastation:

> There was nothing to see; mad lights whirled over the black heavens. He moved along the mud of the trench. It amazed him to find that it was raining. In torrents. You imagined that the heavenly powers in decency suspended their activities at such moments. But there was positively lightning ... Just at that moment he fell on his nose at an angle of forty-five degrees against some squashed earth where, as he remembered, the parapet had been revetted. The trench had been squashed in, level with the outside ground. A pair of boots emerged from the pile of mud. How the deuce did the fellow get into that position?[7]

The characteristic methods of literary impressionism – ellipsis, shifting attention, deferred understanding, and the priority of the senses to thought – found an uncanny correspondence in the disorder of trench warfare. The examples in Ford are vivid, but by no means unique. The war was not, as one may have guessed, a summons back to realist forms or documentary styles. Just as often it was a prod to formal inventiveness. Hemingway, as journalist becoming novelist, heard the evasive rhetoric of cliché and sentimentality; the breakthrough of his early stories -- their tense minimalism – depended on resistance to the banality of wartime prose. In e.e. cummings's *The Enormous Room*, the dislocations of war – here the mass detentions of the harmless – invite absurdist tones and sudden changes in scale and proportion. The war was more than inescapable content; it was a force field of new forms.

The twenties were not only a decade enduring the complex after-effects of war; they were also a period unfolding after radical aesthetic experiment. The years just before and just after the outbreak of war had seen the first great moment of the twentieth-century avant-garde, when a series of movements – from imagism to futurism, vorticism to expressionism, cubism to Dada – erupted into public view and mutual antagonism. The last months and weeks before August 1914 brought intense activity in many capitals of

Europe – exhibitions, performances, manifestos, controversies – that lived in cultural memory even during the time of violence and death.

The war years themselves had inevitably been quieter in the arts. The drum-beating insistence of the prewar avant-garde now seemed unseemly, and the extravagant events of Dada aside, most home-front artists retreated from visible assertions. Virginia Woolf, for instance, labored at her most conventional novel *Night and Day* (1919), tended her fragile health, and made some small-scale but productive experiments in short-story form. It was a time of incubation and suspension, when writers such as Eliot, Pound, and Apollinaire reformed the techniques of their verse, and projects like Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* and Joyce's *Ulysses* found a space to grow longer, more intricate, and demanding.

The result is that when the modernist scene reassembled in the early twenties, it no longer appeared as an affair of *les jeunes*, the tempestuous and peremptory young, but largely as the achievement of mature artists, whose claim to attention was now difficult to contest. This generational change, noteworthy in itself, accompanied a greater durability even for quite disruptive works. Eliot could anticipate the outrage that *The Waste Land* would incite, even as he was securing American publication in the *Dial* and warm appreciation in *Vanity Fair*, while preparing British publication in the *Criterion*, which he was just then founding. All of these journals had a wider and more varied readership than the small magazines, such as the *Little Review* and the *Egoist*, which had been crucial to the first dissemination of literary modernism. A new and appreciative audience was developing, which included a postwar generation of students who were the first harbingers of a later stage in the history of modernism: namely the embrace of the new art by university communities which would recite it, debate it and ultimately canonize it. I.A. Richards at Cambridge played a large part in the academic reception of novelty in the 1920s. Finally, a result of this growing cultural presence of modernism was to encourage more work on a grand scale. After the major publications of Joyce, Eliot, and Proust in the early twenties there followed a succession of large projects, all distinct, but with comparable mythic/historical dimensions: Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*, among others.

Already in 1923, Jean Toomer's *Cane* displays the shifting effects brought by the success of modernism and changing social circumstances. A medley of poems, prose poems, stories, and songs, the book belongs to the moment of polyphony and montage, as one of its most striking examples. The narrator

changes voices and vantage points, sometimes merging with a protagonist, but often retreating to some distant summit. At the same time, the tones shift from a slow-tempered lyricism – "Black reapers with the sound of steel on stones / Are sharpening scythes. I see them place the hones / In their hip-pockets as a thing that's done, / And start their silent swinging, one by one" – to the rattle of the postwar urban world, where "Hurtling Loop-jammed L trains throw them in swift shadow."[8] The individual pieces work as self-standing vignettes but also as mutually illuminating fragments of a composite whole.

As Toomer graciously acknowledged, *Cane* owed a large debt to Sherwood Anderson, in particular to *Winesburg, Ohio*. The chief precedent was the pattern of loosely linked narratives, bound less by character and incident than by physical place and social space. *Cane* extends the strategy in two directions: first, toward the mixture of genres and forms; and, second, toward the wider and conflicted regionalism of the American north and south. Toomer presented his work as an act of recovery before a disappearance. "The folk-spirit," he wrote, "was walking in to die on the modern desert . . . And this was the feeling I put into *Cane*. *Cane* was a swan-song. It was a song of an end."[9] More pointedly, the book is the song of an unresolved ending, not simply the tale of two regions, but of two races. The poems and stories move between a white-dominated north and the remnants of an older black south. Toomer aims toward a fusion of difference, a passing beyond history into some infinite space beyond racial division: this is his pointed version of the historico-mythic project. "I am at once no one of the races and I am all of them," he wrote, "I am, in a strict racial sense, a member of a new race . . . now forming perhaps everywhere on earth, but its formation is more rapid and marked in certain countries, one of which is America."[10] Here is another image of absconded subjectivity, defined urgently but negatively. The signal difference from the related figures in Eliot's Tiresias, Joyce's Bloom, and Woolf's Jacob is that Toomer fashions the problem of unmoored identity within a specific political frame: American region and race. Notoriously, he refuses black identity in the name of an unmarked identity-to-come. But even in this act of refusal, he displays the social register of modernism that will soon become as visible as the invention of difficult forms.

Cane registers the intensifying political life of twenties modernism. The decade, we should remember, was not only postwar and post-first-generation avant-garde; it was also post-revolutionary, following as it did the triumph of communism in Russia. In the prewar period, Moscow and

St. Petersburg had been important sites of avant-garde innovation; for the first few years after the revolution, painters, filmmakers, and poets continued to produce innovative work with international resonance. Notable in itself, the work brought politics into the center of modernist consciousness. If the catastrophe of war had created a milieu of disenchantment, loss, and mourning, the Russian Revolution generated a more heterogeneous and ultimately more insistent response, because it sharply divided sympathizers and opponents and, in so doing, presented artists with inescapable political choices.

A series of cases suggests the near-simultaneity of a political turn in the early decade, with the case of Ezra Pound as first illustration. The early versions of Pound's *Cantos* had adopted a familiar posture of adversarial culture: the "serious artist" as the voice of integrity, resisting the depredations of commercial vulgarity and political dishonesty. But as the war ended, Pound discovered the writings of Major C.H. Douglas, an encounter that launched his commitment to an economic theory of culture, where the production of art belonged firmly within a network of money and politics. In the new view, an engaged modern poetry must recognize itself within competing circuits of power in order to contend with the forces that degrade culture. As Peter Nicholls has shown, the early versions of the *Cantos* rely on moments of lyric vision ascending beyond the sullied everyday, but when Pound recovers his sense of a this-world struggle over values – taking as historical emblem the career of Sigismondo Malatesta, a condottiere (military professional) in the Italian Renaissance – he brings art back into "actual historical existence."[11] Malatesta joined the contest over material goods and political power, but he also built his Tempio (temple), which Pound takes as a supreme figure of beauty wrested from the hard labor of history. The celebrated formal counterpart of this political/economic subject is Pound's verbatim quotation of long sections from his sources. These passages, as Lawrence Rainey has put it, are often "quotidian and antiliterary"; they defy ideals, not only of lyric beauty but of "poetic discourse" as such.[12] In this respect, the quotations belong to the turn from vision to history, from purity to the impure realm of competing wills. Poetry will not descend from above or remain in some space apart; it will only emerge out of the rough terms of combat, and it will sometimes show the scars.

Eliot underwent a comparable, though quieter, change in this same brief period. Soon after the publication of *The Waste Land*, he wrote an essay called "The Function of Criticism," which identified a root conflict within

modernity. On one side, Eliot places a complacent romanticism, which sees autonomous individuality as the center of value; on the other side, he defends a living classicism, which protects Outer Authority at the expense of Inner Voice. The postwar generation, insists Eliot, must choose between these two fundamentally opposed attitudes in literature, in criticism, and in social life.[13] Over the next few years, he moved steadily to the view that art and literature participate in broader political, ethical, and religious concerns. The pronouncement of 1928 – that he now regarded his point of view as "classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion"[14] – indicates how literary views were now inseparable from his widest convictions.

D.H. Lawrence had published *Women in Love* in 1920, a novel that he said frightened him, because it was "so end-of-the-world."[15] It offered an unstinting critique of human dissolution, the loss of self in machinery and cold mental life, a decay manifest at every level of experience: in the coal mines, in the art world, and in the most intimate relations of men and women. A long demonstration of catastrophe, *Women in Love* struggles to imagine an alternative form of life. Rupert Birkin, Lawrence's surrogate in the novel, asserts that he and Ursula Brangwen should go "wandering just to nowhere," and "live in the chinks they leave us."[16] But over the next several years, Lawrence began to aim for social transformation, a commitment "to change the world, to make it freer, more alive."[17] This so-called "leadership fiction" of the middle twenties – *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo*, and *The Plumed Serpent* – offered a sharp attack upon modern capitalism and the communist alternative. For Lawrence, these were mirror images of one another. The only way forward was to recover forgotten instincts and human reverence – "We must go back to pick up old threads. We must take up the old, broken impulse that will connect us with the mystery of the cosmos again"[18] – and to do so by accepting the authority of strong individuals. The contempt for democratic leveling and the trust in charismatic leaders brought Lawrence undeniably close to the fascist programs in Italy and Germany.

The later twenties, as these examples all suggest, can be seen to begin already in 1923. As Eliot moves beyond *The Waste Land* (calling it a "thing of the past so far as I am concerned") toward a classicism, as Pound invented new forms for his epic (defined as "a poem containing history"),[19] as Lawrence looked to "change the world," a series of currents within modernism converged in accepting the political force of art. Within this complex decade, however, the banner of pure technique still flew high, even as the demands of politics grew vehement. In the middle twenties, there emerged some of

the most extreme attempts to renovate the bases of writing. Gertrude Stein gave a lecture at Cambridge, arranged by Edith Sitwell and called "Composition as Explanation," a reflection on the puzzles of novelty.

> Those who are creating the modern composition authentically are naturally only of importance when they are dead because by that time the modern composition having become past is classified and the description of it is classical. That is the reason why the creator of the new composition in the arts is an outlaw until he is a classic, there is hardly a moment in between and it is really too bad very much too bad naturally for the creator but also very much too bad for the enjoyer, they all really would enjoy the created so much better just after it has been made than when it is already a classic, but it is perfectly simple that there is no reason why the contemporary should see, because it would not make any difference as they lead their lives in the new composition anyway, and as every one is naturally indolent why naturally they don't see.[20]

By the time we reach the twenties, as Michael North has shown, new art had to contend with novelty everywhere. Stein sees this condition with unblinking clarity. Art must now move within currents of change everywhere; it must struggle to be recognized as the "outlaw" it is.

Equally at stake in "Composition as Explanation" is a demonstration of Stein's own experiment in style. The restricted vocabulary, the disruption of sentence rhythms, the repetitions, the contrived naïveté of tone, the surprise that such depletion can bring – these verbal tactics, refined over two decades, turn a "lecture" into a piece of performance art, one that resembles, even as it elucidates, Stein's other writings of the moment. The "unreadable" novel *The Making of Americans*, written before the war, came out in 1925, immense not only in its length (nearly 1,000 pages) but also in the unbroken assurance of its subversive style. In a small piece called "The Gradual Making of the Making of Americans," Stein reaffirms (and again exemplifies) the principles behind her work: the attempt to "describe every kind of human being that ever was or is or would be living,"[21] and to do so through the endless rehearsal of the phrases and tenses and moods that disclose who we are.

In the middle of the decade, as her work gained attention, it stood out as an audacious example of modernism as a verbalism, an essentially linguistic understanding of our being in the world. In its strongest formulation, which Stein often approaches, the structure of language not only corresponds to, but also contains, all the meanings we should care to seek. Here Stein's texts stand alongside another audacity of the middle twenties, Joyce's early

work on *Finnegans Wake*, initially published under the bland title "Work in Progress." Joyce's task being to compose a universal history under the inspiration of the philosopher Vico, he invented a universal language, which was as much the essence as the medium of history. *Finnegans Wake* and *The Making of Americans* are strikingly different works: where Joyce composed a language of multilingual puns and new words in every line, Stein reduced her vocabulary to a small set of phrases, not newly created but tirelessly repeated words. Yet, despite these contrasts, the two books met in their commitment to language as such, language independent of the usual tasks of reference. Joyce wrote that the early celebrated section known as "Anna Livia Plurabelle" was "an attempt to subordinate words to the rhythm of water,"[22] while Stein remarked that as she was writing *The Making of Americans* she "unconsciously" became fascinated with "a matter of tenses and sentences."[23] For both Stein and Joyce, meanings (history, character) inhered in language, but language also had purposes all its own, a pure music that required no paraphrase or translation.

What made this moment of "verbalism" both disruptive and inspiring was not simply the force it granted to words, but also the privilege seized by the writer, who claimed a power sufficient to create a total world in language. The power is not merely to see but, in Stein's phrase, to "compose" a universe. The middle years of the decade saw several works in quite different registers that shared an interest in the composition rather than discovery of worlds. So, for instance, the central character (Édouard) in André Gide's *The Counterfeiters* is writing a novel called *The Counterfeiters*, and the book teasingly unsettles the relation between the "real" fiction – the book in our hand – and the "fictional" fiction of the same name. Édouard underlines the central trope, the counterfeit coin, asking us to "imagine a false ten-franc gold piece. In reality it's not worth two sous. But it will be worth ten francs as long as no one recognizes it to be false."[24] Gide inverts narrative levels, reverses containers and contents, and breaks the boundary between inside and outside fiction. It is a novel that simultaneously offers pictures of human cruelty and reminders that they are nothing but pictures.

"Poetry is the supreme fiction, madame": the opening line to Wallace Stevens's "A High-Toned Old Christian Woman" sketches a figure that will magnify through his career.[25] But already in 1923, with the publication of *Harmonium*, Stevens devises a theory of fiction as "supreme," because nothing exceeds imaginative power, including the "fiction" of religion. Poetry comes to us, offering no pretense of reality beyond imagination, or as

Stevens will later put it: "The final belief is to believe in a fiction, which you know to be a fiction, there being nothing else. The exquisite truth is to know that it is a fiction and that you believe in it willingly."[26] The "Anecdote of the Jar" gives an exemplary case:

> I placed a jar in Tennessee,
> And round it was, upon a hill.
> It made the slovenly wilderness
> Surround that hill.[27]

The jar "composes," but it does not invent, the landscape. For Stevens the world always threatens to resist or to overturn the projections of pattern. Our best hope may be to live in our fictions knowingly, but part of our plight, and the impetus of much of Stevens's poetry, is that fiction collides with the world that it labors to bring to order.

Another key example (and telling variant) comes in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921), which exuberantly confuses the levels of fiction and reality. The six "characters" who intrude upon the theatrical ensemble – directors and actors – insist on their right to play out the scenes that define them, that give them an "immutable reality" beyond ordinary life. "Characters" (such as the melodramatic father and the insistent stepdaughter) can achieve the permanence that imagination bestows: their lives are therefore "more true and more real."[28] But the event of the play is to show how eternal characters must join the realm of mortal actors and play out the difficult transaction by which imagination enters the daily changing world. As with Gide's novel, the effect depends on the rapid exchange between container and contents. The characters, after all, are actors too, and once Pirandello is named as the author of the play within the play, as well as the play the audience is watching, then all events onstage move unsteadily – and contradictorily – between the illusory and the real. There is no secure place for reader or viewer to stand outside the hall of mirrors.

A striking feature of these "composed" worlds is their entanglement in movements of time. The created fictions rarely attain the stability they envision; rather, they are caught in motions of growth and decay. Anyone can see, writes Stein in *The Making of Americans*, that "a history of every one must be a long one . . . slowly it comes out from them from their beginning to their ending."[29] As it develops in the twenties, the time-mind of modernism has become more self-conscious and more visible. The war was a bloody sign of rupture, an abyss between then and now. But the trauma of war occurred within a still broader historical condition: the changing sense of temporality in

a post-religious age. How can we organize the modes and tenses of life outside a narrative of fall, grace, and redemption? The strongest response to this metaphysical question, given in the philosophy of Henri Bergson, was to take temporality itself as offering a solution to its own dilemmas. Several of Bergson's works had appeared just before the war (*Time and Free Will* and *Matter and Memory*). Their central and influential insight is that we inhabit two realities. In everyday consciousness, we lead a life of succession, organized in terms of space and separateness, before and after. But in our deeper experience, the fundamental self (*le moi profond*) surpasses the fixity of space and reaches true time, the sense of *duration*, of living in all the tenses at once, in "an organic whole," such as the experience of music, where "we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one another."[30]

Proust's fiction of Marcel begins with Bergsonian recognitions that it enlarges and reinterprets, until the discovery of life-in-time gives the structure of his novel: the movement back and forth across decades, the recurrence and rereading of past events, the synthesis of meanings, their breakdown, and final reassembly. It also gives the vocation of the protagonist. To understand our foundation in memory and loss, in "Time embodied, of years past but not separated from us," is for Marcel to overcome "anxiety on the subject of my death."[31] For Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, we never master time or overcome anxiety, but we can learn to yield ourselves to the rhythm of its waves, accepting the onrushing move toward death that is also a movement toward art. All of her work of the twenties brings such time-consciousness into the foreground. But it's in *To the Lighthouse* (1927) that she presses it furthest. A novel that begins with anticipation (will the child James sail to the lighthouse tomorrow?) ends with long acts of mourning and recollection. Moreover, a plot that gives close focal attention to two days interrupts them with the lyric interlude "Time Passes," which Woolf knew to be a risky technical decision, and which moves speedily across ten years that reduce human life to a parenthetical flicker within cosmic immensity. Time becomes both a plastic resource of plot-shaping and a prominent object of metaphysical concern.

The middle years of the decade were then a period of new, visible, and sustained experiments. Younger figures, such as Hemingway, Toomer, and cummings, could begin careers by drawing upon and extending the precedents (and audiences) of prewar and wartime precursors. Older figures like Woolf, Joyce, Stein, and Pound invented new, yet more challenging forms, unwilling to repeat gestures that had already seemed extreme. For both generations, the decade was a time of growing ambition, while audiences

became more attentive, if not always more responsive. For all these writers, work of the 1920s remains central to twenty-first-century understandings of their place in literary history, but such work became strikingly various in tone, aim, and register.

In the formative years of modernist poetics, Mina Loy and William Carlos Williams had been in productive contact. They shared a defiant commitment to the resources of free verse and the claims of contemporary life to lyric representation. But their divergence in the twenties is striking. After the publication of *The Waste Land*, Williams renewed his commitment to a local, regional, and national poetry. Here, now, in New Jersey, the eye can find all it requires in the stirring of trees and bushes:

> They enter the new world naked,
> cold, uncertain of all
> save that they enter. All about them
> the cold, familiar wind –
>
> Now the grass, tomorrow
> the stiff curl of wildcarrot leaf
>
> One by one objects are defined –
> It quickens:[32]

Loy, on the other hand, moved across national boundaries and encountered a rich variety of artists and works. As against the staunch cultural rootedness exemplified by Williams, Loy exhibits modernist cosmopolitanism in its furthest reach, not only in her attentiveness to the multinational conditions of modernist culture, but also to a language that accommodates varying registers, tones, and specialized terminologies. Here are lines from "Der Blinde Junge," published in *Lunar Baedeker* (1923), which invoke the movements of a blind musician pressing through the streets:

> Sparkling precipitate
> the spectral day
> involves
> the visionless obstacle
>
> this slow blind face
> pushing
> its virginal nonentity
> against the light
>
> Pure purposeless eremite
> of centripetal sentience[33]

For Williams "No ideas but in things," but for Loy ideas and things need and excite one another. Criticized for her abstraction, she employed it not only to enlarge the play of concepts but also to find the music within a technical vocabulary.

The decade was not only a time of such growing range, but also a period when currents of history met and contested. Here we return to the pressures of social emergency. The growth of fascism in Italy, the strengthening of communism in the Soviet Union, and the shock to the British Empire in India became inescapable political facts. For a brief period, a confident and resourceful sensibility of modernism stood alongside the sense of social crisis, preserving its separation and autonomy. Stein and Joyce pursued their universal histories while a particular history unfolded around them. In significant ways, the mid-decade period resembled the moment of 1914, when modernist experiment had met the shock of war. The important difference, however, is the prolonged postwar duration of the contest between art and politics. Unlike the threshold marked by August 1914, the political events of the twenties impinged only slowly, though inexorably, into the practice of art.

On the continent, the avant-garde found itself closely implicated with the new political moment. Cinema played a prominent role, with early Soviet film as a prime example of convergence between radical forms and revolutionary politics. The techniques of montage, which had developed in relative social innocence, became the leading device of a politicized cinema. In the films of Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, as well as in Eisenstein's theoretical writings, montage offered an instrument of critique (through the visual juxtaposition of wealth and poverty, capitalist and laborer) and also of social hope (in images of the triumphant workers constructing the Soviet state). In Germany, expressionism took on a new valence. Emerging during the war, and stimulated by psychoanalytic excavations of instinct, demand, and desire, expressionist dramas had pitted sons against fathers in challenge to the violence of patriarchal traditions. They offered visions of a New Man, who would become a guide toward creativity and peace. In the cinema of the twenties, most notably in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, the expressionist scenario assumed the shape of an absurdist bureaucracy willing to use any force to squeeze profits from a martyred working class. Here, Kafka's posthumous writings took on a potent and timely aspect. *The Trial* appeared in 1925, a decade after its composition, but its narrative of a life enmeshed in legal officialdom served as a resonant figure for the impingements of power. What is "the purpose of this extensive organization?" asks Josef K.: "It consists of arresting innocent people and introducing senseless proceedings against them,

which for the most part, as in my case, go nowhere. Given the senselessness of the whole affair, how could the bureaucracy avoid becoming entirely corrupt?"[34] In Germany, through the visual art of George Grosz and John Heartfield, Dada set aside its cool disregard of politics. Grosz devised a merciless political/erotic satire, and Heartfield developed influential techniques of photomontage that recirculated images of power (Hitler, generals, the lords of industry) and placed them in new subverting contexts.

Karl Marx and Max Weber gave a presiding intellectual force to the new engagements of the avant-garde. Marx's theory of class struggle could be seen as living in a history that would finally produce communism (with the Soviet Union as a then widely credible example), while Weber's account of bureaucracy as the dangerous logic of modernity renewed its warning:

> It is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs ... This passion for bureaucracy ... is enough to drive one to despair ... but what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from this parceling-out of the soul, from this supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life.[35]

Marxist affirmation and Weberian skepticism mark two strong dimensions of thought, both contending with the authoritarian politics of fascism that also won adherents, Pound most scandalously, among modernists seeking radical solutions. Those on both ends of the spectrum agreed that liberal democracy had failed and must give way to a politics of extremity.

The demands of politics were uneasily met by many who had been committed to the autonomy of art. The uneasiness was conspicuous in Paris, where surrealism had dislodged Dadaism as the leading movement. Under André Breton's direction and with the inspiration of Freud's psychoanalysis, the surrealists attempted to transform life through such anti-rational performances as automatic writing, dream speech, and random city drifting. But in the middle twenties, the movement faced critique, within and without, of its political indifference. Breton and his allies labored to bring imagination and politics together, but the effort to create a surrealist-communist alliance led to years of division. Some members of the movement left, others were banished. Breton himself kept striving to preserve the independence of the surrealist project, even as he acknowledged the supremacy of political change. But nothing like a balance or a resolution was achieved.

Across the ocean, another merging of art and politics illuminates the complexity. After Toomer's *Cane* appeared, it won both respect and

suspicion among those within the Harlem Renaissance. The leading voice of political struggle, W.E.B. Du Bois, admired the virtuosity, but acknowledged being "unduly irritated" by Toomer's willingness "to make his art a puzzle to the interpreter."[36] "All art is propaganda," held Du Bois,[37] an instrument of social struggle only justified by the political ends that it promotes. Against this view Alain Locke defended the independence of aesthetic values. *Cane* was an occasion for this difficult conflict of views, but it is fair to say that, through the rest of the decade, writers of the Renaissance felt the claims of both racial struggle and the power of new forms.

The end of the decade confirmed the dispersal of modernism among various techniques and tones, social attitudes and religious dispositions. Virginia Woolf again stands as a revealing case. After the risk-taking experiments of the middle years, Woolf turned in earnest to the conditions and claims of women. Her lectures in *A Room of One's Own* mark a milestone in twentieth-century feminism, while her novel *Orlando* brings the conundrums of gender into relation with a liberated play with forms (parodies, photographs, etc.). Moreover, Woolf will soon begin her next, most formally audacious novel, *The Waves*, which sets aside explicit encounter with the politics of sex. These movements among forms and social commitments are at once distinctive of Woolf and suggestive of the agitations of variety at the end of the 1920s.

T.S. Eliot initiated a lyric turn toward religious poetry – anguished and contemplative – and, as the editor of *Criterion*, he registered the coming political emergency. Pound was articulating a version of the *Cantos* that could accommodate a right-wing activism drawn from fascist and Confucian doctrines. In Germany, Brecht developed the principles and practice of "epic theatre," an attempt to create a drama capable of arousing the revolutionary intelligence of an audience. Surrealism continued its struggle for political-aesthetic partnership with the Communist Party. The writers and intellectuals who had gathered in the Harlem Renaissance continued to represent the African American struggle, but at a growing distance from one another.

The very last years of the decade produced an illuminating compendium of works and acts that let us recognize the postwar rhythm: the consolidation of experiment, the extension of reach, the "epic" aspiration to masterworks, and also the divergence of methods and aims. D.H. Lawrence completed *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, his last novel but also the last revision in an evolving career. In a well-known letter, he repudiated his hopes for strong leaders and called for a renewed "tenderness" (the early title of the novel). In 1929, a

group of writers, including Samuel Beckett and William Carlos Williams, produced a collection of essays, *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress,* intended to celebrate (and defend) Joyce's audacity in the project that would become *Finnegans Wake.* It was the year of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* as well as Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury,* which brought the polyphony of multiconsciousness into the embedded realism of the American South. Very soon, the political extremities of the thirties would alter the terms of modernism again, but while it lasted, the uneasy suspension between autonomous form and social responsibility preserved a space of conviction large enough to accommodate works of widening imaginative reach.

Notes

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The 1930s, the Second World War, and Late Modernism

LEO MELLOR

"Late modernism" has become an increasingly useful – and frequently used – term in literary criticism. It denotes the changing shape of literary experimentation throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and simultaneously positions such writing in dialogue with models and predecessors.[1] Yet it is an inherently unstable term, even to those who would allow periodicity to organize the canon. For how late can modernism get as it mutates, survives, and revives? An answer could come by showing what happens in the years *after* the initial energies of revolutionary formal change, through tracking the expanded possibilities of representation, the multiplicity of forms, and their commodification in mass markets. In this later phase, the inventiveness of many earlier writers became codified as a contemporary tradition and so entered the mainstream of cultural history.

Until the 1990s, literary scholarship had, for the most part, preferred to avoid concentrating on endings in the analysis of modernism. The trajectories were outward or forward: from sources, roots, and genealogies, emerging as flowerings in (or around) 1922. More recent work has displayed significant interest in conclusions, deltas, patterns of influence, and especially in how the literature of the Second World War and beyond might relate to that of the preceding years.[2] Indeed, some of the most astute critical efforts over the past two decades have attempted to identify the characteristics of this lateness and so trace how literary modernism changed throughout the 1930s, becoming institutionalized, politicized, and shaped through exchanges with other art forms. The work of Tyrus Miller has attempted to find a shared understanding in the "apparent admixture of Decadent and forward-looking elements" in writers as varied as W.H. Auden, Samuel Beckett, and Mina Loy, proceeding with a method that sees them amid the wider cultural forces of the 1930s – be it *haute couture* or jazz. Such writing "reopens the modernist enclosure of form onto the work's social and political environs, facilitating its more direct, polemical engagement with topical and political discourses."[3]

In this critical conception, extended by Jed Esty, late modernist texts move through a formal cultural inheritance *and* a political engagement.[4] All this work has to be understood within the context of some decisive changes over the past twenty years, as the aesthetic concept of "the 1930s," with politics transcending formal questions, has largely withered as a critical category; while a renewed modernism – or rather a plurality of modernisms – have radically extended "in temporal, spatial, and vertical directions."[5]

The chapter that follows is written in light of such scholarship. Allowing for the fact that a recognizably modernist literature will emerge in non-European and non-North-American locales through the long middle century, I will explore the "lateness" of late modernism by engaging with *how* British writers, through using the techniques they inherited of experimentation and representational destabilization, responded to the changed material and political considerations of the 1930s – and beyond. For such writing finds politics in everything, challenging both the art and the use of representation. Moreover war, as politics by other means, becomes increasingly important, with writers looking backward to the First World War, but also, in engaging with the wars of the 1930s, seeing the harbingers of what would come. During the Second World War, they attempted to find modes that could convey the horror (and sometimes sublimity) of total conflict while utilizing the artifice of the written word. This chapter pivots upon three aspects of this comprehensive modernist consciousness: firstly, film and flight, the technologies of vista and close-up; secondly, documentary and anthropology, both modes of self-aware witnessing; and thirdly, the problems of traumatized materiality for writers amid conflict.

Film and Flight

Although they certainly existed during the First World War, the technologies of cinema and flight were incrementally shaped by interwar advances and only became ubiquitous in the 1930s. But why might writers put the aesthetic effects and cultural anxieties made possible by these technologies into their writings? Partly this is because, as forms of mediation and estrangement, such technologies brought new perspectives on the blunt matter of quotidian reality. They did so by showing how a faithful rendering of mediation could make the everyday world very strange indeed, leaving a human subject enthralled, bewildered, or entirely remade.

The aeriality of the 1930s has been well explicated by critics, who have detailed how "airmindedness" manifested itself in air races, hawk-eye views,

and pilots-as-heroes, as well as terrors of devastating attack.[6] In Britain, this fear grew from memories of the Zeppelin raids in the First World War; but it also fed off cultural extrapolations, from H.G. Wells onward, of the destruction that gas or bombs could bring to defenseless cities. Traces range from Stanley Baldwin's famous speech of 1932, with its talismanic phrase "The bomber will always get through," to the architect Le Corbusier's *Aircraft* (1935), which theorizes: "The airplane eye reveals a spectacle of collapse ... Cities must be extricated from their misery come what may. Whole quarters of them must be destroyed and new cities built."[7]

The interwar works of Graham Greene, filled with visions of planes and films, are telling examples of how late modernism expands both temporally and generically. For while Greene was an avowedly popular novelist, he nonetheless typifies a late modernist interest in using generic forms – in his case, the spy novel – as vehicles for experiments with literary possibilities. Greene's fame has also previously occluded just how much his 1930s works revel in these complicated constructions of selfhood; as he shows how subjectivity can be projected through gesture, how it can transform over the course of an evening, or how it can retreat into inarticulate sensory experience. Moreover, Greene's own ambitions for both popularity and experimentation can be seen by juxtaposing two texts he published in a single year. The first is his elliptical novella *The Bear Fell Free* (1935), an example of how disrupted narrative form has an obvious attraction to the aerial. In a highly wrought, non-linear narration, it weaves together a flying expedition, memories of the First World War, and dread. This is the moment – just after take-off – of a doomed transatlantic flight:

> Heavy wheel, steel polished struts, lay on the swelling air, pressed it down towards the tents, the landladies, the fathers sleeping under handkerchiefs, the child sick behind the breakwater, the wooden spade rotting behind a rock, the Daily Mail reporter inspecting serial couples; they lay over life, the pool, the rocks, the yellow crawling tide; at the height one should have made some pertinent elder-statesman pronouncement, something serious and sad about suffering humanity, but all one felt was this growing fear, this conviction that there had been a mistake.[8]

Here too the potency of the aircraft can truly be seen: it is not just an object; it is an object with the capacity to make everything else *into* objects. The all-encompassing nature of the vision comes not only from the vantage point but also the indeterminacy of the "one" in the final sentence, reaching to encompass the reader as well as the colluding friends of the pilot. The definite articles work by attaching a reader to the

world as it is, while the apparent detachment of the bomber's viewpoint threatens to blow it all up.

In the same year, Greene's *England Made Me* presents an apparently more conventional work – a bleak fairy-tale of twins, brother Anthony and sister Kate, and their entanglements with Krogh, Kate's lover and boss, an all-powerful Swedish financier. But it also works through a rewriting of the reader's generic expectations of what such a thriller could achieve, on both the personal and geographical scales, and to do this it relies upon the allure of aircraft and, as we will see in short course, the lure of the cinema. As Fred Hall, Krogh's thuggish enforcer, travels, he is lulled into a reverie:

> He closed his eyes again; he was no longer interested by the flight from Amsterdam; he knew the airports of Europe as well as he had once known stations on the Brighton line – shabby Le Bourget; the great scarlet rectangle of the Tempelhof as one came in from London in the dark, the headlamps lighting up the asphalt way; the white sand blowing up around the shed at Tallin; Riga, where the Berlin to Leningrad plane came down and bright pink mineral waters were sold in a tinroofed shed . . .[9]

This is Europe remade spatially, with the replacement of national borders by nodes of significance and associations – directly analogous to the fraudulent capitalism that Krogh himself practices. Yet this form of spatially hyperconnected modernity itself unsettles the characters. While nonchalant about his aerial commutes – "a comfortable dull way of travelling" – Hall compares them unfavourably to the pleasures of the past: "The week-end jaunt, the whisky and splash, peroxide blonde."[10] The thing that worries Hall most is the abstraction forced upon him by being up in the air, where the "great scarlet rectangle" below is part of a sequence of patterns that shows a world of abstracted flux. This is part of Greene's engagement with the "high-sublime," an idea within the more aerially intoxicated parts of aesthetic modernism, which dates back at least to Yeats's poem "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" (1918). It is a concept filled with fragile connections and observable gnomic shapes – such as those in Virginia Woolf's early-1930s essay "Flying over London," where an aestheticizing observer "fell into fleeciness, substance and colour; all the colours of pounded plums and dolphins and blankets and seas and rain clouds crushed together."[11] The changing selfhood of characters might also be part of this. Elizabeth Bowen has a London–Paris flight in her *To the North* (1932), one that is both liberatory and subject-altering to her ambiguous protagonists as – midair – they "both felt something gained or lost, though neither, perhaps, knew which."[12] Their very states of being might thus now be a question of

movement: in Maud Ellmann's terms, "Emmeline fuses with the 'shadowy nets' of transportation: the railways, airlines, and shipping routes whose schedules she knows by heart."[13]

Against such dispersal, or pleasurable nebulousness, aeriality is more often a zone of direct threat, such as in Greene's *The Confidential Agent* (1939). Here the eyes of "D" (the émigré who has survived Spanish Civil War terror-bombings) cannot help looking up in fear, despite London's quotidian city life being as yet unshadowed by air-raids. This is a thriller that roams Britain to provide an index of archetypal 1930s locations (a threadbare boarding house, a desolate colliery village) before culminating at a hallucinatory art deco lido. Such mapping brings angst however; D's (fleeting) happiness can come only in an encompassing embrace – that of the super-cinema. For when D and his companion find one, they sit "for nearly three hours in a kind of palace – gold-winged figures, deep carpets, and an endless supply of refreshments carried round by girls got up to kill." The experience necessitates physicality: "He felt her hand rest on his knee. She wasn't romantic, she had said: this was an automatic reaction, he supposed, to the deep seats and the dim lights and the torch songs, as when Pavlov's dogs salivated. It was a reaction which went through all social levels like hunger."[14]

In this, Greene's D is typical of many late modernist protagonists and writers whose aesthetic interest in – and compelling attention to – film was heartfelt, yet not unproblematic or unenvious. Laura Marcus notes that "Greene's involvement with cinema was perhaps the most extensive of any twentieth-century British writer," and this "involvement" covers script-writing, reviewing, and – far less charted by critics – an all-pervasive inflection that shapes his novels.[15] This inflection is revealed in the way cinema shapes desire, as characters refer back to filmic models, compare their lives to actors, or wonder why the contingency of existence does not obey a narrative arc. It can be seen in private lives, as when Anthony in *England Made Me* decorates his shabby bed-sit with photos of "two girls playing strip poker" torn from *Film Fun* magazine. It shows also in the rationale for action: when he wishes to install himself as Krogh's personal assistant, he does so by comparing the position of this industrial magnate to a star actress from *Film Fun*; both Krogh and the starlet need aides-de-camps. Yet something else lies just beneath the cinematic sheen of the spoken surface: an entropic and incestuous desire – "a devotion of the blood"[16] that is expressed only stutteringly by Kate.

Such lurking messiness, invoked by the filmic medium, troubled other writers, too. Stephen Spender had retrospective queasiness at memories of a

Berlin party, one where he watched another party, with many of the same figures, projected before him:

> Boys and girls were lying on the ground embracing and then rolling away from one another to turn their faces towards the camera's lens. Willi lay stroking the head of a girl beside him. He turned, his face white in the light, and then he kissed her, the shadow first, and then his head, covering the light on her lips. I heard Willi laugh beside me.[17]

Here, as well as the playfulness of life-as-art, the cuts between shots move the viewer and the participants in and out of shadow.

Moving beyond the aesthetically unsettling effects of Spender's refracted connections, other works use film as a formal influence. In these works, jump cuts and juxtapositions become explicitly political. The models offered by Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927) or Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) provided a way to capture the complexity of the diurnal cycle in a cityscape, but also – through montage – the disparities in wealth and power. The translation of these techniques into written form became formative to a number of works.[18] Extending this direct influence from film, other significant anglophone writers had already begun to experiment with montage – and the most significant was John Dos Passos. British writers had already responded to *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), but Dos Passos's trilogy *U.S.A.* (published in totality in 1938) was fundamentally shaped by his meeting with Sergei Eisenstein in 1928; it was this work that gave a model for expansive interconnections that *could* only be introduced through montage. Indeed, the *Daily Worker* on May 9, 1936, published some "Camera Eye" sections from Dos Passos, with instructions for how it should be "read":

> First, do not insist upon making consecutive sense of every phrase and sentence as you go along. The effect is as cumulative as that of music or painting.
>
> Second, remember that this is the verbal equivalent of the inclusive technique of photography, registering apparently irrelevant and even dis tracting details for the sake of achieving a complete atmospheric approxima-tion of reality.[19]

British novels that took these lessons for ideological purposes could include *Major Operation* (1936), James Barke's story of how conversion to communism renews two parallel lives in Glasgow. *Major Operation* should rank alongside Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929) in typifying how montage – especially in the cacophonous aurality of the section titled "Red Music in

the Second City" – allows the splicing of (originally) naturalistic materials to show revelatory political possibilities.

John Sommerfield's extraordinary *May Day* (1936) is the complex apogee of this form. Its action takes place "between the morning of April 29th and the early afternoon of May 1st a few years hence."[20] It focuses on the actions of two brothers, a factory in the East End, and a complex woven mesh – even down to repeated spider's-web metaphors – that connects them to each other, to others, and to history. David Trotter has argued for the value of the novel with its re-embedding of connectivity and its understanding that varieties of communication, and the analysis of such communication, are where power resides.[21] Yet Sommerfield's mode is also a critique: previous attempts at city narrative had failed because they lacked a point of view that could encompass both the directionlessness of individual lives *and* the potential of the working class when seen as a whole. The emphasis on perspectives matters – there is a symbolic entry to the city (comparable to the rail journey that opens *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City*) – but, even before this, there is a vertiginous totalizing view where interconnectivity *is* existence:

> there are shining tarred roads, glistening shop windows, arc lamps nightly flowering into electric buds, geometries of telephone wires and tramlines, traffic lights flinging continuous coloured fireworks in the air, a hundred thousand motorcars and buses ... Railways writhe like worms under the clay, tangled with spider's webs and mazes of electric cables, drains and gaspipes. Then there are eight or nine million people ... In this whirlpool of matter-in-motion forces are at work creating history. These fragile shreds of flesh are protagonists in a battle.[22]

The novel then enacts an understanding of class conflict through montage, as scenes are counterpointed both spatially (different people walk past the same headline) and temporally (different people feel urges at the same time); a tutelary parallax view of sorts. Thus the idle rich disport themselves; the factory workers labor and are injured; the communist cells organize; and the moment of crisis nears. Yet the use of montage can lead to something more intertextual and multivalenced: the mistress of a factory owner, rescued from mechanized drudgery but now kept in a gilded cage of a flat, begins her day in a desultory way: Jenny was "sloping about the dishevelled pink intimacies of her bedroom, half naked, a semi-Japanese kimono trailing around her." The authorial voice then frames her reverie: "This is what she was thinking: ... I'll put the bath on in a minute ... I do look a sight ... wish I had something to read ... Wonder if Molly's still there, wonder how she is ... she was always silly."[23] There is a Molly in the factory – but there is also a Molly (having her own bedroom contemplation)

in "Penelope," the final section of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Moreover Sommerfield's decision to continue with such techniques in the composition of *May Day*, even after Karl Radek's denunciations of Joyce and the lauding of "Proletarian Literature" at the 1934 Soviet Writers Congress, shows how a politics of form in British literature has to also be a politics of culture in a broader, international sense.

Another marker of *May Day*'s complexity is the way it is ready to indict capitalism. It does so in forms that have their own complex history, but it is also not naïve about the glamour that the oppressive city can project. Nevertheless, *May Day* overtly links this wondrous spectacle with vulnerability and fear, through – inevitably – a return to aeriality:

> The red-hot worms of neon bulbs squirmed and wriggled. Searchlights, big guns bombarding the air with rays of absinthe green and rose-pink projected the names of automobiles and film stars onto a moving screen of clouds. The whole sky glowed with a dull red heat from the violence of the electric blows that were showered upon it. Ten thousand feet above, a flock of aeroplanes scattered themselves. This was a week of aerial night manoeuvres, raids were being staged to find the weak points in a barbed-wire fence of searchlights that laced the sky around London. These had got through. Looking down the pilots saw this glow like the tarnished sparks of a distant, fading fireworks explosion. They followed the dull-gleaming silver worm of the Thames. The big power-houses at Battersea and Lots Road were their objectives.[24]

These "worms" that "wriggled" might just have come all the way from Woolf's essay "The Cinema" (1926), with its blot on the frame of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, but, as part of the explosive neon hieroglyphs of London, they are more familiar from novels such as Gerald Kersh's *Night and the City* (1938). Yet this passage is rather different: the illuminatory "bombardment" upwards from the signs reverses the practice-run of the bombers, which look down on them as an ersatz aiming point. This is rehearsal: the implied next step in the causal chain would surely be a real attack. But before that comes, there is the insurrectionary hope of May Day. A vast demonstration, whose scale cannot be fully comprehended from any earthbound perspective, goes ahead; and yet it is watched – and understood as a portent – through visual surveillance:

> A thousand feet above the contingents a police gyrocopter, its windmill sails flickering lazily in the blue air. The observer, looking down, saw the marchers, a long black snake, a slow-moving black river winding along the channels of the streets ... the dark mass flows through the streets, meanders

like some caterpillar crawling across a map of London, its head a mile away from its tail, its red spots the colours of banners.[25]

This flickering vision below the aircraft is that of a cityscape not reduced to abstraction – *pace* Greene or Woolf – but rather one animalistically animated by a mass of workers. It is terrifying to the police in its rough and revolutionary potential, as it is seen "crawling" across London to be born.

Documentary, Anthropology

Film and flight were both cultural forces, as well as material realities, and they helped shape the possibilities for late modernism. Yet the conversion of cultural forces into artworks relies upon forms; and two of the most historically contingent and significant of these are (1) the documentary impulse, and (2) what Jed Esty has called the "anthropological turn."[26] Both are relevant across heterogeneous works. Documentary allows political commitments to be advanced *and* encoded in reportage: the ideal of the "camera-eye" typified by the journal *FACT* or by the GPO film unit (1933–40). Meanwhile, the urge to the anthropological can be traced in pageants, such as the one staged in Woolf's *Between the Acts* (1941), or in reworkings of national myth – such as John Cowper Powys's *A Glastonbury Romance* (1932). What is perhaps most significant is how a synthesis between these two cultural forms and forces helped shape the British version of that most explosive interwar eruption: surrealism.

In France, surrealism developed between the first (1924) and second (1929) manifestos toward overt political commitment, shown by the journal changing from *La révolution surréaliste* to *Le surréalisme au service de la révolution*. A comparable trajectory was followed by some members in Britain, who began to see political import in an awakening of the unconscious. The most prominent initial public manifestation of such possibilities in Britain was the International Surrealist Exhibition, held in the New Burlington Galleries in the summer of 1936. One of the immediate consequences was "Anthropology at Home": a Mass-Observation project conceived by the filmmaker Humphrey Jennings, the poet Charles Madge, and the anthropologist Tom Harrisson, which would find the uncanny in hidden resonances of contemporary culture. Their initial "plan of campaign" listed an assortment of topics for observation:

Behaviour of people at war memorials.
Shouts and gestures of motorists.
The aspidistra cult.

Anthropology of football pools.
Bathroom behaviour.
Beards, armpits, eyebrows.
Anti-Semitism.
Distribution, diffusion and significance of the dirty joke.
Funerals and undertakers.
Female taboos about eating.
The private lives of midwives.[27]

The playfulness of this list is apparent, but overall the manifesto is well characterized as "running halfway between the ghosts of Freud and Marx,"[28] that is, wishing to address both economic or material conditions and sublimated psychic forces. Such a model for discovering the unifying and diagnostic myths for society led, it was hoped, toward the mass expression of a collective – as well as personal – unconscious. Mass-Observation could allow access to the hidden structures of society, and this faith paralleled the desire of writers to use surrealist precepts of association and the operation of chance – but, most crucially, to then control the energies they were releasing. A personal truth was thus sought through both the corporeal body and the British landscape, rather than only the unconscious mind.

Two of the most interesting of the writers who took much from surrealism, whilst renewing ideas of conscious craft, were the poets Dylan Thomas and George Barker. Their work of the late 1930s also moved toward organic forms that coupled the body, biomorphically, with trees and flowers. This impulse both diverged from contemporary social realist, frequently Soviet, notions, and infused their subject matter with horror as well as generative unease. Barker's visit to the Surrealist Exhibition, and his collection of body-shock moments, were woven into his book-length poem *Calamiterror* (1937):

> I recall how the rosetree sprang out of my breast.
> I recall the myriads of birds in the cage of my head,
> I recall my third finger the branch of myrtle,
> I recall the imprisoned women wailing in my bowels.
> I was the figure of the Surrealist Exhibition
> With a mass of roses face.[29]

This is not a dreamscape; rather, it is the crafted assemblage of images, with a controlling lyric subject-position. The sequence ends with an emergence from indulgent selfhood when, coupled with a heritage of radical romanticism, it declares itself "for Spain."

Just as in Barker's work, the human bodies in Thomas's late 1930s poetic and prose texts exist in a charged relationship with the organic world around them. Their resemblance shows in an earlier version of *Calamiterror*, entitled "X stanzas," which Barker had contributed to the August 1936 Picasso special edition of *Contemporary Poetry and Prose*.[30] This text owes much to Thomas's story "The Burning Baby," published in the first number of the same magazine three months earlier.[31] Both attempt to depict birth and death conjoined, but with the laconic limpidity of Thomas – "The bush burned out and the face of the baby fell away with the smoking leaves" – being inverted by Barker into the symbolic "burns / The babe with the salamander in his breast."[32] Both writers continued throughout the 1930s to draw on the possibilities of such traumatized biomorphism as implicitly political, a mode of empathetic engagement that could not be tessellated onto structures of class conflict.

Thomas and Barker represent only some of the more acute examples of the organicist turn in British poetry and art.[33] For this movement to the landscape – and the body – is present in the 1930s paintings of Ceri Richards, Paul Nash, and in Roland Penrose's artists' book *The Road is Wider than Long* (1939). So too, the poetry of David Gascoyne returns repeatedly to "thorns," torn between the theological and the organic, as do the illustrations of his work by Graham Sutherland. In David Jones's *In Parenthesis* (1937), the animistic landscape is riven by the violence of the First World War, and the verbal surfaces are impacted analogously by multiple idioms, dictions, and mythologies. Even this extremity of linguistic and geophysical form is exceeded in his other works, composed throughout the 1930s and 1940s, which combine palimpsestic images with the genealogy of language in an ever-expanding whole. This is true especially in *The Anathemata* (1952). This book-length poem acts as a mythopoetic account of the British landmass and cultural landscape; it derives power from the accretion of etymology as well as topology, the plurality of voices being tracked on each page with substrata of footnotes and annotations, and with illustrations embedded to give an incarnational vision. An example of the referential density requiring such apparatus – and yet showing the potent urgency of the language – comes in this passage, which situates the human creature and human culture as just one of the "life-layers" in geology:

> From before all time
> the New Light beams for them
> and with eternal clarities
> *infulsit* and athwart

the fore-times:
                    era, period, epoch, hemera.
Through all orogeny:
                    group, system, series, zone.
Brighting at the five life-layers
                    species, sub-species, genera, families, order.
Piercing the eskered silt, discovering every stria, each score and macula,
lighting all the fragile laminae of the shales.[34]

Jones's lateral layering of language as strata on his pages, or the emergence of the biomorphic organic in Barker and Thomas, was not the only test for the human subject when set into spatiality and history. A still-potent modernist preoccupation with re-examining the comforting myths of self-control and autonomy could also come in other, urban if not urbane, ways. For mapping the city in words is also a moment of realizing the limits of the cartographic.

Such mapping appears in the knowing title of Patrick Hamilton's trilogy *Twenty Thousand Streets Under the Sky* (1935), with its nod to Jules Verne and its anticipation of the *A–Z Atlas and Guide to London and Suburbs* (1936), which had required the compiler Phyllis Pearsall to trek along 23,000 streets. So too, Jean Rhys's sequence of novels from the 1930s – set in London and Paris – offers maze-like correlatives of inchoate emotions, and records the shaping of a mind through restless spaces: boarding houses, waiting rooms, late-night bars. Her fatalistic *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* (1930) flaunts topographical verisimilitude by having each chapter of the London section named after a specific location: "Acton," "Notting Hill," "Golders Green" – or, conversely, the generic misery of "It Might Have Been Anywhere." But *Voyage in the Dark* (1934) eschews such explanations, instead interpolating into the text letters and documents, even whilst giving characters a profound mistrust of language: "The print was very small, and the endless procession of words gave me a curious feeling – sad, excited and frightened. It wasn't what I was reading, it was the look of the dark blurred words going on endlessly that gave me that feeling."[35] The culmination of her interwar work, *Good Morning Midnight* (1939), compounds alcoholism and self-doubt, material transience and permanent fears. But it also tries to capture the multiplicity of potential experiences that ricochet away from any attempt to confine an existence into a salutary warning:

life, which seems so simple and monotonous, is really a complicated affair of cafés where they like me and cafés where they don't, streets that are friendly, streets that aren't, rooms where I might be happy, rooms where I never shall be, looking glasses I look nice in, looking glasses I don't, dresses that will be lucky, dresses that won't, and so on.[36]

This is a bleak contingency which looks like fatalism – yet it is not. It is rather an attempt to capture aesthetically the problem *of* contingency, of not knowing (or believing) in grand narratives or shaping purposes. Such anthropological truths about life-as-lived could look like an inheritance from naturalism rather than a modernism of patterns. But they might not actually be in opposition. Indeed the narrator's admission that there are infinite possibilities – of rooms, dresses, and lives – cannot be held in check by the final "so on," but perhaps it can be so held through the artistry of the writer.

Possibly the true problem of such multiplying and dispersing possibilities is that really no vantage point, even a putative aerial one, could encompass all. Perhaps the answer comes in another mode. In Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*, for example, the character can only make sense of the abased present by proposing, on the final page, the thought of "starting all over again, all over again."[37] The problem that appeared to overshadow so much late modernist writing, up until 1939, was that the coming conflict-as-cataclysm would mean there could never be any second attempts or chances; the reality was, however, rather different.

War

If a late modernism can expand into the later 1930s, it has to be because British writing was shaped by renewed forms of experimentation, ones that were revelatory of acute war-dread. This comes in the word-splitting swoop of fighters in Woolf's *Between the Acts* (1941), or – less obviously – through the temporal play which marks a text such as George Orwell's *Coming Up For Air* (1939).[38] In this novel, the unprepossessing but perceptive antihero observes London: "A little below us you could see the roofs of the houses stretching on and on, the little red roofs where the bombs are going to drop."[39] That bleak definitiveness about the future was diagnostic of a wider mood. Henry Green termed it a kind of "dreading forward," a late modernist mode that knew that, however formally innovative the depiction of an imagined future could be, it came with a *thanatos*-laden inevitability.[40] Yet the actuality of 1939–45 was not, for writers, the total apocalyptic catastrophe predicted. What happened instead were attempts to write while the temporal conditions of composition, and the material subject matter of the city, seemed to fit uncannily the stranger visions of the 1930s – visions where the aesthetic subsequently looked more like the proleptic.

Humphrey Jennings's wartime cinematic work can be set against his poem "I See London" (1941). Here, the *mise-en-page* juxtapositions give a view of the city where shards of experience can be unified into a patriotic purpose, as – in

his film *London Can Take It* (1940) – the dome of St. Paul's acts as synecdoche for the capital's continued survival. The poem unfolds anaphorically around lines of sight, repeating with variations: "I see London . . ." The final stanza then appears to have sprung from one of Jennings's surrealist collages:

> I see a thousand strange sights in the streets of London
> I see the clock on Bow Church burning in daytime
> I see a one-legged man crossing the fire on crutches
> I see three negroes and a woman with white face-powder
> reading music at half-past three in the morning[41]

Jennings's attempt here, and in his wartime films, is to make a rhetorically charged aesthetic of resistance out of happenstance and debris; and also to show, as in the contemporary photographs of Lee Miller, that the inheritance of surrealism was now, paradoxically, a form of realism.

Bowen's rightly famous "Postscript" to her collection *The Demon Lover and Other Stories* (1945) similarly captures the strangely sublime wreckage of the bombed city, articulating the difficulty of finding form commensurate to the experiences within it: "Taken singly [the stories] are disjected snapshots – snapshots taken from close up, too close up, in the middle of the mêlée of a battle."[42] The recovery of fractured London with "new bare alert senses" explains not only how the stories were written but also the mode of survival Bowen suggests – a form of bricolage: "People whose homes had been blown up went to infinite lengths to assemble bits of themselves – broken ornaments, odd shoes, torn scraps of the curtains that had hung in a room – from the wreckage. In the same way, they assembled and checked themselves from stories and poems, from their memories, from one another's talk."[43] Yet texts can release danger. In "The Demon Lover" (1941), named after a gruesome Scottish ballad, the chic Mrs. Drover's return to her London house becomes a vertiginous fall into the uncanny. First comes the ubiquitous Blitz-time dust as index to destruction elsewhere: in the street "an unfamiliar queerness has silted up"; then inside, "her former habit of life" is in the "bruise" of a handle and the "claw-marks" of removed furniture.[44] A letter waits for Mrs. Drover – but it is from her long-dead (or assumed long-dead) first suitor – and, as she reads it, terror, as well as text, emerges. The dénouement comes with the clichéd reassurance of a London taxi-cab being undone, as the returned demonic ghost of the lover emerges.

The potency of such disordered sensation, tactile terrors, and the inescapability of the past shape the wartime parts of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Far from being transcendentally outside history, this poem embodies a

modernism burnt by material conditions. Fire, ashes, and ruins become the conditions of possibility for writing, but also the subject matter which such writing attends to, especially when attuned to the problem of depicting transmogrification between states. This results in literature which both attempts to fix moments of explosive violence – in what the fireman-writer William Sansom wrote of in "The Wall" (1941) as "the Timeless second" – but also to capture the recursive uncovering, an archaeological motion that weaves all wars together, as in H.D.'s *The Walls Do Not Fall* (1944). In Eliot's *Little Gidding* (1942), these twin processes – the flash and the unravelling – come together as the perambulation of a fire-warden is brought to a stop by an encounter; and this encounter, like that in Bowen, is with an uncanny figure: "the eyes of a familiar compound ghost."[45] Afterwards, amid the flames, "that refining fire" also becomes the solution, an elemental process that would reveal a creative memento mori for combustible memories, modes of textual practice, as well as the flammable fabric of the city:

> Ash on an old man's sleeve
> Is all the dust dried roses leave
> Dust in the air suspended
> Marks the place where a story ended.[46]

This is akin to the dust of Bowen's "The Demon Lover," but this powdery residue is granted a teleology: its significance comes from it once having been composed of nameable things: vaporized rodents to extinguished narratives. What is occurring here is the accretion of another story – in the shape of a poem – from violently transformed elements that once possessed their own stories.

The parallels with Dylan Thomas's wartime works – in film as well as poetry – are unexpectedly striking. His burnt traces are most terrifyingly poignant in "Ceremony after a Fire Raid" (1944). Here the *mise-en-page* makes it work as notes-for-performance, with the imperative "Grieve" taking a single line before the encounter with the "black husk" of the dead child and "cinder of the tiny skull."[47] Like Eliot, Thomas also uses transformative encounters with the debris of the city, most vividly in the sonnet "Among Those Killed in the Dawn Raid was a Man Aged a Hundred":

> When the morning was waking over the war
> He put on his clothes and stepped out and he died,
> The locks yawned loose and a blast blew them wide,
> He dropped where he loved on the burst pavement stone
> And the funeral grains of the slaughtered floor.[48]

The victim is located in alliterative lines, with age and place suborned to war. But the body is then changed as it is understood. Each part of metamorph-osed suffering – "craters for eyes" or "ambulance drawn by a wound" – is remade into a sign, as the incarnational patterns move away from the materiality of stone, floor, and street up toward a pantheistic heaven. Thomas's visual corollary to this rhetorical willing of a redemptive pattern is found in his documentary film scripts of the period, especially in *Our Country* (1944). In this he takes phrases that seem to come from his poems, replicating their audible stutter as the camera moves but compensating for that in the animation of matter and the grace of an aerial vista, until "all the stones remember and sing / The cathedral of each blitzed dead body that lay or lies / In the bomber-and-dove-flown-over cemeteries."[49]

Questions of encounter and mourning, as well as survival and the use of fragments, have now led toward a critical re-evaluation of varied texts from the Second World War. Reappraising these works, previously overshadowed by the literature of the First World War in both popular and academic discourse, brings awareness of pluralities within the term "war writing," and thus renders previous soldier-poet paradigms inadequate. Through this process, we can come to an understanding of postwar culture, one that has to acknowledge a material basis of disorder for subsequent forms of remaking in texts of the 1950s – from W.S. Graham through to Malcolm Lowry. Connections and continuities would then be recognized to be as important as ruptures and chasms. This recuperative work gives value to "modernism" as a critically active term and one that cannot be simply periodized in (or around) 1922. A "late modernism" liberates the analysis of literature produced in the later interwar years, the Second World War, and the early 1950s, from being determined through their historical-temporal frameworks, whether based on neatly delineated decades or the assumption that conflict shaped the entirety of an aesthetic. It appreciates the fact that varieties of formal experimentation were the complex modes for depicting, in such circumstances, the political and aesthetic conditions of being modern, again.

Notes
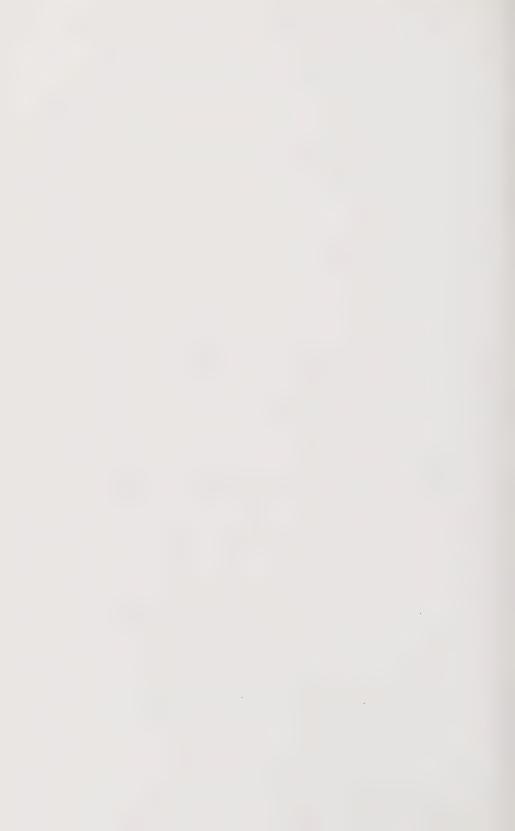
1 Key works of criticism which use or interrogate the concept include Tyrus Miller, *Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction and the Arts Between the World Wars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Joshua Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* (Princeton University Press, 2004); and David Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars*

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013). For a genealogy of the term, see Thomas D. Davis, "Late Modernism: British Literature at Midcentury," *Literature Compass*, 9/4 (April 2012), 326–37.

2 See Gill Plain, *Literature of the 1940s: War, Postwar and 'Peace'* (Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

3 Miller, *Late Modernism*, 20.

4 Esty, *Shrinking Island*, 1–22.

5 Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "The New Modernist Studies," *PMLA*, 123/3 (May 2008), 737–48 (at 737).

6 Most notably Ian Patterson, *Guernica and Total War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

7 Cited ibid., 117.

8 Graham Greene, *The Bear Fell Free* (London: Grayson & Grayson, 1935), n.p.

9 Graham Greene, *England Made Me* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), 161.

10 Ibid.

11 Virginia Woolf, *Selected Essays*, ed. David Bradshaw (Oxford University Press, 2008), 207–12 (at 210).

12 Elizabeth Bowen, *To the North* (London: Penguin, 1995), 138.

13 Maud Ellmann, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Shadow Across the Page* (Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 109.

14 Graham Greene, *The Confidential Agent* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 64–65.

15 Laura Marcus, *The Tenth Muse: Writing about Cinema in the Modernist Period* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 427–31 (quotation at 428).

16 Greene, *England Made Me*, 74.

17 Stephen Spender, *World Within World* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951), 111.

18 See Laura Marcus, "'A Hymn to Movement': The City Symphony of the 1920s and 1930s," *Dreams of Modernity: Psychoanalysis, Literature, Cinema* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 89–109.

19 Cited in Trotter, *First Media Age*, 198.

20 John Sommerfield, *May Day* (London: London Books, 2010), 21.

21 Trotter, *First Media Age*, 210–12.

22 Sommerfield, *May Day*, 25–26.

23 Ibid., 166.

24 Ibid., 189.

25 Ibid., 210–11.

26 Esty, *Shrinking Island*, 2–3.

27 Charles Madge, "Anthropology at Home," *New Statesman and Nation*, January 2, 1937, 12.

28 Michel Remy, *Surrealism in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 102.

29 George Barker, *Calamiterror* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937), 37.

30 George Barker, "X stanzas," *Contemporary Poetry and Prose*, 4–5 (August 1936), 92–94.

31 Dylan Thomas, "The Burning Baby," *Contemporary Poetry and Prose*, 1 (May 1936), 10–14.

32 Barker, *Calamiterror*, 14.

33 Remy, *Surrealism*, 101.

34 David Jones, *The Anathemata* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 73–74.

35 Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark* (London: Penguin, 2000), 9.

36 Jean Rhys, *Good Morning Midnight* (London: Penguin, 2000), 40.

37 Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*, 159.

38 See Leo Mellor, *Reading the Ruins: Modernism, Bombsites and British Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 31–46.

39 George Orwell, *Coming Up For Air* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), 19.

40 Henry Green, "Before the Great Fire," *Surviving: The Uncollected Writings of Henry Green*, ed. Matthew Yorke (London: Chatto & Windus, 1992), 261. See also Paul Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

41 *The Humphrey Jennings Film Reader*, ed. Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet, 1993), 296–97.

42 "Postscript," in *The Mulberry Tree: Writings of Elizabeth Bowen*, ed. Hermione Lee (London: John Lane, 1986), 99.

43 Ibid., 97.

44 Elizabeth Bowen, *Collected Stories* (London: Virago, 1999), 661, 663.

45 T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 38.

46 Ibid., 36.

47 Dylan Thomas, *Collected Poems*, ed. Walford Davies and Ralph Maud (London: Dent, 1998), 107–08.

48 Ibid., 112.

49 *Dylan Thomas: The Filmscripts*, ed. John Ackerman (London: Dent, 1995), 68.

PART II

★

MODERNISM IN SPACE

"Modernism in Space" turns on a twofold conception. There is the space of the plastic, visual arts, including architecture. There is also the space within which – although the prepositional conception "within" involves a model of understanding that modernist thinkers are constantly modifying – the experiences of urban modernity as well as political history take shape. In these several locations, the defining idea of crisis time or time in crisis in modernism may be identified in ways sometimes striking, sometimes subtle. An acute form shows in the revolutionary manifesto proclamations for new visual art, whereas gradualist and rationalist understandings emerge in the subculture of architectural thinking, which tends to see the critical mass of existing traditions as an opportunity for refinement as well as a provocation for change.

The opening chapter in this section frames these several dimensions with an overview of current developments in the understanding of space as a category of perception and extension. It takes into account some of the major breakthroughs in science and philosophy as well as aesthetics. Of manifest and ramifying importance is the recognition that space is not an empty "container" for something else but, in itself, a substantial and constitutive medium. Equally significant is a new cultural geography of space, which anthropologists as well as scientists of perception have opened up. There is a social relativity to the construction of space, this discourse insists, and the cognitive modeling of spatial extension varies in ways that are attributable to
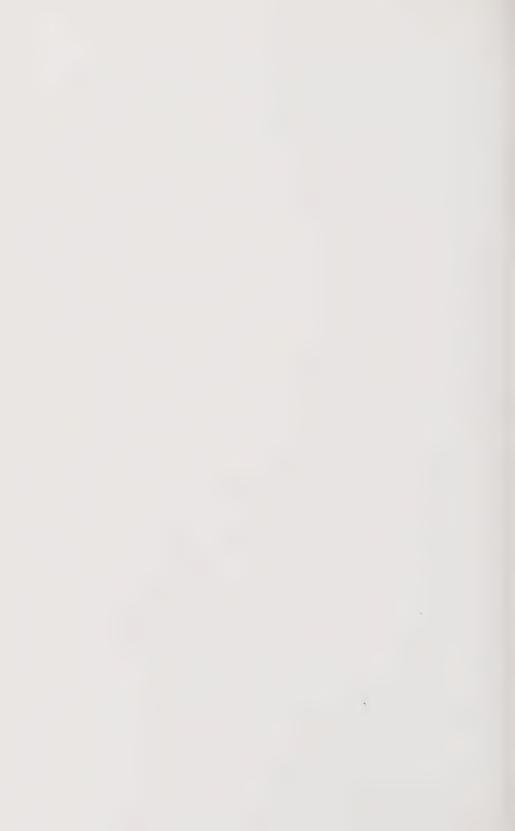
the historical and geographical particularities of a group; sound and touch and even smell and taste, not just sight, may provide orienting senses for the experience of space and, so, for its imaginative representation. These several developments turn space into a medium of manifold potential, featuring its essential materiality and plasticity, and its various manifestations provide the subjects of the following chapters.

The new spaces of modernist painting are taken up in Chapter 9, where "space" includes not only the dimensions of its representation on the canvas but the spheres of its consumption in public as well as in private venues. Alternatively new conceptions of architectural space appear in Chapter 10, which traces the deep time and longer arc of modernist architecture and civic designs in their development from domestic to public spheres, moving from the Arts and Crafts groupings of mid-late nineteenth-century Britain through the functionalist and collectivist plans of midcentury European and American cities. Urban modernity is understood by consensus as the main staging area of a modernist sensibility, and the next two chapters, featuring successive considerations of "Modernism and the Urban Imaginary," orient toward this experience of metropolitan space with emphases that are, in turn, perceptual and political. Chapter 11, subtitled "Spectacle and introspection," offers a consideration of this pair of opposite but complementary experiences of perception in the modern city. "Spectacle" takes up the life of public culture, as focused and channeled through such phenomena as the "crowd" and the "event," while "introspection," turning away from the overwhelmingly intense sensorium of this new urban circumstance, becomes the characterizing action of modern urban life; these dual and sometimes dueling media outline the double rhythm of exterior and interior living that is essential to a larger understanding of the "urban imaginary" in modernism. Chapter 12, subtitled "Nationalism, internationalism, and cosmopolitanism," offers an understanding of modernism as a sensibility flourishing in the geopolitical site of the world-city; it maps tensions between nationalist and internationalist claims on artistic production as well as individuals and offers an understanding of modernist form as a product of the tensions, as well as the successes, of any attempted metropolitan synthesis.

The closing of geographical frontiers that occurred over the long turn of the century coincides with an inclusion of formerly distant locales in the imaginative understandings of Europe and America, as witnessed in the extraordinary proliferation of magazines devoted to an interest in travel to remote places. Conversely, the formerly far-flung locations of colonial culture are brought into communication and relation with the metropolitan

capitals of imperial systems, resulting in an active interchange of Euro-American and South and Central American centers. There is a sort of world-cultural world-historical simultaneity in this emergent situation, and the main title of the final chapter, "Modernism and the new global imaginary," situates this sensibility in a particular location and specific manifestation of three southern hemispheric artists. Its composite subtitle, "A tale of two modernisms: from Latin America to Europe and back again," fairly graphs the looping channels of transmission and interaction in the force field of a geographically expanded modernism's cultural production.

8

Modernist Spaces in Science, Philosophy, the Arts, and Society

STEPHEN KERN

From around 1880 to the outbreak of the First World War, the stable and unified conception of space that had provided the theoretical foundation for science as well as everyday life for two hundred years began to break down. Challenges came from geometry and physics, sociology and psychology, philosophy and religion, art and literature, as well as new communication and transportation technologies such as the telephone, wireless, cinema, automobile, and airplane.

The theoretical source of the classical concept was Isaac Newton, who based his mechanics on space that he regarded as "absolute." This term constructs a space that is *empty* and unchanging with respect to point of view or relative motion, *independent* of anything that takes place in it, *uniform* in all directions, and *universal*, that is, the same for everyone. Newton also believed that *objective* spatial dimensions of the physical world framed the movement of matter, even if no human subject was present to observe them.

By the outbreak of war, every major aspect of Newton's notion of space was challenged. Thus, space was not empty, but full. It was not independent, but modified by relative motion and point of view as well as by what took place "in" it. In fact, the very notion of events occurring "in" the container of empty space was overthrown as space came to be seen as having its own positive, constitutive function. Space was not continuous and uniform but discontinuous and irregular. It was not homogeneous, but heterogeneous. According to sociologists, psychologists, and philosophers, there was a variety of spaces that differed in every social system, psychological type, and human perspective. Finally, it was not objective but, rather, a subjective, interpretive framework for experience, which was relative to the perspective or even to the emotional state of an observer.

These changes in thought were influenced by technological developments that transformed the way space was lived as well as conceived. In the period in which modernism occurs, four aspects of space underwent revolutionary

change: its number, texture, form, and distance. These changes also had social and political consequences as they helped bring about – or at least implied – the erosion of class privilege and the rise of democracy. I combine these phenomena under the single rubric of "democratization," because the essential element of a leveling of former hierarchical distinctions applies to both.

Number

New ideas from all across the scholarly and artistic world indicated that space was heterogeneous. Earlier in the nineteenth century, the geometricians Nikolai Lobachevsky and Bernhard Riemann developed a variety of non-Euclidean geometries, while, toward the end of the century, the physicists Ernst Mach and Henri Poincaré postulated a variety of different physical spaces, which were registered, variously, through all the human senses: visual, tactile, aural, and olfactory spaces. The biologists Élie de Cyon and Jakob von Uexküll explored the space perceptions of different animals, while anthropologists such as James Frazer and sociologists such as Émile Durkheim studied the spatial organizations of different cultures. The historian Oswald Spengler documented how different cultures in different periods created distinctive senses of space. The cubist artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque dismantled the uniform perspectival space that had governed painting since the Renaissance and reconstructed objects as seen from several perspectives. The novelists Marcel Proust and James Joyce used innovative narrative techniques such as impressionism, free indirect discourse, and stream of consciousness to capture varieties of lived space.

Friedrich Nietzsche and José Ortega y Gasset developed philosophies of "perspectivism," insisting that there are as many different spaces and truths as there are points of view. Nietzsche railed against Platonists and Christian theologians who denigrated the value of knowledge acquired through the senses. Such thinkers, he argued, "demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction." He insisted rather that there is "*only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective 'knowing,' and the *more* ... eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will [be] our 'concept' of this thing."[1] To achieve full understanding, we must look at the world through the wrong end of the telescope as well as the right one and see things inside out and backward.

In 1910 Ortega y Gasset formalized his philosophy of "perspectivism," arguing that "this supposed immutable and unique reality ... does not exist: there are as many realities as points of view."[2] His philosophy was based

on Riemann, Lobachevsky, Mach, Einstein, and Uexküll, and shared their discomfort with the many implications of then-conventional ideas about the sanctity of a single point of view or space. Most comprehensively, he challenged the Western world's arrogant belief that one point of view was alone correct. Knowledge progresses and culture advances as the diversity of experience is heard. Durkheim's theory of the social relativity of space gave weight to societies outside the Western world and challenged an implicitly superior Eurocentrism. These arguments on behalf of perspectivism and the heterogeneity of space form part of a general cultural reorientation that was pluralistic and democratic.

Texture

Another historically variable aspect of space is its *texture*. The major development in this regard was the recognition that space was not, as Newton had assumed, passive and empty, but, rather, active and full. These changes provided the metaphysical foundation for the breakdown of aristocratic privilege, a diminishing of class differences and the rise of democracy, and the secularization of life. In addition to these revisions of hierarchies that had governed everyday life, a new set of ranked (or unranked) orderings took place all across the cultural spectrum, as formerly neglected or devalued voids, negativities, backgrounds, silences, empty rooms, "virgin" lands, open frontiers, profane spaces, and disenfranchised people took on more prominence and positive value. These developments democratized the world in the sense that what was formerly of no value (did not count, did not vote) now had a positive, constitutive function.

The idea that space was active and full created a new sense of "positive negative space." Art critics describe the subject of a painting (in a portrait, the figure) as *positive space*, and the background (the space around the figure) as *negative space. Positive negative space* implies that the surrounding space is of equal importance to the figure. A common effect of this transvaluation was a leveling of former hierarchical distinctions about what was primary and secondary. This shift can be seen as a breakdown of distinctions between the plenum of matter and the void of space in physics, between subject and background in painting, and between sacred and profane space of religion.

In 1873, Clerk Maxwell had hypothesized that electricity and light travel in waves through fields of ponderable matter. Einstein abandoned that model. His special theory of 1905 removed the idea that the electromagnetic field is to be regarded as a material carrier. In his mechanics, everything is in

movement throughout the field at the same time, and space is full and dynamic and has the power of "partaking in physical events."[3]

Architects, accordingly, modified the way they conceived of space. Whereas formerly they tended to think of it as a negative element between the positive elements of floors, ceilings, and walls, they now began to consider space a positive element, and began to speak in terms of creating "spaces," not just building "rooms." This change was facilitated by three inventions distinctive to this period: the electric light (1879), reinforced concrete (1892), and air-conditioning (1902). These developments liberated architects from structural requirements for illumination, load-bearing, and ventilation, and so made it possible to sculpt interior space more freely. Frank Lloyd Wright exploited these inventions to create dramatic interior spaces. He described his Larkin Soap Company building in Buffalo (1904) as "the original affirmative negation" in architecture that showed "the new sense of 'the space within' as reality."[4]

Sculpture provided the most graphic affirmation of positive negative space. Alexander Archipenko reversed the traditional notion that space was a void around the mass and maintained "that sculpture may begin where space is encircled by the material."[5] In *Woman Combing Her Hair* (1915), the woman's arching arm frames the empty space that is her head. Never before in sculpture was an essential element such as a figure's head represented by empty space. Here the traditional division of positive and negative space is dissolved as material and spatial forms flow together and constitute the woman with equal force. Poets treated the white space of the page as a formative part of their poems, and lineated their verses with the spatial frame in mind. The framework of the poem, wrote Stéphane Mallarmé, is present "in the space that separates the stanzas and in the white of the paper: a significant silence, no less beautiful to compose than the lines themselves." At the end of a page, he added, "the blanks unfailingly return; before, they were gratuitous: now they are essential."[6]

For centuries painters had used the background to frame their subjects as a pillow frames a head. In the modern period, the background and the space around figures took on a positive function of equal importance to the subject. The impressionists took a first step in giving space its due with their depictions of atmosphere. They used coastal fog, steamy summer haze, and winter twilight to fuse subject and background into a single composition. With cubism the emergence of space as an equal constituent element goes further. Here Braque and Picasso gave space the same colors, texture, and substantiality as material objects, and made them interpenetrate so as to be

8.1 Essential emptiness: Archipenko, "Woman Combing Her Hair." © 2016 Estate of Alexander Archipenko/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

almost indistinguishable. In an interview Braque explained that the main attraction of cubism was "the materialization of the new space which I sensed." He wanted to paint the sensation of moving around objects and give aesthetic substance to the distances between things: "This is the space that attracted me, because that was what early Cubist painting was all about – research into space." In *Still Life with Violin and Pitcher* (1910), the neck of the violin is fractured into sections that open into a space as substantial as the wood. It is impossible to distinguish clearly between subject and background, as plaster, glass, wood, paper, and space are rendered in a fluid pattern of similar forms. Braque explained: "I was unable to introduce the object until I had created the space."[7] The pitcher and violin are just different kinds of aesthetic space, occupied by solid objects that can be simplified, geometrized, fragmented, and then reformed in space.

8.2 Space as solid object: Braque, "Still Life with Violin and Pitcher." © 2016 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is about an empty space that draws the narrator Marlow to Africa and destroys Kurtz, the man he went to find. On Marlow's trek to the central station, he sees images of dynamic negation: empty land, abandoned villages, dead carriers, and unnerving silence. At the inner station, in the heart of darkness, he finds more images of negation: hungry natives, cannibals, and severed heads. He finally locates Kurtz and discovers that negation had taken revenge within him, "because he

was hollow at the core."[8] Kurtz's final words "The horror! The horror!" have become a token of nihilism in the modern world. Emptiness is the stuff of this novel, a force of darkness that rules in the wilderness. Conrad's story records and mourns the loss of the securities and privileges of hierarchy that were implicit in fin-de-siècle racism, imperialism, and Eurocentrism.

August Strindberg's *A Dream Play* (1901) dramatizes a climactic discovery of nothing. For years an officer is obsessed with getting past a guard in order to look behind a door. "That door," he exclaims, "I can't get it out of my mind . . . What's behind it? There's got to be something behind it." Other characters also want it opened, and when they finally succeed, several university officials are standing around and discover that there is nothing behind it. The Dean of Theology interprets its significance: "Nothing. That is the key to the riddle of the world. In the beginning God created heaven and earth out of nothing." The Dean of Philosophy observes: "Out of nothing comes nothing." The Dean of Medicine makes a diagnosis: "Bosh! Nothing. Period."[9] The Dean of Law suggests that the matter is a case of fraud. Strindberg has the custodians of these four fields struggle to explain away the nagging thought that the end of life is nothingness itself.

The beasts of nineteenth-century novels were generally vices, machines, and institutions, or palpable forces of nature. Individuals were plagued by prostitution, alcoholism, and gambling; society was governed by railroads, factories, and coalmines; the economy was driven by materialism, capitalism, and greed. Terrifying as these things seemed, they could at least be named. But the beasts of the twentieth century would be far less identifiable, existing in the mysterious realms of negativity found in the writings of Conrad and Strindberg. For these writers, the void supplies the focus, the substance of the story. Their characters seek meaning outside themselves – in a jungle or behind a door – and find only the horror of nothingness within.

Writers in traditional and emerging disciplines also affirmed the constitutive function of perceptual space. In a discussion of the "stream of thought" in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), William James insisted on the power of negativities, as for example the silence that accompanies sound: "What we hear when the thunder crashes is not thunder *pure*, but thunder-breaking-upon-silence-and-contrasting-with-it."[10] The hyphens bridge the gap between words to illustrate the continuity of experience. The interdependence of sound and silence is but one example of the interaction of positives and negatives in mental life. A contemporary philosopher perceived the leveling effect of affirming the positive function of former negativities in James's philosophy and hinted at the political significance of the "radical" in James's "radical

empiricism." In 1914 Horace Kallen wrote: "Pure experience knows no favorites. It admits into reality ... evil as well as good, discontinuities as well as continuities." James "is the first democrat of metaphysics." James refused to detest the material world as did the idealists – nothing was more or less real or important to him than anything else. He recognized "the democratic consubstantiality of every entity in experience with every other."[11]

New constituent negativities appeared in a broad range of phenomena from physics and philosophy to sculpture and literature. They shared the feature of resurrecting the neglected "empty" spaces that formerly had only had a supporting role, bringing them to the center of attention on a par with the traditional subjects. Thus, figure and ground, bronze and empty space are equally essential to the creation of art and meaning. These new positive negative spaces subverted and reworked the institutions of Western culture that were based on hierarchical distinctions between valued and degraded spaces – between the sacred spaces of religion where God was present and other profane, godless ones; between the privileged sanctuaries of the upper classes, especially those of the hereditary aristocracy, and the vulgar locales of the masses; and between the loci of sovereignty and disenfranchisement, between powerful elites and powerless masses. These spatial redistributions of value accelerated a broad cultural leveling that may be referred to conceptually as well as metaphorically as the democratization of space, in that what formerly did not count (or vote) now had a constitutive function.

In illustration of this major point, the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner argues that the empty spaces of the frontier in America had promoted democracy. In 1903 he concluded: "Whenever social conditions tended to crystallize in the East, whenever capital tended to press upon labor ... there was this gate of escape to the free conditions of the frontier. There free lands promoted individualism, economic equality, freedom to rise, democracy."[12]

Gertrude Stein made explicit that link in the arts. In contrast to traditional paintings in which the subject was more important than the background, she argued, in Cézanne "each part is as important as the whole." Stein adapted this formal shift in art to literature. She rejected aristocratic hierarchy in explaining, "To me one human being is as important as another human being." She affirmed democratization in politics in explaining how she "threw away punctuation" to level out the importance of words in sentences and achieve "this evenness of everybody having a vote."[13] For Stein, hierarchies of creative accomplishment were to be celebrated, but those based on inherited privilege, religious dogma, or political oppression were degrading. She sought

to demolish their authority by undoing the way traditional syntax, including even the use of commas, was used to sustain traditional hierarchies.

Form

The conviction that an inert and stable spatial order underlay experience was tersely expressed by that quintessential Victorian, Samuel Smiles – "A place for everything, and everything in its place."[14] In the face of such complacency about the spatial forms of life and thought, a number of artists and intellectuals assailed the spatial integrity of numerous conventional forms and borders. On the eve of the First World War, Walter Lippman wrote, "The sanctity of property, the patriarchal family, hereditary caste, the dogma of sin, obedience to authority,–the rock of ages, in brief, has been blasted for us."[15]

The assault on the solidity of forms began at the basic level with matter itself. The Newtonian distinction between the plenum of matter and the void of space was undermined by developments in electromagnetic and thermodynamic theory in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1896 Henri Bergson interpreted Faraday's theory of matter as one in which the atom is a cross point for lines of energy radiating through space: "Thus each atom occupies the whole space to which gravitation extends and all atoms are interpenetrating." He concluded that what we call an atom is "a vortex ring, ever whirling in this continuity."[16] The discovery of radioactive disintegration of matter in 1896 also eroded the stability of matter, because particles of certain elements such as radium disintegrate by throwing off energy and in time reveal a loss of mass.

Einstein's physics questioned the stability of all spatially extended forms and challenged Newtonian space as an inert container for the movement of stable particles of matter. In "On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies" (1905), he argues that bodies change their form when moving with respect to a stationary reference system. A rigid body that has the form of a sphere when viewed at rest will begin to assume an ellipsoid shape when viewed in motion, and all three-dimensional objects will "shrivel up into plane figures" when their relative velocity reaches the speed of light.[17] The general theory of relativity (1916) demolished the conventional formal stability of the material universe. Classical physics had taught that all bodies are elastically deformable and alter in volume with changes in temperature. But according to Einstein, every bit of matter in the universe generates a gravitational force that accelerates all material bodies in its field and modifies their apparent size.

For Einstein, the distinction between matter and space was itself merely a function of perspective.

Traditional notions of inside and outside were also changed by several new technologies from this period. Edison's discovery of the fluoroscope in 1896 made it possible to open, at least visually, the form of the body. The skin of buildings was opened up with the new supporting steel frames, walls of glass, and electric lighting, which made possible new interpenetrations of indoors and outdoors. The telephone pierced the shell of privacy. In 1912 Arnold Bennett objected to European hotels in which "the dreadful curse of an active telephone" was installed in every room to invade one's privacy.[18] In 1906 an American writer observed how telephones, telegraphs, rural free delivery, and improved roads mixed city and country life. The expansion of feeder railroad lines linking small towns was making it possible for workers to commute from the suburbs and enjoy pleasures of country living that had been formerly available only to the rich.

Another new technology eroded the formal structure of class lines in the world of entertainment. The cinema (first demonstrated publicly in 1895 in Britain) was a uniquely democratic art form. While the traditional theatre was relatively expensive, the cinema filled hundreds of movie houses with the same big picture for vast working-class audiences. Compared to the theatre, the cinema was not only far more accessible: it enabled its viewers to see anywhere that a camera could be used. The social and political significance of cinema was explained in an article titled "A Democratic Art," which appeared in *The Nation* in 1913. Cheap seats all at the same price, a wide range of subjects, and its appeal to "all nations, all ages, all classes, both sexes" made the cinema a truly popular art form. In the early nickelodeons of New York, which showed silent movies for a nickel, workers from all countries, even those who did not speak English, could mix with the upper classes in the dark with unprecedented proximity. The cinema made "a direct and universal appeal to the elementary emotions" and allowed everyone to be a critic, as "the crowd discusse[d] the technique of the moving-picture theatre with as much interest as literary salons in Paris or London discuss[ed] the minutiae of the higher drama." In 1918 a critic speculated that cinema is "the language of democracy which reaches all strata of the population and welds them together."[19]

Class lines blurred up and down the social hierarchy. In 1912 the editor of a Parisian high society newspaper bemoaned the erosion of those divisions: "Democracy, by breaking down all distinctions, has done away with the barriers which for centuries had guarded the old social hierarchy, and to-day

our salons at their best have little individual character, and at their worst are all exactly alike."[20] A reactionary sociologist blamed the replacement of private cabs by streetcars for a loathsome mixing of upper and middle classes. He even faulted American cities for providing millions of free public baths. A British observer saw the breakdown of classes as part of a collapse of several traditional forms. There is no longer a place for "a class with well-defined boundaries, dividing it from people of poverty on one side and people of wealth on the other." Suburbia has become a "great straggling territory" inhabited by all sorts of people. Modern restlessness has penetrated homes "like microbes through open windows," breeding chaos in the families within.[21]

Coming from an upper middle-class Jewish family and aspiring to be accepted among the high circles of the French aristocracy, Marcel Proust lived between these two classes. In *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913–27) the narrator, Marcel, aspires to be admitted to the exclusive domain of the Princesse de Guermantes, but when he finally gains entry, he discovers that

> a certain complex of aristocratic prejudices, of snobbery, which in the past automatically maintained a barrier between the name of Guermantes and all that did not harmonize with it, had ceased to function. Enfeebled or broken, the springs of the machine could no longer perform their task of keeping out the crowd; a thousand alien elements made their way in and all homogeneity, all consistency of form and color was lost.[22]

Throughout this period the imagery of snobbery repeatedly involved the penetration of "pure" classes by foreign elements across formerly secure class lines.

Whereas realist art distinguished clearly between subject and background, or between the positive space of the figure and the negative space around it, the cubists wiped out that distinction. In their paintings, objects do not have uninterrupted outlines, and in some places they open into the surrounding space. Parts of objects are broken off, colors bleed into neighboring objects, and translucent facets of space, with multiple light sources, cut shadows across bounding surfaces. In *Girl with a Mandolin* (1910), Picasso disjointed the right elbow like a mad surgeon grafting chips of bone onto chunks of space. The cubist assault on the closed form was one of the most graphic and significant of this period. This development entailed more than a shift in artistic style. It involved a transformation in the very purpose of art from the interpretation of optically perceived reality to the recreation of an aesthetically conceived one. The cubists discovered that they could deform objects

and reform the artistic value of empty space in deference to artistic sensibilities alone. If those sensibilities required that an elbow open into the space around it, then they opened it. Their breakdown of the closed form was a declaration of independence of art from visual appearance. Their fracturing of objects and splicing them into space repudiated conventions that separated subject and background as well as those that insisted that the artist defer to visual appearance. Those forms were eroded by new technologies, which were working along a spectrum of fresh artistic and formal conceptions.

Distance

New transportation and communication technologies had the effect, as numerous observers noted, of "annihilating" time and especially space. The increasing safety and comfort of the bicycle and reduction of its cost created a "bicycle boom" in the 1890s that enabled the masses to travel more freely.[23] An article in the *Minneapolis Tribune* in 1895 welcomed the "most democratic of all vehicles" that allowed people of all classes to amuse themselves in the same way. Another journalist was carried away with praise for the bicycle, which was a "great leveler" and an instrument of social equality.[24] Stefan Zweig commented on the democratizing effect of the automobile along with other new transportation technologies. "The bicycle, the automobile, and the electric trains had shortened distances and given the world a new spaciousness ... Whereas formerly only the privileged few had ventured abroad, now bank clerks and small trades-people would visit France and Italy."[25] In an essay of 1898 titled *The Morality of Sport*, the French critic Paul Adam commented on the way automobiles expanded consciousness: the ease of traveling over large distances engendered an exchange of ideas, stimulated the intellect, broke up prejudices, and diminished provincialism.[26]

The telephone, invented in 1876, affected every aspect of human relationship from courting and doing business to conducting diplomacy and fighting war. It expanded the number of contact points between which messages could be sent, drawing millions of people into an instantaneous communications network that overcame former spatial separations between people. By the outbreak of war in 1914, it was an enormously potent technology that democratized the privilege of communication across vast distances, one that had formerly been only for the rich. According to one report, in 1913, Germans made over 2.5 billion calls.[27] In the United States there were 10,000,000 telephones in operation by 1914. During that year, it can be estimated, the telephone lines were used approximately 38 billion times.

The telephone altered the quality as well as the pace and the range of human communication. In a study of city life, motion pictures, and the telephone, titled *Crowds: A Moving-Picture of Democracy*, Gerald Stanley Lee noted, "The telephone changes the structure of the brain. Men live in wider distances, and think in larger figures, and become eligible to nobler and wider motives." Lee welcomed new technology that brought crowds together, leveling former hierarchical distinctions. He viewed electricity itself as the current of the democratic ideal because "it takes all power that belongs to individual places and puts it on a wire and carries it to all places." The new elevator he regarded, ironically, as a great leveler, "giving first floors to everybody, and putting all men on a level at the same price."[28] Proust saw telephone conversation as an "admirable sorcery" that brings before us, "invisible but present, the person to whom we have been wishing to speak," and he imagined telephone operators to be "priestesses of the Invisible" who bring the sound of "distance overcome."[29]

In 1901 H.G. Wells observed that "the world grows smaller and smaller, the telegraph and telephone go everywhere, wireless telegraphy opens wider and wider possibilities to the imagination." Technology demolishes "obsolescent particularisms" such as class distinctions as well as national boundaries and will someday lead to the creation of a "world-state at peace within itself."[30] This latter prediction was one of Wells's most inaccurate, as the world went off to war in 1914 at unprecedented high speed, in part caused by the mishandling of new transportation and communication technologies.

During the July Crisis of 1914, when diplomats failed to keep the peace, the men in power lost their bearings in the hectic rush of telegrams, telephone conversations, memos, and press releases. The time it had formerly taken to cross distances in diplomatic exchange was now tremendously compressed, and these new conditions contributed to the haste and panic of "ultimatum diplomacy." Hard-boiled politicians broke down and seasoned negotiators cracked under the pressure of tense confrontations and sleepless nights, agonizing over the probable disastrous consequences of their snap judgments and precipitous actions. During the climactic period between July 23 and August 4, there were five ultimatums with ever shorter time limits, all implying or explicitly threatening war if the demands were not met. In the final days, the pressing requirements of mobilization timetables, themselves dependent on railroad timetables, frayed the last shreds of patience, and European capitals responded to the rush of information as if they were so many outlets along a telephone party line, jumping at the jingle in every foreign office.

The hierarchy of old Europe was preserved in a specially intense and comprehensive way in Austria, and so the reaction of the Emperor Franz Joseph to modern technologies graphically illustrates the conflict between old and new orders. Up to the beginning of the First World War, rule by the noble class in Austria was legitimized in laws that preserved royal authority and noble privileges. Reared under the rigid formalism of military life and the exacting requirements of one of the oldest surviving royal dynasties, convinced of his divine right to rule, hostile to incursions of popular government and the rise of democracy, isolated socially in a circle of high nobility, and contemptuous of anyone of low birth, Franz Joseph was an embodiment of the hierarchical world of the European aristocracy. In the Hofburg in Vienna, the favorite Habsburg palace for six hundred years, he shunned the use of typewriters and permitted no automobiles. But most revealing was his refusal to install telephones.

Telephones, first used by the rich, soon became a democratic instrument, leveling classes and binding nations into a single electronic network. They were incompatible with the aristocratic principle that certain persons have special importance by virtue of their proximity to the monarch. They broke down spatial barriers horizontally across the face of the land and vertically across social strata. They made all places equidistant from the seat of power and hence of potentially equal value. The elaborate protocol of introductions, calling cards, invitations, and appointments was obviated by their instantaneity; and the protective functions of doors, waiting rooms, servants, and armed guards was diminished by the piercing of their intrusive ring. They penetrated and thus profaned all places; hence there were none in churches. The older geographical and social boundaries of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were incompatible with the new universality, irreverence, and pugnacity of the telephone. In refusing to allow telephones into the Habsburg palace, old Franz Joseph knew what he was about.

By revolutionizing the number, texture, form, and distance of space, the modernist sensibility reworked the physical as well as the conceptual foundations of experience. All four areas of change reworked traditional, space-based hierarchies. Increasing the varieties of lived space increased views on experience, a function that Nietzsche embraced with his philosophy of "perspectivism." The new conception of space as full and dynamic resulted in the affirmation of many new positive negative spaces, a manifold development that led in turn to a reworking of social, religious, and political hierarchies. The breakdown of many forms underscored the iconoclasm

necessary for revolutionary changes in social, religious, and political institutions. The new distances created by new communication and transportation technologies transformed the near and the far, and impacted everything from courtship and business to diplomacy and war. In the modernist period, the Western world was transformed spatially as it reworked the institutions that held it together.

Notes

1 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (New York: Vintage, 1967), 119.

2 José Ortega y Gasset, "Adám en el Paraíso," *Obras Completas*, vol. 1 (1910; Madrid: Revista de Occidenta, 1946), 471.

3 Albert Einstein, *Relativity* (New York: Crown, 1961), 150, and "The Problem of Space, Ether, and the Field in Physics," *Ideas and Opinions* (New York: Bonanza, 1976), 274.

4 Frank Lloyd Wright, "A Testament," *Frank Lloyd Wright: Writings and Buildings*, ed. Edgar Kaufmann and Ben Raeburn (New York: Meridian, 1960), 314.

5 Alexander Archipenko, *Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years 1908–1958* (New York: Tekhne, 1960), 51–56.

6 Stéphane Mallarmé, "Sur Poë," *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954), 872.

7 Dora Vallier, "Braque, la peinture et nous: propos de l'artiste recuellis," *Cahiers d'art*, 29 (October 1954), 15–16.

8 Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899; New York: Dover, 1990), 64.

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10 William James, *The Principle of Psychology*, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1950), vol. 1, 240.

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9

The New Spaces of Modernist Painting

DANIEL HERWITZ

Modernist visual arts germinated within the conditions of modernity, arising in the capitals of Europe – especially in Paris, "capital of the nineteenth century,"[1] as Walter Benjamin famously described it. The second half of the nineteenth century saw the meteoric ascent of French avant-garde painting, making Paris a city of artists audaciously employing non-academic techniques and willfully disrupting traditions of visual coherence. In spite – and perhaps because – of this refusal to abide by enduring orthodoxies of institutional art, so jealously defended by the Salon, the Academy, and the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris became the site in which the complex system of "the art world" was configured. Concurrent with the revolution in visual arts was the rise of the competitive art market controlled by the dealer and the critic, whose "laudatory review became a substitute for a Salon medal."[2] The dealer's profitable transactions contributed to the bourgeoisie's swiftly gaining influence as a class of consumers. This new class cohered in the middle of the nineteenth century with enhanced literacy rates, leisure time, money to spend, and a deep desire for consumption – including and especially items of fashion and objects of art that decorated the spaces of their apartments and villas as proclamations of their arrival as a class.

Of course, modernist art was not always greeted by an appreciative or comprehending public. The annual official Paris Salon, long an extension of and venue for art produced at the École, had already met its subversive match with the Salon d'Automne of 1905, which provoked outrage and scandal – featuring as it did the work of "outlaws" such as Matisse, whose "La femme au chapeau," according to Gertrude Stein in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, "infuriated the public, [who] tried to scratch off the paint."[3] Long before twentieth-century modernist revolutions in art, in fact, there were experimental precursors – one aptly named Salon des Refusés already in 1863, in which Manet's "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe" was received as a direct affront to bourgeois morality.

In spite of such fierce responses, however, galleries were gainfully promoting and marketing modernist art to the public. Once accruing value and just the right degree of aesthetic rebellion, the work of art came to exist in a double system. On one hand, it became for the first time in the history of Europe a bourgeois commodity to the private buyer and a very profitable business for the gallerist. On the other, it was becoming a rarified object: it inhabited the secular religious space of the museum. By 1930, then, under the scrupulous direction of Alfred Barr, the Museum of Modern Art would not only lure the center of the art world to New York City but also become the sanctioned institution for the authoritative enshrinement of modernist art.

This art world gave rise to a primary feature of modern art: the project of critique. The critique of the past and of the art world of the present within the canvas was an *invention* of modern art. The key figure of this phenomenon was Édouard Manet, whose body of work makes a landmark transition from realism to impressionism. Art was about the world in which he lived and was to be marketed, bought, and sold in a way little different from the objects featured in the new department stores on the grand boulevards of Paris. But the price of such otherwise "priceless" commodities was often determined by the reviews of the art critic, the whim and interest of the collector, and what the gallery owners could get away with charging (what the market would bear). According to Harrison C. White and Cynthia White, "The Impressionists seemed to mark a basic new era in art primarily because they ushered in a new structure for the art world. Let us call this new institutional system the dealer-and-critic system."[4]

Part of Manet's project was to paint in such a way as to actively intervene in a cultural world that held the viewer's gaze paramount. And so Manet's famous "Olympia" of 1863 offers a direct reinterpretation of Titian's famous "Venus of Urbino" of 1538, in which a seductive nude reclines on a divan, her head turned toward the viewer in a captivating gaze, her right hand holding flowers, her left on her sex. Scandalous when it was shown at the Salon of 1865, Manet's "Olympia" parodies Titian's painting by grotesquely foreshortening his Olympia, turning Titian's pear-shaped Venus into the stunted body of a girl who appears little older than a child. The expression on the face of Manet's Olympia resides between hostility and indifference, contempt and boredom. Indeed, as is almost always the case with Manet, the more we seek to decipher his subject's expression, the more we must concede to its elusiveness. She is, in that sense, unknowable. This failure of knowledge is meant to challenge bourgeois man's expectation that the woman in the picture – like the world at large – is his possession; she will not conform to

his expectations; he will never know her perfectly. Manet's Olympia effectively blocks that prepossessing gaze.

The effect of Manet's pictorial manipulation is to criticize the tradition of the nude, its presumptions about the role of voyeurism, and the observer's assumed hold over the object of the gaze. In its historical moment, "Olympia" achieved neither the status of masterpiece nor the acquisitive attentions of the art market, remaining unsold during the artist's lifetime. And so the world of art – with its old and new systems of state-determined academies, market forces, galleries, and the cultural legacy of its museums – itself becomes a comprehensive object of critique, revealing a legacy that demanded intervention. Without this system, the project of critique central to modernist art, which involved a hyperconsciousness of its own moment in cultural time, could not have arisen.

With "Jesus Mocked by the Soldiers" of 1865, Manet once again excoriates the critics, galleries, and institutions. Here, with plangent eyes and a vulnerable expression, a naked Christ casts a dispirited look at one of three soldiers about to pierce his body with a lance. The three soldiers are modeled on the Parisian critics who had "mocked" Manet, consigning him and the impressionists to the Salon des Refusés; as such, the ridiculed Christ is modeled on Manet himself.

Another prominent feature of impressionism is its affection for its own present tense – from the speed of trains and the spume of their smoke adrift to the incessant mobility and transience of its subjects, people in and out of shops, gazing at sumptuous window displays, moving along streets, in cafés and public parks, participating in the grand spectacles of public life. Paintings capture and celebrate the energy of the city in its minute by minute existence – its crowds, boulevards, department stores, women with parasols, summer fêtes in the Luxembourg Gardens, the turning of leaves in the Tuileries. Impressionism in particular is dazzled by the speed of horses, the arrival and departure of trains; its love of the present focuses on the glow of the moment, even – or especially – as it moves on.

In effect, impressionists were following the famous injunction of the poet and critic Charles Baudelaire – to become a "painter of modern life." This essay was written in 1863 – the same year Édouard Manet produced his famous "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe" (The Luncheon on the Grass), in the same decade that Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille met while studying under the academic artist Charles Gleyre and began to exhibit together. These painters were already realizing the motives that Baudelaire attributes to the painter as an artist in search of modern

life: "He is looking for that quality which you must allow me to call 'modernity' ... He makes it his business to extract from fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distil the eternal from the transitory ... By 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable."[5]

The painter of modern life lives in search of such transitory moments of experience, moments of impression captured in brushstrokes. And here the theme of radical innovation becomes central to modern art. Impressionism famously recasts the canvas, discarding the hard edges of drawing or the architectural spaces of three-point perspective inherited from the Renaissance. The impressionist painting was a breakthrough in form insofar as it abandoned the distanced, hermetic image, composing instead out of tiny brush strokes that the viewer must visually and actively complete, and that place the viewer in a state of active absorption. The viewer must formulate a scene from the sketch, from the brush stroke, from the ambient play of light and color, a scene that seems evanescent even as it appears so intensely in its moment. Like all moments, or suspensions of time, the impressionist painting already contains its passing within it. And, despite the frequent settings in country scenes, this sense of transitoriness invokes the conditions of urban modernity in Baudelaire's own formulation, where, turning corner after corner, the viewer is struck continually with the feeling of moment-to-moment change, where the lure of the present is intensified by its very elusive, mercurial quality. The impressionist painting bespeaks the quiddity of things, the *this-ness* of this moment and not another – and the essential trait of the present that it is always also vanishing into the past, into memory.

Impressionists were enchanted by the prismatic changes in light that turn a simple haystack into a kaleidoscopic patina of colors, so that the haystack may glow purple, aqua, azure, or yellow-brown as the minute, hour, day, or season changes. Hence, Monet's famous series presents the haystack as its own canvas for the shifts of light over time, granting this humble agrarian object a resonant visual timbre and symbolic charge. Reacting to impressionism, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Georges Seurat conjured the lively style of post-impressionism in the 1880s, recruiting tiny dots of color to prestidigitate hovering pictorial images that seem as strange and insubstantial as a cinematograph. There were also the experiments in volume and form Cézanne explored in his search for a painting that reflects – and reflects on – the quality of perception itself. It is as if how we see were his real subject and he studied it somewhere between art and science. Cézanne's breakthrough had the concerted purpose of re-establishing the

9.1 Visual timbre, resonant space: Monet, from the "Haystack" series.

pictorial values of depth, solidity, and figural robustness by creating new forms of painterly space – ones that do not lead toward vanishing points, do not repudiate three-dimensionality except in a qualified way, and do not depend on the delineation of objects through hard-edged drawing.

Most notable here is the work of Paul Cézanne (the so-called father of abstract art), in particular his still life painting, which he developed from the late 1880s through the first decade of the twentieth century. Cézanne's baskets of fruit sitting atop tables accrue meaning through a series of visual tensions orchestrated between the parts of the pictorial scene: the deletion of a table leg or its startling dislocation from the table, the geometric tilt of a table toward one side of the canvas (as if everything should slide off it onto the ground), the pushing of a wine bottle to the back of the canvas in spite of the conspicuous absence of depth of field. Such pictorial architecture demands that the viewer's eye become – as in the impressionism that influenced Cézanne – an agent actively assembling these visual pieces. Cézanne complements this process as he rounds out his apples, pears, lemons, and onions through painterly, variegated brush strokes and dabs of warm red,

purple, yellow, or brown. The eye luxuriates in his fruits, which lack the fixed edges of Renaissance work, and which the viewer's eye completes by rounding them out, their robustness and beauty fulfilled by the work of the viewer's eye. Nothing recedes toward a vanishing point in Cézanne, but rather achieves stability, order, and venerable solidity through the interrelationships of elements that are working formally rather than representatively. Cézanne's approach to pictorial values exploits the tension between internal elements and the roundedness of objects to startling effect.

Over the next thirty years painting continued to move away from three-dimensional perspective into a world of increasing flatness and hieratic arrangement. Picasso's early work – known as his Blue Period (1901–04) – portrays the bitter-sweet existential nature of life with cold, washed-out blues and somber grays; the Rose Period (1904–06) engages a broader palette of rose, blue, and green. Studiously planed images on the canvas, figures in green elongate like spectral ghosts; the blues articulate bleakness and despair; whereas the rose paintings (often of acrobats known as *saltimbanques*) thaw the mood and monochromatic hues of their predecessors, featuring a more animated style and palette. By the end of this period, Picasso began his break with figurative painting, and the influence of Cézanne's angled shapes and privileging of the line began to appear in the Spanish painter's work.

During the years 1906–11, Picasso and Georges Braque extended Cézanne's distortions of form and inversions of beauty as they jointly broke through to cubism. With a thoroughgoing rejection of Western artistic traditions, cubist work organizes the picture through an interlocking series of visual planes and contrary perspectives whose tensions and complex interrelationships force the eye to actively assemble, to coordinate the visual – sometimes insoluble – cubes on the canvas. In 1912, Picasso and Braque lived as companion-painters in southern France, painting the hill towns of Avignon as compositions of interconnecting streets with stone houses and patterned, tiled roofs. This tremendous surge of creative work occurred within a range of further experimentation, which included deletion, omitting parts of an object thereby requiring the viewer to complete them in the mind's eye; augmentation, exaggerating or extending objects across space; and signification, using pictorial elements, like a musical clef as metonym for visual objects like clarinets or violins, so that the eye works between seeing and "reading" visual forms. Going further, they broke down figure and object into smaller and denser patterns of cube-like parts, which they arranged around increasingly complex visual planes, and applied *trompe l'oeil* textures such as *faux bois*, mimicking blind artistic loyalty to the real.

The experiments in visual form by Cézanne, and then by Picasso and Braque, invoke another principle of modernist visual art: an understanding of experiment for its own sake as the basis of the "breakthrough" value of art, an understanding that results in increasingly radical and innovative pictorial experimentation. The "shock of the new," as critic Robert Hughes entitled one of his books,[6] was a well-known feature of modernism. In creating forms that demand effort to become comprehensible – if not beautiful – to eyes unaccustomed to the experiment, the artist moves increasingly "ahead" of an often mystified public with its share of staunch detractors.

From 1910–12, in their development of "analytical cubism," Picasso and Braque were taking the reductive, analytical principle of cubist composition as far as it could go, anticipating pure abstraction as perspectives appeared deformed, multiple, and contrary, and single colors dominated the canvas. From 1912–14 they turned to collage, taking snippets of newspaper articles, cigarette wrappers, and patterned paper and pasting them onto the surface along with labels from wine bottles, wallpaper, and the like. In collage the wine label retains its original meaning as a wine label while becoming a new, formal element in a collage characterized by drawing, pasting, cutting, and arrangement. The work, so cut from the materials of the actual world, collapses the margin between life and art and abandons three-dimensional space. In this movement, the pictorial canvas became what Marjorie Perloff calls a laboratory for the creation of the new,[7] an experimental domain into which the world could be poured so that new relationships between things could be forged – relationships that depended on these elements retaining their original meanings while taking on new ones. This is a defining principle of modernism: turning the canvas into a laboratory for forming and fashioning a new reality.

Picasso's artistic vision in the first decade of the twentieth century drew heavily on his interest in pre-Roman Iberian sculpture and appropriation of West African sculptures and masks on view at the ethnographic museum in Paris. Picasso's work of 1906–11 is deeply invested in "primitive art," seen as totemic materials and ritual objects associated with innocence, exoticism, and the talismanic. "Primitivism" is a complex and intricate system of motives and aims, but it is clearly intended to undercut the bourgeois values of his time and assault their tepid conformity and repressive civility.

The historical and critical context of primitivism includes three waves of artistic influx from the wider global and colonial world, which hit Europe in the nineteenth century: from China, Japan, and, at the end of the century, West Africa. Each played a vitalizing role in the creation of new art,

beginning with impressionism. But the European cultural world was little interested in the roles of these art objects in the cultures from which they originated. The extent to which Picasso was troubled that his access to African and Oceanic art – exemplified by his masterpiece "Les demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907) – was the consequence of France's predatory colonial project in the French Congo and elsewhere is a point of critical debate.

To some, Picasso saw the revolutionary potential of using foreign images. As Patricia Leighten explains, "Picasso purposely challenged and mocked Western artistic traditions with his allusions to black Africa, with its unavoidable associations of white cruelty and exploitation."[8] To others, Picasso's vision was unmitigated romanticism, his aesthetic efforts trained exclusively on the erotic and formal qualities of the ethnographic pieces. As formal purpose: the mask became a way for Picasso to imagine the hard stability of anthropomorphic forms (especially the face of the figure) without the use of depth, as the mask is only a few inches deep and retains its solid power through the use of wood and through its angular exaggeration of the human face, especially at the jagged eyes. On the erotic: as Leo Steinberg famously wrote,[9] Picasso's purpose was to charge his female figures with an erotic intensity so shattering that female sexuality becomes almost cast as a death threat. This image is actualized in the way "Demoiselles" locks the eyes of the four figures (meant to be prostitutes in a southern French brothel but modeled on his friends, including painter Marie Laurencin) in mortal combat with the gaze of the viewer, who is coded as a desiring male. Their eyes are deep, mask-like sockets; their faces hard and angular. The figures are splayed across multiple planes, which cast at least some of them as simultaneously standing (waiting for purchase by the customer who is sizing them up) and already prone in bed, legs spread, in the act of coitus. It is as if the act of *looking* suggests the act of sex already in progress, an event John Richardson explains as pertaining to the southern Spanish society from which Picasso originates, where to look at a girl is to already lay claim to her sex, leaving the one who looks in the position of responsibility for sexual possession and all the retribution that may derive from that.[10] Moreover, Picasso relied on a number of sources from Western and non-Western art to achieve the full intensity of this and other pictures: on Romanesque sculpture, for example, with its twisted, organic sculptural forms; but above all on the art of Africa, coded in late colonial Europe as seething with African stereotypes of licentiousness, unbridled sexuality, and aggression. The force of the West African mask or sculpture, so stereotyped, is relied upon to proclaim an erotic power capable of shattering the civilized halls of Europe. And so for Picasso

(and many other modernists) the role of primitivism is to use art whose strange, sinewy shapes, and colonial hierarchies grant it the power to obliterate European morality by erupting the dark forces of the human being repressed by civility and religion.

This is the modernist principle of *épater le bourgeois*, a focusing and intensification of Picasso's work with the primitive: here, to undercut and assault bourgeois morals, religion, civility, society, and culture as a whole. This impulse continues into surrealism's fierce, dreamlike juxtapositions of figural elements expressive of the deeply irrational. This energy extends to the parody of priests in surrealism and to its violent assaults on the female

9.2 The space of the gaze: Picasso, "Les demoiselles d'Avignon." © 2016 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

body – what Hal Foster calls the surrealist desublimation[11] of civilization into human aggression and monstrousness, into a disjointed and fragmented self. And, indeed, it continues on into the work of Jean Dubuffet, Jackson Pollock, Asger Jorn, and many other modernists.

As elaborate formal experimentation was activating French modernist painting, an aesthetic based on purity and simplicity – seeking to retain nothing but the most essential elements of its medium – was crystallizing in a Dutch modern movement. This avant-garde formulation, inaugurated in 1917 as *De Stijl* and founded by Piet Mondrian, privileged abstraction and visual isolation, the restraint of vertical and horizontal lines. Mondrian's oeuvre follows a fairly unwavering trajectory from Dutch art through pointilism and cubism, methodically eliminating all but primary colors from his paintings, producing an architecture of vertical and horizontal lines, arranged in such asymmetrical ways as to cause the painting to shimmer. Even the line is freed from its role in defining figure or representation and given an abstract role in his work. This breakthrough to abstraction reduces the painting to what Mondrian believed was the essence of the medium – primary colors and formal relationships between abstract geometrical parts. Mondrian attributed immense political and spiritual meaning to his clarifying methods. As Jed Rasula describes it: "Mondrian, a theosophist, was familiar with thought-form illustrations and a broader tendency to depict spiritual apprehensions by means of pictorial abstraction. His paintings were devotional inducements to equilibrium."[12] His essays and journal *De Stijl*, along with the underlying solidarity of the *De Stijl* movement, sought to proclaim this message. Mondrian's most prominent essay, "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art," acknowledges the various genealogies of modernist art: "Figurative art of today is the outcome of figurative art of the past, and nonfigurative art is the outcome of the figurative art of today."[13]

As such, the avant-gardes differed from the (mere) modernists in the larger role they assigned to art. The avant-gardes wished to turn the work of art into an instrument as well as an icon of revolutionary change, launching a frontal assault on the institutions of art and the ideologies of bourgeois life, and offering a signpost – almost a prophecy – that would lead the way, in the manner of an exemplar, to the radical perfectibility of society. Constructivism, futurism, and the Bauhaus – and other animating avant-garde movements of the period – wished to assign their artistic or architectural experimentation a utopian political role, a future-directed movement that responded to the era's sweeping revolutions: hence the importance of the role of theory and the manifesto. For a visual object is by itself more or less incapable of standing as an icon for the utopian future, a signpost for radical

historical change, if not for the words backing it up and lending it a didactic historical message. For the avant-gardes – and especially Mondrian – the visual work should educate its public, raise its consciousness, sharpen its capacities for perception and reflection, and solicit from its members a new understanding of the world history they face in their own present tense. Here is where the avant-gardes depart from modernism: by incorporating their visual experimentalism into a larger, far more explicit political vision of art. Picasso never believed an artwork could or should carry that historical weight – though he briefly flirted with surrealism (which did believe as much) around 1930. With faith in transcendence, Mondrian saw his work as engagement and experimentation in the purification of the medium through abstraction. In doing so, Mondrian was both a modernist and a member of the avant-gardes.[14]

Mondrian caught the attention of the prominent American art and cultural critic Clement Greenberg, doyen of postwar abstract expressionism. Greenberg stood for the great shift of the modern art world to New York City. For Greenberg, writing from the 1930s through the 1960s, modernist painting had made the long voyage from Monet to Picasso to Mondrian and to Jackson Pollock, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still, and Hans Hofmann (Greenberg's favored artists) to eliminate representation (figure, scene, situation), ornament, and depth, until painting expressed only what was essential to its medium: flatness and the delimitation of flatness, or what he called the purely optical.[15] Abstract painting succeeded insofar as it attended exclusively to the immediate, to the physical reality of the canvas. As a formalist critic, Greenberg believed that art's hermetic turn toward abstraction was a way of preserving aesthetic standards and integrity in a commodified, instrumentalist world; the bleak alternative was kitsch and its blind adherence to the rules and principles of the nineteenth-century art of academic institutions. With characteristic bluntness, Greenberg pronounced in his famous essay "Avant-Garde and Kitsch": "Self-evidently, all kitsch is academic; and conversely, all that's academic is kitsch."[16] A brilliant art critic and friend of Pollock, Hofmann, and the New York school, Greenberg accrued the kind of critical gravitas that could make or break artistic careers, and he pushed artists to conform to his theories of what they were "really doing" even if they hadn't quite articulated their artistic aims. What this constellation of artists was really doing was delimiting the basic terms of their medium, meticulously attending to process and often producing monumental works with grand gestures and muscular effort. Nonetheless the question remains as to whether Greenberg's views are adequate to the subtle balance between

lyricism and anarchy one finds, say, in a Pollock painting, with its violent search for the transcendent and its deep link to the body. Pollock painted on the floor of his barn, engaging his entire body in the swirling of brush strokes, rubbing the canvas with rags, dripping paint onto it, smearing hand marks, and dropping cigarette ash onto it. The Pollock canvas doubly exists as a cipher for his bodily gestures and as a beautiful, independent thing, complete in itself. An alternative way of understanding Greenberg's claim is that while Pollock's gestures are in no way reducible to the demonstration of flatness and its delimitation, he nevertheless worked within (and only within) those parameters, however creatively.

The writing and critical role of Greenberg produced a new status system: the prestige and authority assigned to the critic and to his/her *theories* of modernism within the art world. The emergence and reception of the critic was a consequence of the formal challenges of modernist art. Beyond an expository function, these theories propose that modernist art is guided by a single mission or purpose (such as Greenberg's abstraction/purification of the medium): a distinct process of aesthetic and historical unfolding. Perhaps the most significant theorist of modernism of this kind was the philosopher and critic Arthur Danto, who argued that the purpose of modernism was to discover and demonstrate the essence of art as such, to reveal what makes a work of art art and not another thing. With the bravado of a brilliant modernist, Danto believed he had discovered the final act in this historical drama at a West 58th Street gallery, the Stable Gallery run by Eleanor Ward, in 1964, where, as a young philosopher and woodcut artist, he attended an exhibition of oversized Brillo Boxes by Andy Warhol. Offered in play as a way of blurring the distinction between industrial and fine art, Warhol's boxes became revelations of the conditions that turn ordinary, real things into works of art. These conditions could not be anything visual, as the Brillo Box in the supermarket was (more or less) visually identical to the one in the gallery, but only one was fine art.

The man in dark glasses and a wig, a former advertising artist from Pittsburgh, had hit on, with Danto's prompting, Leibniz's problem of indiscernibility: that what makes two virtually identical things different in kind has to be something hidden and abstract. That something, Danto argued in his persuasive essay "The Artworld" in the *Journal of Philosophy* in 1964 (in which he conceived the term "artworld"), could only be a background of shared theory: a set of concepts constructing terms for the box in the gallery to "make a statement" to the art world. Warhol could press the limits of the art world (with a supermarket box) and get away with it only because these

concepts – at a moment of performance art, abstraction, and pop – were firmly in place. Not that Warhol's gesture was without controversy or provocation. Many took Warhol's antics to be the attention-grabbing of a drugged-out denizen of the Velvet Underground. But the very fact of controversy proved (to Danto) that the opposing artistic efforts imbricated and explicated each other, that deeply contrary artistic concepts had mutual purpose – as his closing lines of "The Artworld" propose:

> What in the end makes the difference between a Brillo box and a work of art consisting of a Brillo box is a certain theory of art. It is the theory that takes it up into the world of art, and keeps it from collapsing into the real object which it is ... [Warhol's Brillo box] could not have been art fifty years ago ... The world has to be ready for certain things, the artworld no less than the real one. It is the role of artistic theories, these days as always, to make the artworld, and art, possible.[17]

For Danto, artistic modernism met its reductio ad absurdum with Warhol's unapologetic act of self-revelation. It was, as he provocatively declared, "the end of art." At this point, for him, modernist art turned into the philosophy of art – indeed, into Danto's own writing. Art practice was thereby freed from the constraints of a strict modernist mission.[18] This newly found freedom to make whatever one wished – unfettered from the burden of modernist aims – is what Danto called postmodernism.

What Danto's work proclaims first and foremost is how theoretical the culture of modernism had become. At this extremity, a critic like Greenberg or a philosopher/artist like Danto could claim to be exposing the underlying "statement" that the modernist work of art was making. For Greenberg, that statement was about the medium: flatness and the delimitation of flatness. For Danto, it was about the definition of (all) art as such. These critics could only have taken on such distinction within the art world because the modernist experiment called for translation into comprehensible terms for the public and had been doing so since the days of impressionism and the Paris avant-garde movements. This ascendency of writing, criticism, and theory also took form as a transaction in the art world between artist and public and had a significant role for art valuation and marketing. Increasingly, the right critic could make the fortune of the right painter, sculptor, or installation artist, just by proclaiming his or her importance or significance. This was a tendency Danto parodied – perhaps in a kind of self-parody – while serving as art critic for *The Nation* from 1984 to 2009: he bemoaned the new high seriousness of the painting of the time, whose point seemed to be to make a work of art *seem* important even while it might have offered no

message at all other than size, a lot of scratching on the surface, and a deep title taken from the Second World War.

Modernism in the visual arts was just as much a global adventure as it was in the literary and musical arts. The Mexican muralist and painter Diego Rivera arrived in Europe in 1907 and remained until 1920, living mostly in Montparnasse, where he absorbed post-impressionism and cubism. In 1921, he returned to Mexico, where he became involved in the Mexican state-driven mural program. For the next thirty years, he covered the walls of palaces, schools, and other public buildings with murals, mostly in fresco, working in Mexico City, Texcoco, Cuernavaca, Detroit, and New York. The murals he painted in the Palacio Nacional depict the Mexican Revolution of 1910–20 in bold colors, simplified forms, and pre-Columbian/Aztec figures and scenes. In these densely packed monumental works, Rivera fuses the violent tumult of the Mexican Revolution with the intensities of the Mexican past, its rituals of blood and sacrifice, dance and war. History becomes, in his murals, a tableau of power and conquest, a grafting of the violent energies of the past onto the revolutionary struggle that produced the Mexican nation – which was little more than a decade old upon his return from Europe. In these murals, with their pre-Columbian physiognomy, iconography, and color, the artistic forms of the past become a mythologized origin of a long arc of Mexican power and struggle, lending the revolution an extensive temporal lineage. At the moment of the then-new Mexican nation, Rivera monumentalizes its claims of sovereignty, independence, and emancipation by causing them to emerge through the unique colors and forms of the past. For Rivera, pre-Columbian times presage the inexorable if also shattering drive of Mexico toward its revolutionary/national future.

Beyond the European and American compass of this essay, where the "painter of modern life" came in the form of an impressionist captivated by shifts of light and the evanescent moment, the past took on a different value. For the modernist artist outside of Europe and the United States, where history included experiences deeply embroiled in nationalism and decolonization, the present and past took on a different meaning, offering the ground for vigorous claims to independence, sovereignty, and a new or incipient nation. The key for a postcolonial modernist was to retrieve the culture of the past, which became in his or her mythic imagination a source for the new nation, as if it had arisen from the long river of this past. How to mythologize the past by fusing it with materials taken over from Western modernism (what Rivera learned in Paris), not to mention localize it in colors, shapes, and narratives, became the stylistic project of postcolonial modernism, and

9.3 Revolutionary modernism: Rivera, mural in the Palacio Nacional.

the source of its innovation. In creating a past for the nation and fusing it with the materials of a modernist present, Rivera was in effect providing modes of belonging (through the image of a shared, originating past) for new citizens. Ways of feeling the nation came from their souls, their inner lives, their "shared" history. Modern art became a way of creating a new heritage for the new nation, fused with its dynamic thrust of modernity.

Frida Kahlo, a painter of passion and talent equal to those of her husband, Diego Rivera, was a proto-feminist, then a renowned artist, and finally a celebrity and object of cult adoration. Though Kahlo's intimate and lacerating self-portraits left an indelible mark on modernist art, her status as an icon has meant that her significant contributions and deeply personal aesthetic style have received far less attention than those of her husband Rivera, whose grand, public, politically charged murals demand attention in ways that Kahlo's small self-portraits had no desire to do. In spite of visiting France and finding inspiration in modernist art circles (primary among them surrealism) and more traditional institutions – indeed, the Louvre's 1939 purchase of Kahlo's self-portrait "The Frame" made her the first Mexican artist to join the museum's prestigious collection – Kahlo and Rivera were artists of Mexico. While Kahlo was more concerned with her extensive physical suffering, she also challenged the oppressive conditions of women's everyday lives in Mexico. Rivera, as his ambitious murals announce, was committed to portraying the social and political upheaval of the Mexican Revolution. Kahlo and Rivera were modernists but they were also decidedly Mexican modernists. And just as they traveled to meet European modernists, members of the avant-garde were drawn to the force of the Mexican Revolution that captivated Rivera and served as an enduring subject. Modernist artists across media – Tina Modotti, Antonin Artaud, Sergei Eisenstein, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa – were enticed by Mexico's transformational historical moment but experienced wildly different degrees of gratification from the revolution's ideological purposes and implications. Artists such as Rivera, as well as the two other famous muralists David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco and many other Mexican artists, were participating above all in a native modernism. Between 1910 and 1940, "an extraordinarily rich and original visual culture emerged, a Mexican modernism that was as distinct as the energy it drew on: carnivalesque, savage, folkloristic, macabre. Above all, it was independent, rejecting external influences and turning inward to retrieve something from the chaos."[19] When *Los tres grandes*, The Big Three – Rivera, Siqueiros, and Orozco – accepted a public commission under the purview of Roosevelt's four-part New Deal art program, they

joined Jackson Pollock, who was at work in the Works Progress Administration's mural division.[20]

Much of the modern art that arose outside of Europe and America did so in the absence of robustly indigenous local art worlds or art markets. The kind of culture in which Manet lived and worked – and without which his project of critique would make no sense – was rudimentary in the early days of modern art in places like India, Mexico, or South Africa. By the same token, the modern artist in these locales was free to experiment away from the burden of critics, museums, and the fetish of commodities, but this absent apparatus also meant that such artists often had to depend on the first world (the capitals of Europe and America) for exhibition, circulation, and sales. And therein may be the rub. Neocolonial attitudes have often meant that modernist innovation outside of Europe and America has gone unacknowledged by the cosmopolitan art centers of Europe and America (Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo offering a notable exception). This neocolonial attitude is grounded in the assumption that the formerly colonized person (from India, South Africa, etc.), now a modern artist, can only have learned modernity at the feet of the European, and thus remains incapable of genuine innovation. Neocolonial ideology has also subscribed to the belief that the colonial subject is incapable of mastering European modernity except in the form of mimicry – leaving the only culture capable of achieving modernity the European/American one. This line of thought led to an epistemological fault. As soon as signs of difference were detected in a modern painting, sculpture, or mural coming from outside Europe, the artist was immediately assumed to be "speaking European modernism badly," that is, following the lead of Euro-American modernism without being capable of mastering the logic of those compositions. For it had been decided in advance that the modern artist outside of Europe and America could not have his or her own route into modernity or, indeed, generate her or his alternative modernity.

This neocolonial attitude toward the global project of modern art only really began to subside in the European and American art capitals at the moment of economic globalization in the 1980s. For example, as soon as India began to have some affluent populations and the Indian art market began to develop, with robust collectors (some living abroad, in America or the UK), critics, museums, and the like, the art began to be taken seriously. The modern art of China, Australia, and other places followed a similar narrative. This decentering of the art world, given the growth of art markets across continents, proved crucial to the lifting of the neocolonial sanction.

And so the growth of art markets across the globe remains fundamental in the normalizing of world modern art.

Diffusion (the route of Rivera) was not the only path to modernism outside of Europe and America. Indigenous traditions in Africa, Australia, the Middle East, and Asia make contact in their own ways and on their own terms with modern life and its anxieties, and in a few examples did so without learning from the modern art of Europe at all. These traditions present the theorist with alternative forms of modernity, alternative ways of thinking about modern art, which must either expand the concept of modern art or recast it in some other way.[21] As Ralph Crozier explains, the very word "modernism" has inextricable Western connotations. Though native modernisms occurred in Japan, India, and China, some of these movements developed in response to exposure to circulating European avant-garde exhibitions.[22] But global modernism's entry into the "art world" in some instances met with formidable obstacles. It simply did not have the market demand of its European counterparts; traditions of form and medium died hard ("academic and realistic Western-style art" as well as national and regional methods and styles), and state-sponsored political control over artistic production meant no support, interest, or collectors for innovation.[23] But much of this narrowness has reversed in the last twenty years. And so the capitals of Europe and America indeed play a fundamental role in the story of modernism, in its unfolding and articulation, but not at the expense of the creative thrust of modern art and its reinvention elsewhere, across the globe. The story of modernism is a story wanting constant reinvention.

Notes

1 Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999).

2 Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World*, 2nd edn. (University of Chicago Press, 1993), 2.

3 Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 34.

4 White and White, *Canvases and Careers*, 150.

5 Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Phaidon, 1964), 12–13.

6 Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991).

7 Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture* (University of Chicago Press, 1986). See especially chaps. 1 and 2, "Profond Aujourd'hui" and "The Invention of Collage."

8 Patrician Leighten, "The White Peril and *L'Art negre*: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism," *Art Bulletin*, 72/4 (1990), 609–30 (at 610).

9 Leo Steinberg, "The Philosophical Brothel," *October*, 44 (Spring 1988), 7–74. Steinberg wrote this piece, originally published as an essay in *October* and then as a monograph, as an alternative to the formalist readings of Picasso that had dominated the critical literature, and which understood his experiments purely as ways of re-establishing solidity and dimension in painting in new terms. For Steinberg the point is that those experiments are deeply connected to Picasso's desire to infuse the canvas with erotic charge and primitivist power.

10 John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, vol. 1: *The Prodigy, 1881–1906* (New York: Random House, 1991).

11 Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995). See especially chaps. 1, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 2, "Compulsive Beauty," and 3, "Compulsive Identity."

12 Jed Rasula, *History of a Shiver: The Sublime Impudence of Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 214.

13 Piet Mondrian, "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art," in Robert L. Herbert (ed.), *Modern Artists on Art*, 2nd edn. (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2000), 151–65 (at 153).

14 See Daniel Herwitz, *Making Theory/Constructing Art: On the Authority of the Avant-Gardes* (University of Chicago Press, 1993), esp. chap. 4, "Mondrian's Plato."

15 Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973).

16 Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1989), 11.

17 Arthur Danto, "The Art World," *Journal of Philosophy*, 61/19 (1964), 571–84 (at 581).

18 See Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

19 Frances Stonor Saunders, "Mexican Modernism and the Politics of Painting," *Guardian*, June 19, 2013, www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jun/29/mexican-modernism-politics-paint-rivera.

20 Ibid.

21 See Daniel Herwitz, *Heritage, Culture and Politics in the Postcolony* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), chap. 3, "Sustaining Heritage Off the Road to Kruger Park."

22 Ralph Crozier, "Modernism(s) and Global Modernity(ies): What Can Modern Art Offer to Global History?", *Journal of Global History*, 9/1 (March 2014), 162–67.

23 Ibid., 165.

Architectures and Public Spaces
of Modernism

MILES GLENDINNING

The architecture of modernism differed markedly from its art or literature in that it lacked clarity of definition. The boundaries that marked it off from the "non-modernist" were far less sharp, and the rupture from what went before and came after was much less dramatic. This difference stemmed partly from the basic nature of architecture, within which "artistic" factors have always been intrinsically tied into considerations of the "practical" (as exemplified by Vitruvius's threefold definition of architecture as *firmitas*, *utilitas*, *venustas*, or solidity, usefulness, and beauty). Moreover, construction requires huge investments of money and complex networks of relationships with external agencies not concerned at all with "art." Architecture has always, by its very nature, been dominated by the "ruling power": a truly "avant-garde architecture" is a contradiction in terms. As a result, to talk of architecture in the stereotypically modernist artistic language of "pure form" or defiant "ruptures" and manifestos is virtually impossible: although "paper projects" could often exert considerable influence, those that were built were infinitely more important. All modernist architecture was in some way interwoven with the practical, mundane world of building organization and construction, often on a very large scale, and many of the ideological tensions and excitements within modern architecture were actually concerned with interpretations or theories of "the practical."

Chronologically, too, any idea of a sharp definition of modernism in architecture is challenged by the long roots of modernism, which stretch back into the nineteenth, if not the eighteenth, century. This history is dominated by evolutionary rather than revolutionary approaches. In their conscious relation to the past, even those modernist designers and writers who did deploy a rhetoric of sharp rupture and rejection often combined this radicalism with far more conservatively built realizations in practice. In the nineteenth-century architecture of France, a strong emphasis on modern rationalism was combined with the pleas of Viollet-le-Duc to escape eclectic

historicism and return to "regional building" – a trend echoed in the "vernacular" concepts of the English Gothic Revival and Arts and Crafts Movement, which represent a combination of modernity with medievalism and love of conservation.[1] From these deep roots, there evolved, above all, a modernity not of rupture and gesture but of technical prowess founded in "tradition." This combination was certainly exemplified in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French architecture, where the Beaux-Arts tradition of classical rationalism formed the base for a variety of developments of restrained modernity, which ranged from the radical city replanning projects of Haussmann in Paris to the remarkable developments of cast-iron architecture. But in the United States, too, bold constructional, architectural, and city-planning innovations, such as the metal-framed skyscraper building, also sprang organically from the classical Beaux-Arts tradition.[2]

The emergence of the modern "artist-architect," too, was a trend thoroughly anchored in the foundation of nineteenth-century architecture. From this background there emerged a new concept of the architect as a prophet-visionary of modern social, moral, and architectural salvation, uniquely able to synthesize scientific and artistic "progress," and to point the way toward a new, all-embracing order in reaction against the supposedly tasteless chaos of nineteenth-century laissez-faire capitalism and historicist architecture. Unsurprisingly, some of the earliest pioneers of this approach sprang from the precociously modernizing society and economy of Victorian Britain, where the architects of the Gothic Revival, led initially by A.W.N. Pugin, and reinforced by the writings of Ruskin and Carlyle, pioneered a new, individualistic self-projection of architectural style and moral rhetoric.[3] Their Arts and Crafts successors, notably William Morris and William Lethaby, integrated this rhetoric into *Gesamtkunstwerk* visions of social-artistic reform, especially in the fields of domestic architecture and interior decoration. This framework was taken up and powerfully developed in America, where the school of H.H. Richardson developed a monumental neo-Romanesque style, and where Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright theatrically projected themselves as iconic visionaries of new-world artistic-cultural renewal.[4] And it was equally appropriated in Wilhelmine Germany and in Austria, where the idealistic intensity of K.F. Schinkel and romanticism evolved into more thoroughgoing concepts of a "crisis of culture" (highlighted in the writings of Adolf Loos) and a polemical opposition to both traditional eclecticism and "modern" decorative styles such as art nouveau.[5]

None of this activity, it should be emphasized, remotely matched the avant-garde extremism and, even, anarchism of avant-garde artists (such as,

later, Duchamp and the Dada artists). As we will see shortly in the work of Walter Gropius or Le Corbusier, architectural visions of salvation were always intrinsically bedded into concepts of social progress, of dashing individualism in the service of society. As Le Corbusier famously argued in *Vers une architecture* (1923), modernist architects and planners saw their work, not as a part of revolution, but, if anything, as a defence *against* revolution.[6]

That insistent fascination with the "practical" was seen not least in architects' own evolving artistic visions, especially in the formative shift in 1890s Germany away from the "historicist" concept of architecture as a matter of facades and ornament. Interest moved toward more abstractly "empathetic," "feeling"-driven ideas of artistic "form" and "space." This trend first emerged in the writings of art historians such as Wölfflin, Riegl, and Schmarsow, and its first architectural outcomes were not abstract modernism of any sort but a monumental baroque classicism with strong nationalistic overtones.[7] After the turn of the century, the concept and rhetoric of an architecture of "form" and "feeling" was rapidly taken up by proto-modernist architects, such as Henry van de Velde and Walter Gropius, who put forward the totalizing vision of a fragmented world brought back together by artistic wholeness. However, their visions were not just about art and aesthetics. No less than the Beaux-Arts architects and writers in France or the United States, they always retained a fundamental concern for the reform of society through architecture as a "practical art."

Across Europe and America, a wide range of permutations of these elements flourished. Some of these variations emphasized mainly the "artistic," while others stressed "rational" and "scientific" paradigms; others attempted to reconcile the two. The turn-of-century movements of extreme artistic renewal went under a variety of international names, including art nouveau, Secession, and *Jugendstil*. Initially, at any rate, they all generally shared a preoccupation with "organic" or "symbolic" forms, but differed in detail and in their geographical location. The art nouveau designers based in France and Belgium, such as Victor Horta, Hector Guimard, and van de Velde, emphasized flowing, natural forms, especially in internal decoration – as did the early work of C.R. Mackintosh in Scotland.[8] In the cases of Horta and Guimard, there was considerable structural experimentation and internal use of iron, developing the ideas of Viollet and de Baudot in projects such as Horta's Maison du Peuple (1897–1900) or Guimard's Paris Metro station entrances (from 1899). In Barcelona, by contrast, the "Modernisme" grouping, led by Antoni Gaudí, pioneered a powerful, Ruskin-influenced fusion of exotic modernity and local Catalan tradition in a range of urban

interventions, including urban apartment blocks as well as landscape *Gesamt-kunstwerk* compositions (especially the Park Güell, from 1893).[9] Within these groupings, the early 1900s witnessed a marked shift from organic to rectilinear forms – for example, in the later works of C.R. Mackintosh. In Vienna, the grouping led by Otto Wagner from the 1890s (the Wagnerschule) shifted from a combination of rationalism and romantic sensuousness to a more rectilinear style from around 1905, led by architects such as Peter Behrens and Josef Hoffmann.[10]

Elsewhere, the organic extremism of art nouveau or *Jugendstil* was reflected in more restrained formulae of early modernism. These developments exploited structural innovations in a less flamboyant manner – for example, in the variations of the Beaux-Arts structural tradition by Auguste Perret, a concrete structural engineer and contractor, in a succession of projects from 1897 onward. These designs included the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées (1911–13) and the towered Le Raincy church of 1922–24, and their skeleton-dominated approach became entrenched for many years in France.[11] In Chicago, the new structural techniques of skyscraper steel-framing were powerfully integrated with idiosyncratic naturalist ornamentation in the 1890s projects of Adler & Sullivan, notably in the Guaranty Building (Buffalo), or more restrainedly and horizontally, in the "Prairie Houses" of Frank Lloyd Wright.[12] And in the Netherlands, the work of Berlage and Cuypers developed Viollet's concepts of structural expression in a more restrained manner, notably in Berlage's project for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange (won in competition in 1883 but built after many revisions from 1897–1903). In a range of housing and planning schemes after the First World War, the "Berlage school" would mutate into a more full-bloodedly artistic, individualistic strain (as in the projects of Michel de Klerk or the Amsterdam school or the journal *Wendingen*). Along these lines, a grouping concerned chiefly with rational town planning, exemplified in Berlage's plan for Amsterdam-Zuid, was first conceived on picturesque Sitte-like principles in 1901 but revised in 1915 along more axial, even "classical" lines.[13]

But it was above all in Germany that the most complex and variegated responses emerged to the turn-of-century challenge of modernity. These responses fused the new artistic ideals of space and form with concepts of rational social and technological modernization. Here, the years after 1900 saw a veritable explosion of efforts, which were doubtless influenced by Loos's attacks in Austria against the "decorative" approach of the Secessionists. He is most famous for his 1908 essay "Ornament and Crime," but his importance shows also in his built works, many (ironically) luxurious shops

or private houses, which pioneered the ideas of "essential" form and "factual," "ornament-free" architecture.[14] Within Germany, the shift away from *Jugendstil* decoration was seen, for example, in the work of Behrens, who shifted from an ethos of mystic ritual to a Riegl-influenced monumentality (as in his essay "Monumental Art" of 1908), and, in his work from 1907 as company architect for the firm of AEG, he engaged these ideas with the high-technology world of electric machinery.[15]

It was the ever-increasing concern of modern German architects such as Behrens, Walter Gropius, or Hermann Muthesius to fuse the "artistic" and the "scientific-industrial." This aspiration culminated in the founding of the Deutsche Werkbund in 1907 (by Muthesius and two others). Its work was influenced, partly, by the geopolitical expansionism of 1890s–1910s Wilhelmine Germany, with its drive to produce "high quality" manufactured goods; and partly by rationalistic ideals of machine production, standardized "Typisierung" and their application to social problems – as seen, for example, in Gropius's influential 1910 text on the prefabricated construction of housing. Within the Werkbund, the tension between "rational" and "poetic" approaches sharpened into an open confrontation between two factions, which were headed respectively by Muthesius and van de Velde. This disagreement rose to a climax at the 1914 Werkbund exhibition, which featured wildly contrasting pavilions, including a "model factory" by Gropius and Meyer and a glass "expressionist" pavilion by Bruno Taut. Rejecting van de Velde's expressive, billowing forms, Gropius, Hoffmann, and Muthesius were now shifting to an orderly modern classicism and helping to integrate architecture and modern industrial product design.[16]

This conflict, or creative tension, continued after the First World War, in the tension between increasingly ambitious visions of rational modernity and increasingly fantastic visions of expressionistic art. A succession of collective or collegiate organizations emerged in pursuit of these divergent ideals. The foundation of the Arbeitsrat für Kunst in 1918 by Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius, and others was followed the next year (1919) by the establishment of the Bauhaus. This new school, envisaged as an institutional focus for modern design studies, was initially directed by the mystical dreamer Johannes van Itten, but after his resignation and replacement by Gropius in 1922, the latter steered the Bauhaus strongly in a rationalist direction, focusing on areas such as housing and fittings design.[17] Among some other modernist German architects, however, the early postwar years saw a trend in the other direction, toward furious experiments in poetic, expressionistic design, with overtones of visionary utopianism. Behrens, for example, had

become disillusioned with the classicism of industrial power, and his IG Farben headquarters at Höchst in 1920–24 turned to an intensively individual, faceted brick expression. Hans Poelzig's stalactite-like 1919 renovation of the Grosses Schauspielhaus in Berlin, and Hugo Häring's Gut Garkau farm complex (from 1924), shared an "organic," anti-rectilinear approach.[18]

Ultimately, this "poetic" postwar modernism was simplified and commercialized into a "streamlined" modernism. This development was exemplified in the shift in Erich Mendelsohn's work from the utopian daring of the Potsdam Observation Pavilion of 1917–21 to the wrap-round window bands of his 1920s department stores.[19] Indeed, for the European and American population at large, "modern design" was chiefly associated with the style-led, often spectacular formulae now generally known, together, as "art deco." This influence comprises a wide variety of permutations, however, ranging from the refined *Gesamtkunstwerk* of highly crafted materials and objects at the 1925 Paris Decorative Arts expo to the "iconic" styling of US skyscrapers or of ocean liners.[20]

But while the "fantasy" element of early interwar expressionism was burning itself out or popularizing itself into "streamline" art deco, the advocates of "rational" modernity were busy at work. They were expanding their horizons and ambitions in a voracious exploitation of the vast scope opened up by the exponential increases in state "planning" and social provision since 1917 – in some places through violent revolution, as in Russia, and in others through evolutionary socialism, as in Western Europe. As always, much of the groundwork for this had been laid at the turn of the century or earlier, in the explosion of interest in modern town planning and urban reform. This concern had begun with the upsurge in housing reform in late nineteenth-century Britain, including the early municipal housing of the London County Council and the pioneering of the garden-city concept in 1898 by Ebenezer Howard; to these initiatives the United States had added the new technology of the highly serviced multistory apartment block. The German-speaking world had contributed the rationalism of city-extension zoning and the street-picture artistry of Camillo Sitte, targeted against the right-angled block-planning of Haussmann in Paris or Hobrecht in Berlin. By 1904, in the Cité Industrielle project by Tony Garnier, these ideas had begun to coalesce into an integrated vision of a completely new, functionally planned, socialist city.[21]

But the full architectural realization of these ideas on any scale had to await the recovery after 1918, and especially after 1923, when a loose grouping dedicated to modern rationalism and styling itself the "New Objectivity"

(*Neue Sachlichkeit*) emerged in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The concept of "Sachlichkeit" had been originally conceived by Hermann Muthesius in the 1890s. It conveyed the ideal of an organic or "functionalist" link between architectural style and purpose, which would be guaranteed by intense dedication to scientific research and progress.[22] In the reformist 1920s, the idea suddenly became omnipresent, and, often, explicitly socialist. For example, in 1925, the "ABC" group was formed by Stam, Lissitzky, and Hannes Meyer as a hotbed of rationalist experimentation in planning, science, and lightweight housing technology. Its researches then became bound up with the Weimar government's crash housing-drive to build one million subsidized dwellings in 1927–31. This strategy was fronted by the 15,000-house program of Frankfurt housing chief Ernst May (1925–30), for which G. Schütte-Lihotzky designed a "Frankfurt kitchen" in 1926. On a smaller scale, Otto Haesler designed a series of modernist housing projects in Celle and Karlsruhe in 1924–31, and around 1926 Gropius and the Bauhaus became involved in a range of housing projects in Berlin, Dessau, and so forth. After 1928, the Bauhaus contributed strongly to this pursuit of "artistic-scientific" housing design under its new director (until 1933), Hannes Meyer; its new buildings in Dessau (1925–26), with their white walls and vast windows, became a set-piece of the new modernism, as was the Weissen-hofsiedlung in Stuttgart (1927) – a renowned modernist "housing zoo."[23]

The new spirit of social progress in the built environment was not, however, expressed everywhere in this white-walled style. In Vienna, the famous socialist housing program of the city council took a very different architectural and planning shape, emphasizing dense courtyard-plan developments, while the Hamburg architectural-planning regime of city architect Fritz Schumacher clad its highly coordinated replanning programs in a brick modernist style with expressionist overtones.[24] Similar programs in the Netherlands were variously expressed through the highly mannerist brick "Amsterdam school" and the flat-roofed international modernism of Oud's work in Rotterdam.[25]

The scope of "objectivity" widened far more after 1928, when a more ambitious network of modernists, the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM), was founded in an attempt to draw together as many strands of the modern movement as possible. Dominated for its first five years by *Neue Sachlichkeit* architects, its founding declaration (the Le Sarraz Declaration, 1928, signed by twenty-four architects) identified "building" rather than "architecture" as the proper object of its efforts, and demanded a planned economy and collectivized industry. And in the Athens Charter of

10.1 Aesthetic of density: Karl Marx-Hof, Vienna, designed by Karl Ehn, 1927–30.

1933, CIAM set out the archetypal formula of the planned modern city, with high office and apartment blocks set in swathes of greenery.[26]

As with all modernism, however, the opposite "pole" of artistic style was also present. It shows in this case as an architecture of rectilinear, free-flowing walls, columns, and glass, as demonstrated for example in the 1929 Barcelona Exhibition Pavilion by Mies van der Rohe, or in the work of the De Stijl movement in the Netherlands. These initiatives were closely aligned with the abstract forms of painters such as Mondrian and van Doesburg and exemplified in G. Rietveld's Schröder house in Utrecht, with its centrifugal, dissolving pattern of slabs and cubes.[27]

During the 1920s, modernist architectural ideas were adapted rapidly to the two outer extremes of the socialism–capitalism spectrum. In the USSR, the years of flux prior to the consolidation of Stalinism allowed the flourishing of one of the most extreme utopian variants of modernism. This was the constructivist movement, which began with such agit-prop set-pieces as Tatlin's Third International Monument project of 1919–20, or the wild social experimentation of architects such as Leonidov under the aegis of the OSA Association of Contemporary Architects in the late 1920s. These projects exceeded the scale even of the earlier futurist movement in Italy.[28] Inspired by these innovations, numerous European socialist architects migrated to the USSR to work on vast building projects – for example Ernst May, from 1930, working on the new city of Magnitogorsk – but they largely met with disillusionment, as the Stalinist system was rapidly moving from a paradigm emphasizing modernist experimentation to one of classical stateliness.[29] At the other, capitalistic extreme, the work of Frank Lloyd Wright in the United States showed an increasing concern for city and regional planning, which was based around the consumerist idea of dispersed, car-mobile suburbia – as in the "Usonian" house project of 1936–38 or his earlier (from 1932 onward) "Broadacre City" concept. Somewhere between were European countries such as Sweden, where the late 1930s laid the foundations for its later emergence as a paradigm of social democratic energy in the built-environment; or England, where post-1933 European émigré designers helped launch a growing movement of social activism in modern architecture and planning, led by bodies such as Modern Architectural Research, the Association for Planning and Regional Reconstruction, or the Architectural Association.[30] As modernist architecture faded from view in countries such as Germany, Austria, and Spain, these new hotbeds took their place.

Almost all of these tendencies – restrained artistic individualism, utopian rhetoric of social salvation, and scientific rationalism – were drawn together

in the work of Le Corbusier, whose entire career was, in a sense, dedicated to advocacy of a bridge between art and science, architecture and engineering. Brought up in Protestant French Switzerland and trained by Perret, Corbusier's first works still subscribed to a generally Beaux-Arts architectural ethos, but early on he began to show his interest in the idea of "industrially produced" housing, in the skeletal Maison Domino project of 1915 and the Citrohan house of 1920. Developing an architectural-artistic world outlook of "purism," which was influenced by the ideas of Loos, he began in the 1920s a two-strand career. On one hand, he developed his formal credentials in villas and other elite projects, while, on the other, he published a succession of manifestos and tracts on urban and social reform, influenced by the speculations of Garnier. Like Wright, Corbusier advocated an open-planned city of greenery; it would be populated not with low structures but with high towers rising above continuously flowing ground floor space. This is a concept he developed progressively in his Ville Contemporaine of 1922, his Plan Voisin of 1925, and his Ville Radieuse of 1931, but this vision of towers and greenery remained on paper in the interwar period, other than in isolated complexes such as Alvar Aalto's Paimio Sanatorium of 1929–32. Unsurprisingly, Corbusier became deeply involved in the city-planning initiatives of CIAM, and in contacts with the *Neue Sachlichkeit* and Russian experiments. Indeed, he was the principal author of CIAM's 1933 Charter of Athens, but as the 1930s proceeded, his work also increasingly pointed toward a growing reaction against machine utilitarianism and toward a more sensuous approach exploiting natural materials.[31]

Insofar as the twentieth century was a time of polarized political ideologies, pitting left versus right, "democracy" versus "totalitarianism," it was unsurprising that architecture reflected these extremes with polarizations and fluctuations of its own. These divisions encompassed not only the modern movement but also "traditional" architectures. At any time, it was seen by many commentators as axiomatic that each architectural style should correspond to a fairly precise political stance, but these associations were often turned on their heads within a few years. In the 1920s, for example, modern architecture was generally assumed to be socialist in character and "traditional classicism" to be more politically conservative, but Stalin's espousal of socialist realism from 1932 onward threw all of that into confusion, and by the 1950s, it could even be argued by some that international modernism was "capitalist" or "bourgeois" and monumental classicism "socialist."

But even within the totalitarian states, a considerable diversity of positions was possible. This variety was seen especially clearly in the case of Italy,

10.2 Socialist art-deco: Mayakovskaya Metro Station, Moscow, designed by Alexey Dushkin, 1938.

where the classical grandeur of Mussolini's "New Rome" coexisted with a vigorous school of modern rationalism, exemplified in the work of Gruppo 7 (founded 1926) or in set-pieces such as Terragni's Casa del Fascio, Como (1932). The "E42" (EUR) expo that would have crowned this movement was a striking synthesis of classical and modern elements.[32] In Germany and the USSR, conversely, there was a much sharper, more exaggerated shift away from modernism, as seen in the monumental reworking of the Olympic Stadium project in Berlin and in Mies's turn to classicism in his 1933 Reichsbank project, or in the sharp increase in influence of Paul Schultze-Naumburg's "Heimat" school.[33] Within the USSR, the inception of socialist realism led to a complete rejection of all avant-garde or constructivist theories as "bourgeois formalism," although the buildings actually constructed showed a more gradual shift. The possibilities ranged from the restrained art deco classicism of buildings such as the Lenin Library or the Gosplan building (both early to mid-1930s) to the sumptuous classical ornament of the VDNKh expo – a stance that continued in the 1950s, for example

in the fantastically ornate metro stations of the Circle Line (1952–54). This style would be repudiated forcefully in 1954–56 by Khrushchev, however, and values shifted consequently to a more "modern" approach in architecture and city planning.[34]

Within the "democratic West," many of the same trends were discernible, but in a more diffuse form. Sharp debates occurred between traditionalists and modernists over set-piece projects, as in the League of Nations head-quarters competition of 1927. After all the international modern efforts of the 1920s, the 1930s were dominated by a synthesis of monumental classicism and spectacular art deco modernity. This fusion was seen, for example, in the United States in skyscraper complexes such as the Rockefeller Center (1932–39), or in the 1939 New York World's Fair. The vast New Deal program (together with urban replanning initiatives such as those of Robert Moses in New York) ensured that this approach would also pervade the built fabric of the whole country in countless minor public social complexes – a breadth of coverage that "mainstream International Modernism" would only achieve in the reconstruction years after 1945.[35]

Among the leading international modern "pioneers," the 1930s saw a growing trend away from the smooth, sharp-edged, white aesthetic of the 1920s toward more "natural" or "vernacular" expressions. Prominent examples include Corbusier's shift toward rough-textured walling and even pitched roofs (e.g., the Errazuriz housing project of 1930), the spectacular natural setting of Wright's Fallingwater villa (1936), or the growing prominence of a "Nordic modernism" influenced by national romanticism. This last development is exemplified in Aalto's turn away from the white-walled sharpness of Paimio or Viipuri Library to the "organic" forms of his Finnish Pavilions at the 1937 Paris and 1939 New York World's Fairs, as in his Villa Mairea of 1938–39.[36]

During the Second World War and the late 1940s, the shift toward a more stately or "monumental" modernity gathered further momentum. This development shows in the publication by Giedion, Léger, and Sert of the "Nine Points on Monumentality" in 1943 and in such postwar set-pieces as the Perret concrete-classical rebuilding of Le Havre and Amiens, or the LCC/Robert Matthew design for the Royal Festival Hall in London (1948–51).[37] If modernist architecture differed from its counterparts elsewhere in "the arts" through its long roots in previous centuries, it also differed in the more gradual build-up of its significant realizations. And it was only in the post-1945 era that modern architecture was built on a really large scale, when it also spread significantly outside its European and North American

heartlands: only in 1956–63, for instance, with the building of the new capital city of Brasília, were the 1920s visions of Corbusier and the CIAM "pioneers" translated into gigantic reality. But the vast scale of these "concrete" realizations also guaranteed that, eventually, in the 1970s–1980s, there would follow a correspondingly violent reaction and rejection – as we will see at the end of this chapter.

In purely "architectural," "formal" terms, the early postwar years simply perpetuated and elaborated some of the key trends of the 1930s. At the "organic" end of the spectrum, Aalto continued to develop his informal "Nordic modernism" in projects such as Säynätsalo Town Hall (1949–52) or the Helsinki National Pensions Institute (1948–56), and Le Corbusier evolved his 1930s "monumental vernacular" into a new aesthetic of rough concrete massiveness, realized now on a grand scale in projects such as the Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles (1947–52) or the new city of Chandigarh (from 1951). At the "rationalist" end of the spectrum, the work of Mies, following his move to America, further developed his favored aesthetic of precise metal and glass rectilinearity, as at the Illinois Institute of Technology (from 1939), the Farnsworth House (1946–50), or the Lake Shore Apartments (1948–51) – an approach that in some ways presaged the "corporate modernism" of firms such as Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill (SOM).[38]

Arguably far more important than these stylistic trends, though, was the sheer scale of production of "modern architecture" that now ensued, in countries all over the world. In a way, this global scope produced a new kind of "modern vernacular," where a new kind of diversity stemmed not so much from formal "architectural schools" as from the wider cultural-political characteristics of the various regions of the developed and developing world, with their many sharp ideological splits. Here, again, the intrinsically close interrelationship between architecture and the "ruling power" in society was decisive.

Within Western Europe, the general spread of the social democratic welfare state spurred the emergence of a kaleidoscopic variety of approaches. The interrelated fields of mass housing and reconstruction planning formed the central battleground. The key opposition occurred between the protagonists of "design" and "production," who tussled incessantly over issues such as "open" versus "closed" prefabrication systems, high or low blocks, or urban redevelopment versus new-town "overspill." These struggles were epitomized in the clashes between public-authority designers and "producers" in London, and even between different factions of designers within the London County Council's renowned housing division. The difference is

10.3 Scandinavian informality: Gröndal housing development, Stockholm.

visible in the contrast between the two halves of the 1950s Roehampton development – the Alton East area, designed on picturesque Scandinavian lines by communist advocates of "people's detailing" (1950–55), and the rhetorical Corbusian concrete slabs of Alton West (1952–58), whose designers rejected the idea of "committed" socialist architecture.[39] This frenetic diversity also often resulted in a surprisingly sharp contrast between adjoining countries, such as the vast linear blocks of France's peripheral *grands ensembles*, the small-scale brick housing of Belgium, the Dutch arrays of balcony-access slabs, and the tall urban redevelopment towers of England.

In the Soviet-socialist "eastern" bloc, there was naturally an even greater confidence in the ability of the state to plan and provide equally for all. And here the totalitarian model of planned social provision enjoyed an apparently greater consensus of approach. Unanimity formed around the industrialized modernism embraced by Khrushchev and Brezhnev – a modernism of vast arrays of standardized precast concrete slabs (punctuated by towers from the 1960s), grounded both in the free-form planning of the interwar Corbusier-CIAM manifestos, as well as in the axial grandeur of Beaux-Arts classicism.

This vision was now reproduced on a vast scale, in "mikrorayons" from East Berlin to Khabarovsk.[40]

In the United States, by contrast, the postwar years saw the beginnings of a retrenchment from the nascent welfare state of the New Deal era, even as Western and Eastern Europe rushed to embrace state-led planning. It is worth bearing in mind in this regard that even some of the leaders of large-scale, coordinated public development in the United States, such as Robert Moses, always maintained a fierce opposition to anything smacking of socialism or even of "planning." Instead, the American contribution to the evolution of postwar modernism became chiefly concentrated in the arena of style and form. At first, this issue was hotly contested, not least in the clash between the "social" ideals of the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the style-led approach of the School of Architecture at Yale, but gradually the consensus shifted inexorably in the one direction, as programs such as public housing became increasingly stigmatized and residualized. A new generation of form-oriented American architects began to emerge, such as Richard Neutra (designer of refined private villas, such as the Kaufmann Desert House of 1946–47), Philip Johnson (whose Glass House of 1949 outdid Mies's machine aesthetic), Eero Saarinen (whose extravagant arched designs anticipated the "iconic" modernism of c. 2000), and Louis Kahn, whose Yale University Art Gallery of 1950–53 marked a decisive break from collegiate gothic/classical in US college design.[41] The commissioning of institutions symbolizing the new global reach of US power allowed the flourishing of a slightly different strain of formal modernism, perpetuating and developing the 1940s concern with "monumentality" in grandiose complexes such as SOM's US Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs (1956–62), E.D. Stone's "colonnaded" embassy in New Delhi (1957), or the multi-architect Lincoln Center development in New York (1957 onwards).[42]

But now the architecture of modernism was rapidly spreading beyond its heartland countries across the world. In some countries, such as Canada and Australia, the dominance of laissez-faire capitalism and low-density development led to fairly similar results. Here, relatively isolated modernist set-pieces, whether villas or public buildings, were stranded in a sprawl of suburban development – although the city of Toronto pioneered an alternative planning formula of tall slab blocks distributed across a vast metropolis. In post-reconstruction, newly Westernized Japan, too, a vigorous school of postwar modernist architecture arose, led by Kenzō Tange, architect of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (1955), the 1964 Olympic Stadium, and a host of other (mostly) government-funded commissions; Tange was a specialist in

massively articulated concrete forms.[43] In central and southern America, and across decolonizing Asia and Africa, the contribution of modern architecture was at first largely confined to elite set-pieces, many of which imaginatively attempted to reflect regional tradition, as in the houses and churches of Barragán in Mexico, or the villas of Alan Vaughan Richards in Lagos.

A number of centers in the developing world leapfrogged this hybrid stage of development. There is Singapore, with its vast program of planned new towns and public housing (beginning with Queenstown, from 1954), and, above all, Brazil, which, even prior to 1945, had begun to develop an indigenous school of modernism. This native modernism was fueled by the fertile imagination of Oscar Niemeyer in a wide range of projects from the Ministry of Education slab (1936) to the Pampulha pavilions (1939–42). In the late 1950s, Niemeyer collaborated with planner Lúcio Costa, and a host of other practices and government organizations, in the realization of probably the grandest single project of the modern movement. This is the building of the new capital city of Brasília, with its "iconic" cruciform plan of a "monumental axis" intersected by curved residential "wings": the axis, flanked by parallel slabs of government ministries, terminated in a freely composed complex of vertical and horizontal forms, including a tall twin-slab secretariat tower. In this colossal project, the synthesis of "art" and "science," of "style" and "society," which was demanded by the interwar pioneers, was finally and most decisively achieved.[44]

But if the postwar years saw the spread of modern architecture across the world, they also witnessed, largely within its old heartlands, the emergence of a range of critical, reformist movements. Rather like perestroika in the 1980s USSR, these reforms would begin by attempting to renew modernism but would end up undermining it. This development had two main strands, concerned respectively with the scientific and the artistic-humanist paradigms of architecture; they overlapped substantially in their shared utopianism and belief that "traditional" CIAM modernism had become too restricted or utilitarian in scope.

The scientific-utopian strand was represented by a range of commentators, including the American polymath engineer Buckminster Fuller and architect planners such as Contantinos Doxiadis, the English "Archigram" group or the French "Situationist" and Japanese "Metabolist" groupings. All of them proposed to tackle a supposed global built-environment crisis through all-encompassing conceptual frameworks, but these were of a wildly divergent character – some highly systematic and science-driven (Fuller, Doxiadis) and some distinctly anarchic (the Archigram "Walking City" of 1964).[45] Eventually, in the 1970s and 1980s, this world outlook would help shape the

"High-Tech" movement, which would help revive interest in modernism after its "postmodern" rejection (see below): its early set-pieces included Piano and Rogers's Centre Pompidou (1972–77) and Norman Foster's Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank headquarters (1979–84).[46]

The social-humanist critique of modernism was much wider in its membership. It began in the 1950s with the emergence of the "Team 10" grouping of younger architects, led by Alison and Peter Smithson, Aldo van Eyck, and others, in opposition to the functionalist old-guard of CIAM, which ultimately disbanded in 1956. They advocated in its place a far more diverse range of visions of community, including elements of "American" consumerism (celebrated in the ICA Independent Group's famous "This is Tomorrow" exhibition of 1956) as well as the more familiar rhetoric of social solidarity, "honesty," and "reality." The built realizations were highly varied, ranging from the forcibly idiosyncratic, harshly geometrical early works of James Stirling (e.g., the Leicester Engineering Building, 1959–63) or the frame-infill "megastructure" ideal (Cumbernauld Town Centre, 1963–66) to modestly scaled, "humanistic" complexes, reacting against CIAM heroic-tower rhetoric, such as van Eyck's Amsterdam orphanage or Atelier 5's Siedlung Halen, Bern (both 1960).[47]

These reformist trends went under a range of slogan-like names (most prominently and ambiguously, the "New Brutalism"); but by the end of the 1960s, they were themselves increasingly questioned, as part of a general rejection of all forms of modernism. At first, the main attacks were directed against the modern movement's love of tabula rasa newness and its dependence on "grand narratives" and the rule of experts. Fueled by the invective of critics such as Jane Jacobs and countless radical activists, urban conservation and "rehab" replaced mass demolitions, low-rise "vernacular" styles and "critical regionalism" replaced concrete towers, and critics such as Giancarlo de Carlo urged a shift from dirigisme to "user participation."[48] But the anti-modern reaction did not stop there. Instead, it became even more extreme, discarding the remnants of modern architecture's "socialist" ideals in favor of newly resurgent capitalism and repudiating all its utopian ideals and narratives for their opposite – a "postmodernism" dedicated to style, image, and decoration, and celebrated by critics such as Charles Jencks (in his *Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, 1977). A new generation of architects emerged, with slightly differing emphases on either side of the Atlantic: in the United States, dedicated to highly eclectic image-led design (e.g., Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia, New Orleans, 1979), and in Europe pursuing a history-steeped, scenographic urbanism inspired by writings such as Aldo Rossi's *L'architettura della città* (1966).[49]

Eventually, around 1995, when postmodernism in its turn began to fall from favor, some of its underlying values would survive and help shape a new phase of "contemporary design." A now "iconic modernism" appropriated and deployed the "original" modern movement's stylistic motifs in the interests not of utopian socialism but of neocapitalist image-making – but that, of course, is another story altogether, and outside the frame of reference of this chapter.[50]

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Modernism and the Urban Imaginary 1:
Spectacle and Introspection

MATTHEW BEAUMONT

In a scene from *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), Virginia Woolf's most sustained attempt to grasp the relationship of consciousness to the conditions of life in the modern metropolis, a solitary, aging man strides north along White-hall, London's most monumental road. At once purposeful and purposeless, Peter Walsh is only half-conscious of his surroundings because he is preoccupied with clinging to the idea that he is still young. "I am not old, he cried, and marched up Whitehall, as if there rolled down to him, vigorous, unending, his future." In spite of this sudden effusion, his future does not roll down the road to him. Instead, he hears from behind him "a patter like the patter of leaves in a wood" – a sound more like death than life. This unsettling, irregular sound is mingled with "a rustling, regular thudding sound." As the noise overtakes him, he glimpses a troop of soldiers: "Boys in uniform, carrying guns, marched with their eyes ahead of them, marched, their arms stiff, and on their faces an expression like the letters of a legend written round the base of a statue praising duty, gratitude, fidelity, love of England."[1] They have been commemorating the dead of the Great War.

Disconcerted, Peter dismisses them. They are "weedy for the most part," the embodiments of an enfeebled empire (66). If the soldiers are youthful, then, they do not necessarily have a vigorous, unending future before them either. "Drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline," the figures that form this troop are like the undead marching up behind him (66). But Peter cannot keep pace with them, and admits to feeling a rueful sense of admiration for their order and mechanical precision. In their "steady way," they march past him and everyone else on the street, "as if one will worked legs and arms uniformly, and life, with its varieties, its irreticences, had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths" (66). Hesitating on the edge of the pavement,

Peter perceives that their gaze is like the "marble stare" of those statues of heroic military leaders that stand sentinel along the roads that line the center of London – "the spectacular images of great soldiers [that] stood looking ahead of them" (66). He respects the capacity of these recruits to renounce the contradictions of life in the metropolitan city, its varieties, its irreticences; "but the stare Peter Walsh did not want for himself in the least" (66–67).

Reminded that he is alone and anonymous in London, not least because he has returned from a colonial life in India, and that he is free to be open to its varieties and irreticences, he is suddenly suffused once again with a sense of excitement. "The strangeness of standing alone, alive, unknown, at half-past eleven in Trafalgar Square overcame him. What is it? Where am I?" (67). These vertiginous questions induce not horror but a strange, fragile joy. He is overwhelmed by "three great emotions": "understanding; a vast philan-thropy; and finally, as if the result of the others, an irrepressible, exquisite delight; as if inside his brain, by another hand, strings were pulled, shutters moved, and he, having nothing to do with it, yet stood at the opening of endless avenues down which if he chose he might wander" (67). Peter's sense of self, like that of the soldiers, whose actions are automatic, is cancelled out. Someone other than him appears to be controlling his consciousness – pulling the strings, moving the shutters. But at the same time his sense of self is affirmed, glorified. Rendered foreign to himself, he is freed. It is as if he stands at the center of a city whose roads radiate out from him in the form of limitless possibilities.

Liberated for an instant from the need to find himself, Peter does for an instant find himself. He feels "utterly free – as happens in the downfall of habit when the mind, like an unguarded flame, bows and bends and seems about to blow from its holding" (67). Peter's epiphany is like the one outlined by Walter Pater in *The Renaissance* (1873), where he insists that failure in life "is to form habits" and that "to burn always with this hard gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life."[2] But in Peter's case, this ecstasy cannot be maintained. At least, it is rapidly displaced into a hard, gem-like desire for an attractive young woman he happens to see crossing Trafalgar Square. "Fingering his pocket-knife," Peter follows her along the Haymarket, up Regent Street, to Oxford Street, past all the shops; and, finally, as far as Great Portland Street, where she enters a house in a side street, casts "one look in his direction, but not at him," and is gone (68, 70). "It was over" (70). She has triumphed over him. He is disappointed at the outcome of this game but not deflated. Certainly, he doesn't feel ashamed of his predatoriness, which is inseparable from his playfulness. The libidinal after-effects of his

epiphany persist, and he relishes the sense that, "like the pulse of a perfect heart, life struck straight through the streets" (70).

This scene constitutes what Marshall Berman, in a celebrated account of the dialectics of modernity, characterizes as a "primal modern scene." Berman formulates the term during a discussion of Charles Baudelaire's Paris after 1848, when Bonaparte and Haussmann "blast[ed] a vast network of boulevards through the heart of the old medieval city" – creating a culture of spectacle in which, alongside the regimentation and reification of everyday life in the city, "urban realities could easily become dreamy and magical." But the notion of the primal modern scene refers more generally to "experiences that arise from the concrete everyday life" of the metropolis in capitalist society; experiences that "carry a mythic resonance and depth that propel them beyond their place and time and transform them into archetypes of modern life."[3] It is in anticipation of such a primal modern scene that, in the final paragraph of *Sons and Lovers* (1913), D.H. Lawrence's protagonist, disavowing both his lover and his mother, "walk[s] towards the city's gold phosphorescence."[4]

It is above all on the street, the site where private and public experiences intersect, that these scenes are acted out. There, the dialectics of exterior and interior that are structural to the everyday conditions of modernity as these are apprehended in modernist aesthetics are constantly dramatized. "The street," André Breton underlined, is "the only valid field of experience."[5] Alongside *Mrs. Dalloway*, a series of significant European novels in the early twentieth century situated the relationship between the city and consciousness, the metropolis and mental life, at the center of their attempt to solve the representational problems thrown up by the social and cultural developments of the time: Joyce's *Stephen Hero* (1904); Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907); Richardson's *Pilgrimage* (1915–67); Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922); Svevo's *Zeno's Conscience* (1923); Musil's *Man Without Qualities* (1930–42); Barnes's *Nightwood* (1936), among others. In Beckett's late modernist fiction, for its part, the social is almost entirely internalized, and "the city becomes prolapsed," as one critic puts it.[6]

The drama of Peter's epiphany on the roads of imperial London, to focus on this example in Woolf's novel, is of primal significance for both abstract and concrete reasons. In the concrete terms on which I propose to concentrate in the first instance, Peter's epiphanic experience dramatizes an encounter between the archetypal hero of modernity identified by Baudelaire, the "passionate spectator," and the representative forms of urban spectacle – specifically, the troop of soldiers and the female passerby.[7] This relationship

between spectator and spectacle finds its template in Paris, where Hauss-mann, driving boulevards through the capital in order both to reinforce the counter-revolution and to provide the optimum environment for the profit motive, and displacing some 350,000 people in the process, set out the geometries of commodity capitalism. But it is not limited to Paris at this time; and the concept of the primal modern scene can be extended to describe some of the political and psychological effects of the monumental spaces of other cities, especially in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when an emergent culture of consumption, embodied in the department store, was superimposed onto the spatial order of the imperial metropolis.

The spectator sketched by Baudelaire is a middle- or upper middle-class man who freely resides "in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite," as he puts it in "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863).[8] The function Baudelaire ascribed to this spectator was to act as a highly tuned instrument for conducting and transmitting the contradictory energies of capitalist modernity, a state of permanent social and existential transformation. Women and working-class men were for the most part disqualified from performing this spectatorial role because of the social restrictions that, in the class-divided and patriarchal conditions of capitalist society, determined their relations to the city. If the passionate spectator defined modernity, because he had the requisite economic or social independence, then he also marginalized these subaltern actors in relation to it. For historical reasons, Raymond Williams observes, "perception of the new qualities of the modern city had been associated, from the beginning, with a man walking, as if alone, in its streets."[9]

The solitary man in the streets of the metropolis – a spiritual if not a social aristocrat – is essentially a post-romantic archetype. Baudelaire transposed the alienated but finally privileged individual crucial to romantic ideology from the landscape to the cityscape. The modernists extended but also challenged this archetype, displacing its social identity and delving deep into its existential one. In *Ulysses*, for example, Joyce located the life of the city in the consciousness of a lower middle-class Jewish man. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf centered it in the consciousness of an upper-class woman. More pointedly still, perhaps, she disputed the *flâneur*'s monopoly over the representation of the individual's responses to the modern metropolis through her principal male characters: Peter, whom she deployed in part to expose the social and sexual politics that have shaped this paradigm; and Septimus, in whose psychotic mind she pressed it to the point of collapse. As an upper-

class man, Peter is an exemplary candidate for the role of *flâneur*; but his relationship to the metropolis is far from comfortable. Woolf uses him to offer an immanent critique of Baudelaire's post-romantic archetype. In Peter's stroll along Whitehall, she stages the ideological drama of the spectator's encounter with the concrete forms of metropolitan spectacle – in particular, the soldiers, who stand in for the culture of imperialism; and the female pedestrian, who stands in for the culture of consumerism. Woolf uses the phrase "spectacular images" in reference to the military statues that Peter passes, but it applies to these other reified figures, too, frozen as they are by the gaze of the man walking, as if alone, in the streets. In the portrait of Peter, Woolf reveals the ways in which Baudelaire's passionate spectator colludes in the culture of the spectacle.

Alongside the dandy, both the soldier and the female passerby play a privileged role in Baudelaire's poetics of modernity – which he summarizes in terms of "the *outward show of life*, such as it is to be seen in the capitals of the civilized world; the pageantry of military life, of fashion and of love." The pageantries of military life and of fashion and love are spectacular expressions, respectively, of the cultures of imperialism and consumerism – the principal components of capitalist society in the European metropolis from the mid to late nineteenth century. "In many respects," David Harvey argues, "imperial spectacle dovetailed neatly with commodification and the deepening power of the circulation of capital over daily life." In addition to mobilizing support for imperial authority, the boulevards that Haussmann built in Paris, which served as sites both of production and of consumption, created employment and "facilitated circulation of commodities, money, and people." So the "sociality" of the people that inhabited their precincts "was now as much controlled by the imperatives of commerce as by police power." In this context, the soldier and the female passerby both act as "bearers of the spectacle."[10]

First, the spectacle of the soldiers. Baudelaire comments that the painter and illustrator Constantin Guys, the artist who for him embodies the aesthetics of metropolitan modernity, "shows a very marked predilection for the military man, the soldier." And he speculates that "this fondness may be attributed not only to the qualities and virtues which necessarily pass from the warrior's soul into his physiognomy and his bearing, but also to the outward splendour in which he is professionally clad." Baudelaire appears to share his friend's predilection. In the most substantial section of "The Painter of Modern Life," he glorifies Guys's love of "the landscapes of the great city," his delight in its "universal life," and imagines a military parade: "A regiment

passes, on its way, as it may be, to the ends of the earth, tossing into the air of the boulevards its trumpet-calls as winged and stirring as hope." He pictures Guys's instantaneous response to this sight, and evokes the alacrity with which, in his sketches, he examines and analyzes "the bearing and external aspect of that company." Baudelaire mimes this rapid, poetic response in his own prose, which excitedly registers "glittering equipment, music, bold determined glances, heavy, solemn moustaches."[11]

Baudelaire's description concludes in a paean to the artist's capacity for identifying with the phenomenon he represents, for collapsing subject into object: "See how his soul lives with the soul of that regiment, marching like a single animal, a proud image of joy in obedience!"[12] It is an unsettling effusion. Berman has pointed out that "these are the soldiers who killed 25,000 Parisians in June 1848 and who opened the way for Napoleon III in December of 1851" – occasions when Baudelaire opposed the men whose militaristic glamour appears to thrill him a decade later. Uncomfortably, Baudelaire's celebratory image of troops, marching through the roads of the capital as if to the farthest reaches of the empire, carried cataclysmic implications for the proletarians of Paris.

Berman, in his account, underlines "the tremendous importance of military display – psychological as well as political importance – and its power to captivate even the freest spirits."[13] But, if it captivates Baudelaire, it does not captivate Woolf. In the aftermath of the Great War, she strips away the pretensions of military spectacle. Peter perceives the "stiff yet staring corpse" underlying the spectacular image of the marching soldier. For this spectator, the thrill that Baudelaire had experienced is no longer possible. The horrors of history interrupt the spell of the imperial spectacle.

Second, the spectacle of the female passerby. Baudelaire presents the spectacular image of this archetypal figure in a section of "The Painter of Modern Life" entitled "Women and Prostitutes." He is especially interested in prostitutes. "In that vast picture-gallery which is life in London or Paris," he declares, "we shall meet with the various types of fallen womanhood – of woman in revolt against society – at all levels," from courtesans to the "poor slaves" of the stews. In classifying these types, and detailing their physiognomies, he insists that he is not trying "to gratify the reader, any more than to scandalize him"; and he is adamant that, if anyone is intending to satisfy "his unhealthy curiosity," "he will find nothing whatever to stimulate the sickness of his imagination."[14]

In restaging the Baudelairean forms of the spectacle in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf hints that there is in fact an unhealthy curiosity to Peter's interest in the woman he secretly tracks through the streets of central London. This is in

part because, even as he idealizes her, he objectifies her body: "she became the very woman he had always had in mind; merry, but discreet; black, but enchanting" (68). This scene is a feminist reinscription of Baudelaire's poem "À une passante," in which he describes a female passerby dressed in mourning, "stately yet lithe, as if a statue walked," and invests this "lovely fugitive" with his libidinal and spiritual longings.[15] But Peter's curiosity is also implicitly unhealthy because, as he silently pursues the passerby, he dissolves her identity into the commodities amongst which, at the core of London's culture of consumption, she circumambulates:

> On and on she went, across Piccadilly, and up Regent Street, ahead of him, her cloak, her gloves, her shoulders combining with the fringes and the laces and the feather boas in the windows to make the spirit of finery and whimsy which dwindled out of the shops onto the pavement, as the light of a lamp goes wavering at night over hedges in the darkness. (69)

In an almost cubistic effect, the woman's body is broken up into part objects, including hands and shoulders. These then combine and intersect, in the reflective surfaces of the glass screening the shops or department stores, with the commodities on display. If the commodity itself, from the mid to late nineteenth century, increasingly became the dominant form of the spectacle, then this anonymous woman, in acting as a "bearer of the spectacle," is comprehensively colonized by it. In Peter's consciousness, commodities are at the same time spiritualized, in the shape of the ethereal finery that spills onto the pavement, and eroticized.

Woolf uses Peter's half-playful, half-predatory activities on the street to demonstrate, in Walter Benjamin's compelling formulation, "how easy it is for the *flâneur* to depart from the ideal of the philosopher out for a stroll, and to assume the features of the werewolf at large in the social jungle."[16] In this primal modern scene, Woolf implicitly presents a feminist critique of the Baudelairean hero of modernity. In the more abstract or formal terms to which I have alluded, Peter's perceptions of the city enact what Victor Burgin has called the "imbrication of social space and mental space."[17] This mutual interpenetration of inner and outer comprises an exemplary experience, in the urban imaginary limned by modernist art and literature, of the reciprocating relationship between spectacle and introspection. In this sense, too, the incident involving Peter in central London revisits the site of some of Baudelaire's meditations on the poetics of everyday life in Paris. In the conditions of metropolitan modernity, private and public forms of space are liable -- abruptly, but also routinely -- to open into and enfold one another. For an

instant, the multifaceted forms of the individual's mental and metropolitan life, their shifting concavities and convexities, connect and intersect.

At the precise moment of his epiphany in Whitehall, Peter's mind both skims along "flat as a marsh" and stops and stands "at the opening of endless avenues" (67). In this interplay of movement and stasis, surface and depth, of the interior and the exterior, the open and the closed, it is impossible to discriminate clearly between consciousness and the city. These tessellations might be characterized in terms of an equation taken from Benjamin: "The system of Parisian streets: a vascular network of imagination."[18] Peter's relationship to space here recalls the dreamscapes of the city assembled by Thomas De Quincey in his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821), a book translated by Baudelaire in 1860. But the contradictory effect of Woolf's composite image is also comparable, more immediately, to the interpenetration of spaces explored by poets of her generation.

Isaac Rosenberg's "Fleet Street" (1912), for example, carefully orchestrates the relations of inside and outside in its depiction of the individual embedded in the disorienting everyday life of the city. Rosenberg immerses the reader in the anarchic daily life of the "shaking quivering street," which has a "pulse and heart that throbs and glows / As if strife were its repose." But, in spite of closing his ears to the chaotic metrics of the arterial road, the poet quickly capitulates to them:

> I shut my ear to such rude sounds
> As reach a harsh discordant note,
> Till, melting into what surrounds,
> My soul doth with the current float;
> And from the turmoil and the strife
> Wakes all the melody of life.

The poem's concluding stanza, in which both the buildings and passersby that populate the street "blindly stare" at its inhabitants, iterates the idea that the city is, in the end, repressive, secretive.[19] This cannot erase the impression, though, that the poet's private self has, for a moment, opened up to the public life of the metropolis, creating an almost miraculous harmony.

Mina Loy explores this ambiguous territory, at once psychic and social, in "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose" (1925), a long autobiographical poem. There, the narrator describes the protagonist, a Hungarian Jew leading an exilic existence in London, pacing "the cancelled deserts of the metropolis" in search of something that will fill his sense of loneliness.[20] "Cancelled," an anatomical term that means latticed or porous, captures precisely the shared architecture of the city and of consciousness, which are at the same time

limitless and labyrinthine. Cityscape and dreamscape, as in the paintings and poems of the surrealists, compete in a relationship of mutual permeability.

In "The Painter of Modern Life," Baudelaire had sketched these kinds of complicated, constantly changing spatial dynamics between the inner and the outer when he compared the passionate spectator in the city "to a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness, responding to each one of its movements and reproducing the multiplicity of life and the flickering grace of all the elements of life." Baudelaire adds: "He is an 'I' with an insatiable appetite for the 'non-I.'"[21] Compared to Guys's spirited but, in formal terms, conservative sketches of Parisian life, Baudelaire's own prose poems, in *Paris Spleen* (1869), are far more effective at capturing this restless relationship between the "I" and the "non-I" in the streets of the city. Baudelaire's ambition in these fragments was to capture "the lyrical impulses of the soul, the undulations of reverie, the jibes of conscience" insofar as these were shaped by his "exploration of huge cities" and "the medley of their innumerable relations."[22] As in Rosenberg's poem, though, and in other modernist portraits of metropolitan life, the insatiable appetite of the "I" for the "non-I" perpetually competes with the insatiable appetite of the "non-I" for the "I."

For Baudelaire, as the philosopher Gaston Bachelard emphasized, "immensity is an intimate dimension." In his phenomenological meditation on the role of the word "vast" in Baudelaire's oeuvre, Bachelard quotes from the poet's *Journaux intimes*: "In certain almost supernatural inner states, the depth of life is entirely revealed in the spectacle, however ordinary, that we have before our lives, and which becomes the symbol of it." "The exterior spectacle," Bachelard explains, "helps intimate grandeur unfold."[23]

Modernist literature pursues and plays out the Baudelairean dialectic of mental and metropolitan space in multiple directions. Christopher Butler typifies this in terms of the tension, in the "confrontation with the city" characteristic of the early twentieth-century avant-garde, "between an introspective alienation and a celebration of the sheer energy and collective diversity of life." This is the contrast, he adds, between *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*, both published in 1922.[24] In spite of their different forms, and their different emphases, both Eliot's poem and Joyce's novel explore the articulations of self and the city in their attempts to apprehend the experience of metropolitan modernity. The former is a cracked collocation of voices that collectively evokes the consciousness of an imperial city in a state of terminal decline. The latter is a peregrination through the glorious, grimy life of a colonial city that, immersed in the present of its presiding consciousnesses, is filled with a sense of the future as well as the past.

In its representation of its principal male characters, Peter and Septimus, *Mrs. Dalloway* explores both the tendencies outlined by Butler – "introspective alienation and a celebration of the sheer energy and collective diversity of life" – with notable clarity. During Peter's perambulation through central London, the city and his consciousness seem continuous, their spaces coterminous. But he remains within the orbit of the ordinary, the ostensibly rational. He is conscious, for instance, of "the strangeness of standing alone, alive, unknown, at half-past eleven in Trafalgar Square," and asks, "What is it? Where am I?" (67). Empirical reality – even if it is porous, cancelled – retains its ontological priority. It doesn't dissolve, however much it is transformed by being absorbed into Peter's consciousness. The shops, the statues, the streets, remain autonomous of him. It is only as Peter falls asleep beside an elderly children's nurse on a bench in Regent's Park that the real for a time seems spectral. Lapsing into this hypnagogic state, he toys with the idea that "nothing exists outside us except a state of mind" (73).

For Septimus, the shell-shocked soldier adrift in an indifferent metropolis, the exterior spectacle helps both an intimate grandeur and an intimate horror unfold. Concrete reality is assimilated to Septimus's traumatized consciousness in a perpetual rush, at once exhilarating and terrifying. Exquisitely sensitive to his immediate environment, he feels as if his body has been

11.1 The collective diversity of life: Oxford Street, London, in the early twentieth century.

"macerated until only the nerve fibres were left" (88). The sound of a motor horn, which reaches him from the road, cannons about in his consciousness, colliding in "shocks of sound" that rise in "smooth columns," and sliding in and out of his delirious fantasies, fantasies that revolve around the sense that, lying "back in his chair, exhausted but upheld," he is also lying "very high, on the back of the world," and that the earth vibrates beneath him (88–89).

After his sleep, Peter passes the bench in Regent's Park on which Septimus is sitting with his wife. This is one of those encounters or non-encounters characteristic of metropolitan modernity, which is daily defined by contingencies that seem both meaningful and meaningless, as, here, it is equally intense and fantastical. Seeing Peter approach, Septimus spontaneously identifies him with one of his dead comrades from the Front. In a horrifying moment, sensing "legions of men prostrate behind him," he apprehends Peter as "the dead man in the grey suit" (91, 92). His painful experience of the synaesthetics of the city – the chime of another motor horn "tinkl[es] divinely on the grass stalks" – has in an instant opened out into a vision of London as a city of the dead (90). This phantasmagoria provides a superimposition of two linked terrains: the prospect of urban modernity and the landscapes of technological war. "So many," as Eliot had intoned in an echo of Dante, "I had not thought death had undone so many."[25] The capital is suddenly a city composed not of streets encircling parks but of trenches bordering no-man's-land; not of endless avenues, to put it in terms of Peter's mental topography, but of marshland. In the poem "Town in 1917" (1918), Lawrence glimpsed an apocalyptic London consisting of "Fleet, hurrying limbs, / Soft-footed dead." Recalling Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), the nightmarish final stanzas of the poem present the imperial city, in a time of cataclysmic war, as a place of primordial horror: "London, with hair / Like a forest darkness, like a marsh / Of rushes, ere the Romans / Broke in her lair."[26]

It is to this horrifying hinterland, the territory of brutal military conflict, that Whitehall leads in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Septimus's hallucination is the symptomatic expression of the imperial city's unconscious. It reveals the horror on which the grandeur of the capital is built. This is the repressed topography of the "landscapes of the great city" that Baudelaire's spectator gazes on, which is littered with the ghostly corpses of the 25,000 proletarians past that the regiment that thrills him have processed. It is the chaos and desolation that underlie "the amazing harmony of life in the capital cities," which he glimpses in the fearful, infernal associations of the empty plain and the stony labyrinths of the metropolis.[27]

In the terms famously developed by Georg Simmel in "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), it might be said that Septimus fails "to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces." Or, more precisely, his autonomy and individuality are at once erased and intensified in the everyday conditions of the modern city. In his case, the organ that the "metropolitan type of man" develops in order to protect himself "against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him" has degenerated.[28] It has atrophied on the battlefields of Europe. The passion of Baudelaire's spectator, in Septimus, becomes pathological, as he fails to cope with the "myriad impressions" his mind attempts to assimilate. In "Modern Fiction" (1925), Woolf pictures them as "an incessant shower of innumerable atoms" – as if they are shrapnel.[29]

Septimus's kaleidoscopic consciousness rotates in an uncontrollable motion. It cannot process what Simmel calls "the psychological conditions which the metropolis creates" – "the rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of onrushing impressions." Septimus is fatally susceptible to one of the "great dangers of the metropolis" – "indiscriminate suggestibility." What Simmel identifies as "the *intensification of nervous stimulation* which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli" overwhelms him.[30] The partition that, however porous, preserves the distinction between interior and exterior, mental life and metropolitan life, collapses completely. In this sense, inhabiting the city is like subsisting in a permanent state of combat. He cannot keep the battlefield out of either the city or his consciousness. The war that has produced this susceptibility has been seen by Woolf as the constitutive condition of urban modernity.

For his part, Peter is far closer to an embodiment of Simmel's "blasé attitude," and it might be claimed that the arc of his narrative traces his attempt to acquire, once again, the reserve, the self-protective disposition, needed to survive in the metropolis. This is the "dissociation" that, as Simmel formulates it, is "in reality" one of the "elemental forms of socialization" in the city. Or, perhaps more precisely, it traces the failure of Peter's attempt to acquire this "intellectualistic mentality."[31] For at the end of the novel, his state of mind is far from indifferent. "What is this terror? What is this ecstasy?" he asks, filled with "extraordinary excitement," as he sees Clarissa at her party in the final sentences (255). Earlier in the narrative, however, his efforts to distance himself from the city seemed to have been successful. He relished "the richness" of London, "the greenness, the civilization," in part because he has just returned from India (92). He objectified it. Indeed,

passing Septimus in Regent's Park, in a moment of self-reflection for which he congratulated himself, he decided that his "susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" (92).

This insight is more precarious than he suspects, as the ecstasy and terror he feels at the end of the day indicate. But it is more important to emphasize that, in spite of a certain unconscious kinship to Septimus, he can have no idea of what this susceptibility to impressions might mean for the anonymous man he glimpses on the park bench – a psychotic who, at the highest pitch of ecstasy and terror, is on the point of committing suicide. In the case of Septimus, in contrast to the Baudelairean hero, it is the "non-I," teeming in the streets and parks of the city as on the battlefields of France, that has an insatiable appetite for the "I" – the "Non-I" obliterates the "I."

The representation of this violent experience of inner and outer space in the modern city requires that the relatively stable, static perspectives of nineteenth-century realist narrative are ruptured. Woolf uses the double narrative perspective of indirect discourse, which is uniquely capable of exploring the dialectical relations of objective and subjective, to enact these unfoldings: "He had escaped! was utterly free – as happens in the downfall of habit when the mind, like an unguarded flame, bows and bends and seems about to blow from its holding. I haven't felt so young for years! thought Peter" (67). In this sentence, which I have already invoked, the narrator and Peter speak simultaneously, and their voices weave in and out of one another. In spite of the grammatical differences between them – the different personal pronouns, the different tenses – the exclamation "He had escaped!" is scarcely less Peter's own utterance, scarcely more the omniscient narrator's, than the succeeding one, "I haven't felt so young for years!" Like Joyce's narrative voice in *Ulysses*, Woolf's delicately mediates between exterior spectacle and the intimacies of her character's interior life. The distinction between inside and outside is delicately deconstructed in a displacement of the relations between the self and the city.

Narrative voice, in Woolf's novel, unifies the disparate, sometimes competing individualities that comprise life in the metropolitan city. The narrator's general language ingests the characters' particular languages. Language itself is thus the means not only of representing the relations between inner and outer but also of healing the split between them. Form, in modernist art and literature, is the means not simply of presenting or performing the contradictions of content but of attempting to solve these contradictions. It tries to collage or glue together what Emmanuel Levinas characterizes as "the scission of being," that is, a false division of existence "into an inside and

an outside."[32] This is the utopian dimension of modernist representations of the city – the dream of a form that, even as it reproduces the confusions of urban modernity, will assimilate and comprehend, in Simmel's terms, the rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of onrushing impressions.

Metropolitan modernity in the early twentieth century entailed what Henri Lefebvre characterizes as a "massive injection of discontinuity," as the older patterns in "knowledge, behaviour, and consciousness itself" became more and more susceptible to the accelerating metabolism of commodity capitalism.[33] For the modernists, in this cultural climate, artistic form itself, especially when it mimicked these discontinuities, secretly represented the dream of a deeper continuity. This continuity, then, might ultimately dissolve the reified opposition between metropolitan and mental life, the politics of spectacle and the poetics of introspection, in a dialectic of the interior and the exterior that is adequately textured to the reality of that experience.

Notes

1 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, ed. Claire Tomalin (Oxford University Press, 1992), 65–66. Subsequent references to this edition will appear parenthetically by page number in the text.

2 Walter Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, ed. Matthew Beaumont (Oxford University Press, 2010), 120.

3 Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1983), 148, 150, 152.

4 D.H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, ed. Keith Sagar (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), 492.

5 Cited in Walter Benjamin, "Marseilles," *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken, 1986), 131–36 (at 131).

6 Richard Lehan, *The City in Literature: An Intellectual and Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 121.

7 The phrase "passionate spectator" is from Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1995), 9.

8 Baudelaire, "Painter of Modern Life," 9.

9 Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Hogarth Press, 1993), 233.

10 David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2006), 212, 221.

11 Baudelaire, "Painter of Modern Life," 24, 10–11.

12 Ibid., 11.
13 Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, 137.
14 Baudelaire, "Painter of Modern Life," 37–38.
15 Charles Baudelaire, "In Passing," *Les Fleurs du Mal*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Picador, 1987), 97–98.
16 Walter Benjamin, "The Return of the *Flâneur*," *Selected Writings*, vol. II: *1927–1934*, trans. Rodney Livingstone et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 265.
17 Victor Burgin, *In/Different Spaces* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 28.
18 Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 901.
19 Isaac Rosenberg, "Fleet Street," in Mark Ford (ed.), *London: A History in Verse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 519.
20 Quoted in Rachel Potter, *Modernist Literature* (Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 108.
21 Baudelaire, "Painter of Modern Life," 10.
22 Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen*, trans. Louise Varèse (New York: New Directions, 1970), ix–x.
23 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 194, 192.
24 Christopher Butler, *Early Modernism: Literature, Music, and Painting in Europe, 1900–1916* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 137.
25 T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, in *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), 65.
26 D.H. Lawrence, "Town in 1917," *The Complete Poems of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 171.
27 Baudelaire, "Painter of Modern Life," 10.
28 Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," (1903), trans. Hans Gerth (1950), repr. in *Simmel on Culture*, ed. David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1997), 174–75.
29 Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction," *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Andrew McNeillie, vol. IV (London: Hogarth Press, 1994), 160.
30 Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 179.
31 Ibid., 177, 180.
32 Emmanuel Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001), 105.
33 Henri Lefebvre, *Introduction to Modernity*, trans. John Moore (London: Verso, 1995), 179–80.

Modernism and the Urban Imaginary 2: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Cosmopolitanism

DAVID JAMES

Asked about how "multiracial London" had been tackled in her debut, *White Teeth* (2000), Zadie Smith remarked that she "was just trying to approach London." In her celebrated chronicle of urban hybridity, Smith didn't "think of it as a theme, or even a significant thing about the city," because that is simply "what modern life is like."[1] The synonymity here between the metropolis and multiethnicity is assumed to be a given, one of urban fiction's fundamental constituents rather than its merely topical destination. But if today it seems odd to isolate the notion of cosmopolitanism as a deliberately "significant thing" in depictions of social experience, how then do we make critical claims about the import of such attitudes, responses, and forms of contact in literatures, both local and transnational, from an earlier modernist moment? And in such a moment, to what extent did the city in fact conflict with, more so than facilitate, genuinely cosmopolitan practices? Moving from lived experience to literary expression, might we see the formal innovations of modernism becoming actively engendered by – rather than merely coinciding with – the collision of entrenched nationalist sentiments and emerging intercultural environments? Can we, that is, regard the reconstitution of urban communities as a shaping factor in renovations of literary technique? Such questions underpin what follows as, across successive decades, I chart the ways in which reconfigurations of cultural settings relate to changes of literary form. Cosmopolitan social formations represent more than a contextual backdrop against which the urban imagination of modernism evolved. By the same stroke, if the metropolis becomes the generative situation of cosmopolitanism, there is no guarantee that the ideals of the cosmopolitan will be realized. And it's the city's fraught history of social and ethnic relationality that provides some of the formative tensions and so accounts for some of the major developments in modernist aesthetics.

Recent work in modernist studies has underlined this case for seeing the sociopolitical dynamics of cosmopolitanism as intrinsic to modernism's formal advancements. Rebecca L. Walkowitz, for instance, has traced "critical cosmopolitanisms" in Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf in ways that correlate rhetorical strategies with postures and modes of political perception. Instead of approaching the predicaments, transformations, and displacements of social categories as matter for purely dramatic treatment in fiction, Walkowitz moves beyond a diegetic and characterological account of cosmopolitan practices. More ambitiously still, she contends that by engaging "the global, non-Western entanglements of British culture," modernist narrative itself "produces a cosmopolitan theory that emphasizes the analytic (new ways of thinking and feeling) as well as the thematic (new objects of thinking and feeling)."[2] Adopting a somewhat critical stance toward the practical implications of modernist writings that "invoke cosmopolitanism as a set of fragile and evasive normative ideals," Janet Lyon argues that "The coextensive concerns of modernism and cosmopolitanism are such that one might suppose modernism always to be informed by the cosmopolitan, even if . . . it rarely conveys a viable picture of cosmopolitanism."[3] To suggest that cosmopolitan dynamics were constitutive of modernism's aims from the start raises difficult issues about how and where we locate the inception of modernism, especially when it is increasingly regarded as a multiple set of movements and moments that are constrained neither by strict periodizations nor linguistic and national parameters.

This critical interest in diversifying modernism has had the advantage of attracting a range of methods from comparative literature to further the work of consolidating modernism's international archive. New figures have emerged to enlarge the cartography of modernist networks, resisting the centripetal pull toward the capital cities of national cultures as the frame of familiar reference. Nobel prize-winning Spanish poet Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881–1958) is a case in point. Here is a writer who, in Gayle Rogers's phrase, "always had a worldly poetic scope and cosmopolitan sensibilities," and who enables us to rethink "the segmented ways in which we have conceived of [Spanish-American] *modernismo* and modernism."[4] In heteroglossic works such as *Diary of a Newlywed Poet* (1917), Jiménez exemplifies how the fusion of cosmopolitan commitments and aesthetic ambitions is facilitated not only by the figurative treatment of urban multicultures but also through the transnational reconstitution of creative practice itself. Traveling "between Spain and the Americas," then, Jiménez came to "realize that his view of *modernism* was translingual," and in North America "he seized upon a form

and idiom that existed between languages and between places."[5] As Rogers shows, Jiménez thus aimed "to inhabit modernisms in several languages not just by imitating or adopting foreign influences but also by combining citations, allusions, translations, and cross-linguistic poetics."[6] Where the transatlantic poetics of a relatively early writer like Jiménez prompts us to reframe the onset of modernist cosmopolitanisms, this chapter works toward the latter end of the periodizing spectrum, shifting the temporal coordinates of modernist production beyond the 1940s and into the postwar era. By turning to those years leading up to and after midcentury, we find writers apprehending newly unstable conditions for national identity and dramatizing the subjective consequences of migration between cultures. Reading this literature, we may see how displacements of the sense of national belonging motivated innovations in structure, dialect, and style, and we open an archive that leads us to recalibrate the politics of modernist experimentalism.

When modernist writers register the social and ethnic multiplicity of urban domains, these moments seem as estranging as they are intimate. As such, they remind us of the prescience of an observation Georg Simmel made in 1903: metropolitan lives, however intersubjective they seem, are "composed more and more of these impersonal contents and offerings which tend to displace the genuine personal colorations and incomparabilities."[7] Modernist fiction of course did more than simply reproduce stark visions of the city's prevalent impersonality: it did so by coloring-in personal "incomparabilities," projecting these against the perceived homogeneity of the crowd and particularizing the mental worlds of individuals amid the indifference of routine. Indeed, the affective force of urban modernist writing offers a crucial foil to assumptions that the "metropolitan type of man," as Simmel claimed, "reacts with his head instead of his heart."[8] In a more complex formulation, as we will see, cosmopolitan subjects record experiences of promise and disappointment as the joint forces of diversity and impersonalization shape the spaces of an urban modernity detached from the older assurances of national identity.

That worldly desires can be disappointed by the compulsions of the local is vividly demonstrated in *Dubliners* (1914), where Joyce brings transnational emancipation within touching distance of the domestically loyal heroine of "Eveline." In this miniaturist yet devastating sketch of aborted emigration, Joyce's scenic descriptions focus and track the conflicts that mediate Eveline's embrace of what lies beyond the self and beyond the nation – engaging the international through an individual's dilemmas of an embedded domesticity. While she contemplates the proposal of her lover, Frank, that they emigrate in

secret to begin a new life in Buenos Aires, Eveline takes stock of "home": "She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from."⁹ The spectator's detachment here is echoed later in Eveline's emotionally frozen refusal at the docks to leave with Frank as their ship embarks: "All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart" while she "gripped with both hands at the iron railing" (28). Such detachment is anticipated and reciprocated in the functional style of the story's opening sequence, where the serenity of Eveline's brief, casual wonderment at the collected dust serves only to highlight the imperative decision that she is delaying:

> Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. (27–28)

In its pedestrian, halting tempo, Joyce's measured description of moment-by-moment sensations of an acoustic and olfactory nature simulates Eveline's gathering inertia. Though time might well be "running out," no such urgency interrupts this reverie on attachment ("She knew the air"), for Eveline's contemplation of the familiar world to which she is anchored has interposed itself between home and the prospect of emigration. In all its obstinate specificity, local environment is pregnant with associations, acting like a militant mnemonic that "remind[s] her of the promise to her mother." This moment of recalled duty doesn't quite constitute one of Joyce's negative epiphanies – it offers an affective memo of obligation to home and nation more than a fatalistic realization – but it is certainly a disabling recognition of a predetermined future. A subsequent flashback intensifies this sense of entrapment, as we discover that Eveline's enclosure within familial loyalty is matched by the nationalist enclosures of her father's intolerance toward the district's local immigrants:

> She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again in the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy. The organ player had been ordered to go away and given sixpence. She remembered her father strutting back into the sickroom saying:
> —Damned Italians! coming over here!
> As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother's life laid its spell on the very quick of her being – that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness. (28)

Pinned between chauvinistic parochialism and the inheritance of an existence defined by "commonplace sacrifices," Eveline ultimately becomes a victim of paralyzing irresolution, when the memory that might spur her to self-determination casts in fact an immobilizing "spell." Recent commentators such as Richard Begam persuasively argue that Joyce "positioned himself between the extremes of nationalism and cosmopolitanism, of particularism and universalism." In this early *Dubliners* story, however, the kind of explicit "commitment to cultural decolonization" that we find in *Ulysses* is anticipated in more oblique and ambivalent terms. Eveline's incapacitating vacillation reveals how the demands of nationalist belonging and transcontinental opportunity are not only competing but practically incompatible.[10]

This brief story reveals a sober picture of precarious and wishful internationalism: the progressive objective can't be squared with the contingencies of personal volition and local necessity. It's a confined, snapshot scenario, more suggestive than definitive. By virtue of this small portrait of cultural reattachment and confinement, however, Joyce conveys the kind of qualified vision that's typical of modernism at large. What is "more significant than the overt staging of cosmopolitanism," in Lyon's phrase, and as Joyce is also suggesting, "is the role that cosmopolitan fragility plays" in modernism's examination of a "conditional sense of worldly engagement."[11]

The fragility of worldliness within the context of a perniciously stratified nation state would be given psychologically probing treatment by writers beyond Europe. Mulk Raj Anand, for one, channeled Joyce's influences toward new representations of cultural inequities within the world-imperial picture. *Untouchable*, which Anand began in 1928 and published in 1935, uses the template of the one-day novel to follow the toiling work of a sweeper, Bakha, entirely disenfranchised by caste. More than a detailed record of diurnal oppression, the narrative exposes the wider politico-religious confrontation in late colonial India: the heinous yet sanctioned divisions of caste are confronted by technological modernizations, which might help to mitigate the entrenched injustice of "untouchability." In the closing stages, then, Gandhi himself makes an appearance and the novel's climactic episode turns into a chamber for debating rational and spiritual alternatives to systemic discrimination. Emerging from Gandhi's gathered audience, a poet proposes that India embrace the advent of the flush toilet as a basic but vital step toward resolving caste separatisms, and this pragmatic approach to human rights is offset by the Gandhian ethos of cultivating personal emancipation by way of virtue and self-sacrifice.

Untouchable is both a novel of ideas and a virtuosic demonstration of psychological realism. When it represents the conflict between local tradition and global modernity, it evokes the inner phenomenological experience of a youthful protagonist who moves between wonderment and despair. Although it has been characterized "as 'realist' and 'documentary' by some," as Toral Jatin Gajarawala remarks, "the putatively photographic elements of the text clearly compete with the aesthetic flourishes as well as the larger political philosophy of a cultural modernism that reveled in the singular individual consciousness."[12] Out of this competition between modes, however, it becomes apparent that Anand held much in common with Virginia Woolf, Jean Rhys, and other innovators concerned with evoking the perception of urban astonishment and estrangement. In particular, Anand used narrative perspective not only to inhabit Bakha's idiosyncratic viewpoint but also to carry out a form of critical work *through* its affective force and immediacy:

> Nearly a month had passed since he was last in the city, so little leisure did his job at the latrines allow him, and he couldn't help being swept away by the sensations that crowded in on him from every side. He followed the curves of the winding, irregular streets lined on each side with shops, covered with canvas or jute awnings and topped by projecting domed balconies. He became deeply engrossed in the things that were displayed for sale, and in the various people who thronged around them.[13]

Anand aligns the perspective to involve us vividly in Bakha's sensation of release and temporary respite from the workaday oppressions of caste. The relative vagueness of adjectives and nouns (*sensations*, *curves*, *things*, *various people*) paradoxically reproduces quite precisely the perceptual characteristics of blurred distraction and ingenuous absorption. What might seem like itinerant or aimless actions – following the curve of streets – come alive as exceptional, unmissable. Entrance into this sensorium, of course, is a stepping-stone in the progression of this *Bildungsroman*, as it draws personal struggle toward the spotlight of national politics. Yet moments like the one above also pause the teleological momentum of such a plot, and the interruption speaks to what Anand himself describes as his "difficulty" in trying to reconcile two contrasting scales of representation: "I want my novel to be a poetic whole, and still reflect the miscellaneous life of India, which is huggermugger, kachar-machar everywhere."[14] This desire to offer a microanalysis of the vagaries of quotidian life within a structure that has overall integrity and symbolic cohesion points to one of Anand's many affinities with Joyce. But influence here amounts to more than mere emulation. As Jessica Berman

has shown, Anand is "building a new tradition in fiction for India that draws its inspiration from Joyce even as it responds to the rhetorical exigencies of its Indian heroes and locations"; in doing so, he "crafts a cosmopolitan Indian modernism that engages directly with matters of caste, poverty, national identity, and colonial status."[15]

Nascent or momentary aspects of worldly awareness and self-scrutinizing nationhood are also registered through literary technique in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925). This perambulatory narrative captures in form something of London's social multitude in the traumatic wake of war. Constantly shifting location and focus, the novel sustains a mobile narrative voice that moves fluently between different characters as centers of consciousness. With this nomadic point of view, Woolf merges free indirect style with more external-ized and panoramic modes of commentary. This method has its precedents, as Woolf herself recognizes in an essay on Turgenev, where she argues that the writer "has to observe facts impartially, yet he must also interpret them. Many novelists do the one; many do the other – we have the photograph and the poem. But few combine the fact and the vision; and the rare quality that we find in Turgenev is the result of this double process."[16] Implying here that the novel should bring together what seem like two contrasting registers (the photographic and the poetic), Woolf also highlights the utility of two different scales of observation – the independent bird's-eye view and the subjective street-level view. And it's the alternation between these scales that achieves the "double process" Woolf finds so instructive in Turgenev, now in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Counterpointing the superior view with the ground-level representation, where her most inventive work occurs, Woolf utilized "modest forms of attention," as Walkowitz calls them, by "thinking of perception as a social process" and by "valuing transient communities and experiences."[17] In *Mrs. Dalloway* such tactics influence the nimble choreography of narrative per-spective. Moving in quick succession across different points of view, Woolf tracks a happenstance event in a manner that uncovers the city's collective consciousness. The exhaust of a car that may or may not belong to royalty explodes, suspending for a minute everyone's attention, amid the hustle and bustle of central London:

> Choosing a pair of gloves – should they be to the elbow or above it, lemon or pale grey? – ladies stopped; when the sentence was finished something had happened. Something so trifling in single instances that no mathematical instrument, though capable of transmitting shocks in China, could register the vibration; yet in its fullness rather formidable and in its common appeal

emotional; for in all the hat shops and tailors' shops strangers looked at each other and thought of the dead; of the flag; of Empire. In a public-house in a back street a Colonial insulted the House of Windsor, which led to words, broken beer glasses, and a general shindy, which echoed strangely across the way in the ears of girls buying white under-linen threaded with pure white ribbon for their weddings. For the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound.[18]

The seemingly insignificant "surface agitation" caused by the car turns into a "common appeal" that prompts a shared moment of reflection, not simply about the costs of the First World War, but also about the impact of conflict upon the dwindling stability of Britain's self-image as the sovereign hub of Empire. What's important about this appeal is that it cuts across social and gendered divides, if only for a time. Communal impressions of an ordinary event's chain of graver associations produce a collectivizing effect, as a pocket of London is momentarily brought together, if not altogether united, in the transient pathos of reflection on "the dead." By the same token, Woolf registers at the level of language the fact that such momentary bonds between people of different status are vulnerable and fleeting: the repetition of the indefinite pronoun *something*, for instance, implies that although this short episode has touched an overwhelming sentiment, it is also ultimately intangible, only partly grasped by those influenced by it. Form itself thus operates performatively: moving beyond this seemingly localized event, the narration not only depicts but also embodies the augmentations in scale in these progressive compositions – from the war dead, to the nation, to the costs of Empire, which become clear as the scene unfolds. Mobile and fluid, the transpositions in perspective document a protean and provisional sense of collectivity. In this momentary tableau, she captures the dynamics of enlargement pursued throughout the novel from the domestic to the social, from personal routine to shared recognition, from a single household's rudimentary party preparations to a city's fleeting awareness of itself in "profound" post-imperial transition.

Both condensing and emblematizing Britain's "imperial 'without' inside the national 'within,'"[19] in Ian Baucom's phrase, this kind of dramatic profile of London would receive a later modernist rendition in the work of Sam Selvon. *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) approaches the metropolis as "a kind of place where hate and disgust and avarice and malice and sympathy and sorrow and pity all mix up. Is a place where everyone is your enemy and your friend."[20] As is apparent from the velocity of this sentence, which is hurtled along by those recursive conjunctions, Selvon deals with what

Simmel called the "typical dangers" of urban life – in all its "indifference and indiscriminate suggestibility" through narrative manner, mainly through idiom and accent.[21] As Susheila Nasta notes: "using a creolized voice for the language of the narration and dialogue, a voice which transports the calypsonian 'ballads' of his errant island 'boys' to the diamond pavements of Caribbean London, Selvon not only envisioned a new way of reading and writing the city but also exploded some of the narrow and hyphenated categories by which black working-class voices had hitherto been defined."[22] Through its discursive stylization, then, *The Lonely Londoners* incorporates certain facets of cosmopolitan inclusivity, presenting the reader with a vernacular mode that remains an "artificial construction," as Peter Kalliney puts it, but one that is nonetheless "mutually intelligible to West Indians, and with some allowances, to all English speakers."[23]

Intelligibility in comprehension, however, doesn't always translate into social mutuality within the world of the novel itself, just as urban diversity doesn't automatically precipitate interracial rapport. Indeed, the provisional community established by Selvon's cast of Caribbean immigrants under the aegis of Moses – the narrative's center of gravity in some respects, and often its main focalizer – soon falls apart; the "latent antipathy" and "practical antagonism" of Simmel's archetypal urban citizen have transmuted into the built environment itself.[24] They discover "people living in London who don't know what happening in the room next to them, far more the street, or how other people living" (60). This level of individuation seems more conspicuous than social reciprocity or accommodation. In that sense, characters come to experience how "London is a place like that. It divide up in little worlds, and you stay in the world you belong to and you don't know anything about what happening in the other ones except what you read in the papers" (60). Selvon's vision of a self-insulating populace resistant to the cosmopolitanism it otherwise constitutes is uncompromising but not uniformly pessimistic, and in fact the dynamism and variance of the novel's style partly counterbalance the portrayal elsewhere of urban isolation and indifference and predictability.

A kaleidoscopic central episode is one case in point. Comprised of an extended Joycean sequence of unpunctuated reflections, it merges individual selves and behaviors with a panoramic voiceover. This vernacular narrator delineates a sultry, sun-drenched London in a collusive, implicating, second-person mode of address:

> a lot of people in London who cork their ears and wouldn't listen but if they get the chance they do the same thing themselves everybody look like they frustrated in the big city the sex life gone wild you would meet women who

> beg you to go with them one night a Jamaican with a woman in Chelsea in a smart flat with all sorts of surrealistic painting on the walls and contemporary furniture in the G-plan the poor fellar bewildered and asking questions to improve himself because the set-up look like the World of Art but the number not interested in passing on any knowledge she only interested in one thing and in the heat of emotion she call the Jamaican a black bastard though she didn't mean it as an insult but as a compliment under the circumstances but the Jamaican fellar got vex and he stop ... (101)

Reinforced by the galloping syntax, interethnic intimacy and racism interact rapidly and play constantly against the domestic backdrop of avant-garde architecture and painting. Thus Selvon renders in a striking set-piece his vision of a volatile cosmopolitanism, where collectivity and individuality consort and contrast with each other in scenes that mix the presences of high art and demotic culture.

From this unsentimental standpoint, *The Lonely Londoners* teases apart the conflation of multiculturalism and social conviviality. Selvon travels the full stylistic spectrum from erotic lyricism (as in the passage above) to piercing directness, staging fraught confrontations with cultural difference in London as both a precondition of and impediment to acclimation. On this point, Moses is resolute: "Nobody in London does really accept you. They tolerate you, yes, but you can't go in their house and eat or sit down and talk. It ain't have no sort of family life for us here" (126). In its own idiom, then, the novel eloquently orbits Moses's resigned sense that tolerance has turned out to be the disappointing symptom of the city's superficial multiculture:

> Under the kiff-kiff laughter, behind the ballad and the episode, the what-happening, the summer-is-hearts, he could see a great aimlessness, a great restless, swaying movement that leaving you standing in the same spot. As if a forlorn shadow of doom fall on all the spades in the country. As if he could see the black faces bobbing up and down in the millions of white, strained faces, everybody hustling along the Strand, the spades jostling in the crowd, bewildered, hopeless. As if, on the surface, things don't look so bad, but when you go down a little, you bounce up a kind of misery and pathos and a frightening – what? He don't know the right word, but he have the right feeling in his heart. (138–39)

Moses can't quite articulate in "the right word[s]" this ubiquitous yet fissured scene of "jostling" ethnicities, but just so he establishes the urgency of the task Selvon sets himself at the level of narrative discourse. For the novel formally aspires to move beyond the promising "surface" animation of describing the seductive "swaying movement" of multiethnic London in its

effort to enunciate instead an often inexpressible "pathos." This sentiment lies in the realization that multiculturalism is by no means in actuality a guarantor of cosmopolitanism – or a way of withstanding Britain's residual yet resilient nationalism.

Selvon's late modernist "ballad" to a racially "restless" city yields a distinctly unromantic account of the way diversity doesn't automatically furnish hospitality, thereby offering an equivocal depiction of the local ramifications and practical advantages of internationalism. For Selvon's friend and fellow Caribbean novelist, George Lamming, the prospect of Britain fostering worldly ways of thinking and acting is inhibited by the self-insulation of its communities. As he dramatizes it in *The Emigrants* (1954):

> In England nobody notice anybody else. You pass me in the street or sit next to me in the train as I come from a next planet. If you hungry you keep it to yuhself and if you rich the same thing. Nobody ask questions and nobody give answers. You see this the minute you put foot in London. The way houses build was that people doan' have nothing to do with one another.[25]

Lamming's indictment of social factionalism is relentless, but his densely plotted and multiperspectival fiction is at the same time not reducible to the protocols and strategies of social realist critique. Though he undoubtedly remained, as Kalliney points out, "the most fiercely anticolonial intellectual of his generation," Lamming was "neither immune to, nor embarrassed by, the attractions of metropolitan modernism."[26] Such modernist affinities, evident in Lamming's polyphonic array of voices and perspectives, extend also to the modeling of characters. Collis, *The Emigrants*'s melancholic poet, is redolent of a paradigmatic modern-artist-in-exile, and he emerges as the annalist of his uprooted community after the novel reaches and settles in London. Toward the close, Collis occupies the narrative's center of intellection, meditating on the extent to which his fellow migrants have come to resist, or become disillusioned with, their shared "feeling, more conscious in some than others, that England was not only a place, but a heritage" (237). This sense that England "was already part of us," however, is "now coming to an end": the nation for Lamming's dejected observer is "simply a world which we had moved about at random, and on occasions encountered by chance. It was just there like nature, drifting vaguely beyond our reach" (237).

Presenting a cast of characters who hold in view (at least) two disparate geographies, *The Emigrants* subjects Britain to emotional and material comparison. The novel dissolves the idealized prospect, which involves the incomers identifying with England's benign "heritage," into the brute realities

of urban dislocation. But that is not to say that attachments to the metropolis diminish entirely with its demystification. "What it is that a city have," asks Selvon's Moses, "that any place in the world have, that you get so much to like it you wouldn't leave it for anywhere else?" (134). A year after Selvon's iconic novel of resettlement was published, James Baldwin would ask a similar question of himself. Back from Paris in 1957, Baldwin reflected that he "began to see New York in a different way." By adopting a tactic of "seeing beneath the formlessness, in the detail of a cornice, the shape of a window, the movement of stone steps," he delineated in the city "something of that Europe which has spawned it."²⁷ As Baldwin gestures to the legacy of slavery, site-specific perceptions blend immediate impressions with historical excavations. Approaching memory on a personal and national scale, his vigorous nonfiction would inspire later twentieth-century chroniclers of transoceanic dislocation such as Caryl Phillips who, in *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), embarks on his own nomadic account of diasporic history, visiting pivotal locations for the eighteenth-century transport (Liverpool) and eventual enslavement (Charleston) of African people. Like Phillips, Baldwin's creative imperative is to see beyond the appearance of iconic places, to listen "beneath the nearly invincible and despairing noise" of New York, tracing "the sound of many tongues, all struggling for dominance." And these modes of watching and hearing the city anew dovetail with a more personal resolve: "Since I was here to stay, I had to examine it, learn it all over again, and try to find out if I had ever loved it."²⁸

A re-examination and relearning of life in New York following tragic loss defines the narrative challenge of Baldwin's formally ambitious novel, *Another Country* (1962). Equally epic and erotic, its journey follows along divisions familiar within this genre of cosmopolitan modernism: urban cosmopolitanism divides between its spectacular appearance and the reality of racial intolerance on an interpersonal level. For the group of white and African American friends at the center of the novel, New York is always for each side "another country," too; as a collectively judgmental perspective, it is monumentalized into a single discriminatory way of seeing. This visual regime is refracted and distributed through the impersonal glances of passersby: "They encountered the big world when they went out into the Sunday streets. It stared unsympathetically out at them from the eyes of the passing people; and Rufus realized that he had not thought at all about this world and its power to hate and destroy."²⁹ The white Italian Vivaldo – who himself "felt totally estranged from the city in which he had been born," a "city for which he sometimes felt a kind of stony affection because it was all

he knew of home" (60) – accompanies Rufus and Leona, who are accepted when they don't appear as lovers. "Without Vivaldo," however,

> there was a difference in the eyes which watched them. Villagers, both bound and free, looked them over as though where they stood were an auction block or a stud farm. The pale spring sun seemed very hot on the back of his neck and on his forehead. Leona gleamed before him and seemed to be oblivious of everything and everyone but him. And if there had been any doubt concerning their relationship, her eyes were enough to dispel it ... Maybe he was making it all up, maybe nobody gave a damn. Then he raised his eyes and met the eyes of an Italian adolescent. The boy was splashed by the sun falling through the trees. The boy looked at him with hatred; his glance flicked over Leona as though she were a whore; he dropped his eyes slowly and swaggered on – having registered his protest, his backside seemed to snarl, having made his point. (29–30)

They are moving through spaces that should be successfully cosmopolitan, "since this was the Village – the place of liberation – Rufus guessed" (28). Doubting his own doubts that this is the place of liberal sociality that it is supposed to be, Rufus's paranoiac double vision reveals itself in the fiber of Baldwin's syntax. For the increasingly staccato, declarative opening clauses ("the boy ... the boy") enact in their momentum and directness the rapidity and confusions of the interpretive moves Rufus has to make, as it quickly becomes clear that those suspicions about his susceptibility to the city's racist gaze are well founded.

Writing on the social experience of urban cosmopolitanism, Richard Sennett claims, "For Simmel and in a different way for Joyce or Proust, the stranger is a bearer of a new kind of freedom. When you plunge into a crowd of people who cannot be categorized, you are dislodged from your own subjective categories of difference."[30] As we've seen, however, modernist fiction gives a much less glamorous treatment to the promises of cosmopolitanism, all in all, to the positive possibilities of self-displacement through urban encounters with otherness. Detecting a "strange barbarity of manner and custom" behind the apparent conviviality of the crowd, as the Baldwin of *Another Country* describes it, modernist writers remained alert to the "sense of danger and horror barely sleeping beneath the rough, gregarious surface" of even the most diverse metropolises (230). While Simmel characterized the emergent subject of urban modernity as an émigré from established nationalist modes of self-definition, the artistic response of modernists was not always so affirmative, as writers probed the implications of how people may at once "get used to a place," in Anand's terms, "become familiar with it,"

and yet also find that "the fascination of the unknown, the exotic, dominates them."[31] Across the volatile cosmopolitan situations surveyed here, one discovers that the possibility of thinking and acting in recognition of difference is indeed hard-won, since this process often also involves a reinforcing of the very inhibitions, tribalism, and intolerances that coexist with difference and disenfranchisement. These representations register the varying fate of that ideal in the idiosyncratic terms of region or locality, but they do display a constant involvement with this value of the urban imaginary. Even when modernist writers chose to "take the inward way," as Dorothy Richardson once called it,[32] they continued to look outward and gain traction on that "rough, gregarious surface" of social, cosmopolitan life.

Notes

1 "An Interview with Zadie Smith," *PBS*, www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/teeth/ei_smith_int.html.
2 Rebecca L. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 29, 28.
3 Janet Lyon, "Cosmopolitanism and Modernism," in Mark Wollaeger and Matt Eatough (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 387–412 (at 387, 388).
4 Gayle Rogers, "Jiménez, Modernism/o, and the Languages of Comparative Modernist Studies," *Comparative Literature*, 66/1 (2014), 127–47 (at 131, 128).
5 Ibid., 132.
6 Ibid., 129.
7 Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), trans. Hans Gerth (1950), repr. in *Simmel on Culture*, ed. David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1997), 184.
8 Ibid., 176.
9 James Joyce, "Eveline," *Dubliners*, ed. Jeri Johnson (1914; Oxford University Press, 2008), 23. Hereafter cited parenthetically.
10 Richard Begam, "Joyce's Trojan Horse: *Ulysses* and the Aesthetics of Decolonization," in Richard Begam and Michael Valdez Moses (eds.), *Modernism and Colonialism: British and Irish Literature, 1899–1939* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 185–208 (at 188, 186).
11 Lyon, "Cosmopolitanism and Modernism," 397.
12 Toral Jatin Gajarawala, *Untouchable Fictions: Literary Realism and the Crisis of Caste* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 72.
13 Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable* (1935; London: Penguin, 2014), 34.
14 Mulk Raj Anand, *Conversations in Bloomsbury* (1981; New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 93.

15 Jessica Berman, *Modernist Commitments: Ethics, Politics, and Transnational Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 109.

16 Virginia Woolf, "The Novels of Turgenev," *Collected Essays*, 4 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1966–67), vol. 1, 249.

17 Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style*, 82.

18 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, ed. David Bradshaw (Oxford University Press, 2000), 15.

19 Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 55.

20 Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956; London: Penguin, 2006), 27. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

21 Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 179.

22 Susheila Nasta, "Introduction," in Selvon, *Lonely Londoners*, vi.

23 Peter J. Kalliney, *Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 137.

24 Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 179.

25 George Lamming, *The Emigrants* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 74. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

26 Kalliney, *Commonwealth of Letters*, 134.

27 James Baldwin, *No Name in the Street* (London: Michael Joseph, 1972), 51.

28 Ibid.

29 James Baldwin, *Another Country* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 27. Hereafter cited parenthetically.

30 Richard Sennett, "Cosmopolitanism and the Social Experience of Cities," in Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (eds.), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 42–47 (at 43).

31 Anand, *Untouchable*, 66.

32 Dorothy Richardson, "Letter to P. Beaumont Wadsworth," April 30, 1923, in *Windows on Modernism: Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson*, ed. Gloria G. Fromm (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 68.

Modernism and the New Global Imaginary

A Tale of Two Modernisms: From Latin America to Europe and Back Again

RUBÉN GALLO

Critical and literary exchanges between Latin America and the rest of the world are often haunted by the question: *which* modernism? In Spain and Spanish America, the Spanish term "modernismo" refers to a school of nineteenth-century poetry launched by the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío with the publication of *Azul* in 1888; it includes the Cuban Julián del Casal and the Uruguayan Julio Herrera y Reissig, among others. Curiously, Spanish-American *modernismo* has very little to do with Anglo-American modernism. The Latin American movement was much closer to nineteenth-century romanticism or French Symbolism, and was characterized by an interest in the exotic, usually derived from French orientalist models, a deep focus on individual passions, especially melancholic moods, and a formal model based on traditional rhyme, including sonnets and verses in *endecasílabos*. The Real Academia's dictionary defines the movement as "seeking the creation of a refined world . . . and an openness to other cultures, especially exotic ones."

Around the turn of the last century, Latin American poets rebelled against what they perceived as an exhausted model. Mocking Rubén Darío's passion for including swans and other beautiful birds in his poems, the Mexican Enrique González Martínez urges readers to "twist the swan's neck" and abandon the received ideas of *modernismo* ("Tuércele el cuello al cisne," 1911). This once controversial verse became the rallying cry of a new movement called *post-modernismo* (not to be confused with postmodernism), which called for a poetic renewal and a new aesthetics.

There were several other movements that bore the name *modernismo*. In Barcelona, the architectural experiments launched by Antoni Gaudí in

the 1880s are usually called Catalan *modernismo*. And historians of Spanish-American religion use *modernismo* to refer to a turn-of-the-last-century effort to reconcile Catholic dogma with modern philosophical and scientific theories. Most of these movements ended by 1920, when a wave of literary experimentation introduced a new series of currents that had much in common with Anglo-American modernism: ultraísmo in Spain and Argentina (Borges was an early member), Estridentismo and the creations of Los Contemporáneos in Mexico, the singular poetic creations of César Vallejo in Peru, and the wild racial writings of Luis Palés Matos in Puerto Rico and Nicolás Guillén in Cuba. In Spanish, most of these movements are usually classified under the label "modernos" (modern) or "vanguardias" (avant-gardes), but many of them are closer to the sensibilities of a Marcel Proust, a T.S. Eliot, or an Ezra Pound, and thus they have a close connection to Anglo-American modernism. Portugal and Brazil avoided these nominal confusions. In the Portuguese-speaking world, *modernismo* refers to the literary and artistic movement launched at São Paolo's Semana de Arte Moderna (Modern Art Week) in 1922 and led by the poets Mario and Oswald de Andrade, among others.

The disjunction among these different *modernismos* and their Anglo-American counterparts is itself a modernist phenomenon, characterized by fragmentation, geographic dislocation, and a temporal discontinuity between past and present, backward- and forward-looking gestures. The temporal and geographic abyss between the two continents opens up a quintessentially modern space for theoretical inquiry. If *modernismo* and modernism were ever brought together – say, by compiling an anthology of poems from various Latin American *modernismos* for an Anglo-American readership – the resulting volume would read very much like Eliot's *The Waste Land* or Pound's *Cantos*: it would show a series of works from the past that are woven to create a new, contemporary text.

In this literary history, those non-modernist *modernismos* lead us to the more recognizably bona-fide Latin American modernisms. Rather than providing an exhaustive list of all the various movements that erupted in the Americas, showing the fronts of the modernist revolution in locations ranging from Buenos Aires to Mexico City, I will focus on three figures who exemplify this new hemispheric temper most significantly and who left a definitive mark on Latin American literature of the early twentieth century. These modernist masters are the Brazilian Mário de Andrade, the Mexican Salvador Novo, and the Cuban Nicolás Guillén.

Brazilian Modernism: Writing Machines

In the 1920s, Mário de Andrade (1893–1945) was a young writer inspired by European avant-garde movements who aspired to launch a modern literary revolution in the Americas. He sought to break with the nineteenth-century literary tradition in Brazil, which privileged an imitation of European forms, by combining modern literary forms with an interest in the peculiarities of Brazilian history. In the same year as the Semana de Arte Moderna was launched, he identified the typewriter as an eloquent symbol of the new literature. Andrade devoted a poem – "Máquina de Escrever" ("Typewriter," 1922), later included in *Losango caqui* (1924) – to the writing machine, the modern instrument that fascinated writers of all schools and aesthetic persuasions. Writers from around the world had focused on this machine as an eloquent symbol of the textual work in the age of mechanical writing: Mark Twain was the first writer to submit a typescript to his editor; Theodora Bosanquet, Henry James's secretary, recalls that the novelist became addicted to the clicking sounds made by her typewriter as he dictated; Eliot featured a typist as one of the most memorable characters of *The Waste Land*; the Spanish poet Pedro Salinas devoted the poem "Underwood Girls" to his typewriter's keys; and Cocteau wrote a play, *La machine à écrire*, based on the same instrument.

Not all writers were enthusiastic about this new invention, however. In his seminar on Parmenides, which we will revisit later, Heidegger denounced the typewriter as a dehumanizing invention. And Mariano Azuela, the foremost novelist of the Mexican Revolution, depicted the typewriter as a cold, industrial, and ultimately useless machine that was out of place in a poor country like Mexico (even though he had used a typewriter to finish *The Underdogs* during the armed conflict).

Andrade's "Máquina de Escrever" belongs to this long line of modernist writing devoted to the typewriter. But his poem goes deeper than most texts by presenting a theory and praxis of mechanical writing, as we can see in the opening verses:

B D G Z, Reminton	[B D G Z, Reminton
Pra todas as cartas da gente.	For all the letters we type
Éco mecânico	Mechanical echo
De sentimentos rápidos batidos.[1]	of swiftly typed passions]

These verses constitute one of the most radically unorthodox opening stanzas in the history of Latin American poetry; the first verse does not even

begin with words, but merely with marks left by the type-bars after an anonymous operator has pressed several keys at random. There is no meaning in the characters "B D G Z": they are not the representation of something but the trace of a mechanical event, indexical marks left behind by the moving parts of a machine.

The opening characters – "B D G Z," pronounced "Beh Deh Jeh Zeh" in Portuguese – are onomatopoeic transcriptions of industrial clatter. Andrade thus puts to practice both the futurist call for introducing noise into literature and the Estridentista project for a writing punctuated by anti-aesthetic stridencies. And this inaugural industrial clatter is only the first step in a complex poetic project that reflects, and is shaped by, the typewriter's mechanical underpinnings. A close reading of this poem will allow us to pinpoint its dialogues with other contemporary modernist works.

The opening verse, "B D G Z Reminton," expressively demonstrates how the typewriter transformed writing. Few of Andrade's readers have realized that the Remington in the first verse is misspelled: it is not a Remington but a *Reminton*, a play on the typographical errors that were introduced by type-writers, and which conservative writers in the early years of the twentieth century often took as troubling symptoms of the degradation of writing brought about by machines. Andrade's "Reminton" is not just a typo, however, but a demonstration of how machines can transform writing (it is also a refutation of Blaise Cendrars's assertion that "Never has a typewriter made a ... spelling mistake").[2]

In "Reminton" the brand name lacks the letter "g," a letter that seems to have been purloined from the illustrious name of the American arms manufacturer. There is no "g" in "Reminton," but there is a "G" in the middle of "B D G Z," the sequence of letters immediately preceding the word "Reminton." The letter "g," it turns out, is not missing; it has merely been displaced from its expected location between the "n" in "Remin" and the "t" in "ton" to a more enigmatic location between the "B D" and the "Reminton."

The tale of misplaced "g" illustrates one of the ways in which the use of a machine can transform writing: in contrast to the flow of handwriting, typing requires the operator to mentally break words into individual letters, and to press the corresponding keys one at a time. In the modern era, words must be assembled serially out of discrete letters, like objects on an assembly line. As Kittler writes, the typewriter transforms letters into "selection[s] from a countable, spatialized supply" and the writing process becomes "manipula-tions of permutation and combination."[3]

Critics of modernity looked with horror at the serialization that character-ized typewriting, a process that treated words like mass-produced, industrial commodities. The philosopher Heidegger admonished his students that the typewriter not only "tears writing from the essential realm of the hand," but also ultimately "degrades the word."[4] The typewriter not only separates writing from the human hand; it also separates words into individual letters that must be typed serially. Like pictorialist photographers, Heidegger con-sidered handcrafted creations superior to their mechanical counterparts.

Andrade, however, has no misgivings about treating words like industrial objects on an assembly line, but, on the contrary, is quite amused by the process. The verse "B D G Z Reminton" not only demonstrates how the typewriter must break words into individual letters and imprint them serially on the paper. It also achieves a more lighthearted effect: it tropicalizes the Anglo-Saxon and – at least for Portuguese speakers – unpronounceable "Remington" into a Latin-seeming and transculturated "Reminton." The g-less *Reminton* is a Remington parading in Brazilian drag, a playful writing machine that has stripped itself of any association with the American arms manufacturer: it stands as an emblem of Latin American modernism, a tropicalized recasting of the technological modernity that inspired American and European modernisms.

Andrade's poem goes on to consider another way in which the typewriter has transformed writing: the machine standardizes texts, depriving them of the subjective marks associated with handwriting. Heidegger lamented that "the typewriter makes everyone look the same,"[5] but Andrade finds much to celebrate in the uniformity of mechanically produced typescript:

> Igualdade maquinal,
> Amor odio, tristeza...
> E os sorrisos de ironia
> Pra todas as cartas de gente...
> Os malevolos e os presidentes da Republica
> Escrevendo com a mesma letra...
> Igualdade
> Liberdade
> Fraternité, point.
> Unificação de todas as mãos... [6]

> [Mechanical equality,
> Love hate sadness
> And ironical smiles
> For all the letters of the world

> Hoodlums and presidents
> All write using the same typeface
> Equality
> Freedom
> Fraternité, point.
> Unification of all hands. . .]

In Andrade's poem, the standardization of writing is not, as Heidegger had suspected, a symptom of the degradation of human nature in the industrial age, but, on the contrary, a "mechanical equality" fraught with revolutionary potential. The uniformity of typescript banishes all traces of the writer's social class and exerts a democratic influence on texts, making a president's letter indistinguishable from one written by a hoodlum. The typewriter has the potential to spark a revolution in the republic of letters by ensuring "liberty, equality, and fraternity" for all letter writers – a radical proposition that would culminate with the "unification of all hands." Andrade's poem becomes a manifesto proclaiming the internationalization not of labor but of typing, and it invites the reader to participate in the socialist battle-cry of mechanical writing. Typists of the world, unite!

Andrade demonstrates that the typewriter has transformed not only the layout and appearance of letters but the essence of writing itself. His poem enacts a standardization of literature that abolishes all differences between high and low culture, between poetry and popular textual practices.

In the last section of "Máquina de Escrever," Andrade describes another peculiarity of his Remington keyboard. The machine – probably the Remington portable, a 4-bank machine introduced in 1920 – did not have a key for typing an exclamation mark ("!"). Instead, operators were required to assemble this character by typing an apostrophe (" ' "), then backspacing, and finally typing a period (" . ") so that it would fall directly under the apostrophe to create a composite exclamation mark (this process can be represented by the following equation: ' + . = !). A "commotion" ensues because Andrade "forgot" to backspace, and thus ended up with two individual, sequential characters: an apostrophe followed by a period (" '. "). The result is a dangling apostrophe resembling "a falling tear" (a mechanical secretion, since the author acknowledges that he had "shed no tears") and "a period after the tear."[7]

This curious procedure demonstrates that the typewriter required the operator not only to assemble words out of individual letters but also to piece together characters out of the existing keys. This taylorization of

language would have horrified Heidegger, since the chopping of words that he associated with the typewriter has now been extended to the characters themselves. Andrade, however, has no qualms about using his Remington for such a lighthearted, mechanical dismemberment of characters.

In his exploration of the typewriter and its impact on poetry, Andrade goes much deeper than any of his modernist peers. Eliot was mostly interested in the dehumanizing effects of the machine on a woman who spends all day typing; Salinas plays on thinking of the machine's keyboard as a company of girls; Cocteau suggests a link between "machine à écrire" and "machine infernale." Andrade, in contrast, deploys numerous strategies – from the inclusion of indexical typestrokes to the mechanogenic passages celebrating the discovery of new typewriter keys. He is exploring the different avenues open for creating a new form of typewritten poetry. His poem is to the typewriter what Marinetti's "Zang-Tuum-Tumb" is to radio.

Mexican Modern: Salvador Novo and Radio

While Mário de Andrade was busy typing away in São Paolo, a very young Mexican poet celebrated the new technology of wireless radio transmission and tuned in to global modernity. Salvador Novo is one of the most extraordinary – and least known, at least in an international context – modernist figures. He was born around the turn of the last century, lived through the Mexican Revolution during his teens, and emerged as one of his country's leading intellectual forces in the 1920s. By the time he was in his early twenties, Novo had learned English, French, and German, and he devoted himself to reading modern writers and thinkers from around the world. He published articles on Proust in *Contemporáneos*, a literary review he helped found and which became the most important literary journal in Mexico; reviewed Freud's publications and embarked in a self-analysis; befriended John Dos Passos and accompanied him on a tour of the Mexican countryside;[8] and published articles on Eliot, André Gide, and many other modernist figures. Octavio Paz once wrote that what characterized Novo's life and work was a "fundamental desire to be modern" (Novo, who was not known for his modesty, put it more succinctly and presented himself as "Un Proust que vive en México" – a Mexican Proust). Like most of his literary heroes – Gide, Proust, Cocteau – Novo preached a kind of homo-modernism, affirming homosexual identity as a fundamentally modern experience (and modernity as a specifically gay-friendly development).

Like many of his modernist peers, Novo became fascinated by modern machines and especially by their impact on writing. He loved automobiles and the chauffeurs who drove them – a passion he shared with Proust – and most of his writings celebrate the modern metropolis that Mexico City had become by 1930: a bustling urban space filled with automobiles, tramways, and masses of pedestrians. Out of the dozens of texts he devoted to modern phenomena, his writings on radio stand out as his most original contribution.

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw the rise of radio broadcast around the world – a phenomenon that intrigued modern writers. F.T. Marinetti was the first to meditate on how this new invention could serve poets: words – the poet's medium – were transformed into electromagnetic impulses and broadcast invisibly around the world though Hertzian waves. Marinetti urged poets to take a cue from radio and "cut the wires" so they could exercise a "wireless imagination." The first "Manifesto of Futurism" (1909) sparked a worldwide interest in this new medium and its literary possibilities: Rudolf Arnheim devoted an entire theoretical treatise to analyzing the medium (*Radio*, 1935), while Walter Benjamin and Samuel Beckett experimented with radio plays. Apollinaire devoted one of the inaugural *calligrammes* to wireless broadcast, and poets from Blaise Cendrars to the Mexican Estridentista wrote poems about radio.

From the time he was in his early twenties, Novo had participated actively in radio literature. In 1924, one year after the opening of the first radio station in Mexico City, he founded a literary journal called *Antena* and went on the airwaves to read a "Radio-conferencia sobre el radio" (Radio-lecture on radio), marveling at the powers of the new medium to broadcast his voice around the world and to bring his message into the living rooms of thousands of listeners he did not know. "Señoras y señores que me escucháis," he began, "No sabría explicar la emoción que se intercala en mi garganta al considerar que mi voz se escucha, débil como es, en el confín lejano, por magia de la ciencia" ("Ladies and gentlemen who are listening, I can scarcely find the words to express the emotion that chokes me at the thought of my voice being heard, however faintly, across the far distance, thanks to the magic of science").[9]

Novo continued to think about radio throughout the 1920s, all while publishing on modern writers from Joyce to Proust. In 1934 he published his most sophisticated article on the subject, "Meditaciones sobre el radio," a text that brings together radio and Freud. This remarkable essay evokes Walter Benjamin's article on mechanical reproduction, and its subtitle could well be "The Work of Art in the Age of Wireless Transmission."

The essay opens by presenting media as extensions of bodily organs. Novo points out that the most interesting inventions are those extending the powers of the eyes and the ear: the telescope, the microscope, the telephone, the telegraph, and radio. He then offers a succinct but revealing "biography of radio":

> Radio emerged as the climax of a series of scientific attempts to transmit sound over long distances, from the telegraph and the telephone to the gramophone, with successive improvements such as tubes, discs, and "orthophonics". A fast learner like all of today's "precocious kids," at barely ten years old it has replaced lead sulfide with bulbs; it can fit into a pocket, dominate the grandest living room or lull our siesta from the bedside table; it rides with us in the car, allows a Minister in his office to hear the abuse hurled against him in Congress, and drives us crazy in restaurants. Lastly, by virtue of an inexplicable – to me, of course – paradox of nomenclature, it offers a "short wave" for aural coverage of the farthest distance, and a "long wave" for listening to nearby stations. And as though this weren't enough, enhancements are coming in the form of television. Nothing can surprise us any longer. Ever since the nineteenth century, we have been living with miracles.[10]

Like Walter Benjamin in his writings on technology, Novo pays particular attention to the ways in which new inventions have transformed all aspects of life and especially the means of communication. Along with modernist writers from Proust to Dos Passos, Novo considered new technologies a perfect lens to understand both modernist aesthetics and modern life.

As part of this brief history of radio, Novo spends several pages analyzing the effects of broadcasting on language. He develops an important distinction between the "words" (*palabras*) uttered by a speaker and his "voice," which is colored by an array of tones, modulations, and eccentricities that are lost when words are written down. Words, he writes, serve to express ideas, but they can only be understood by those who speak the language in which they are uttered; voice, on the other hand, functions like music, a universal language to transmit emotions. The affects communicated by the voice, he believes, are more remote, more primitive, and more universal than the rational meaning conveyed by words. In the history of civilization, noise and music were the most ancient means of communication; only later did man invent words "for his comfort." But we still retain "intact, the primitive treasure of reacting not to words but to voice."[11]

Novo then links this opposition between words and voice to two fundamental concepts in psychoanalytic theory. "To use the language of

Freudians," he writes, "we could say that [man's] conscious mind – the ego – is full of words, while his unconscious – the *id* – is full of noises that can slip past the censorship of consciousness when we are overcome by emotion." Cries, screams, and other spontaneous interjections communicate primeval affects emanating from the *id*, which overpower the words issued from consciousness. Novo observes that a person's voice – and not physical looks – tends to shape our unconscious perception and often determines whether we consider him pleasant or unpleasant, since "it is the tone of the voice which is put at the disposal . . . of the unconscious." The voice has the power to make a strong psychic impression, and its pitch and tone often work against the conscious message conveyed by words:

> Someone pleasant to look at can become hateful when talking, even if his words are attractive in themselves. And no matter how hard and hostile the words of an ugly person, we might nevertheless sense the treasure of a kindred subconscious from their voice alone. The power of "tone" over word (of subconscious over conscious language) has long ago been demonstrated, in numberless examples.[12]

To my knowledge, Novo was the first Freudian among Mexican modernist poets. As this quotation shows, he saw himself as a cultural analyst determined to probe the cultural psyche in search of elusive unconscious elements. Just as he considered the "voice," with its unconscious elements, much more interesting than the ego-based words, his essays and autobiographical writings – most notably *The Statue of Salt* – privilege all forms of psychic activity that offer to reveal a person's unconscious desires, fears, and associations: dreams, slips of the tongue, fantasies, and erotic life. In most of his written work – from poetry to essays – Novo would put writing at the service of recording the unconscious – an ambition he shared with André Breton, though his technique was markedly different: instead of "automatic writing," Novo sought to put writing at the service of a self-analysis. This interest in a subterranean eros links him to Proust: both writers put modernist forms at the service of an eroticism that was decidedly modern.

In addition to his observations about voice and words, Novo uses the language of psychoanalysis to theorize another characteristic of broadcasting. Like neurosis, he observes, radio offers the possibility of escaping the world: it is "an invisible form of Jacob's ladder allowing the sick man, the neurotic, or even the chambermaid to flee their immediate reality."[13] Radio is an inherently neurotic medium, and listening to its programs for too long is one of the "new maladies of the soul" unleashed by modernity.[14]

Novo elaborates on Freud's remark – in *Civilization and its Discontents* – that modern media function as extensions of our organs and emerge as the "prosthetic gods" of twentieth-century modernity. He seeks to isolate the characteristics distinguishing radio from other media, and in the process he arrives at some of the same conclusions as the most celebrated theorists of the time, from Rudolf Arnheim to André Coeuroy: that it is a blind medium ("the radio listener," he writes, "becomes blind and mute"); that this temporary blindness takes listeners to a "heightened aural perception," leaving them "ready to vibrate at the most minor stimulus without the need for words";[15] and that the microphone amplifies the accidents and tics of announcers, transforming them into unforgivable blunders.

But Novo's most original contribution to the understanding of the medium comes with his use of psychoanalytic concepts. He anticipates by three decades the quality that Roland Barthes called "the grain of the voice," and his distinction between words and voice prefigures Julia Kristeva's theory of poetic language. Novo's theory of voice as the most important feature of radio transmission, surpassing the meaning of words, corresponds to Kristeva's account of how the semiotic register, punctuated by rhythm and musicality, is in constant tension against the symbolic register and its Cartesian elements.[16] Along the same lines, modernist authors from Antonin Artaud to Samuel Beckett used their radio plays to broadcast eerie human voices colored by powerful emotions that transcend the meaning of the words uttered. Artaud, for instance, staged the breakdown of language in his *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (1947): words eventually give way to a series of primal screams, drum beatings, and "glosso-lalias."[17] Orson Welles exploited the illusion of reality and immediacy produced by a chummy announcer to fool his listeners in *The War of the Worlds*. And in plays like *Embers* and *Cascando*, Beckett experimented with novel techniques for emphasizing the blind condition of radio listeners and intensifying their sense of disorientation. Novo was more interested in theorizing these kinds of experimental language practices than in incorporating them into his poetic work: his readers would be hard pressed to find a poem that puts into practice the radical experiments with voice discussed in his essays.

One other author who made a connection between radio and the uncon-scious is the French critic André Coeuroy, who, in a short article from the 1920s, compared the night sky, filled with invisible radio waves, to the unconscious: like the unconscious, it was full of messages that were inaccess-ible to our perception. And if the technique of free association allows us furtive glimpses of the unconscious, then radio receivers allow us to tap into tiny fragments of the vast universe of radio communications.

Novo used his radio writings to tune in to the global modernism that fascinated him. He lived in Mexico City and did not travel often, but modernist literature became a radio apparatus of sorts for him: he could read and tune in to the latest literary and poetic movements in New York, Paris, London, Vienna, and Berlin. In line with Bertolt Brecht's calls for a "two-way apparatus of communication," Novo perhaps hoped that this kind of cultural broadcast would function both ways – from the world to Mexico and from Mexico to the world – but, as Brecht observed, the problem with radio communication is that it flows only one way.[18] This was a crucial development in Mexican modernism: the revolution (1910–20) had isolated Mexico from the rest of the world, and during the 1920s Novo and other like-minded writers experimented with cosmopolitan strategies to link their work to the literary scenes in the rest of the world.

In any case, Novo's radiophonic aesthetics were crucial in shaping the literary sensibilities of Mexican modernist writers. His passion for modern inventions, unconscious life, and experimental erotics cast a decisive influence on an entire generation of Mexican poets, among whom Octavio Paz is perhaps the best-known figure. Paz's interest in surrealism, in the connection between eroticism and poetry, and in a cosmopolitan modernity can be easily traced back to his early readings of Novo and the other poets – Xavier Villaurrutia, Gilberto Owen, Jorge Cuesta – associated with the Contemporáneos group.

Cuban Modernism: Nicolás Guillén and the *Bongó*

From Mexico City to Buenos Aires, modern poets embraced machines as symbols of an elusive modernity they yearned to grasp. Automobiles, typewriters, radios, cameras, and film projectors dominate much of the poetry written in the first three decades of the twentieth century. One notable exception is Cuba, a small island that became one of the foremost centers of literary and artistic experimentation in the Americas starting in the 1920s (and continuing through most of the century: Cuba's importance in Latin America and the world increased dramatically after the 1959 Revolution).

Cuba was always an outlier in Latin American history. It was one of the first countries to be settled by the Spanish conquistadors and the last in the region to gain its independence (in 1898 – almost seventy years after Mexico, Argentina, and Chile). During the nineteenth century it was one of the most industrialized countries in the Americas and it was home to one of the first railway lines in Latin America. The production and export of sugar made it

one of the wealthiest nations in Latin America until the Great Depression plunged the island into generalized poverty and chaos in the 1930s.

In Latin American literary history, Cuba has played a major role in shaping literary and cultural debates in the region. This story begins with the writings of José Martí in the second half of the nineteenth century, and continues today with the passionate, often violent debates about the merits and shortcomings of the Cuban Revolution. In earlier stages of this hemispheric and global interaction, and especially during the 1920s and 1930s, modern poets in Cuba developed an extremely productive dialogue with modernist writers from around the world.

Like their Mexican, Brazilian, Peruvian, and Argentinean counterparts, young Cuban poets tuned in to the literary productions of a global modernity. The journal *Revista de avance* – the first issue appeared in 1927, in the midst of the modernist boom – became a forum for translating and exchanging views on the most recent publications from Madrid, Paris, London, and New York. As in the case of the Mexican Contemporáneos, the Cuban writers who participated in this journal – Alejo Carpentier, Juan Marinello, and Jorge Mañach, among others – were especially interested in the work of Proust, Eliot, and Pound.

The most original Cuban poet of this generation was Nicolás Guillén (1902–89), an Afro-Cuban from a working-class background. While many of his contemporaries were seduced by the mirage of modernity, Guillén used his poetry to explore the past and delve into the origins of Cuban culture. He was especially interested in exploring Afro-Cuban history and experience, and his poems stage one of the first attempts to translate Afro-Cuban speech into a literary form.

Guillén has often been compared to Aimée Césaire as a bard of *négritude*, but his project seems closer, in many respects, to Eliot's or Pound's poetic meditations on the relationship between history and literature. His interest in Cuban roots also recalls the modernist fascination with ancient cultures (Eliot's interest in Sanskrit and Hindu myths; André Breton's celebration of Mexico as a surrealist homeland; Dalí's and Picasso's use of African figures), and the apparently paradoxical belief that one way to be modern was to look backward into the origins of civilization.

Guillén's first two books sparked a revolution in Cuban letters. *Motivos de son* (1930) and *Sóngoro cosongo* (1931) broke with literary tradition by introducing motifs taken from popular music into poetry – one of the first attempts in global literature to question the separation between high and low cultures. "Son" is a traditional Cuban musical form, developed mostly

by Afro-Cubans, and accompanied by the beatings of a *bongó*, a Cuban drum. As Elena de Costa writes, "The *son* form which predominates in this volume, is one of the basic forms of Cuban music, containing African and Spanish elements, accompanied by guitar, its relative the *tres*, with three pairs of strings, which imitates the rhythm, bass, bongo drums, maracas, *claves* ... and trumpet."[19] Guillén recognized the lyrics of these *sones* – which often recount the various woes endured by the singer – as a model for modern poetry: language has been stripped down to its most essential elements (in a gesture that corresponds to Marinetti's instructions to would-be futurist poets), and simplicity marks rhymes, structure, and melody. This reduction to fundamentals returns poetry to the staging area of an identifiably new, particularly modernist, art. In addition, Guillén became interested in the black vernacular – often consisting of African words or expressions inserted into Spanish syntax – that was often employed in *sones*.

In line with a number of nineteenth-century Cuban poets, Guillén followed Walt Whitman's ambition to write a poetry that copied the rhythms and intonations of everyday speech. He took this project a step further, however, and wrote poems that can be read as *sones*. These compositions are so rhythmical that many of them have been set to music by composers like Paco Ibáñez and the group Quilapayún. Thus "Canto negro," one of the poems included in *Sóngoro cosongo*, opens with a bombastic stanza, as surprising for English-speaking readers as it first was for Cuban readers in 1931:

> ¡Yambambó, yambambé!
> Repica el congo solongo,
> repica el negro bien negro;
> congo solongo del Songo
> baila yambó sobre un pie.[20]

"Yambambó" and "yambabé" are Afro-Cuban interjections derived from "yambó," the name of a popular dance. "Congo," "solongo," and "Songo" are terms that evoke another dance form (the "conga"). All of these are interspersed with two Spanish verbs: "repica" (to toll) – suggesting that the "congo solongo" and the "negro bien negro" (very black black) are as sonorous as bells – and "baila" (to dance). As in much modernist poetry, the referents are less important than the materiality of the words used. By reading this poem out loud, the reader turns himself into a musical instrument, using his hips and tongue to produce the melodies of an unusual *son*.

Guillén was aware that this kind of formal experimentation could very easily be assimilated into the facile exoticism that plagued much modern poetry. One of the poems in *Sóngoro cosongo* criticizes the naïve European fascination with African cultures and clearly marks his differences with this trend:

> Y ahora que Europa se desnuda
> para tostar su carne al sol
> y busca en Harlem y en La Habana
> jazz y son
> lucirse negro mientras aplaude el bulevar,
> y frente a la envidia de los blancos
> hablar en negro de verdad.[21]

> [And now that Europe has stripped down
> to sunbathe its flesh
> and searches in Harlem and Havana
> jazz and *son*
> show off black man while the street audience applauds
> and make the white men envious
> by speaking true black]

With a brilliant image, Guillén assimilates well-intentioned intellectuals interested in African cultures to sunbathing tourists: just as Europeans flock to the tropics to revel in the sun, intellectuals visit Harlem and Havana in search of poetic local color. Guillén was probably thinking as well about some currents of mainstream European or American modernism, in which artists holiday in the exotic otherness of a cultivated primitivism. He, in contrast, intends to speak "true black" ("hablar en negro de verdad"). How, the reader wonders, is this to be done?

One of the poems in which Guillén speaks "true black" is "Tú no sabe inglé" (You know no English), a composition that plays on a single phrase spoken with a heavy Afro-Cuban accent. Working-class Cubans tend to drop the endings of words, especially when they end in "s." Thus a phrase that would be spelled correctly as "Tú no sabes inglés" (You don't know English) sounds like "Tú no sabe inglé" when it is spoken on the street. The entire poem reads:

> Con tanto inglé que tú sabía,
> Bito Manué,
> con tanto inglé, no sabe ahora
> desí ye.

La mericana te buca,
y tú le tiene que huí:
tu inglé era de etrái guan,
de etrái guan y guan tu tri.

Bito Manué, tú no sabe inglé,
tú no sabe inglé,
tú no sabe inglé.

No te namore ma nunca.
Bito Manué,
si no sabe inglé,
si no sabe inglé.[22]

The poem plays on other peculiarities of the Cuban street dialect: Vs are pronounced as Bs, Ls tend to be silent, and English words are invariably Cubanized. Thus "Víctor Manuel" – the person apostrophized in the text – is spelled "Bito Manué," "yes" becomes "ye," "strike one" appears as "etrái guan," and "one two three" as "guan tu tri." In translation, the message seems quite simple: "You used to speak such good English / Víctor Manuel / but now you can't even say 'yes' / the American woman is looking for you / but you have to run away / your English was only good for saying 'strike one' and 'one two three' / Víctor Manuel / you don't know no English / You don't know no English / Don't ever fall in love again / Víctor Manuel / if you know no English / if you know no English."

Guillén's project has been compared to that of the Harlem Renaissance, but a poem like "Tú no sabe inglé" could be included in an anthology of futurist writing: Marinetti recommended liberating writing by simplifying syntax, removing adjectives and adverbs, and using verbs in the infinitive – and this is similar to what Guillén accomplishes in his text. These verses could also be compared to Pound's experiment with bridging the gap between pronunciation and spelling by introducing such terms as "kulchur."

A final element in Guillén's poetry links it to other modernist texts of its time. Just as writers from Apollinaire to Proust to Pound sought to use writing to reflect on the experience of war trauma, Guillén linked poetic innovation to an analysis of the most painful moments in Cuban history and especially to the Afro-Cuban struggle for emancipation, independence, and equal rights. In "Caña" (Sugarcane), four telegraphic stanzas succinctly convey the violence suffered by Afro-Cubans through the centuries:

El negro
junto al cañaveral.

El yanqui
sobre el cañaveral.

La tierra
bajo el cañaveral.

¡Sangre
que se nos va!

The poem made such an impression on Langston Hughes that he translated it into English ("I had written poems about the exploitation of Cuba by the sugar barons and I had translated many poems of Nicholás [sic] Guillén," Hughes recalled):

Negro
In the cane fields.
White man
Above the cane fields.
Earth
Beneath the cane fields.
Blood
That flows from us.[23]

By presenting merely two variations on the phrase "El negro junto al cañaveral" ("the black man next to the sugarcane field"), the poet evokes Cuba's colonial history and its dependence on African slaves. After the abolition of slavery in the late nineteenth century and Cuban independence in 1902, the land changed hands – the landowners were now American and not Spanish – but the power dynamics remained the same. The last stanza uses four words to present a powerful image: the soil in the sugarcane plantation has been irrigated with the blood of countless black workers.

In the Cuban canon, Guillén is remembered more for his politics than for his modernist innovations. In the 1930s he joined the Communist Party and after the Cuban Revolution he became the regime's official poet until his death in 1989. He was a politicized modernist, like the Chilean Pablo Neruda or the Peruvian César Vallejo. Nevertheless, his poetic experiments of the 1930s created unsuspected links between Afro-Cuban poetry and international modernist figures, among whom Langston Hughes was the most vocal admirer.

Conclusion

Andrade, Novo, and Guillén: this small sampling illustrates the diversity of Latin American modernisms in the 1920s and 1930s. Andrade and Novo were fascinated by modernity and by machines; Guillén, in contrast, was inspired by Cuban history and by the Afro-Cuban experience. Andrade and Novo looked toward the future while Guillén preferred to cast a backward glance (in this respect, he could be classified as an "arrière-garde" figure, to use the term introduced by William Marx in his writings on the history of the avant-garde).[24] All three figures deployed many of the modernist literary techniques and tropes familiar to their Anglo-American peers – fragmentation, temporal disjunction, a re-evaluation of history and the canon – though they did so with an unusually upbeat spirit (which we can see even in Guillén as he is dealing with one of the darkest episodes of Cuban history).

Notes

1 Mário de Andrade, "Máquina de Escrever," *Obras completas de Mário de Andrade* (São Paolo: Livraria Martins Editôra, 1966), 70.

2 Quoted in Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 39.

3 Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks: 1800/1900* (Stanford University Press, 1990), 194–95.

4 Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans. André Schumer and Richard Rojcewikz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 81.

5 Ibid.

6 Andrade, "Máquina de Escrever," 70.

7 I thank my colleague Jussara Quadros for her generosity in cracking the enigma of the "lagrima" and the "ponto fora de lugar."

8 Rubén Gallo, "John Dos Passos in Mexico," *Modernism/Modernity*, 14/2 (2007), 329–45.

9 Salvador Novo, "Radio-conferencia sobre el radio," *El Universal Ilustrado*, 399 (January 1, 1925), 4–5, repr. in *Ensayos* (Mexico City: Cultura, 1925), 17–19. All translations are mine unless indicated otherwise.

10 Salvador Novo, "Meditaciones sobre el radio," *Toda la prosa* (Mexico City: Empresas editoriales, 1964), 93–94.

11 Ibid., 88.

12 Ibid., 89.

13 Ibid., 94.

14 In her *Nouvelles maladies de l'âme* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), Julia Kristeva argues that since Freud's time, new social, political, and technological developments

have introduced "new maladies of the psyche" – vandalism, racial complexes – that were never imagined by Freud.

15 Novo, "Meditaciones," 95.

16 Julia Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique* (Paris: Seuil, 1974).

17 Antonin Artaud, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God," *Selected Writings* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988), 555–71.

18 Bertolt Brecht, "The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication," *Brecht on Theater: 1918–1932*, ed. John Willet (New York: Hill & Wang, 1964), 51–53.

19 Elena de Costa, "*Sóngoro cosongo*: Collection of poems by Nicolás Guillén," in Verity Smith (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Latin American Literature* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1997), 393–94.

20 Nicolás Guillén, "Canto negro," *Sóngoro Cosongo; Motivos de son; West Indies Ltd; España: poema en cuatro angustias y una esperanza* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1952), 21.

21 Nicolás Guillén, "Pequeña oda a un boxeador cubano," *Poema en cuatro angustias y una esperanza*, 15–17. My translation. For an alternative English version of this poem, see "Small Ode to a Black Boxer," *Man-Making Words: Selected Poems of Nicolás Guillén*, trans. Roberto Márquez and David Arthur McMurray (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 53–54.

22 Guillén, "Tú no sabe inglé," *Poema en cuatro angustias y una esperanza*, 47.

23 *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes*, vol. IX: *Essays on Art, Race, Politics, and World Affairs*, ed. Christopher De Santis (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 271–72.

24 William Marx, *Les arrière-gardes au XXème siècle: l'autre face de la modernité esthétique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004).

MODERNISM IN AND OUT OF KIND: GENRES, COMPOSITE GENRES, AND NEW GENRES

"Modernism in and out of kind: genres, composite genres and new genres" follows the significant inventions by modernist writers, artists, and musicians in the traditional genres of artistic expression. It also connects this experimental thinking about types and kinds to new ways of seeing categories of identity in the established taxonomies of cultural systems – gender and race, politics, art and advertising, and technology.

In the mid-late nineteenth century, Wagner's notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* or total work of art set out to combine the visual and aural materials of operatic production in a newly enriched synthesis. This idea provides a model form and motive concept for some of the most important experimental work in artistic modernism, which includes intervention in existing genres and inventions of new and composite ones. So, the first chapter of this section will outline the concept and challenges of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, noting how its intended synthesis also prompts a complementary interest in its opposite, especially in the second-stage iterations of modernism, which witness a compensatory attempt to isolate and radicalize the material and form specific to each art, which Ezra Pound dubbed "its primary pigment." These two extremes lift and reinforce each other and generate the tensions

essential to some of the major work of experimentation in the individual as well as combinatory genres of modernism.

The subsequent chapters in the first half of this section bring these ideas into the several arts, genres, and media of modernism. Chapter 15 takes as its title a well-known phrase, "the condition of music," to which Walter Pater had enjoined "all arts" to "aspire." Often repeated as a motto for the generic compositing of modernism, this phrase directs a survey of music aspiring to be modernist in this way but also in other ways: in combining different kinds of aesthetic material within the acoustic register but also, and especially, in being open to the contradictions that being "modern" involves and representing these in a fashion that is not only dramatic but self-reflexive, self-conscious, in effect, modernist.

Similar initiatives appear as motivating forces in literary history, which provides the material for the next five chapters. Experiments with the form and content of the basic genres of novel, poem, and drama appear with differing purposes and effects in the stories told in Chapters 16, 17, and 18. What joins these several literary histories in miniature is a powerful and empowering notion that the older forms must be unmade and remade in the image of a sensibility whose contemporaneity is its establishing circumstance. There is a kind of generative skepticism in all this experimental work with genre. The return upon the conditions of the art as the substance as well as the means of representation provides a sign of the crisis time of existing conventions, which may no longer be taken as sufficient or necessary to the representation of a consensus public understanding. The work that emerges from this recognition appears as a familiar and even signature feature of a self-consciously modern, and so recognizably "modernist," art.

The motivating pressure of newness in modernist art may represent an over-reading of Pound's now familiar dictum, "Make it New," but it is useful to recall that this advice was directed particularly at translators. Their work in the service of a transhistorical as well as transcultural readership locates the special present of a contemporary readership as its orienting aim. Accordingly, Chapter 19 follows the poetics and practices of translation as a defining enterprise of modernism, while the compositing of author and translator as co-creators of the text provides its own version of modernism's combinatory genres. As a signal of existing divisions being fundamentally reworked, an essay on "Literature between media" at the end of the first half of this section locates the space between older forms of literature and newer media of transmission as the site of modernism's own mediating – and combinatory – work.

The chapters in the second half of this section follow the inventive, combinatory genres of modernism in related directions. This thinking extends to some of its most important consequences in social and political as well as cultural history. Here the established categories of sexual and racial identification are being fundamentally rethought and reworked.

These activities are compatible with and collateral to a questioning and testing of the nature and aim of art itself, where "itself" provides the subject of most concerted work. Thus the second half of this section opens with a sequence of three chapters joined under the heading of "Art and its others." The first, subtitled "The aesthetics of technology," frames the challenge that new and ever larger resources of technology present to older models of the artistic subject and older media of artistic production. It picks up the consideration just advanced in the essay on literature between media as it follows the interaction between artists and technology into and through the various force fields of twentieth-century history, paying particular attention to the changes rung on earlier millenarian dreams of the machine by the nightmare experience of the First World War. The second in this series, subtitled "Advertisement and the little magazines," unravels the supposedly paradoxical relationship between the "fine" or "pure" arts and the putatively coarsening "impurities" of commercial culture, advertisement most notably. In the venue of the "little magazine" in particular, this chapter shows how a modernist art not only becomes its own commodity but, in doing so, demonstrates as well as accomplishes the historicity that is the basis of its claim on being modern in the first place. "Aesthetics as politics," the subtitle of the last of these three chapters, frames this difficult issue as a question of genre as it follows the combination of political content and aesthetic practice in the thinking of a number of major modernist artists. Most notable because most conspicuous in this regard are those figures who proposed some version of the "totalitarian synthesis," which can be seen as a function of the "total work of art" in the theory of Wagnerian opera. And so this chapter curves back into the opening essay of this section to trace the fate of that conceit into one of the most important if problematical consequences of modernism's new thinking about the conditions and limits of existing genres.

Gender no less than genre is the subject of experimental work in a modernist consciousness, which presents a directed rethinking of existing forms of female and male identity, and this thinking extends as well to race; these linked interests provide the subject of the last three essays in this section. "The 'New Women' of modernism" offers an historically situated consideration of its topic, following the evolving concept not through the

standard category of fictional prose, the so-called "New Woman novel," which is of course an extensive literature, but in the more experimental measures of an identifiably modernist poetry, where some of the most interestingly and significantly innovative work actually occurs. "'The Men of 1914'" takes up the phrase it has pronged between those inverted commas, examining this once authorizing formulation for an exclusively male modernism and situating it anew in the context of real modernist preoccupations with the limits and conditions of genre as well as gender. What emerges is a recognition that, far from being a claim to an authentically masculine ownership of modernism, it is a counterfeit quotation, not exposed as such by us but already and first of all by its author, who is inscribing the uncertainty of its referent as an ostensible measure of the unmaking and remaking of such categories of established power and identity. "Modernism and the racial composite: the case of America" brings this section to an end as it centers its "case" in the Harlem Renaissance. Here the cultural production of "blackness" by white as well as African American artists presents an extension of generic thinking into the complex and generative but also antagonistic dynamics of racial compositing, which, as it is seen in an international as well as American frame of reference, reveals the racial and racialist undergirding for modernism in many of its locations.

14

Gesamtkunstwerk

LUTZ KOEPNICK

Few concepts of aesthetic theory are more elusive, only some suffer more from the inadequacies of translations, and rare are those traveling with more political baggage through time. It is impossible not to associate the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* with the work and visions of Richard Wagner – the composer's monumental efforts to join music, dance, and poetry into compelling spectacles also included his ambitions to transform the production and consumption of art into a sacred ritual located outside of the routines of modern industrial life.[1] And yet, when first developing the concept around 1850, Wagner could draw on a rich history of German romantic thought, charging his own desire for reforming opera with an earlier generation's hunger for poetic re-enchantment. The term's post-Wagnerian occurrences and applications are manifold, however, and astonishingly inconsistent. They range from naming the power of synesthetic perception to the mobilization of the masses in Hitler's, Mussolini's, or Stalin's political choreographies; from celebrating narrative film's magnetic powers to castigating Disneyland's emotional manipulations; from theorizing the effects of contemporary installation and performance art to exploring the immersive qualities of virtual reality technologies.

Though Wagner himself barely used the term, its English translation suggests direct continuities between Wagner's nineteenth-century pursuit of aesthetic synthesis and the most horrendous manifestations of twentieth-century politics. It has become commonplace to render Wagner's "gesamt" as "total" in English, thereby situating the total work of art as a precursor of whatever one may want to identify as totalitarian about modern industrial culture and society. In many uses of the term, Joseph Goebbels's infamous speech of February 18, 1943, which was meant to incite popular enthusiasm for what he called total war, echoes and in fact culminates Wagner's quest for aesthetic integration. In its original language, however, the concept itself asks for greater nuance: the idea of "gesamt" could just as well be translated

with words such as "aggregate," "sum," and "collected," and thus describe a process of combination featuring traces of heterogeneity and difference, of amalgamation and construction. While the translation's slippage from total to totalitarian, and from aesthetic to political mobilization, has the potential to make us ask tough questions about the term's original design and intentions, it also suggests rash answers and positions without careful reflection.

The task of this chapter is not only to offer a more nuanced account of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, its conceptual range as much as its historical trajectories, but also to present the concept as indispensable to any definition of aesthetic modernism. As presented in the following pages, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* serves as a model for any experiment with composite genres and media in aesthetic modernism. As importantly, it offers an optics to place modernism's desire for synthetic art into a critical context. Wagner's dream of synthetic art intended to contest the perceptual structures, products, and institutions of modern life. It recycled Germanic myths so as to overcome a felt absence of meaning in modernity, and – like the works of numerous romantics around 1800 – it envisioned aesthetic culture as a medium of historical transcendence and spiritual redemption. And yet, nothing could be more erroneous than to relegate the *Gesamtkunstwerk* to the mere prehistory of modernism or to see it as a flight from modernism's acute engagement with the present, its programmatic awareness of the Now. The dream of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* instead figured as a decisive switchboard of various modernist agendas and self-definitions. It illuminates how modernism, by negotiating the dialectics of art and technology, of the aesthetic and the political, of high art and modern mass culture, aspired to couple artistic experimentation to social reform and to reshape the present in the name of a different future. To understand the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in and across time is to delve deeply into the history and memory of modernism. It helps focalize the aspirational drive of many different modernist projects, as much as it allows us to map the deep-seated desire among modernists to explore aesthetic experience as a response to the problems of industrial modernity.

Aesthetic Autonomy and Medium Specificity

Though it comes in different shapes, sizes, and inflections, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* is unthinkable without the rise of industrial technology and mass society, the ever-increasing commodification of aesthetic experience, and the emergence of modern media of artistic reproduction and dissemination.

In essence, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* tried nothing other than to address the crises and contingencies that define modern life as modern. It amalgamated different channels of aesthetic communication and perception so as to reroute pressing needs of the Now and renegotiate its relations to past and future. And yet, leading critics and theorists of modernism were often quite suspicious about the wish to integrate different artistic practices and redefine the boundaries of the aesthetic. The work of both Clement Greenberg and Theodor W. Adorno is paradigmatic in this respect, each tackling the *Gesamtkunstwerk* from a different angle, both refusing to have synthetic art fully join the modernist canon.

Greenberg's perspective on what makes modernism modernist is well known. The two central categories of his conceptual framework are those of abstraction and medium specificity, the earlier achieved by systematic investigations of the latter, that is, by means of modernism's aspiration to explore, reveal, and reflect on what distinguishes one medium of artistic expression from another. In Greenberg's understanding, modernism pursued its goal of aesthetic autonomy with the help of a delicate dialectical operation, at once affirming and negating the past. Like good Hegelians, true modernists engaged the history of art as a teleological process in which abstraction occupied a final moment, when different media in all their distinctiveness and identity would come to the consciousness of themselves. Artistic projects eager to cross, amalgamate, or fuse different genres and mediums, however, placed themselves outside of this dialectic and teleology. The *Gesamtkunstwerk*'s desire for synthesis refuted the process of differentiation as a key feature of cultural modernity, Greenberg believed, and thus failed or even renounced the ambitions of aesthetic modernism.

Certainly no less a dialectical thinker than Greenberg, Adorno's account of how modernist art, by struggling for aesthetic autonomy and specificity, constituted itself as modernism differs significantly from the model of his American contemporary. In Adorno's perspective, modernism was born as a reaction to the gradual commodification of cultural material during the second half of the nineteenth century; it turned ever more enigmatic and self-contained so as to refuse assimilation and hold on to the idea of meaning and plenitude in the form of a promise. Whereas the *Gesamtkunstwerk* rested on too many compromises with the emerging sites of modern mass culture and consumption, modernism renounced any desire to blur the boundaries between art and non-art, and it became ever more abstract, reflexive, and inscrutable to communicate what it no longer could dare to say. Unlike the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the modernist art Adorno preferred – Schoenberg's, say, or

Beckett's – needed to be black rather than spectacular, minimalist rather than expansive, fragmented rather than synthetic, so to uphold the promise of what synthetic art falsely presented for instant consumption. At its core, the vision of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* fueled and was fueled by totalitarian impulses, at once obscuring and reconciling the divisions of modern culture. No overarching cultural reform or spiritual redemption could be expected from art any more. Modernism's glimpses of truth were borrowed from the ruptures of the age itself.

Though quite different in nature, Greenberg's and Adorno's reservations about the *Gesamtkunstwerk* are representative of the reception and placement of this synthetic art of modernism ever since the late nineteenth century. For Adorno, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in particular in its Wagnerian articulation, failed to negate the logic of industrial capitalism and culture with appropriate rigor. Not dialectical enough, it assimilated high art to the exigencies of popular utility and consumption. Instead of exploring the painful divisions of modern culture and engaging modern reification head on, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* harmonized existing contradictions and thereby denied the contentious interdependence of art and mass culture, a rivalry that had given birth to modernism in the first place. For Greenberg, the desire to produce synthetic art could not but fail to drive the aesthetic beyond traditional regimes of imitation. Unlike his true modernism, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* shied away from embracing the modern differentiation of media and genres as a viable point of formal interrogation. Due to this lack of dialectical rigor, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* fell short of what modernism was all about: to pursue abstraction, which Greenberg understood as art's effort to turn its gaze entirely onto itself. In Adorno's perspective, then, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*'s political and social aspirations betrayed the formal sensibilities of aesthetic modernism. In Greenberg's view, the lackluster formal reflexivity of synthetic art made it play directly into the hands of modern kitsch and forgo the ethos of aesthetic autonomy.

Adorno and Greenberg continue to inform various definitions of aesthetic modernism on either side of the Atlantic. But neither Greenberg's credo of medium differentiation nor Adorno's insistence on aesthetic negativity may be the last word about what makes modernism modernist. One side of this debate tends in fact to neutralize the other. Whereas Greenberg in Adorno's eyes refused to understand the riddles of modernist art as sundials of larger historical processes, Adorno in Greenberg's perspective thwarted any effort to conceptualize media as the ontological basis of artistic production. These differences are instructive because they urge us to revisit the history of the

modern *Gesamtkunstwerk* in all its diversity. With minds freed from the normative expectations of Adorno and Greenberg alike, we may trace how synthetic art reworked given notions of medium specificity in order to address central conflicts of modern art and culture. In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss three different versions of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, all of which meant to feature the *Gesamtkunstwerk* as a constitutive element of modernist aesthetic practice in all its multivalence and ambiguity.

Wagner's Dream

Less known than it should be is the fact that Wagner himself used the term *Gesamtkunstwerk* rather sparingly in his otherwise rhapsodic writing on music, art, and modern culture. Introduced in his exile writing around 1850, in particular in the 1849 essays "Art and Revolution" and "The Artwork of the Future" and then in the 1851 book *Opera and Drama*, the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* involved an argument about the structural logic of different artistic forms no less than an ambition to reshape the viewer's senses and thereby overcome the fragmenting power of modern culture. Future music drama was meant to reunify the separated domains of dance, music, and poetry and thereby redeem individual art forms from their historical isolation, yet, in order to do so, it had to tap into what in each art form inherently pointed toward the others. The rhythmic aspects of dance called for sound and music; the harmonic and melodic qualities of music required words to achieve highest fulfillment; and the poetic word showed all the others what true art at its best was all about, namely to invent something from nothing, to present – rather than represent – aesthetic material within the self-contained universe of the dramatic stage, and thus to bring forth the totality and freedom of unbridled creativity. Contrary to Adorno's later reading, integrated art in Wagner's original vision circa 1850 wasn't merely designed to provide a multitude of individual stimulations so as to absorb the viewer's senses most effectively. It was intended instead to result from the actualization of different structural or ontological features embedded in each and every art form – a process Wagner himself extravagantly described as a process of loving entwinement: here all three sister arts "tight-clasped, breast on breast, and limb to limb, melt with the fervour of love-kisses into one only, living shape of beauty."[2]

When developing his concept, Wagner relied heavily on Friedrich Schiller's critique of modern differentiation and fragmentation in *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1794–95). Like Schiller, Wagner read the process

of modernization as one leading toward an ever-increasing rationalization and disintegration of the human sensorium. The alienated subjects it produced were able to function within industrial and bureaucratic settings, yet unable to advance what it might take to unfold the full potentialities of the species in each and every individual. In Wagner's perspective, the course of modern art had largely developed in lockstep with this history of the senses, at once energizing and being energized by the social fragmentation of perception. The task of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was nothing less than to reverse this path, that is, provide an aesthetic laboratory in which modern subjects could explore the loving entwinement of different arts as a training ground for the future reintegration of the auditory, the visual, and the tactile. A project much more than a product, Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* was to change the course of modern society by changing the registers and relational structure of the human senses. Unlike Schiller, however, Wagner left no doubt that it took much more than well-meaning and well-crafted works of art to launch this process. Writing a little more than half a century after the romantic poet, Wagner now faced a burgeoning culture of commodified distraction, streamlined entertainment, and conspicuous consumption, all of which seemed to erase the very conditions for aesthetic experience. What was needed in order to restore the transformative power of the aesthetic were comprehensive institutional reforms, not just stylistic or formal interventions: it required the rebuilding of how art was produced, circulated, and received in a public sphere; it needed a space that did not follow the dictates of commerce, that did not serve the purpose of representing social status, power, and prestige.

No matter what came out of it, the Bayreuth theatre and festival were initially designed to meet this ambitious agenda. Envisioned as early as the 1850s, but only opening its doors for the first time in 1876, Bayreuth was to serve Wagner's ambition to remake the modern institutions of art in the image of Greek public culture and restore precisely thus the conditions for the possibility of aesthetic experience and sensory reintegration. With its infamous mystical abyss, an auditorium mimicking the amphitheatres of antiquity, and a double proscenium at once framing and funneling the viewer's attention, the festival theatre was not simply designed to produce the highest degree of empathy and identification; it served also to rework the audience's very ability to absorb and be absorbed by advanced stagecraft and Wagner's unique compositional techniques. The older Wagner and his later devotees were to think of Bayreuth as a site to redefine art as a new religion and endow the disenchanted routines of modern life with auratic energy – a

place to turn one's back to the exigencies of modern existence. In the original vision, however, Bayreuth was entrusted with the task of encouraging audiences not to flee from but into modernity. It was to provide, not a temple, but a workshop to recalibrate the audience's fragmented senses, moving the spectator beyond the traffic and commerce of the everyday and allowing the modern subject to experience perceptual synthesis as a promissory note for a non-alienated future.

Celluloid Dreaming

The work of composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold, a wanderer between different worlds, neatly exemplifies one important avenue of how Wagner's dream of synthetic art moved into the twentieth century. Korngold's first Hollywood assignment as film composer was the collaboration with Max Reinhardt (and William Dieterle) on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935). While freely mining the music of Felix Mendelssohn, this work fed on Wagner's compositional methods as much as it sought to recast Wagner's dream about the loving entwinement of different arts, now around the program inherent in cinema with sound.

Born in Brünn in 1897, Korngold started his career at an early age, his middle name signifying what his ambitious parents wanted him to be: a unique genius renewing Mozart's legacy for the present.[3] His early music shows no signs of what made Vienna a breeding ground of musical modernism in the first decades of the century. His compositions prior to moving to Hollywood around 1930 were characterized by strong melodic writing, by dance-like rhythms and harmonic intensities, by spectacular fanfares and moody textures. His work was indebted to Brahms, Puccini, and Strauss, whereas it was difficult to detect any echoes of the Second Viennese School or any efforts to revolt against the templates of tonality. No Oedipal revolt against the (musical) world of the fathers, no attempts to unsettle the listeners' act of listening, no ambitions to rebuild the grammar of music from scratch or to absorb the noises of modern life into his compositions.

The coming of synchronized sound cinema in the late 1920s and Korngold's move to Southern California in the early 1930s led to a curious and in many respects unexpected modernization of his musical language. He took the opportunity to import Wagner's dream of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* into the landscapes of industrial mass culture, thus forcing a form of modernism into his compositional practice. While it is tempting to argue in retrospect that Korngold had been writing film music long before he actually composed for

film, it is more important to note that he played a crucial role in defining the aesthetics of film music to begin with and, in so doing, essentially modernized the musical field in a culture of ever-increasing mediatization. His sense of timing, of coordinating images and sounds, of pitching music just beneath an actor's voice so as to intensify speech, proved exceptional. As Jessica Duchen writes, Korngold's "use of large blocks of music, complex interweaving of Leitmotivs, and sensitivity to music's interaction with speech left an indelible impression on the future of the field ... Korngold showed how music could be woven integrally into the structure of film; he not only raised the quality of the music but also its relevance to the movie as a whole."[4] The aesthetic program behind all this was truly Wagnerian. However, unlike Wagner, for whom synthetic art was meant to unfold the mythical substance of the German language, Korngold explored Wagner's musical vocabulary so as to amplify dramatic action and speech. Though abundant with musical leitmotivs and Wagner's so-called endless melodies, Korngold's scoring practice modified some of Wagner's own principles by prioritizing the intelligibility of speech over the full interpenetration of word and music.[5]

A Midsummer Night's Dream abounds with innovative special effects, putting cinematic technologies to work in order to capture the power of dreams and present captivating images of bodily transformations. In its original version, the film also included a lengthy musical overture. It was based on Mendelssohn's incidental music of 1842 and set against a static title card, thus recalling the former task of operatic overtures to bring audiences to attention and to define a threshold whose passing was to enable undivided attention, absorption, and self-forgetting. While individual performances are uneven, the film enchanted its early audiences with its lyrical dance choreographies: in these prolonged interludes, the delicate sounds of Korngold's score, the graceful movements of bodies, spectacular cinematography, and the diegetic murmurs of nocturnal settings, all seemed to join into one unified dynamic. Cinema here, quite reflexively, aimed at nothing less than to absorb and synthesize all the other arts, even if this meant to suspend narrative progress and, for minutes on end, do without theatrical dialogue. Wagner's nineteenth-century reforms, in Adorno's trenchant perspective, anticipated nothing other than the mindless workings of the twentieth-century culture industry. In Reinhardt and Korngold's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, however, cinema makes no apologies for inheriting the legacy of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. A multimedia hybrid, film in fact celebrates its technological ability to culminate and conclude what Wagner's nineteenth-century music drama hoped to achieve. It releases the *Gesamtkunstwerk* from is social elitism and

feeds it straight into the circuits of the popular. While adapting Shakespeare's play and Mendelssohn's music for an age accustomed to cinemas rather than theatre stages or classical concert halls, Korngold's scoring at the same time used this opportunity to redefine the relationship between sounds and images in contemporary cinema and open up unforeseen avenues into the social as well as aesthetic future. In doing so, Korngold and Reinhardt provided Depression-era audiences with a chance to explore cinema as what Miriam Hansen has called a site of popular modernism: a place within the bounds of a modern leisure culture of consumption able to synthesize selected artistic innovations in a popular *and* modern vernacular of its own; a media-based dreamspace allowing the viewer "to appropriate technology in the mode of play, that is, in a sensory-somatic and nondestructive form."[6]

Reinhardt and Korngold's act of audiovisual dreaming of 1935 is no doubt Wagner's nightmare. It is part of the much larger, at times ironic, at times bitterly tragic story of German and Austrian Jews in Hollywood, who were often asked to embody Nazi villains on screen and thus represent the very culture that had forced them to flee Europe. That is a story in which Wagner's own anti-Semitism offers its own ironic fold. And yet, precisely in reading Wagner against the grain, and in modernizing the *Gesamtkunstwerk* for twentieth-century media culture, films such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* cannot be entirely relegated to the sidelines of the history of aesthetic modernism. What we hear and see here surely is neither Schoenberg nor Ruttmann nor Eisenstein. But inasmuch as Reinhardt's images and Korngold's orchestrations explore the conditions and possibilities of producing synthetic works under the conditions of industrial modernity, films like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* certainly partake of what modernism is and was all about, namely, the aspiration to become and be contemporary, to face the Now in all its transitoriness and as something distinctly different from the past.

Moholy-Nagy's Construction Site

"What we need," wrote Hungarian Bauhaus member László Moholy-Nagy in the second edition of *Painting Photography Film* of 1927, "is not the '*Gesamtkunstwerk*', alongside and separated from which life flows by, but a synthesis of all the vital impulses spontaneously forming itself into the all-embracing *Gesamtwerk* (life) which abolishes all isolation, in which all individual accomplishments proceed from a biological necessity and culminate in a universal necessity."[7] If Wagner's vision for Bayreuth has often – and quite

rightly – been read as an expression of artistic megalomania corrupting the audience's mental and somatic health, Moholy-Nagy's high modernist radical-ization of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* should certainly ring similar alarm bells at first. Moholy-Nagy did not hesitate to claim that, in striking art from the term and concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the aim of the *Gesamtwerk* was not only to penetrate and reshape all spheres of modern existence, but to rewire the physiological and neurological hardware of the modern subject, that is, to reconstruct the sensorial apparatus in such a way that society could be changed from the ground up. No longer confined to a realm at once separate but related to the everyday, the aesthetic in Moholy-Nagy's vision reassumes its original comprehensive Greek meaning: it refers to all that which pertains to the process of sensory perception. As it encompasses the entirety of social and bodily space, Moholy-Nagy's *Gesamtwerk* is meant to offer nothing less than a conduit to re-engineer people's entire sensory access to the world. It redefines the artist as a technician remodeling social and political life by reshaping human biology. Art's greatest triumph is its complete disappearance into the deepest folds and recesses of human existence, its re-emergence as an unmitigated and techno-logically mediated mode of biological reassembly, of biopolitics.

Moholy-Nagy's 1920s concept of the *Gesamtwerk* participates in what Peter Bürger called the historical avant-garde's efforts to erase the boundaries between art and life.[8] Driven by polemical misgivings about the conciliatory politics of bourgeois art, Moholy-Nagy wanted to unlock the aesthetic from its historical isolation so as to reanimate its transformative energies and redirect these forces along political channels. As it brings different media and modalities of modern communication such as photography and film into productive conversations, the *Gesamtwerk* does not simply want to add a new genre, idiom, or -ism to the established languages of art. Its task instead is to shift the entire operation of the sensory in modern culture and so open precisely what Moholy-Nagy himself understood as modern society's path to socialism. At first, Moholy-Nagy's concept of modern art as a mode of sensory re-engineering certainly sounds even more autocratic than the phan-tasmagorias of Wagner's Bayreuth. If Wagner's project of perceptual reform remained deeply indebted to Schiller's program of aesthetic education through artistic autonomy, in Moholy-Nagy's version, aesthetic interventions produce immediate physiological and political reverberations. Eager to recre-ate each and every aspect of society from scratch, the *Gesamtwerk* – it could be argued – aspires to subject its recipients to the god-like authority of the artist and thereby defines modernism as a demiurgic exercise of inventing future presents without any reference to known pasts.

Like Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, Moholy-Nagy's concept of the *Gesamt-werk* is more nuanced than later critics have tended to read it as being. First, what is striking about Moholy-Nagy's institutional intervention is the fact that he no longer really aims at the production of works at all, even when he seeks to situate engineers and technicians as successors of the classical or bourgeois artists. What matters instead is to set up laboratory-like settings in which audiences can experiment with and hone different physiological responses to phenomena moving in space and time. What matters is to explore the formal structure of perceptual responses and immaterial relations as blueprints for rebuilding the structures of sociability. According to Moholy-Nagy's conception of the *Gesamtwerk*, as Joyce Tsai explains, human beings must "become attuned to the ways in which subtle shifts in color, form, and space might fundamentally alter the balance of a composition. And in the process, as if by way of analogy, the newfound ability to discern formal relationships might expose the mutability of other kinds of relationship in the world – political, economic, and social."[9] Far from simply hitting the viewer over the head and demanding prescribed responses, Moholy-Nagy's *Gesamt-werk* wants to provide room for play. Here subjects can explore the inter-action between mediated effects and sensory responses and so encounter alternative organizations of social space at the level of form, which, in its very changeability, offers the promise of alternative, improved sociality in the future.

Second, although Moholy-Nagy's *Gesamtwerk* envisions both the collabor-ation of different media of formal experimentation and the reworking of our sensory access to the world, he makes no plea to collapse the different registers of human perception into organic unity and quasi-prelapsarian totality. His subject of aesthetic experience is no longer the bourgeois individual of the nineteenth century, yearning for sensations of synthetic wholeness through total absorption so as to repair the rupturing effects of modern traffic, commerce, and technology. Rather, what Moholy-Nagy's *Gesamtwerk* asks us to explore is the extent to which human bodies and their sensory organs themselves operate as media and mediums, as interfaces, as technics of embodiment, as apparatuses whose logics cut across the confines of the bourgeois subject and in this way empower new types of community. Located beyond the self-enclosed realm of traditional works of bourgeois art, his *Gesamtwerk* describes experimental folds in the given continuum of time and space. In this dimension of invented experience, we can see and sense our own seeing, hear and touch upon our own hearing, and investigate unexpected couplings of the senses. This is to be done, in the name not of a

redemptive future of fully integrated human subjectivity, but of a decentering and possible redistribution of the sensible in accordance with the highly mediated nature of modern industrial society. If Wagner hoped to reshape the modern present in the image of mythic meanings, Moholy-Nagy wants us to embrace modern media as a hybrid room for play, not only for the sake of articulating ever-different sensory relationships, but of reloading the present with the image of post-bourgeois futurity.

Total Media

It has often been noted that Hollywood filmmaking, after the arrival of synchronized sound, learned greatly from Wagner's techniques of orchestration and affective management. Similar to Wagner's music dramas, the designers of Hollywood's early integrated soundtracks in the 1930s not only used leitmotif techniques, they also understood how to pitch music right below the acoustics of speech, so as to ensure the highest possible degree of absorption; within the confines of a movie theatre, they could replicate the effects of Wagner's infamous mystical abyss in Bayreuth. In the lavish musical and backstage musical productions of the 1930s and early 1940s, Wagner's dream of reuniting the estranged sisters of dance, music, and poetry – of movement, sound, and sight – seemed to come full circle. Staged in front of audiences no longer divided in the auditorium by markers of class and status, complex choreographies and sweeping soundtracks situated cinema as a perfect training ground to recalibrate the human senses for an age of profound technological, political, and social change.

But no story of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, understood as a particular response to the challenges of modern technology and mass culture, is complete without discussing how twentieth-century totalitarianism – German National Socialism, Italian fascism, and Stalinism – embraced the full array of modern media to manipulate minds and engineer politically effective emotions. Exiled amid what they considered the nightmares of the Hollywood dream factories, Adorno and Horkheimer needed no extensive commentary on the relationship between political developments in Europe and cinematic business in America. For them, totalitarian media politics and Hollywood mass distraction defined nothing other than two sides of one and the same coin. Each of these was an equal manifestation of Wagner's overdetermined effort to anticipate the subject's emotional response within the work of art itself, which could be seen now as a dictatorial desire to overwhelm the audience with lavish stimulations, disintegrate the critical capacity of the viewer, and

then reintegrate the fragmented subject within the larger gestalt of both total and totalitarian art.[10] In the eyes of Adorno and Horkheimer, fascism and twentieth-century mass culture were equally born out of the spirit of Wagner's total work of art. Both of them converted the nineteenth century's most arduous program of aesthetic reform into phantasmagorical spectacles that mobilized post-bourgeois masses into gestures of mindless submission. In Adorno's and Horkheimer's perspective, the path from Riefenstahl's highly choreographed crowds on the rally grounds of Nuremberg to Busby Berkeley's elaborate stage designs was as short as the one from Wagner's leitmotif technique to the slogans of twentieth-century advertising or the tropes of Goebbels's political speeches. As conceived by Wagner, the *Gesamt-kunstwerk* always already aimed at triumphing over the will of the spectator. This desire is at once perfected and consummated when the twentieth century, at once media made and media mad, involved the entire human sensorium in its strategies of political and economic mobilization.

In his 1992 book, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, Boris Groys has given the argument about the Wagnerian roots of twentieth-century dictatorships a different, albeit no less provocative, turn.[11] In Groys's view, Stalin's – and by extension Hitler's and Mussolini's – efforts to transform modern state and nation into stages of sensory spectacle and dictatorial self-expression continued the earlier avant-garde's hopes to erase the boundaries between art and life. Similar to Moholy-Nagy, according to Groys, Russian avant-gardists in the first decades of the twentieth century aimed at cutting all ties to the past so as to re-engineer social relationships from scratch. They dismantled the institutions of autonomous art with an intention to impact life directly and replace aesthetic experience with agitation and propaganda, an affective politics of collective mobilization. Though Stalin himself had little patience with the artistic avant-gardes of the 1910s and 1920s, the "Stalinist art of living" – as Groys calls it – inherited the avant-garde's idea of forging a new human being, of remaking the physiological and psychological templates of individual and communal existence. For Stalin, politicians turned out to be the most effective engineers of the human soul, where the political is defined not as an arena of intricate negotiation or deliberation but as a place where the leader's will to power could manifest itself and – in recourse to the whole arsenal of art and modern media of mass communication – become a source of demiurgic resolve and creativity.

Groys's and Adorno/Horkheimer's account of the continuities between the *Gesamt(kunst)werk* and totalitarian media politics in the 1930s could not be more different, but their several accounts bring us to the same place for an

understanding of modernism. Reading past aesthetic practices from the perspective of later political developments, they leave us little ability to understand multimedia practices and sensorial recalibrations during the period of high modernism as a modernist exercise in aesthetics at all. The shadow of what Walter Benjamin in 1936 called the "aestheticizing of political life"[12] in the modern age of technical reproducibility has loomed so large over any effort to conjoin different media, modes of sensory perception, and affective registers, that modernist theory has often automatically associated total art and totalitarian politics. For that reason, critics have questioned, if not outright denounced, the modernist underpinnings of synthetic aesthetic practice. It would certainly be foolish to deny what Stalin's and Hitler's choreography of the masses learned from Wagner's or the avant-garde's efforts to drive art beyond its own limit. It would be equally foolish, however, not to ask whether dominant objections against the *Gesamtkunst-werk* as a modernist practice have resulted from a certain political overdeter-mination of existing critical paradigms themselves, that is to say, from the rather naïve belief that modernist aesthetic practice would automatically entail politically progressive stances and could not associate itself with calamitous movements such as fascism or Stalinism. Once we abandon the cherished assumption that modernism, by producing aesthetically innovative and formally reflexive objects, was always already on the side of progressive politics, there is little reason not to count late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century experiments with converging different media and cross-wiring separate channels of sensory perception as modernist, whether we like the political outcome or alliance of these aesthetic projects or not.

Gesamtkunst Now?

Multimedia practice is the order of cultural production today, so much so that critics such as Rosalind Krauss define our present as a post-medium condition.[13] Virtual reality environments, Disneyland, video installation art, ubiquitous screens and soundscapes in urban centers, mobile entertainment gadgets – all seem to inherit some aspect of the ways in which artists, in the second half of the nineteenth century, began to engage different media in order to intensify people's receptivity to art. And yet, to call all this a *Gesamtkunstwerk* certainly misses the point and erases important nuances. The idea and vision of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was formulated as a response to a very particular set of challenges: the rise of modern industrial culture and mass consumption; the perceived fragmentation of perceptual processes; the

inroads of modern technologies of reproduction into the domains of traditional art; the sequestration of art in the bourgeois institutions of representative culture. Though it entailed remarkably different formal and political agendas, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* hoped to formulate at once compelling and contemporary answers to the questions produced by these developments. To call every cultural object that may rub against the limits of its medium and engage more than one or two registers of sensory perception a *Gesamtkunstwerk* is to lose the historical memory and social motivation of this protean form.

What defines the *Gesamtkunstwerk* as such is its peculiar role within the history of aesthetic modernism. Far more than just a timeless practice of joining different channels of aesthetic communication, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* emerged as an effort to reclaim the transformative energies of aesthetic experience and launch them against the perceived immobility of industrial society. And it was constitutively driven by the ambition – at times naïve and utopian, at other times megalomaniac and totalitarian – to correct the pathologies of modern rationalization and alienation with the help of a wide-ranging politics of the senses, that is, a radical restructuring and remediation of our sensory access to the world.

Notes

1 For useful overviews of the concept's historical development, see among many others Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art: From Bayreuth to Cyberspace* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Juliet Koss, *Modernism after Wagner* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); and Udo Bermbach, *Der Wahn des Gesamtkunstwerks: Richard Wagners politisch-ästhetische Utopie* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004).

2 Richard Wagner, *Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (New York: Broude Bros., 1966), 96.

3 For more on Korngold's career in Vienna and Hollywood, see Brenda Carroll, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1997); Jessica Duchen, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (London: Phaidon, 1996); and Julius Korngold, *Die Korngolds in Wien: Der Musikkritiker und das Wunderkind – Aufzeichungen von Julius Korngold* (Zurich: M. & T. Verlag, 1991).

4 Duchen, *Korngold*, 181.

5 For a closer analysis of Korngold's Wagnerianism, and of the role of Wagner's musical idiom in Hollywood cinema of the 1930s and 1940s, see chap. 5 of Lutz Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema between Hitler and Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

6 Miriam Bratu Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 19.

7 László Moholy-Nagy, *Painting Photography Film* (1927), trans. Janet Seligman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 17.

8 Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

9 Joyce Tsai, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice: László Moholy-Nagy and his *Light Prop for the Electrical Stage*," in Anke Finger and Danielle Follett (eds.), *Reconsidering the Total Work of Art* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 280–81.

10 For more on this triangulation of Wagner, Hollywood, and National Socialism, see for instance Andreas Huyssen, "Adorno in Reverse: From Hollywood to Richard Wagner," *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 16–43; and Koepnick, *Dark Mirror*.

11 Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, trans. Charles Rougle (London: Verso, 2011). See also Jeffrey Schnapp, *Staging Fascism: 18 BL and the Theater of Masses for Masses* (Stanford University Press, 1996), which makes a similar argument for the role of the avant-garde in fascist Italy.

12 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility," *Selected Writings*, Vol. IV: *1938–1940*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2003), 269.

13 Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), and "Two Moments from the Post-Medium Condition," *October*, 116 (Spring 2006), 55–62.

"The condition of music": Modernism and Music in the New Twentieth Century

RONALD SCHLEIFER AND BENJAMIN LEVY

[In the twentieth century,] in essence, two avant-gardes were forming side by side. The Parisians [e.g., Debussy, Satie, Stravinsky] were moving into the brightly lit world of daily life. The Viennese [e.g., Schoenberg, Webern, Berg] went in the opposite direction, illuminating the terrible depths with their holy torches.

Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*[1]

In this chapter we examine the advent and nature of modernist musical forms: both the art music growing out of the "leisure music" that developed from the great social, intellectual, and experiential transformations in the European Enlightenment in a "long history" of Western music; and the more popular forms related to the "immediate history" of Europe and America between 1890 and 1945, coinciding with and following the Second Industrial Revolution.[2] Although we are dating musical modernism this way, Daniel Albright cites the historian of music, Carl Dahlhaus, who claims that the term "modernism" in relation to music should be restricted to twenty years, 1890–1910.[3] While he describes in detail Dahlhaus's argument for this short period, Albright himself discusses modernist and postmodernist music, and extends the dates of modernism (with qualifications) to 1951.[4]

The "immediate" history of modernism responds, in part, to the remarkable technological and social changes in the distribution of music from 1880 to 1940. Specifically, in this period a large range of cultural and musical experiences designed for the rising lower middle class – through technologies (e.g., the phonograph invented in 1906, radio circa 1901, microphone circa 1922), social institutions (e.g., public concerts), burgeoning educational opportunities (including musical education), and musical venues (e.g., cabarets, dance halls, musical theatre, jazz, music in the park) – created a world of popular and semi-popular music that competed with the high art of concert

music. In a study of George Gershwin, Charles Hamm suggests that "alternative periodizations of the history of music, based on economic and social relations rather than musical style" would allow us to understand Gershwin's music in new ways, specifically in relation to an "era of 'Mass media' or 'repetition,' rather than . . . a 'Modern' or 'Twentieth-century' style period. The critical issues of his time become the impact of the electronic mass media on the invention, production, and consumption of music – not experiments in abstract manipulation of tones."[5]

Music and Modernism

In 1913, *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) premiered in Paris to riot and scandal. "Instruments," Modris Eksteins writes, "that have no vibrato were intentionally chosen in order to eliminate any trace of sentimentality . . . With its violence, dissonance, and apparent cacophony, the music was as energetic and primitive as the theme."[6] That theme was the enactment of the earliest human times, when a young woman dances herself to death in a pseudo-pagan ritual in order to bring on springtime, the energy of life, and time itself. The huge orchestra (more than 120 instruments) played a score dominated by constantly shifting rhythms and time signatures, and unusual harmonies. The dancers, choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes company, also eliminated any trace of sentimentality with stiff puppet-like movements. In their formal evening attire, the audience screamed at the dancers, drowned out the music, and ripped up the chairs of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.[7] Later, when T.S. Eliot writes about his first experience of *The Rite of Spring*, he recalls a music that seemed to "transform the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor-horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the underground railway, and the other barbaric noises of modern life."[8] Its New York premiere, in 1924, took place two weeks before the premiere of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, which announced itself as "An Experiment in Modern Music."[9]

In 1941, in a Nazi prison camp, *Quartet for the End of Time* by Olivier Messiaen (1908–92) was first performed. This music stands in striking contrast to the overwhelming music of *The Rite of Spring*. With the simplicity of the *Quartet*'s four instruments – piano, clarinet, violin, cello – not all of which perform in each of its eight movements, this quiet music, bordering on atonality, aspired to the music of birdsong, pre-Enlightenment plainchant,

and the adaptation of non-Western rhythmic ideas. It was not aimed at capturing the energy of life in the new twentieth century, but, as Messiaen says of plainchant, of achieving "all at once the purity, the joy, the lightness necessary for the soul's flight toward Truth."[10] Against the powerful rhythms and gestures of *The Rite of Spring* – gesture, we will see, is an important aspect of the aesthetics of modernism – Messiaen reduces meter and gesture to imperceptibility: "Messiaen's music," Paul Griffiths notes, "is most frequently tied to a pulse, which insists that all moments are the same, that the past, the present and the future are identifiable. Sometimes the pulse is so slow that causal links are sufficiently distended not to be felt: in these extreme adagios the possibility of eternity becomes actually present in the music."[11]

In Stravinsky and Messiaen, then, we see two impulses of aesthetic modernism in general and modernist music in particular: (1) engagement with the new world of cultural modernism and its wealth, its transformations of social relations and everyday experiences, its abundant new knowledges and new technologies, its repudiation of the past in favor of the noisy present (and, sadly, its connections with totalitarianism in the new century); and (2) pursuit of transcendental states, from apocalypse (the end of time) and free-floating emotion seemingly distinct from any experience of its human (bourgeois?) subject to pervasive quietude and nothingness itself. More than the other arts – perhaps because it *begins* in sensation rather than the objects of cognition found in the plastic and discursive arts – music makes clear the contours of the aesthetic experience of modernism.

In his influential study, *Philosophy of New Music*, Theodor Adorno distinguishes between Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) in terms close to these, although he does so by judging the transcendental "purity" of Schoenberg to be "authentic," while considering Stravinsky's engagement with worldly life as empty entertainment (or worse). Adorno is a purist; he seeks the authenticity of *disillusionment* in art, the realization that the promise of happiness that art pursues cannot be achieved under the present social conditions.[12] For Schoenberg, according to Adorno in Daniel Albright's apt summation, "music is not a simulation of passion, but passion itself," while "Stravinsky's music pertains to disappropriated pseudo-feelings, feelings not felt by anyone in particular . . . [It is a species of] the counterfeit."[13] In a similar fashion, Adorno himself describes the popular music of the early twentieth century as "artistic trash and compromised cultural values"[14] insofar as "art for Adorno . . . yields truth rather than pleasure."[15] While Adorno's judgments

seem harsh – and in many ways short-sighted – nevertheless the isolation of these impulses is instructive in understanding musical modernism.

Moreover, these two impulses of modernism – seeking transcendental truth and pursuing worldly engagement – involve the double response of twentieth-century modernism to both the "long history" of Enlightenment Europe and the "immediate history" between 1890 and 1945. The "long history" begins in the seventeenth century, comes to fruition in the bourgeois civilization of the nineteenth century, and then spills over into the "immediate" historical moment around the turn of the twentieth century. The period of "immediate history" begins when, as Perry Anderson argues, "Modernism [was] 'triangulated' by three decisive coordinates": an aesthetics "dominated by aristocratic or landowning classes"; the "emergence . . . of the key technologies or inventions of the Second Industrial Revolution; that is, telephone, radio, automobile, aircraft, and so on"; and "the imaginative proximity of social revolution."[16] These three forces converge stormily in the premiere of *The Rite of Spring*: there are Stravinsky's links to imperial Russia, there are the sounds of urban modernity that Eliot hears in the music, and there is significant class conflict apparent in the premiere riot. If Stravinsky embodies the turmoil and excitement of the great transformations of the Second Industrial Revolution in the new twentieth century, then Messiaen quietly embodies the modernist response to the "long history" of Europe in rethinking the self-evident "truths" of the liberal-secular Enlightenment project. In their different ways, moreover, both together challenge the Enlightenment project in rethinking the autonomous and essentially conscious self-knowing individual subject of experience, the sovereignty of reason, the sense of (secular) truth transcending worldly experience, and the hegemonic assumption that the West and its cultural formations, including Western music, are the full realization of humanity.

In both seeking transcendental truth and pursuing worldly engagement, the music of the early twentieth century effected what seemed at the time – and continues to seem – a revolution in the very experience of music itself. Albright notes that the very *quality* of auditory experience has a history and that human sensate experience is not always the same, but is conditioned by historical and social circumstances. Thus, he observes that "music history is often taught as a story about expansion of resource: from the emancipation of the third (after the earliest medieval music, when only fourths and fifths were considered consonant) to the emancipation of all dissonances [in the modernist age]."[17] With this, Albright is describing the "revolutionary" transformation of musical experience itself from the self-evident "truths" of

the scalar and harmonic conventions of Western music inherited from the Enlightenment. Such a transformation of musical experience takes its place alongside changes in the self-evident truths of the conventions of perspective in the visual arts, canons of "wholeness" in the discursive arts, and notions of authorial self-expression and control in wider senses of human psychology.

In his important study of the philosophy of music, *Sound and Symbol*, Victor Zuckerkandl asks "how, without falling back upon the old belief in the world soul or in a God in nature, [are we] to conceive feelings outside of a consciousness, and a seeing, hearing, and touching of feelings?"[18] The concept of "feelings outside of a consciousness" was, in significant degree, the goal of much of what has come to be called modernist art, whether it seeks transcendental truth or engagements with the modern world. This is clear in the concept of the musical gesture we discuss later in this chapter – what Kurt Weill (1900–50) describes as both a worldly engagement with human character and an intellectual engagement with transcendental significance; in this understanding, gesture eschews psychology, romanticism, and sensuality in favor of the instantaneous grasping of "pure meaning."[19] The art of musical gesture, that is, the sensate art of sound and tone, reveals the *force* of worldly and transcendental aesthetic experience more readily than the other arts. Thus Zuckerkandl argues that in music, the perception of *musical tone* cannot be described in terms of physical sound and psychic feeling, but that what we experience in music requires "a third thing, which belongs to neither the physical nor the psychic context."[20] He designates this as "pure dynamism," which he later calls the "external psychic" described in terms of "force." This phenomenon, he says, "would then prove to be something purely dynamic, not feeling but force – a force for which the physical would be as it were transparent, which would work through the physical without touching it." He claims that while the eye "has such an important part in the construction of the world of material things," the *ear* "is the organ particularly capable of perceiving the dynamic component of external events."[21] In musical modernism, we are arguing, such *force* – whether it took the form of transcendental "truth" or of worldly "pleasure" – came to be most vigorously present and meaningfully tangible in individual and collective experience.

Musical Modernism: Form and Content

This chapter adapts its title from Walter Pater's phrase in *The Renaissance* in 1873 that *"all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music."*[22] The import of Pater's argument, somewhat like Zuckerkandl's, is that insofar as the

organized sounds of music may be understood to provoke experience more immediately than any other art, music accomplishes the nearest synthesis of material and meaning (of experience apprehended as meaningful) and so stands as the exemplary instance of aesthetic experience. Following the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson – both important figures in cultural modernism – Claude Lévi-Strauss makes this argument in greater semiotic detail than Pater's assertion. "Painting," he writes,

> through the instrumentality of culture, gives intellectual organization to a form of nature which it was already aware of as a sense pattern. Music follows exactly the opposite course: culture is already present in it, but in the form of sense experience, even before it organizes it intellectually by means of nature. It is because the field of operation of music is cultural that music comes into being, free from those representational links that keep painting in a state of subjection to the world of sense experience and its organization in the form of objects.[23]

Lévi-Strauss is describing music as a phenomenon in which culture already informs "sense experience," so that cultural phenomena – meaning, intellectual organizations, feelings themselves – are apprehended as both immediate and transcendental, the two engagements with history we are describing. Thus Eliot readily "hears" the London underground in Stravinsky, and Messiaen (and even Adorno, who doesn't share Messiaen's religious faith) can hear "the soul's flight toward Truth" in music.[24]

Unlike Lévi-Strauss, however, Pater's formulation rests on a traditional (Enlightenment) conception of the strict separation between "form" and "content." But twentieth-century modernism engaged in the rethinking of such a traditional understanding, just as it engaged in the rethinking, as we have already suggested, of the (psychological/bourgeois) subject of experience. In "Structure and Form," Lévi-Strauss criticizes this traditional understanding, arguing (as we are in describing modernism's relation to tradition) that, as opposed to *form*, "*structure* has no distinct content; it is content itself, and the logical organization in which it is arrested is conceived as [a] property of the real."[25] In this, he is arguing that the seemingly "immediate" sensations of experience – the "content" that appears to exist separately from its "form" (e.g., the sounds of music, the colors or shades of paintings, the meanings of words) – are, in fact, *always already* subject to mediation or "structure" in order to be realized and experienced.

If, as Bruno Latour argues, the strict opposition of form and content conditioned the advent of Enlightenment conceptualizations,[26] then twentieth-century modernist music reveals even more generally the

rethinking of a number of "self-evident truths" inherited from the early modern period. It is especially notable that received ideas of music, well into the late nineteenth century, at least in Europe and America, really begin in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This early modern period is the age of major innovations: methods of musical notation, the inventions of musical instruments as we know them today, the very idea of a musical key, standardizations of "tempered" musical tuning, the growth of music-listening as a "leisure" activity, and even the conception of a composer as a type of "author" (as in Michel Foucault's famous essay "What is an Author?"). All of these aspects of music-making and music-listening emerged in this period, and they raise a number of issues fundamental to our understanding of what modernist music is and does.

In relation to the "self-evident truths" of this tradition, the issue of "tempered" tuning is crucially important to particular strands of modernist music. Tempering, developed in the seventeenth century and advocated by Bach (e.g., *The Well-Tempered Clavier*), was a response to recently invented keyboard instruments, which did not lend themselves to tuning for particular performances of music in different keys. But tempered tuning also suggested that music "transcended" performance: tempered tuning "standardized 'pure' tones across different keys" and so established an absolute standard above the contingencies of particular performance.[27] Thus, as in twentieth-century modernism, both a sense of truth "transcendentally" outside the accidents of the world and of worldly historical phenomena combine in the early modern category of well-tempered music. In fact, modernist composers often advocated alternative views: musicians like Harry Partch (1901–74) rejected equal temperament as a lie and looked to just intonation and to the microtonal intervals found in non-Western music. The rejection of equal temperament suggests that modernist music (and modernist arts in general) can be understood in relation to the concept of "semantic formalism," a category closely related to Lévi-Strauss's conception of "structure" that cannot be abstracted from "content" in the way that the Enlightenment conception of "form" can. Foucault's point is that in a similar fashion the "author" – the *subject* governing the production and consumption of art – cannot be abstracted from larger forces in the world she inhabits.[28]

One implication of collapsing the distinction between content and form entails one of the most notable features of musical modernism, one that Albright studies in illuminating detail. This is the aspiration toward including other arts within music and its performances. If *aesthetic experience* does not distinguish between form and content, but rather encounters content arising

from structure in a kind of semantic formalism, then the particular arts (i.e., "forms") are not tied to particular "contents" (i.e., sound, color, words, etc.). This understanding is clear in the phenomenon of the Ballets Russes in Paris, and it culminates perhaps in Stravinsky's multimodal ballet, whose set designs, narrative, dancers, and even allusions to the urban sounds Eliot hears, extend the principles of the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*. As the chapter in this volume outlining the history and theory of Wagner's concept makes clear, *Gesamtkunstwerk* always operates in a double rhythm of media pluralism and generic purism. And so its influence shows equally clearly in the self-conscious pursuit of the "purity" of musical experience that Messiaen achieves in his *Quartet* as it does in works of "worldly" spectacle.

Musical Austerity: The Pursuit of "Purity"

Even earlier than Messiaen's, however, a "transcendental" sense of music – implicit in Adorno – can be seen in Arnold Schoenberg. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Schoenberg composed a series of challenging works that came to (and continue to) define one strand of modernism. The Second String Quartet in F-sharp Minor, op. 10 (1907–08), caused a riot at its premiere, although it is relatively unassuming when compared to the innovations of *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* (1908–09) and, most of all, *Erwartung* (*Expectation*, 1909), which is among Schoenberg's most challenging early works. It is one of Adorno's first examples in pointing to Schoenberg, over Stravinsky, as the prophet of progress. The union of *Erwartung*'s shocking and uncomfortable subject with its revolutionary musical material is part of its legacy as a modernist masterpiece, expanding the scope of artistic expression outside bourgeois conventions and into the frontiers of the psychoanalytical. The increasing hysteria of the protagonist – a woman searching through the woods for her husband, discovering his corpse and, in her dreamlike state, being unsure whether she herself murdered him – is set to atonal music that divorces itself from accepted harmonic practices and hierarchies, avoiding any tonal center and employing a high level of constant dissonance, with chords using fourths, tritones, and sevenths, eschewing the resolution to consonance. The form of the work, too, is notable for its continuous development without overt repetition of motif, let alone of themes, and so deliberately lacks the recognizable building blocks of formal structures, emphasizes instability, and only allows the most elusive connections between moments. Although it is a one-act monodrama – a kind of opera – unlike the worldliness of a ballet such as *The Rite of Spring*, *Erwartung*

is "nearly prelinguistic," "a halting speech so naked it had scarcely roused itself to the level of language."[29]

Schoenberg's rhetoric in relation to his early music highlights a modernist conception of the authority of the composer, driven by his inner compulsion to seek out the new. Discussing *The Book of the Hanging Gardens*, settings of poems by Stefan George, Schoenberg notes:

> I have for the first time succeeded in approaching an ideal of expression and form which has been in my mind for years ... now that I have set out along this path once and for all, I am conscious of having broken through every restriction of a bygone aesthetic ... I am, nonetheless, already feeling the resistance I shall have to overcome: I feel that even the least of tempera-ments will rise in revolt, and suspect that even those who have so far believed in me will not want to acknowledge the necessary nature of this development.[30]

The pursuit of the aesthetic goal of the transcendental impulse discussed above necessarily entails a violation of received ideas about harmony, sub-jectivity, and artistic continuity; but in doing so, Schoenberg suggests, the artist also places himself in a bewildering state of isolation. These sentiments drove Schoenberg to found the Society for Private Musical Performances in 1918, retreating from the conservative concert-going public and the critics, and sheltering in the realm of specialist performers, composers, and listeners. This was a move that allowed for education and refinement of the musical experience, but it also led to charges of elitism. Thus, in his notes to *The Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Schoenberg intensifies the heroic image of the artist present in romanticism and defends the creator's right to dictatorial control, despite the language of democratization and non-authority (the "emancipa-tion of dissonance," and eventually the method of composing with twelve tones "which are related only to one another").

Whether or not they validated or superseded artistic control, these eman-cipated dissonances were the subject of Schoenberg's ongoing work, which, after a long period of composer's block, involved a more conscious structur-ing of what we might call "subject-less" feelings. Eventually (in 1923–25), he developed his often misunderstood twelve-tone system. The fundamental idea is that the "row" or "series" (a specific ordering of the twelve notes of the equal tempered scale, using each note once, without repetition) gives rise to all of the material of a musical work. The series can be stated in its original form, can be played backwards ("retrograde") or upside-down ("inversion"), and these forms can be combined in different ways to produce variation.

The potential of a series to create an abstract, yet organic, structure for coherence outside the tonal system of traditional music – and outside the apparently autonomous subject-composer of music – became a particularly attractive theory for modernist composers. Indeed, even while there are ways in which Schoenberg's earlier practice simply intensifies the modernist impulses in his predecessors, expanding on Gustav Mahler's brilliantly original use of orchestration and Richard Strauss's more limited use of unresolved dissonances, his twelve-tone method encouraged more drastic breaks with tradition.

The "purity" of Schoenberg's elitist conception of art music gestures to the break from tradition found also in Stravinsky and throughout the modernist arts. The disruption of musical syntax in Schoenberg's music was the springboard for more radical notions of musical temporality. In the music of Schoenberg's student Anton Webern (1883–1945), sparse, austere figures, reduced to isolated motives, floating in atonal space, call attention to the *materiality* of the music in its basic form: as isolated intervals sculpted in instrumental sounds, attuning the listener to the experience of shaped acoustic. This phenomenon, in which sensate experience is shaped rather than simply represented as a pre-existing "content," is the import of the "semantic formalism" that we take to be Lévi-Strauss's modernist sense of "structure."

The connection between the materiality of Schoenberg and Webern and that of the "worldly" music of twentieth-century French composers – especially Debussy and Satie – is striking, even while the features they use to articulate this materiality are quite different. The music of Claude Debussy (1862–1918) does not negate thematicism to the degree of Schoenberg or Webern, yet his melodies, even while they invoke the (worldly) images of his titles (e.g., *La mer, Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune, Images*), are often revisited with different harmonizations within a single work, emphasizing contradiction over development, and seeming to expand the musical moment into an imaginative space. The mechanistic repetitions of Erik Satie (1866–1925), in works like *Vexations* and *Parade* (a collaboration with Jean Cocteau) – and also, for that matter, the ostinato blocks of Stravinsky's *Rite* and the setting of Gertrude Stein's *Four Saints in Three Acts* by Virgil Thomson (1896–1989) – also begin to highlight the material nature of sound and challenge its relation to form. In the case of Satie, the material sound/tone in his music is self-consciously limited, not to the end of transcending the world but of celebrating the urbanity of it through a self-consciously inorganic music. These instances of musical "worldliness," which aim at engaging seemingly primal

and universal aspects of life, are in notable contrast to the transcendental impulses in Schoenberg and his "school" (Alban Berg, 1885–1935, as well as Webern). Still, modernist music, both worldly and transcendental, as we are arguing, starkly transformed received ideas of form and content. Thus, in a tradition very different from Lévi-Strauss, Mary Poovey argues that "after about 1870" seemingly autonomous "facts" (conceived to be "content" phenomenally separate from system or theory since the time of early modern culture) came to be seen as "themselves already modeled and thus exist[ing] at one remove from what the eye can see."[31] So too, Lévi-Strauss's terms, "structuralism" as well as "semantic formalism," are properly associated with the historical moment of cultural modernism.

Music as Performance and Gesture

Another aspect of modernist music obviates rather than transforms received ideas of form and content. Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*

> prophesied a new type of popular art – low-down yet sophisticated, smartly savage, style and muscle intertwined. It epitomized the "second avant-garde" in classical composition, the post-Debussy strain that sought to drag the art out of Faustian "novel spheres" and into the physical world. For much of the nineteenth century, music had been a theater of the mind; now composers would create a music of the body.[32]

The very fact that *The Rite of Spring* was a *ballet* – which meant it dealt with bodies, with a different kind of collaboration than that of composer and conductor/orchestra, with things as well as sounds (e.g., the "objects" Lévi-Strauss finds in paintings but not in music) – distinguishes it strongly from Schoenberg's austere sounds and voices. Moreover, the *Rite* revels in powerful rhythms as well as sounds, the *gestures* of music that were emphasized in both the popular and art music of the new century.

Rhythm, as epitomized in *The Rite of Spring*, is closely related to gesture, and in 1928, as we have seen, Kurt Weill – influenced by and collaborating with Bertolt Brecht – examined "*Gestus* in Music." Such *gestus* – which is "at once gesture and gist, attitude and point"– captures the basic "attitude which precludes every doubt and every misunderstanding";[33] Albright describes it as "a pure flash of meaning."[34] More broadly, in "Rite and Rhythm," János Maróthy argues that "music is made humanly important not by a 'violin sound' or by a 'piano sound' alone but by their shaping through the *gestures* of a performing artist."[35] A theory of gesture necessarily involves abandoning

the absolute distinction between form and content, as it calls for interpretation that does not come after some pre-existing content but, in its act (or "gesture") of interpretation, creates the possibility of grasping a phenomenon as "content" in the first place. Thus, Charles Keil suggests in one example that "gesture" is not a label for a pre-existing action, but the very act of grasping an action *as* meaningful: "when a jazz saxophonist comes up with a triple forte screech, is he having reed trouble or is it the climax of his solo? Only the gesture's place in the overall process can determine the answer."[36] If it is the accidental screech of reed trouble, it is not a gesture at all, but a simple accident. A gesture, one might say, is a complex accident, purposeful and aleatory at the same time, and essentially *subject* to interpretation: hence the notion of "semantic formalism," where form and semantics (content/meaning) are grasped together ("arrested") and experienced as a property of the real, as in the "pure flash of meaning" in the screeching climax of the solo.

Even in the highest of high modernists – in Samuel Beckett's austere arts as well as Stravinsky's frantic playfulness – gesture plays with truth. That is, in the work of modernist art, we can hear and see everyday gestures of words and sounds and grasp seemingly transcendental truth. In a powerful argument, Maróthy notes, "music is not solely a question of the organs of sound production/perception but that of the *human body as a whole*."[37] Moreover, such musical gestures – including its rhythms – participate in social life. Thus, in talking about music more generally, Maróthy asserts that it "creates a *field of force*, in which we behave accordingly," the very force Zuckerkandl describes.[38] More importantly, such behavior entails versions of what Mikhail Bakhtin – another cultural modernist – has called "speech genres." Thus, Bakhtin argues that "when the listener perceives and understands the meaning . . . of speech, he simultaneously takes an active, responsive attitude towards it."[39] In a similar fashion, Maróthy argues – perhaps in direct opposition to Adorno and Schoenberg – that music "has never been fully separated from words and/or dancing (let alone *cheironomia* in conducting music); even the first autonomous music genres, the *suite* and the *variation*, were built on the *movimenti* of dance types determined by ritualized occasions and the corresponding behavior patterns."[40] Still, musical gesture can be marshaled in the pursuit of "purity" as well as worldly engagement. "Brecht," Albright notes, "was uncomfortable with the extraordinary charm of Weill's music. To Brecht [and Adorno would add Schoenberg as well], music should be written with a knife's blade – should be confrontational, aggressive, disturbing."[41] In this way, the gestures of music can be heard and *felt* in modernist music altogether.

Musical Modernism: The American Scene

American responses to the conditions of being – and sounding – modern took a different shape from those of their European counterparts, reflecting the different but related circumstances in the New World, even if American composers and audiences in the early twentieth century harkened back to the European tradition. The experiments of Charles Ives (1874–1954) came to be hugely influential in defining the course of modernist music in America. Many of his most ambitious scores were only premiered decades after they were written, yet the bold direction he took made him a champion for the following generation. Ives's earliest training was under his father, but he also encountered the European tradition in study at Yale. Soon, he rebelled against imitation of European models, stating in his *Essays Before a Sonata* that the "luxuriant" music of Wagner "had become cloying, the melodies threadbare," and that Debussy's *La mer* had "a kind of sensual sensuousness underlying it" that was impoverished when compared to a more spiritual appreciation of nature found in Thoreau (see Ives's Second Pianoforte Sonata, "Concord, Mass., 1845").[42] Ives's consciously modern materials included chords built from different intervals, including seconds and fourths, rather than the usual thirds, the pairing of pianos tuned a quarter-tone apart, and the use of simultaneous tempos in different parts of the ensemble in works like *The Unanswered Question* and the Fourth Symphony, an effect inspired by hearing two separate bands playing from opposite sides of the town square. They explicitly reverse Enlightenment traditions in music, even as they perform music from a uniquely American perspective. Ives's use of quotation – especially of hymn tunes, sometimes with ironic distance and yet sometimes in more sentimental ways – also helps convey a sense of pluralism, mixing vernacular and concert music as he absorbed materials of the past into the context of the present.

Ives's first publisher was Henry Cowell (1897–1965), a composer, performer, and tireless promoter of new music. Cowell had an important role in consolidating and developing materials from Ives's experiments as well as his own. It was Cowell, in his book *New Musical Resources*, who defined tone clusters and devised a new notation for them as well as other innovations. In addition, Cowell's book discusses the possibilities of microtonal music and sliding tones, connecting these ideas, at least nominally, to the practice of non-Western traditions, often validating his materials by appeals to the overtone series and the science of acoustics. His rhythmic innovations included "scales" of rhythm, meter, and tempo analogous to scales in pitch.

He incorporated these innovations in his own compositions, especially in his remarkable works for piano. Cowell toured internationally, playing these pieces and making use of new techniques – clusters, using the entire hand or even the forearm, and playing the strings inside the piano directly – that introduced new types of physicality to performance.

Cowell's influence extended beyond his own works, to his promotion of others through publication, concert production, and teaching. He founded the periodical *New Music*, which published the scores to works not only by Ives but also by contemporaries including Ruth Crawford, Carl Ruggles, Edgard Varèse, Carlos Chávez, and Aaron Copland. His book *American Composers on American Music* also gave a forum for his colleagues working with diverse new techniques. His New Music Society of California helped provide a venue for Europeans including Schoenberg as well as the American "Ultra-Modern" composers as Cowell's circle has come to be called. Cowell taught throughout his career, both in California and later in New York, and was notable for teaching modern techniques as well as being one of the first to teach music from non-Western cultures. His broad interests are reflected in the diverse range of his students, including Lou Harrison (1917–2003), who furthered the synthesis of Eastern and Western musics; John Cage (1912–92), who expanded on the use of noise in music as well as the extended performance possibilities of the piano; and even, briefly, George Gershwin (1898–1937). In fact, the two impulses of modernist music we are tracing in this chapter can be seen in the work of Gershwin, friend to Schoenberg and Berg, who infused moments of atonality into popular music, as in "Summertime" (in *Porgy and Bess*), "Good Work if You can Get It," and even *Rhapsody in Blue*. Ross describes this twofold musical identity nicely:

> Falling between two stools was, in fact, the essence of Gershwin's genius. He led at all times a double life: as music-theater professional and concert composer, as highbrow artist and lowbrow entertainer, as all-American kid and immigrants' son, as white man and "white Negro." *Porgy* performed the monumental feat of reconciling the rigidity of Western notated music with the African American principle of improvised variation. In the end, Gershwin reunited two sides of the composer's job that should never have been separated to begin with, and he came as close as any composer of the day – his chief rival was Kurt Weill – to the all-devouring, high-low art of Mozart and Verdi.[43]

As the examples of Gershwin and Weill suggest, America and Europe were hardly isolated from one another, especially in relation to the worldliness of modernist music. Thus, both George Antheil (1900–59), who was born in

New Jersey but spent much time in Paris, and Edgard Varèse (1883–1965) – a student of Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924), a modernist immersed in the classical tradition – who was born in France but spent most of his life in the United States, reflect the transnational technological innovations of the Second Industrial Revolution. The spectacle of Stravinsky's *Rite* and the provocation of Satie were still in the air as Antheil, a friend and favorite of Ezra Pound, made his mark on the Parisian musical world. His *Ballet mécanique,* a project with Fernand Léger, was given its first full public performance in Paris in June 1926; the score calls for player pianos (pianolas) alongside percussion instruments including electric bells, sirens, and propellers. The celebration of technology is apparent, and shocking, not only in the novel sounds, but in the visual effect of machines taking the stage. Varèse was another to embrace new technology as an integral part of modernity. He had already used sirens in his work *Amériques* (1918–21) and was an advocate for new musical instruments that would allow for more modern and spatial forms of expression; later in his career, he emerged as a pioneer of electronic music.

Modernist Music and Twentieth-Century Politics

As presented by Weill, Brecht, and others, a theory of gesture joins Schoenberg's strict twelve-tone system as two separate but related attempts to discover order outside the received Enlightenment notions of tonal harmony, counterpoint, and authorial control. These attempts were undertaken in the face of the dissolution of these elements of music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this, music offered perhaps the most distinct analogue or expression of a general anxiety among *some* people living at this time. This anxiety was related – often in vaguely conscious ways – to a sense that their stable order of life-experiences (including social relations and received ideas about the world and value) was dissolving into chaos in the sheer crowdedness of things and people in the new twentieth century. We say "some" people because it was sometimes the very democratization of Western life, with the increasing visibility of and claims for a wider, richer life by laborers, women, homosexuals, and ethnic minorities, that contributed to the free-floating anxiety felt by many. In 1923, Eliot reviewed James Joyce's *Ulysses*, stressing how the novel gives "a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history,"[44] and many modernists – including Eliot – gravitated toward authoritarian politics in the early decades of the century. Thus, Thomas Mann's great novel, *Doctor*

Faustus, depicts Germany selling its soul to the devil in reference to fascism in the figure of its hero, Adrian Leverkühn, a modernist composer, who develops a method of composition that Mann acknowledges is "known as the twelve-tone or row system, [which] is in truth the intellectual property of a contemporary composer and theoretician, Arnold Schönberg."[45]

In the first half of the twentieth century, composers in Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany faced censorship and the extreme politicization of art under totalitarian governments. In Russia, Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75) faced the not-so-veiled threat of Stalin's displeasure, and Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) returned from exile to a more or less uneasy life (which included composing the powerful score for Sergei Eisenstein's film *Alexander Nevsky*). As late as 1948, the Central Committee of the Soviet Union banned forty-two works by "formalists," including major works by Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Similarly, in Hitler's Germany, the new music of modernism – atonalism and other modernist trends – was denounced as "degenerate," especially as an aspect of Jewish conspiracy. Ross notes that the life of the Czech-Jewish composer Erwin Schulhoff

> neatly maps the early twentieth century: he started off writing in a Romantic, folk-inflected style, then took up jazz piano and indulged in Dada provocations . . . In the twenties he produced toughly lyrical chamber music in a Bartókian vein. In the next decade he embraced socialist realism and went so far as to set the *Communist Manifesto* to music . . . Even in Wülzburg [concentration camp, where he died], he continued to compose.[46]

This was possible because, even in the Nazi concentration camps, as we saw with Messiaen's *Quartet*, music continued to be performed and listened to. Thus, in relation to the horrors of totalitarian politics, as in the widening sense of both worldly engagement and the quest for transcendental states of human experience, modernist music engaged the breadth of twentieth-century experience and understanding.

Notes

1 Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007), 45.

2 For these historical contexts for modernism, see Ronald Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), and *Modernism and Time: The Logic of Abundance in Literature, Science, and Culture 1880–1930* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

3 Daniel Albright (ed.), *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), 6.

4 Ibid., 13.

5 Charles Hamm, *Putting Popular Music in its Place* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 319–20. See also Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music*, 174–75.

6 Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (New York: Anchor, 1989), 50.

7 See ibid., 9–55; and Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. IV (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 170–90.

8 Quoted in Albright (ed.), *Modernism and Music*, 12.

9 Carol Oja, "Gershwin and American Modernists of the 1920s," *Musical Quarterly*, 78 (1994), 632.

10 Olivier Messiaen, *Lecture at Notre Dame: An Address at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, December 4, 1977*, trans. Timothy J. Tikker (Paris: A. Leduc, 2001), 5.

11 Paul Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 15.

12 Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music*, 187.

13 Daniel Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent: Modernism in Music, Literature, and Other Arts* (University of Chicago Press, 2000), 14–16; Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

14 Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 6.

15 Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music*, 14.

16 Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," in Carey Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 317–33 (at 324–25).

17 Albright (ed.), *Modernism and Music*, 137.

18 Victor Zuckerkandl, *Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World*, trans. Willard Trask (Princeton University Press, 1969), 60.

19 Kurt Weill, "*Gestus* in Music," trans. Erich Albrecht, *Tulane Drama Review*, 6 (1961), 28–32. See also Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent*, 112.

20 Zuckerkandl, *Sound and Symbol*, 60.

21 Ibid., 63.

22 Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, ed. Donald Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 106.

23 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, trans. John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Harper, 1975), 22.

24 Messiaen, *Lecture at Notre Dame*, 5.

25 Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Structure and Form: Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp," trans. Monique Layton, rev. Anatoly Liberman, in Vladimir Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 167–89 (at 167).

26 Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). He argues that this strict opposition governed Enlightenment thinking, but not Enlightenment political and social behavior.

27 Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music*, 39.

28 In *Modernism and Popular Music*, Schleifer describes semantic formalism in relation to the *performances* of music, and especially popular performances as distinct from the analysis of the scores of classical music. He notes that in discussing Beethoven, Stravinsky suggests that "the logic of music's language – or really Beethoven's particular musical language – creates the meaning-experience it seems to represent. Thus, the procedure of semantic formalism, *realizing* as it does the equivalence of the natural and the artificial [i.e., content and form], is powerfully performative insofar as it is an enactment as well as a representation" (6).

29 Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent*, 149.

30 Arnold Schoenberg, "Program Notes" for *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, in Malcolm MacDonald, *Schoenberg*, rev. edn. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 13.

31 Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 3–4.

32 Ross, *The Rest is Noise*, 76.

33 Weill, "*Gestus* in Music," 28, 29.

34 Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent*, 112.

35 János Maróthy, "Rite and Rhythm: From Behaviour Patterns to Musical Structures," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 35/4 (1993–94), 421–33 (at 430).

36 Charles Keil, "Motion and Feeling through Music," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 24 (1966), 337–49 (at 345).

37 Maróthy, "Rite and Rhythm," 422.

38 Ibid., 425.

39 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. Vern McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 68.

40 Maróthy, "Rite and Rhythm," 429.

41 Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent*, 118.

42 Charles Ives, *Essays Before a Sonata and Other Writings*, ed. Howard Boatwright (New York: W.W. Norton, 1962), 73, 82.

43 Ross, *The Rest is Noise*, 150.

44 T.S. Eliot, *Selected Prose*, ed. Frank Kermode (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 177.

45 Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Modern Library, 1948), Author's End Note.

46 Ross, *The Rest is Noise*, 332–33.

The Modernist "Novel"

MARINA MACKAY

"And Emma sought to find out exactly what was meant in real life by the words *felicity*, *passion* and *rapture*, which had seemed so fine on the pages of the books."[1] Thus Emma Bovary contemplates the gap between her reading about love and her experience of betrothal to dull Charles, and thus Flaubert claims a new kind of experience for "the pages of the books." Emma comes to believe that "the general mediocrity of life" is "a kind of anomaly, a unique accident that had befallen her alone," but this is a novel in which everyday life asserts comprehensive demands, clomping along as unromantically as the villager Hippolyte, whose leg has been amputated in a botched surgery Charles Bovary undertakes in the fanciful belief that it will make his medical reputation.[2] With its ironic celebration of the ordinary, a maneuver that would find a kind of apotheosis eighty years later in the witty plotlessness of Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* (1930–42), *Madame Bovary* (1857) is a proto-modernist undoing of the novel: a rejection of the novel's traditional endorsements of the individual will to power triumphing over intractable reality, and a rejection of the moral assurances and shapely plots typically associated with nineteenth-century realism. This chapter engages the long history of the modernist novel as a corrective project, from Flaubert's transformation of domestic realism to the novel's near-dissolution in the course of the following century.

Modernist Forms

It is as well to begin in France, in any case, in view of Henry James's implied contrast between French and British attitudes to the novel at the end of the nineteenth century. James suggested that whereas the French take the novel seriously as an art form – or consider the novel *"discutable"* – the English novel has "no air of having a theory, a conviction, a consciousness of itself behind it": the philistine English assumption has been that "a novel is a novel,

as a pudding is a pudding, and that our only business with it could be to swallow it."³ And James was not alone among the period's émigré novelists in urging a new self-confidence and self-consciousness among English practitioners. Joseph Conrad, too, insisted that it was high time that the novel started taking itself seriously. The classic statement of this view comes in his famous preface to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* (1897), published in the year James and Conrad became acquainted.

> [The novel] must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music – which is the art of arts. And it is only through complete, unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance; it is only through an unremitting never-discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences that an approach can be made to plasticity, to colour, and that the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words: of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless usage.⁴

Arguing that fiction may legitimately come to be considered as much an art as sculpture, painting, and music, "the art of arts," Conrad asks here for a committed sense of purpose among novelists: "strenuously aspire," "unswerving devotion," "unremitting never-discouraged care." It scarcely matters what form the novel takes so long as that form is knowingly created – that it has, to recall James's words, "a theory, a conviction, a consciousness of itself behind it."

Samuel Hynes long ago characterized East Sussex neighbors James, Conrad, and Conrad's collaborator Ford Madox Ford as the "Rye Revolutionists." "Important English writers do not ordinarily fit very neatly into schools," Hynes writes, "but the Rye Revolutionists were, in a loose way, a kind of school, held together by common theories about fiction, by common likes and dislikes, as well as by the odd fact that none of them was altogether an Englishman."⁵ As Hynes's suggestion of foreignness implies, these transitional modernists were in some ways more closely identified with continental rather than English novelists – or "nuvvelists," Ford called them in a book in which he contrasted them unfavorably with Flaubert and Conrad (while Henry James, Ford wrote in 1913, was "the greatest man now living").⁶ This identification with the continent encouraged these writers to bring across the Channel a formalistic attention to style never previously associated with the English novel. The outcome was that the novel was to be remade across England, as well as across Europe and the United States, by an unprecedented alertness not only to what a novel could

be about, but to what a novel could actually *be*. "There is the story of one's hero," as James put it in the preface to his altogether-international *The Ambassadors* (1903), "and then . . . the story of one's story itself."[7]

Such self-consciousness dominates modernism; perhaps it determined modernism. After all, these were perhaps the first novelists since the 1740s – since the era of Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson, compelled by the very novelty of the novel to defend their "new species of writing," their "new province of writing" – whose fiction reaches us accompanied by theoretical essays, manifestos, and prefaces.[8] Some of these paratexts are now autonomously canonical in their own right: James's "The Art of Fiction" has already been quoted, its importance perhaps rivaled only by that of Virginia Woolf's endlessly quotable "Modern Fiction" and "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown." Her contemporary D.H. Lawrence's "Surgery for the Novel – Or a Bomb" would be worthy of honorable mention here for its tellingly rebarbative title alone, but is instructive in another way, too, because, taking to task in 1923 the modernist novel of heightened consciousness – only a year after the publication of *Ulysses* – it suggests how ready modernists were to pounce on each other's experiments and not only on the perceived limitations of more traditional precursors.

Their committed theorizing was surely historically motivated in part. What, for example, might count as plot after the exhaustion of the old three-decker and serial formulae? James characterized the older publication structures/strictures as something like the literary equivalent of dressage: "a tax on . . . that ingenuity of the expert craftsman which likes to be taxed very much to the same tune to which a well-bred horse likes to be saddled."[9] And if conventional plot is coming to look artificial, there is also the new problem of how to write character now that unitary notions of selfhood no longer persuade, a point noted by even the less radical of the period's major writers. As E.M. Forster conceded, "Psychology has split and shattered the idea of a 'Person', and has shown that there is something incalculable in each of us, which may at any moment rise to the surface and destroy our normal balance. We don't know what we are like. We can't know what other people are like."[10] Published in a 1938 essay, this assertion comes late in the modernist day, though is not quite as belated as it seems, given that it coincides historically with his friend Woolf's diary declaration that she was now reading Freud ("Freud is upsetting: reducing one to whirlpool; & I daresay truly"[11]). Still, it is clear from his earlier reflections in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) that Forster was finding his contemporaries' recent engagements of plot impossible to ignore ("In the losing battle that the plot fights

with the characters, it often takes a cowardly revenge. Nearly all novels are feeble at the end. This is because the plot requires to be wound up"), and likewise their grappling with the nature of personhood ("We cannot understand each other, except in a rough and ready way; we cannot reveal ourselves even when we want to; what we call intimacy is only a makeshift; perfect knowledge is an illusion").[12] *Aspects of the Novel* is a significant work in its historical context, indicating as it does a more theoretical engagement with craft than Forster's empiricism would seem to allow. Unsurprisingly, given the source, it is among the least combative of modernist novelists' statements on their practice – but it is a statement nonetheless.

That self-consciousness is the hallmark of modernist fiction, then, is attested to by the sheer volume of reflections on the novel produced in this period, reflections on the novel that are also often manifestos about it. But even when they appear without any such explanatory or polemical context, modernist novels are often themselves theories of the novel. This aspect of the period's fiction is underscored by the fact that this was a golden age of the *Künstlerroman*, the artist novel, in which the imaginative and the analytical become almost indistinguishable. Among the most explicit about the processes of its own making is André Gide's *The Counterfeiters* (1925), a novel in which the Gide surrogate Édouard is writing a novel named (of course) *The Counterfeiters*. Just to add to the peculiar self-reflexivity of the project, Gide then published his *Journal of the Counterfeiters* (1926), detailing his deliberations as he composed the novel, and offered (its dedication announces) "to those who are interested in questions of technique."[13] On the anglophone side, James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) is perhaps the iconic example of modernist fiction reflecting on its own making, focusing almost genetically on the circumstances in which the novel could come to be written at all: the growing command of language in the infant author ("baby tuckoo"); his apprehension of and resistance to guilt and shame ("Pull out his eyes, / Apologise"); his relationship to his family ("– O, I say, here's a fellow says he kisses his mother every night before he goes to bed"); his class-complicated relationship to Irish Catholicism ("But it was a holy smell. It was not like the smell of the old peasants who knelt at the back of the chapel at Sunday mass"); his growing exposure to a self-defeated Irish nationalism ("Dante had ripped the green velvet back off the brush that was for Parnell one day with her scissors and had told him that Parnell was a bad man").[14] By the time we leave Stephen Dedalus at the end of the novel, we might doubt that the humorless character of the final pages could write the book we have just read, but, nonetheless, we have encountered the forces that might make the novel ultimately possible.

In this respect, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* has something in common with Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913), which stops short of Paul Morel's full development as an artist – in the open ending of the novel we see him walking away from Miriam after his mother's death. Still, there is little doubt about what he will become once he has left behind the women who nurtured his artistry in the first place; Miriam, we're told, "brought forth to him his imaginations," as do Mrs. Morel and Clara.[15] Such women will then themselves become the contested – to say the least – subject of all Lawrence's major fiction. But if Joyce and Lawrence, like, say, Knut Hamsun and Thomas Mann in their earlier artist novels *Hunger* (1890) and *Tonio Kröger* (1903), imply an irrevocable divide between an authentic artist and his inauthentic society, what is equally apparent in their work is an embedded reliance on the constraining forces these novels ostensibly reject, the deathly embodiment and fixity of, say, women or nation. Thus far I have been describing the modernist novel's corrective function as a formal matter, but it typically has a similarly critical relationship to its culture, and one outcome of this oppositional stance is a powerful dependence on what the novel ostensibly resists. Perhaps Lawrence needed the category of Woman rather more than women needed him.

Modernist Feelings

Lawrence's closing line sees Paul Morel turning "towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly," and modernists famously produced the greatest novels of modern urban life.[16] Of course, many classic nineteenth-century novels had made urbanization a central interest – from the industrial Manchester of Elizabeth Gaskell's realist *North and South* and the Parisian slums of Émile Zola's naturalist *Thérèse Raquin* to the fin-de-siècle West End and Whitechapel social poles of Oscar Wilde's *Dorian Gray* – but in modernist fiction the city is increasingly a site of phenomenological as well as social and moral inquiry. In this respect, as in so many others, modernist fiction is reshaping its inheritance from prior forms of fiction. Furthermore, the way in which the city activates new states of mind might be taken as exemplary of these writers' broader concerns with the relationship between the inner life and its environment; this section turns to the presentation of the inner life in modernism, and to a parallel modernist refusal to make that inner life readable.

Hamsun's city novel *Hunger* is an important early example of the way in which individual consciousness transforms the world. This novel's

hallucinatory representation is akin to what Woolf's Septimus Smith might have supplied had he turned his attention to Oslo rather than London, although the literally starving artist of *Hunger* experiences the city through a mind destroyed by malnutrition rather than psychological trauma. Whereas Mrs. Dalloway will experience her exhilarating entry onto the Westminster streets as "a lark ... a plunge" – anticipating that "plunge" onto the streets Septimus takes at the paradoxical moment when he kills himself thinking that "He did not want to die" – the unwilling *flâneur* of Hamsun's novel experiences these heightened states of mind mainly because he is losing himself to hunger as he walks the streets: "I went with the flow, borne from place to place this happy morning, rocking serenely to and fro among other happy people."[17] Light spirits are a delusion inspired by light-headedness, but the hunger in *Hunger* is also a pretext for exploring what would become a signature modernist concern with fluctuating states of consciousness, impressions cast as flickering street lights: "They last a second, a minute, they come and go like a moving winking light; but they have impressed their mark, deposited some kind of sensation before they vanished."[18] So Hamsun wrote in an essay contemporary with *Hunger*, in a passage that prefigures many of the key documents of English-language modernism: Ford on impressionism ("we saw that Life did not narrate, but made impressions on our brains") or Woolf on modern fiction: "Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible?"[19]

That famous line from Woolf pairs "alien and external" as if what is "external" is necessarily "alien"; by extension, what counts as intrinsic and essential must be what happens inside the experiencing mind. Social, material, and physical realities certainly matter in her fiction, but they matter first insofar as they impinge on the consciousness of characters. Above all, biological finitude is the ever-present unthinkable material fact in her fiction, and so offers endless examples of the ebb and flow of a mind trying to process what resists assimilation. We might think of Clarissa Dalloway, a recent survivor of the flu pandemic, trying simultaneously to contemplate and evade her own mortality: and so we learn that "she feared time itself ... the dwindling of life; how year by year her share was sliced," and then watch her clutching at straws as she consoles herself that "She had just broken into her fifty-second year. Months and months of it were still untouched. June, July, August! Each still remained almost whole!"[20] Or there is Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse* struggling to fix her feelings about Mrs. Ramsay's sudden death, and caught between a kind of rationalizing mockery ("Mrs Ramsay has

faded and gone, she thought. We can over-ride her wishes, improve away her limited, old-fashioned ideas") and a harrowing grief, felt as much in the body as the mind ("To want and not to have, sent all up her body a hardness, a hollowness, a strain. And then to want and not to have – to want and want – how that wrung the heart, and wrung it again and again! Oh Mrs Ramsay!").[21] Here we see the mind in flux, producing a sequence of thoughts both provisional and contradictory, and consciousness itself is foregrounded as it runs up against its absolute limit: its impotence in the face of our fragile material being; its unbearable knowledge of its own circumscription by time and mortality.

As these examples imply, the past bears down heavily on Woolf's characters, and in this respect, too, she is easily cast as a representative figure for modernism's treatment of consciousness. As in much modernist fiction, there is a pronounced sense in her novels of people not so much living in the present as having survived the past: that's obviously true for Clarissa Dalloway and Lily Briscoe in the examples above (and true as well for the Great War veteran Septimus Smith, and for all the characters who make it out the other side of *To the Lighthouse*'s middle section). Modernity inflicts its shocks, and the mood of many modernist novels is of coming to terms with a catastrophe; hence the novel of lyrical and often melancholic retrospection: Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913–27) is almost proverbially definitive of fiction in which memory works involuntarily to salvage everything time obliterates. Some modernist novels are strikingly explicit about fiction as a form of recuperation: "You may well ask why I write," speculates John Dowell, narrator of Ford's *The Good Soldier* (1915):

> And yet my reasons are quite many. For it is not unusual in human beings who have witnessed the sack of a city or the falling to pieces of a people to desire to set down what they have witnessed for the benefit of unknown heirs or of generations infinitely remote; or, if you please, just to get the sight out of their heads.[22]

The trauma in this case is a domestic one: the belated realization of the infidelity of Dowell's late wife, Florence, with his late friend, Edward Ashburnham, a betrayal enabled by the collusion of Ashburnham's wife. Private loss is the event with which characters are coming to terms, too, in works such as William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930), for example, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925). A hermetic private circle has been shattered by loss, either literal deaths (Addie Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*), or, as in *The Good Soldier*, losses

compounded by the traumatic revision of what characters were believed to have been (Caddy Compson, Jay Gatsby). Modernist fiction is full of characters reckoning in a seemingly endless present with the events of the past, a pervasive modernist interest with a literally formative effect insofar as it is productive of modernist narrative's signature anti-chronological modes, for, as Faulkner's Quentin Compson says, "time is dead as long as it is being clicked off by little wheels; only when the clock stops does time come to life."[23]

These private losses are typically compounded by a massive historical loss or transformation: the demise of plantation-house privilege in Faulkner's South, for example, or the cataclysmic end to the pre-1914 belle époque in Ford, the historical convulsion to which he would return in his *Parade's End* tetralogy (1924–28). But there is also a kind of anticipatorily elegiac quality to modernist fiction's treatment of historical consciousness. For example, in Joseph Roth's haunting and ironic *The Radetzky March* (1932), as well as in Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, the catastrophe is a world-historical one yet to happen. In Musil, famously, the end the characters have in mind is a celebration of Franz Joseph's seventy years as Austrian Emperor; the superseding destiny the reader cannot forget is the outbreak of the First World War.[24] The narration of life among the elite of prewar Austro-Hungary is irrevocably contaminated by knowledge of this culture's imminent annihilation. Roth is more explicit that readers know what the characters cannot; his characters are "still unaware that each of them, without exception, would have an assignation with Death within a couple of years"; they cannot "hear the machinery of the great hidden mills that were already beginning to grind out the Great War."[25]

Nonetheless, if melancholic pathos is among modernist fiction's characteristic historical affects, it is a factor of modernism's corrective habit that where we find repetition, we find repetition with a theorized difference, and so it is important to consider those works that resist, sometimes in a strenuously committed way, the powerful emotional inwardness we often associate with modernist fiction. And so, for example, an important contrast to Roth's retrospective handling of the run-up to the First World War is offered by his fellow Austrian-Jewish writer Hermann Broch's treatment of the years preceding the Second. Formally, they are altogether different: *The Radetzky March* is a tightly plotted novel following three generations of the same family; *The Guiltless* (1950) resembles more closely a collection of linked stories. (Broch referred to it as a novel, while maintaining that the terminology did not matter; here, as in *The Sleepwalkers*, 1932, he is clearly testing

the convention that a primary and teleological plotline serve as a novel's unifying principle.) Like Roth's novel, however, *The Guiltless* is about people unwittingly complicit with death-bound political forces, only Broch is almost pitiless about those lives. Accounting for his ironic title, Broch wrote that *The Guiltless* is peopled by "types prevalent in the pre-Hitler period":

> None of them is directly "guilty" of the Hitler catastrophe. That is why the book is entitled *The Guiltless*. Nevertheless it is precisely from such a state of mind and soul that Nazism derived its energies. For political indifference is ethical indifference, hence closely related to ethical perversity. In short, most of the politically guiltless bear a considerable share of ethical guilt.[26]

Even the less unpleasant of these "types" are craven failures, and the novel's tone is dismissive, to the point that at times the narrator-author seems sickened and bored by his own characters, as if he thinks them barely worth writing into full existence in the first place. Thus, for example, he introduces a mathematics teacher residing in a boarding house:

> Can such a minimum of personality, such a non-self, be made into an object of human interest? Might one not just as well develop the history of some dead thing, of a shovel, for instance? What significant happening can there be after the great event of such a life, the passing of the teacher's examination? What thoughts can still arise in the hero's mind – his name is irrelevant, let him be called Zacharias – now that his small talent for mathematical thinking gradually has begun to atrophy?[27]

The "significant happening" is, true to the narrator's throwaway manner, a non-happening. In a development Broch treats as tediously predictable, "Zacharias" ("his name is irrelevant") seduces the daughter of his boarding house landlady; less predictably, they arrange a suicide pact and head into the countryside to kill themselves when their pseudo-romance goes wrong; more predictably, they return home from the countryside probably engaged to be married in the good bourgeois style (probably, that is, because, true to form, Broch's narrator casually supposes that "in all likelihood this is what happened").[28]

Since modernist fiction is typically associated with the presentation of consciousness, it is striking that the characters' crime in *The Guiltless* is thus a kind of *lack* of consciousness, and the effect of literal mindlessness is heightened by the analytical, almost metafictional distance between the narrator and his subjects. This is an important reminder that, contrary to the temptation to make of Woolf and Proust wholly representative figures, "interiority" is really only part of the story of modernist fiction. Jonathan

Greenberg has identified in modernism, and particularly in late modernism, a rejection of inwardness and empathy in favor of the satirical and grotesque. Inevitably, it complicates matters that, as with a number of our formulae for thinking about modernism – Wyndham Lewis's classic "Men of 1914," for example – the opposition between an interiorizing and an externalizing modernism is an antithesis built into modernism by modernists themselves in such polemical essays and self-reflexive fictions as those discussed above.[29] Or, to return to Lewis, in his artist-novel *Tarr* there is an art modeled on "the armoured hide of the hippopotamus, the shell of the tortoise, feathers and machinery," and then an art concerned with the "naked pulsing and moving of the soft inside of life": a hard, exterior novel of "dead" unconsciousness versus a novel of the "human and sentimental" interior.[30] That, of course, only confirms Greenberg's claim that "feeling ... has its own story *within* modernism."[31] One reason modernism is so difficult to generalize about is that as soon as a new orthodoxy is felt to have formed – for Lewis, this consensus was emerging around the new novel of sensibility – invective and corrective follow.

Greenberg's examples are writers from the English-Irish traditions such as Lewis, Samuel Beckett, and Evelyn Waugh. To this list we might add the continental modernists Louis-Ferdinand Céline and Franz Kafka, making allowances for the less mitigated darkness of their irony. We see that anti-sentimental modernist grotesque clearly in evidence, for example, from the savage renewals enacted at the end of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915), when his family has disposed of Gregor's insect cadaver, to the projection of postwar renewal by the unwilling soldier Ferdinand Bardamu in *Journey to the End of the Night* (1932):

> And when I'm dead, is the honor of my family going to bring me back to life? ... I can see how it will be with my family when these warlike scenes have passed ... as everything passes ... I can see my family on fine Sundays ... joyfully gamboling on the lawns of a new summer ... while three feet under papa, that's me, dripping with worms and infinitely more disgusting than ten pounds of turds on the Fourteenth of July, will be rotting stupendously with all my deluded flesh ... Fertilize the fields of the anonymous plowman – that is the true future of the true soldier![32]

This is affectively a far cry from even the satirist Waugh's least happy ending, to name one of Greenberg's authors.[33] The conclusion of *A Handful of Dust* (1934) has Waugh's hero, Tony Last, haplessly lost in the jungle, his beloved country house no less ignominiously converted into a fur farm, for the new owner "hoped one day to restore Hetton to the glory that it had enjoyed in

the days of his Cousin Tony."[34] Waugh's fake renewal is preposterous and mildly sad rather than straightforwardly sadistic or nihilistic. And so it is important to acknowledge that the satire/sentiment, outer/inner binaries can collapse. Even Woolf, after all, had a satirical streak of her own. And if she would scarcely have attempted the feral vulgarity of Céline on the Great War, she seldom mentions without icy disgust the complacent culture that failed to grasp the war's devastating enormity. Her range in representing this historical catastrophe includes her satirical mimicry of the pseudo-consolatory discourse surrounding Andrew Ramsay's "mercifully" quick death in *To the Lighthouse* when he is "blown up in France," the alienated, contemptuous representations of military figureheads in 1929's *A Room of One's Own* ("the faces of our rulers in the light of the shell-fire. So ugly they looked . . . so stupid"), and the droll, mock-quizzical isolation of "the brass and the feathers" of an outlandish military masculinity in her pacifist *Three Guineas* (1938): "A woman who advertised her motherhood by a tuft of horsehair on the left shoulder would scarcely, you will agree, be a venerable object."[35]

Still, for the perfect example of the kind of affective mixture that complicates binaries of an inward and an exteriorizing modernism, we might turn, in closing this section, to the work of another woman modernist, Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* (1936), a novel at once lacerating and grotesque. This is a novel about impossible hybridization more generally, from the opening scene in which the blonde, goose-stepping Hedwig Volkbein gives birth to (the ironically named) Felix, son of the Italian-Jewish Guido Volkbein, to the closing scene in which Robin turns dog at Nora's feet. "From the mingled passions that made up his past, out of a diversity of bloods, from the crux of a thousand impossible situations, Felix had become the accumulated and single – the embarrassed": everyone in this novel is "accumulated and single": they are all individually and vividly, even luridly characterized, and yet they contain such contradictions and multiplicities as to prove hard to place.[36] Felix identifies over-powerfully with an aristocracy that would claim no part of him; already divided by his Irish-Americanness, Dr. O'Connor lives between genders in a room that is likened to "a cross between a *chambre à coucher* and a boxer's training camp"; to the extent that the mysterious bisexual Robin Vote votes for anything, she votes with her feet rather than her unknowable will.[37] The inner lives of the strange, suffering population of *Nightwood* feel both authentic and illegible.

So, to return to the urban emphasis with which this section began, *Nightwood*'s wrong-footing treatment of identity dramatizes in an almost

expressionistic way a stark condition of uprooting and deracination; the character who first intervenes in Nora and Robin's relationship is character-ized as "a 'squatter' by instinct," parasitically attaching herself to the emo-tional experiences of others; the other characters are squatters in the more general sense, living nowhere, tied for long to no one.[38] Urban life is often like this in modernist fiction, as in Alfred Döblin's forensic *Berlin Alexander-platz* (1929), with its contingent relationships dictated to the last degree by the squalid milieu of the ex-convict Franz Biberkopf, who is trying and failing to turn his life around. (The air of inevitability is underscored by a narrator who prefaces each section of the novel outlining what will happen in the pages to come.) Early in the novel, two Jewish men, randomly encountered as usual, tell Biberkopf the story of a man who has killed himself in prison after his exposure as an impostor: "And what did they do, the others?" asks the convict: "Well, what could they do?" replies the storyteller: "they looked on."[39] The prison models the city in this novel: in both, people are locked in together, and yet relationships among them are haphazard and perishable.

Modernist Transitions

Still, urban displacement can be cast more positively; in the definitive modernist city novel, *Ulysses* (1922), little could be more dangerously divisive than too comfortable a sense of belonging, as the "Cyclops" episode makes clear. Derogated as "a half and half . . . neither fish nor flesh" by the bigoted Citizen, the Jewish-Irish Bloom rejects what he sees as the Citizen's narrow-minded (here, one-eyed) nativist creed: "Force, hatred, history, all that," Bloom calls it: "insult and hatred."[40] And the narrative voice endorses, indeed enforces, that cosmopolitanism, by, for example, sneaking into the exuberant comic inventory of "Irish heroes and heroines of antiquity" adorning the girdle of the kilted Citizen some unexpected names, Dante and Columbus finding spots alongside Cuchulain.[41] In fearful flight from the fact of urban heterogeneity, the Citizen makes his racist stand for an Irish identity that never existed, and *Ulysses* offers a defense of modernist uprooting in the hope of the tolerance that might attend a collective existence marked by ties that do not bind people too tightly. In this closing section, I suggest that many later writers wished instead to rehabilitate locality and particularity.

That is, in view of such extraordinary city novels as those discussed so far, there is good reason for the longstanding association of the modernist novel with urban modernity, but it is also the case that considerations of modern-ism might include, too, modern writers' experimental representations of the

varieties of provincial experience. It has already been proposed that modernist fiction is in some sense a self-consciously corrective body of work; it is also corrective in a self-renewing way. Thus, if modernist novelists set out to correct traditional understandings and practices of fiction, we might also consider how their works in turn modify each other across the longer history of modernism. And so by the late 1920s and through the 1930s and beyond, writers would come to engage productively what Raymond Williams retrospectively summarized as modernism's "metropolitan perceptions."[42] Williams argued that it was really an "ideological victory" that metropolitan modernism became modernism itself, an institutional modernism centered on the deracinated urban artist. "The life of the émigré was dominant among the key groups," wrote Williams: "Their self-referentiality, their propinquity and mutual isolation all served to represent the artist as necessarily estranged, and to ratify as canonical the works of radical estrangement. So, to *want* to leave your settlement and settle nowhere like Lawrence or Hemingway, becomes presented, in another ideological move, as a normal condition."[43] This is recognizably the modernism of the canon, but there were other "modernisms" – and, of course, many now customarily use the plural form – and those were not necessarily "the works of radical estrangement."[44] Some, in fact, were the works of intensely felt cultural commitment.

For example, Jed Esty has argued very convincingly for an English late modernism distinguished by a turn toward national-cultural particularity; in his reading, the late works of Forster, Woolf, and T.S. Eliot reveal a concern with an emergent "insular" Englishness in response to the decline of empire, a diminution entailing that English culture must learn to relativize its status as merely one culture among others. Esty's language for this process explicitly follows Williams: "'demetropolitanization', meaning the retrenchment, in the thirties and forties, of all that metropolitan perception implies."[45] But there were additional forms of "provincial" modernism, rooted deeply in specific places and cultural identities outside the metropolis; indeed, Robert Crawford goes so far as to cast "modernism as provincialism" all along, writing of the high modernists that "the roots of their creativity came from Hailey, Idaho, from Poland, from Dublin, St Louis, Langholm, or the Nottinghamshire pits."[46] In many cases, these outsiders reached the heart of English culture one way or the other – Eliot's ultra-English self-positioning exemplifies this kind of trajectory – but once we move beyond the 1920s, and into the 1930s and beyond, provinciality is clearly nothing to be disavowed. Here we might think of late 1930s examples ranging from Zora Neale Hurston's Florida in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to Flann O'Brien's rural Ireland in *The Third Policeman*.

These socio-geographically marginal locations are vivified by the dissolution of conventional strategies of narrative representation. Obviously, modernist writers were not starting from scratch in underlining the problem of perspective; Victorian novelists also knew that "so much depends ... upon distance: whether people are near us or far from us." Many of the classic nineteenth-century novels make explicit how much rests on focalization, from *Bleak House*'s switches between panoptical vision and Esther's subjective perspectives ("I have a great deal of difficulty in beginning to write my portion of these pages") to the moralization of narrative viewpoint in *Middlemarch* ("Dorothea – but why always Dorothea? Was her point of view the only possible one with regard to this marriage?").[47] But with that caveat in place, if we were to isolate a single novelistic feature that modernist fiction makes most visible, it is how much it matters where we are looking from, and in later modernist fiction, specifically, perspective takes on unmistakable political meanings. The politics of modernism are a notoriously contested matter, but it can at least be said that there are some late modernist limits to Georg Lukács's famous charge in "The Ideology of Modernism" that modernist fiction is the writing of the pathologically solitary subject. In "all great realistic literature," Lukács wrote, characters "cannot be distinguished from their social and historical environment. Their human significance, their specific individuality, cannot be separated from the context in which they were created. The ontological view governing the image of man in the work of leading modernist writers is the exact opposite of this. Man, for these writers, is by nature solitary, asocial, unable to enter into relationships with other human beings."[48]

One counterexample from the later part of the period associated with modernism: Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *Sunset Song* (1932) is a Scottish national classic, though, instructively, not much read or taught outside that context, as if to confirm Williams's point that the modernist canon accommodates only the otherwise culturally displaced. Gibbon's protagonist Chris Guthrie is at the end of a rural tradition in the northeast of Scotland, and is caught between the will to better her social condition through education and her love of the land on which she has been brought up. A novel of blood and soil, incest and suicide, *Sunset Song* in paraphrase can admittedly sound a little *Cold Comfort Farm*, yet with its discontinuous, time-shifting narration, its symbolic intensity, and its foregrounding of the opacity of language, *Sunset Song* is very much a modernist novel. What is really memorable and distinctive about the novel, however, is the political end to which it puts its modernist technique, and especially its experimental attempt to ventriloquize a dying community through what Cairns Craig describes as "a radical narrative strategy which displaces the third-person, omniscient – and

anglocentric – author in favour of a narration organised through the voices and the gossip of the folk themselves."[49] The novel opens by recounting the history of the community up until the 1911 present – the novel's climactic event is the Great War – and we are told bitterly that "they had no history, common folk"; the novel not only gives them a "history," and inserts them into such textbook history as the First World War, but gives them a history in their own voice.[50] And, so, for example, this is how the novel describes a by-election in the village's constituency:

> Just as the building of the new bit Knapp began so did the bye-election, the old member had died in London of drink, pure brute, folk said when they cut his corpse open it fair gushed out with whisky. Ah well, he was dead then, him and his whisky, and though he'd maybe been a good enough childe to represent the shire, feint the thing had the shire ever seen of him except at election times. Now there came a young Tory gent in the field, called Rose he was, an Englishman with a funny bit squeak of a voice, like a bairn that's wet its breeks. But the Liberal was an oldish creature from Glasgow, fell rich he was, folk said, with as many ships to his name as others had fields. And real Radical he was, with everybody's money but his own, and he said he'd support the Insurance and to Hell with the House of Lords, *Vote for the Scottish Thistle and not for the English Rose.*[51]

Aptly enough, in view of the fact that the topic is an election, the passage works through juxtaposition of apparent opposites: pithy folk formulae ("when they cut his corpse open it fair gushed out with whisky") appear alongside differently conventional political sloganeering (*"Vote for the Scottish Thistle and not for the English Rose"*); events of one kind of community significance, here an election, are undiscriminatingly positioned against the rebuilding of a neighbor's burned-down farmhouse ("the new bit Knapp"). The narrative perspective here is neither that of an omniscient narrator, nor of the ostensible protagonist, Chris; rather, the narration is channeling the mocking consensus of an entire community on an election whose outcome they know will have no meaningful impact upon their lives. If a free election is the very symbol of democracy itself, the real democracy in evidence here is happening through the novel's own radical perspective. This is in some ways a marked departure even from modernism's own experimental practice in the 1920s – *Ulysses* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, for example, are deeply sociable novels, but they favor a multiperspectival representation of community as a collection of individual selves that is in clear contrast to Lewis Grassic Gibbon's apparent belief that a community might be understood as having a voiceable perspective of its own.

If we move, finally, to another modernist margin, we see the afterlife of that democracy of perspective more characteristic of 1920s modes in Jean Rhys's return to the Caribbean in her late modernist and incipiently post-modernist *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), which famously rewrites *Jane Eyre* in order to undo the dominant address of Brontë's first-person narrator; the novel foregrounds instead the viewpoints of Edward Rochester and, especially, his first wife. In the context of Rhys's long but fractured career, *Wide Sargasso Sea* rather neatly exemplifies the move from the metropolis to the periphery – Esty's "demetropolitanization" of perspective – in that the interwar fiction of Rhys's earlier years was very much a metropolitan body of work: *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* (1931) and *Good Morning, Midnight* (1939) follow desperate Julia Martin and Sasha Jensen around Paris; in *Voyage in the Dark* (1934), deracinated Anna Morgan spirals into squalor in London. The Caribbean is often there in the background – Anna Morgan is from the Caribbean, for example, as is Julia Martin's mother – but *Wide Sargasso Sea* undertakes the reverse maneuver of placing England at the margins of the novel, having the English characters adrift and afraid in the Caribbean. This novel is most obviously a revision of *Jane Eyre*, but it is also a belated continuation of Rhys's own career as a modernist.

In conclusion, then, with respect to the modernist novel, as with so much else about modernism, it may be most useful to think in terms of perpetual undoing and doing, unmaking and remaking. Modernism started as an unraveling, and proved capable of unraveling itself: almost synchronically, indeed, through its internal meditations on its own practice, and then diachronically, as one writer scorned the work of contemporaries, as with Lewis on the writer he called "Woolfe," or reworked it, as Woolf did with the modernist daybook after her reading of Joyce. And then modernism changes over decades, fictional techniques proving capable of transformation for new historical, geographical, and political contexts. It was with a view to that perpetual renovation undertaken by the generations immediately before theirs that many novelists of the 1940s and 1950s tried to argue against the revival of realist forms in the face of a widespread feeling that modernism belonged to the prewar period alone. Asked in a 1958 interview about the fate of those modernisms of subjective interiority and ironic exteriority discussed earlier in this chapter, the experimental English novelist Henry Green supposed that "Joyce and Kafka have said the last word on each of the two forms they developed. There's no one to follow them. They're like cats which have licked the plate clean."[52]

A wistful end to modernism? Not quite, for, as this late modernist went on to say, "You've got to dream up another dish if you're to be a writer."[53] This

chapter began in France, and may end there, for in France modernist ambitions endured assertively into the second half of the century. Under the banner of the *Nouveau Roman*, writers would continue to generate fresh ways of thinking about fictional form: as Alain Robbe-Grillet put it, "no one would dream of praising a musician for having composed some Beethoven, a painter for having made a Delacroix, or an architect for having conceived a Gothic cathedral," and yet the postwar novelist may still be praised for "writing like Stendhal."[54] And at the end of modernism as at its beginning, French fiction would energize British, the *Nouveau Roman* inspiring some of the most idiosyncratic talents of the postwar period, among them Iris Murdoch, Muriel Spark, and Christine Brooke-Rose. Neither they nor their French counterparts imitated the modernisms of earlier generations; nor were they meant to. "There is no question ... of establishing a theory, a pre-existing mold into which to pour the books of the future," wrote Robbe-Grillet: "Each novelist, each novel must invent its own form."[55]

Notes

1 Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, trans. Geoffrey Ward (London: Penguin, 2003), 33.

2 Ibid., 55.

3 Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," in Leon Edel (ed.), *The Future of the Novel: Essays on the Art of Fiction* (New York: Vintage, 1956), 4.

4 Joseph Conrad, preface to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus," Conrad's Prefaces to his Works*, ed. Edward Garnett (London: Dent, 1937), 51.

5 Samuel Hynes, "Conrad and Ford: Two Rye Revolutionists," *Edwardian Occasions: Essays on English Writing in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1972), 48.

6 Ford Madox Ford, *The English Novel from the Earliest Days to the Death of Conrad* (London: Constable, 1930), 89, and *Henry James, A Critical Study* (London: Secker, 1913), 48.

7 Henry James, *The Ambassadors* (London: Penguin, 2008), 6.

8 Quoted in William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 176.

9 Henry James, *The Wings of the Dove* (London: Penguin, 2008), 10.

10 E.M. Forster, "What I Believe," *Two Cheers for Democracy* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1966), 68.

11 *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell with Andrew McNeillie, 5 vols. (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979–85), vol. v, 250.

12 E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1955), 95, 63.

13 André Gide, *The Counterfeiters, with Journal of "The Counterfeiters,"* trans. Dorothy Bussy and Justin O'Brien (New York: Vintage, 1973), n.p.

14 James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (London: Penguin, 1992), 3, 4, 11, 15, 13.

15 D.H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), 318.

16 Ibid., 654.

17 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 3, 195; Knut Hamsun, *Hunger*, trans. Sverre Lyngstad (London: Penguin, 1998), 6.

18 Quoted in James McFarlane, "Intimate Theatre: Maeterlinck to Strinberg," in Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (eds.), *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890–1930* (London: Penguin, 1991), 514.

19 Ford Madox Ford, "Joseph Conrad," *Critical Writings of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Frank MacShane (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 73; Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction," *The Virginia Woolf Reader*, ed. Mitchell A. Leaska (San Diego: Harvest, 1985), 288.

20 Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, 38, 47.

21 Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 235–36, 241.

22 Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* (London: Penguin, 2002), 14.

23 William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 85.

24 But see also Michael André Bernstein's argument that *The Man Without Qualities* works *against* foreshadowing, for foreshadowing "implies a closed universe in which all choices have already been made, in which human free will can exist only in the paradoxical sense of choosing to accept or willfully – and vainly – rebelling against what is inevitable." Michael André Bernstein, *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 2, 104–06.

25 Joseph Roth, *The Radetzky March*, trans. Michael Hofmann (London: Granta, 2003), 98.

26 Hermann Broch, "How *The Guiltless* came into Being," *The Guiltless*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Evanston, Il: Marlboro Press and Northwestern University Press, 2000), 289.

27 Broch, *The Guiltless*, 27.

28 Ibid., 38.

29 Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (London: John Calder, 1982), 249.

30 Wyndham Lewis, *Tarr* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 265.

31 Jonathan Greenberg, *Modernism, Satire, and the Novel* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

32 Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: New Directions, 2006), 56. Ellipses in original.

33 "Happy Ending" is the ironically titled final chapter of *Vile Bodies* (1930), and while the action takes place on no less than "the biggest battlefield in the

history of the world," the effect is more camp than fearsome. Evelyn Waugh, *Vile Bodies* (New York: Back Bay, 1999), 314.

34 Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), 308.

35 Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 181, *A Room of One's Own* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1989), 15, and *Three Guineas* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 25.

36 Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (New York: New Directions, 2006), 11.

37 Ibid., 85.

38 Ibid., 75.

39 Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, trans. Eugène Jolas (London: Continuum, 2004), 16.

40 James Joyce, *Ulysses* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 321, 333.

41 Ibid., 296.

42 Raymond Williams, "Metropolitan Perceptions and the Emergence of Modernism," *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (London: Verso, 1989).

43 Raymond Williams, "When Was Modernism?" *Politics of Modernism*, 35.

44 Hence the diversification of the field that took place between, for example, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane's *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature, 1890–1930* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976) and Peter Nicholls's *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995). The plural is favored by numerous recent surveys, such as *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms* (2011) and *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms* (2012).

45 Joshua Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* (Princeton University Press, 2004), 3.

46 Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 270.

47 Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 258; Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (London: Penguin, 2003), 27; George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Penguin, 1994), 278.

48 Georg Lukács, "The Ideology of Modernism," *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John Mander and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), 17–46 (at 19–20).

49 Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 65.

50 Lewis Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song* (London: Penguin, 2007), 12.

51 Ibid., 104.

52 Henry Green, "The Art of Fiction," *Surviving: The Uncollected Writings of Henry Green*, ed. Matthew Yorke (New York: Viking, 1993), 247.

53 Ibid.

54 Alain Robbe-Grillet, "The Use of Theory," *For a New Novel: Essays on Fiction*, trans. Richard Howard (Evanston, Il: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 10.

55 Ibid., 12.

The Modernist Poem

MARJORIE PERLOFF

The title of this chapter is somewhat misleading: there is, of course, no single species we can call *the* modernist poem. Still, what makes the term "modernist poem" not only useful but necessary is its negative thrust, serving as a reminder that "modernist" is not simply a period term: it is not, for example, synonymous with "early twentieth-century." Indeed, the eruption of the modernist ethos in Europe in the later nineteenth century left much of what passed in popular parlance for poetry essentially untouched. The paradox is that the very mass society that bred modernism was also prone to ignore its most striking manifestations.

Consider two poems written in English in 1915: Sara Teasdale's "Enough" and Mina Loy's "Songs from Joannes":

> It is enough for me by day
>   To walk the same bright earth with him;
> Enough that over us by night
>   The same great roof of stars is dim.
>
> I have no care to bind the wind
>   Or set a fetter on the sea –
> It is enough to feel his love
>   Blow by like music over me.
>   ("Enough")
>
> Spawn of Fantasies
> Silting the appraisable
> Pig Cupid   his rosy snout
> Rooting erotic garbage
> "Once upon a time" "Once upon a time"
> Pulls a weed   white star-topped
> Among wild oats sown in mucous-membrane
>   (From "Songs to Joannes")[1]

These two "love poems" could hardly be more different. Teasdale's, which no one is likely to classify as "modernist," is written in the iambic tetrameter quatrains so prevalent in nineteenth-century America. Loy's six-line stanza, the opening of a fifteen-page sequence, is difficult to scan at all; its offbeat lines have anywhere from two to six primary stresses and they are unrhymed. Indeed, the most prominent prosodic feature of this extract from "Songs for Joannes" is probably its visual appearance: the quirky spacing between words and phrases that creates a sense of dislocation.

Teasdale's short poem avoids colloquialisms and direct speech, drawing its language from that pool of "poetic diction," where the earth – is that where we really walk? – is "bright," the "dim" night sky is a "great roof of stars," and wind must signify transience and volatility. Perceptive as this speaker is, she knows that she can't force the man she loves to be true to her any more than one can "bind the wind" or "fetter the sea," but that just knowing he's *there* is enough for her. What evidently created piquancy for Teasdale's admirers – and she had many of them – is the faint hope of the conclusion, the poet suggesting that there is, after all, a chance that this "musical" wind "blowing over" her head might someday be all hers.

Mina Loy's "Song for Joannes" displays a very different conception of poetry. The normative vocabulary of love poetry is here replaced by the distinctly "unpoetic" language of body parts and fluids, as in "mucous-membrane" or the "saliva" of the next stanza. Loy's language ranges from the abstraction of "spawn of fantasies" to intentionally coy metaphor, as in "rosy snout" for penis; her language is at once blunt and yet curiously aloof and indirect. Does the description of "pull[ing] a weed" from the woman's body fluid refer to abortion? We cannot say with certainty but clearly the erotic union described here is a nasty one. The poem's fragmentary noun phrases are disconnected: for example, "Once upon a time," the ironic reference to the fairy-tale dimension of what "love" promises to be, is inserted without explanation between lines 4 and 6. There is, moreover, no direct guidance here from a first-person speaker; the reader is left to infer what happened, or might have happened, from the poet's oblique paratactic phrasing.

Mina Loy was a self-declared modernist poet. She belonged to the key "modernist" generation of poets born in the 1880s – the Americans Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, H.D., the English D.H. Lawrence, and the Europeans Anna Akhmatova, Guillaume Apollinaire, Blaise Cendrars, Velimir Khlebnikov, Fernando Pessoa, Georg Trakl – whose revolutionary aesthetic is best understood as a form of fascination with, but also resistance to, the urban, industrial, and technological landscape in which

modernist poets, whether "high modernists" like T.S. Eliot, or such more populist champions of the New as F.T. Marinetti and Vladimir Mayakovsky, came of age.

High Modernism

The first self-consciously urban poet was surely Charles Baudelaire, whose *Fleurs du mal* had no sooner been published in Paris (April 1857) than it was impounded and its author charged with an offence against public morals. In 1885, the young Jules Laforgue (whose ironic dramatic monologues were to have such a marked influence on Eliot) wrote:

> [Baudelaire] was the first to speak of Paris as one damned to the daily life of the capital (the gas-lamps, the restaurants and their air-vents, the poor-hospitals, gambling, wood being sawn into logs which echo on the paving-stones of the courtyards, and the fireside, and cats, beds, stockings, drunkards and modern, factory-made perfumes), but all in a noble, distant, lofty manner.[2]

The *distance* Laforgue speaks of here is twofold. First, however concrete and shocking Baudelaire's graphic imagery, the poet's "I" is oddly detached from the very incidents in which he participates; he is a voyeur looking in from the outside at his own experience. Direct self-expression as in the poems of, say, Alphonse de Lamartine or Alfred de Musset, gives way to the obliquities of perception on the part of the *flâneur*, the Man of the Crowd, as Edgar Allan Poe had called him in the short story by that name – an anonymous being whose alienation was to become the very emblem of modernity. Secondly, Baudelaire's verse form remains largely traditional: he writes sonnets, quatrains, and other elaborate rhyming stanzas, primarily using the alexandrine, that staple of French poetry from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. Baudelaire's poetry, almost impossible to translate because the sonorities of these fixed forms cannot be duplicated in English, is characterized by the astonishing tension between fixed form and explosive meaning. Consider the opening stanza of "Le Soleil":

> Le long du vieux faubourg, où pendent aux masures
> Les persiennes, abri des secrètes luxures,
> Quand le soleil cruel frappe à traits redoublés
> Sur la ville et les champs, sur les toits et les blés,
> Je vais m'exercer seul à ma fantasque escrime,
> Flairant dans tous les coins les hazards de la rime,
> Trébuchant sur les mots comme sur les pavés,
> Heurtant parfois des vers depuis longtemps rêvés.

[Along the old outskirts of town, where Venetian blinds in hovels hide secret lecheries, when the cruel sun strikes with redoubled ray town and country, rooftop and wheatfield, I go to practice by myself my whimsical swordsmanship, sniffing at any corner for chance rhymes, tripping over words like curbs, bumping sometimes into lines long sought in dreams.][3]

Here, in the sordid and nondescript Paris neighborhoods beyond the boulevards, the *flâneur*-poet engages in a curious sort of fencing, imitating the sun in its drive to transform all that it shines upon, from dirty window blinds to the cripples en route to the hospital, into something rich and strange. Such "fencing" is not easy: discipline is required of the poet at every turn.

But what was perhaps Baudelaire's most profound "modernist" breakthrough came, not in the lyrics of *Fleurs du mal*, but in the prose poems collected in *Le spleen de Paris* (1869). For Baudelaire, the alternative to the formal rhymed stanza was not free verse – an alternative Rimbaud was to develop in his late lyrics like "Mémoire" – but simply prose itself. "Which one of us . . . has not dreamed," he wrote his friend Arsène Houssaye in the book's dedication,

> of the miracle of a poetic prose, musical, without rhythm and without rhyme, supple enough and rugged enough to adapt itself to the lyrical impulses of the soul, the undulations of reverie, the jibes of conscience? It was, above all, out of my exploration of huge cities, out of the medley of their innumerable interrelations that this haunting ideal was born.[4]

The fifty short pieces in this collection still seem revolutionary in their willingness to dissect the poet's own shocking impulses in language that, by the standards of Baudelaire's day, was considered raw and vulgar. In "Le mauvais vitrier" (The Bad Glazier), for example, Baudelaire begins in essayistic mode, contemplating a strange form of behavior to be observed among his friends – namely, sudden, impulsive, and gratuitous acts committed by those who are normally quite calm and deliberative. After a series of examples, some comic, some horrific, the narrator turns in on himself: "I, too, have more than once been the victim of these outbursts of energy." And he tells us that one fine day with nothing to do, he looked out his window and saw a poor man carrying a heavy load of window glass on his back. On impulse, the narrator summons the glazier up the six flights of stairs to his room, only to berate him with the words, "What! You have no colored glass, no pink, no red, no blue! No magic panes, no panes of Paradise?" And he pushes the glazier, "stumbling and grumbling toward the stairs." As if such cruelty were not enough, when the sad figure reappears on the street below, the poet throws a

flowerpot ("my engine of war") at his head, knocking him down to the ground. The window-glass breaks into a thousand fragments. By no means ashamed, the poet, "drunk with [his] madness," shouts after the stranger, "Make life beautiful! Make life beautiful!" "Such erratic pranks," the poem concludes, "are not without danger and one often has to pay dearly for them. But what is an eternity of damnation compared to an infinity of pleasure in a single second?"

Here is what Walter Benjamin was to call the "shock experience" at the heart of modern urban existence.[5] In a moment of self-hatred prompted by his sense of his own impotence, his own failure to have produced beauty, the poet is roused to action. Only in this senseless *acte gratuit*, it seems, can the poet emulate "lightning striking a crystal palace." And only in such actions, horribly enough, can he experience "an infinity of pleasure in a single second."

"Le mauvais vitrier" is a remarkable exercise in tonal design, marking a particular turn from what seems natural and commonsensical, even humorous, to something profoundly contrarian and hostile. Baudelaire's is not a short story with plot and character creation, but an elliptical parable initiated by what Rimbaud was to call the "dédoublement du moi" – the doubling or splitting of the self: the schizoid "I," able to step back and analyze its own thoughts and impulses, as if from the outside. *Je est un autre.*[6] Then, too, Baudelaire leaves open the question of blame: is the poet the victim of the social and economic order, of the ruthless capitalism of the Second Empire? Or is his action a reflection of the Original Sin that the Catholic Baudelaire took to be an article of faith? And what is the relation of shock experience to the production of art?

Unresolved as these issues remain, *Le spleen de Paris* makes clear that, Baudelaire's avoidance of overt politics notwithstanding, the modernist poem is the product of a particular cultural-historical matrix – the European nineteenth century after the failed revolutions of 1848 – and only subsequently does it spread, first to England and the United States, and then around the globe, so that "modernism" in, say, Japan or Brazil is a later phenomenon.

The drive of the first modernists, in any case, was to create a poetry that could not be readily consumed, the antithesis of mass entertainment and especially journalism, with its "easy reading" technology, its degradation of language, its flattening out of all complex thought. "Every newspaper," Baudelaire declared in "My Heart Laid Bare" ("Mon cœur mis à nu"), "from the first line to the last, is nothing but a tissue of horrors ... And it is this

disgusting aperitif that civilized man digests every morning with his break-fast."[7] And Mallarmé echoed this sentiment in his essay "The Book: A Spiritual Instrument" (1895):

> The newspaper with its full sheet on display makes improper use of printing – that is, it makes good packing paper. Of course, the obvious and vulgar advantage of it, as everybody knows, lies in its mass production and circulation ... it is nonetheless an annoying influence; for upon the book – upon the divine and intricate organism required by literature – it inflicts the monotonousness of its eternally unbearable columns, which are merely strung down the pages by hundreds.[8]

"To *name* an object," Mallarmé famously said in 1891, "is to suppress three-quarters of the enjoyment of the poem, which derives from the pleasure of step-by-step discovery; to *suggest*, that is the dream. It is the perfect use of this mystery that constitutes the symbol."[9] W.B. Yeats, who came to this distinction between *show* and *tell* via his friend Arthur Symons (*The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, 1899), put it this way: "All sounds, all colours, all forms, either because of their preordained energies or because of long association, evoke indefinable and yet precise emotions, or, as I prefer to think, call down among us certain disembodied powers, whose footsteps over our hearts we call emotions" ("The Symbolism of Poetry," 1900).[10] The evocation of "disem-bodied powers" was not quite what Mallarmé had in mind, but the two poets could and did agree that the poet can never speak "directly as to someone at the breakfast table, there is always a phantasmagoria."[11] *Phantasmagoria* – the word originally refers to the illusionistic optical device used in the eighteenth century to project images on a wall or screen – was Yeats's term for the mysterious powers of the imagination that defy all rational explanation. In a slightly different context, Benjamin applied the term to the commodity fetish, the curious power of the inert object to take on a life of its own.[12] *Évoquer au lieu d'exprimer – to suggest rather than to state* – became the modernist credo. Metaphor, after all, was the trope of mere comparison, the finding of similar-ities between *a* and *b*, and hence a trivial pursuit. The symbol, by contrast, was the irreducible thing itself, an echo chamber of possible meanings activated by a particular verbal and rhythmic context. Mallarmé's swan frozen in ice, Rilke's "Archaic Torso of Apollo," Yeats's Tower, Hart Crane's Brooklyn Bridge, Robert Frost's Oven Bird and Mending Wall – these symbols, orches-trated within the verbal and syntactic obliquities of the poem, could resonate as no direct statement could. Each appearance of a given symbol, moreover, would be slightly different, creating a field of metonymies.

Difficulty and *difference*: these were to become the central features of high modernism. *"To name is to destroy"*: from Rimbaud and Mallarmé to Eliot and the Mina Loy of "Straw Cupid," to the great poet of négritude of the next generation, Aimé Césaire, whose exotic and difficult vocabulary has been such a challenge to translators, indirection has been regarded as central to poetry, demanding as it did what we now call "slow reading" – reading carefully and again and again so as to take in the density, irony, and allusiveness inherent in poetry. Difficulty, furthermore, went hand in hand with another feature prominent in the poetry of the generation born in the 1880s: a sense of exile. In contrast to their Victorian forebears, modernist poets – in France as in England, in the United States as in the rest of the Americas – were more often than not expatriates or exiles. *"Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch,"* says Marie in *The Waste Land*. For Eliot, such rootlessness was dangerous – a source of modernist spiritual emptiness – but the fact is that some of the best poets of the period were exiles. Mina Loy, born in London as Mina Gertrude Löwy to an Austro-Hungarian Jewish father and English mother, left home for the continent in 1899 when she was seventeen, and led a peripatetic life in Munich, Paris, Florence, and New York, finally settling in the United States in 1936. Eliot and Pound, H.D. and the slightly older Gertrude Stein (b. 1874) were American expatriates in the Europe of the two World Wars. Blaise Cendrars was born Freddy Sauser in Switzerland, Apollinaire was born Wilhelm Albert Kostro-wicki in Rome to a Polish mother and unknown, possibly aristocratic, Italian father. William Carlos Williams's English father had married a woman he met in Puerto Rico, who was of Basque, Dutch, and Jewish descent. The Portuguese Fernando Pessoa was brought up in South Africa and first wrote in English, then returned to Lisbon at seventeen and wrote under a series of pseudonyms. And D.H. Lawrence, Velimir Khlebnikov, and Vladimir Maya-kovsky were, so to speak, class exiles, alienated by their working-class origins from the then-"genteel" literary mainstream. In the decades that followed, exile often became associated with issues of race. Aimé Césaire, for example, returning to his native Martinique after more than a decade spent studying and writing poetry in Paris, dramatized his painful re-entry in his long poem *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*.

Exile, in any case, went hand in hand with a new self-consciousness, an acknowledgement that one was producing not just another pretty poem to be published in a popular magazine or read aloud by the fireside, but something that really made a difference. From Pound's "Make it New!" to Rainer Maria Rilke's "You must change your life" (later echoed in Wallace

Stevens's "It must change"), revolution was in the air: a sense of urgency, of transformation, of beginning again and again. W.B. Yeats, self-styled "last Romantic" though he was, caught the modernist fever after 1910 from his young friend Ezra Pound and wrote a manifesto poem called "A Coat" (1914):

> I made my song a coat
> Covered with embroideries
> Out of old mythologies
> From heel to throat;
> But the fools caught it,
> Wore it in the world's eyes
> As though they'd wrought it.
> Song, let them take it,
> For there's more enterprise
> In walking naked.[13]

Walking naked: Yeats knew perfectly well that the "passionate normal speech" and the "loosen[ing]" of rhythm"[14] he now called for had to be the result of careful construction. Notice how "A Coat" shifts from its opening iambic trimeter to singsong trochaic tetrameter with slack feminine rhyme ("embroider*ies*"/"mytholo*gies*") to satirize the conventionality of his own earlier poetry, and concludes with the bravura rhyme in the foreshortened last line. In struggling thus valiantly to be, in Rimbaud's words, "absolument moderne,"[15] Yeats directs us, not only back to Baudelaire, whose French he couldn't read too well, but to the Anglo-American poet who was his chief modernist rival – T.S. Eliot.

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915) has become such a classic that we tend to underestimate its extraordinarily innovative nature. From its slow monosyllabic opening line – "Lét us gó then, || yóu and Í" – with its falling rhythm and sharp midline break – to the devastating paradox contained in the poem's final perfect iambic pentameter – "Till húman vóices wáke us ánd we drówn" – "Prufrock" displays an entirely new sense of what the sonic tension between what Eliot called "fixity and flux" can do. The "dim" "roof of stars" of his fellow St. Louis poet Sara Teasdale is here replaced by the extravagant conceit of the evening "spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherised upon a table." The poem's original readers were shocked: could poetry really talk of such things? And could "streets," here viewed as "muttering retreats," really be compared to "tedious arguments"?[16]

Then, too, what was the relationship between J. Alfred Prufrock (the name connotes genteel prissiness and prudery) and the poet who invented him? Such masks were endemic to modernism: think of Pound's Hugh Selwyn

Mauberley, Paul Valéry's Monsieur Teste, Rilke's Malte Laurids Brigge, and, in the literal sense, Pessoa's lifelong adoption of what he called heteronyms: the rural uneducated "natural" man Alberto Caeiro, the physician and classicist Ricardo Reis who composed formal Horatian Odes, and the exuberant naval engineer Álvaro de Campos, based in London, whose poetry had a Whitmanian cast. For years, no one knew that all three of these poets were the inventions of Pessoa. Indeed, Álvaro de Campos's "So Many Gods," translated by Richard Zenith, appeared in *Poetry* magazine as recently as 2009.[17]

But the most striking modernist invention in "Prufrock" may well be its deployment of Flaubert's *mot juste* – the exact word with just the right shades of meaning and structurally related to the poem's other words. Consider the opening of the poem's final tercet: "We have lingered in the chambers of the sea." Early in the poem, it was the yellow fog that *"lingered* upon the pools that stand in drains"; later, the evening "ma*lingers*," and throughout his "walk," Prufrock himself lingers, delays, and wastes "time," as he strolls at "dusk through narrow streets," "watch[ing] the smoke that rises from the pipes / Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows." To linger – the *flâneur's* contemplative role in Baudelaire is opposed throughout the poem to the rapid, decisive, mechanized motion of the external world, where "The eyes . . . fix you in a formulated phrase," the meaningless and repetitive round that we meet again in "The Fire Sermon" in *The Waste Land*. And "the chambers of the sea," the mermaids' habitat, makes a perfect contrast to those endless *rooms* where "the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo."

Like Baudelaire, who was one of his heroes, Eliot presents Prufrock, who is and is not the poet himself, as *flâneur*, in this case, a curiously anxious and repressed man in the crowd, aloof and yet hopelessly caught up in the daily round of the urban experience. But although Eliot was to become an Anglo-Catholic, and although, in his famous essay on Baudelaire (1930), he was to speak so admiringly of Baudelaire's belief in Original Sin – "the possibility of damnation is so immense a relief in a world of electoral reform, plebiscites, sex reform and dress reform" – his own poetry is at heart Protestant, the poetry of someone who cannot help believing that there are, after all, good works to be performed, that there is such a thing as self-discipline and self-improvement. Consequently, Baudelaire's sense of evil yields in Eliot and other American Protestant poets like the Robert Frost of "Desert Places" and the Hart Crane of "The Marriage of Faustus and Helen" to a free-floating angst, a nervous anxiety that alternates with idealism and hope. Indeed,

"hope" is one of the key words in such later Eliot poems as "Ash Wednesday," which begins, "Because I do not hope to turn again / Because I do not hope . . ."[18]

"Open to the boulevards": Toward a Demotic Modernism

From Baudelaire to Eliot, I have suggested, we have a modernist poetry characterized by density, concentration, irony, and aesthetic distance, a Symbolist poetry in which language, in Ezra Pound's words, is "charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree."[19] The multiplex resonant poem: the paradigm applies to poets as various in their emphases as Trakl and Rilke, Anna Akhmatova and Osip Mandelstam, Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore. Akhmatova, for example, is primarily a love poet – a poet of immediate experience and epiphany who appears to be quite different from a T.S. Eliot – but even her most erotic ballads, like "In the Evening" ("Vecherom") of 1913, are tempered by a curiously modernist irony; a disenchanted perspective as when the speaker, dining with her lover on "oysters in ice on a plate," realizes that the touch of his hands is like the absentminded stroke one would give a cat or a bird.

But there is a second, rather different strain of modernism, exemplified by the growing opposition between the two American expatriate modernist poet-friends, whose names are still regularly linked: Eliot and Pound. Indeed, one of the great paradoxes of modernist poetics is that even as Eliot was making the case for a poetry of *indirection*, for what he would call the *objective correlative*,[20] his friend Ezra Pound was insisting that poetry be the *"direct* treatment of the 'thing'" and that, in poetry "constatation of fact" was crucial.[21] This is confusing, for wasn't "mere fact" precisely the object of modernist scorn? Or is the drive toward facticity, authenticity just the other side of the modernist coin?

What we might call the "other tradition" of modernist poetry has, like its counterpart, a French derivation, but that derivation is more Rimbaldian than Baudelairean. In response to his mother's query as to the import of the (to her) incomprehensible *Une saison en enfer*, Rimbaud replied, "J'ai voulu dire ce que ça dit, littéralement et dans tous les sens" ("I wanted to say what it says, literally and in every sense").[22] Some eighty years later, Samuel Beckett would take a similar line when, on the last page of his "Addenda" to *Watt*, he wrote down, "no symbols where none intended." And again, "There is no

key or problem. I wouldn't have had any reason to write my novels if I could have expressed their subject in philosophical terms."[23]

Difficulty remains a property of this strain of modernist poetry, but it is not the difficulty of obscure and esoteric symbolism – of the objective correlative – as much as it is a syntactic one: the leaving out of connectives that would provide the continuity of "normal" prose. On the contrary, in the poetry of the futurists, of Apollinaire and Cendrars, Pound and Williams, *modernity* meant the acceptance of the everyday life of the city and the new technology of high-speed trains and automobiles, "readymade" clothes and gadgetry, the newspaper headline and the advertising poster. In the machine aesthetic of the painter Fernand Léger and his poet-friends, precision and accuracy – what Pound called "the luminous detail" – became the important criteria. Hence the emphasis on the proper name, whether of persons or places, for names have their own sonic and visual aura even as they give the language of poetry a sense of authenticity – of telling it like it is. In keeping with this drive toward authenticity, free verse becomes the form of choice. Whereas for Eliot, "the ghost of some simple metre should lurk behind the arras in even the 'freest' verse; to advance menacingly as we doze, and withdraw as we rouse,"[24] the futurist F.T. Marinetti was calling, not just for free verse, but for *parole in libertà* – *"words in freedom,"* which is to say, concrete nouns and noun phrases arranged paratactically in loose sequences or catalogues, with no observable connections – words, in Marinetti's parlance, *senza fili* ("without strings").[25] Such *parole in libertà* were best expressed visually rather than temporally: Marinetti's best "poems," paradoxically, were visual constructs, in which the typography and spatial design themselves created the meanings.

The starting point in English for this aesthetic was, of course, Ezra Pound's imagist manifesto, republished in "A Retrospect" of 1918, which begins:

> In the spring or early summer of 1912, 'H.D.', Richard Aldington and myself decided that we were agreed upon the three principles following:
>
> 1. Direct treatment of the 'thing' whether subjective or objective.
> 2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
> 3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.[26]

The second principle would have been perfectly acceptable to Eliot, coming as it does from Flaubert's *mot juste* down to Pater's encomium to art as the "focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy."[27] And the first, along with its corollary, "An 'Image' is that which

presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time," has to be taken with a grain of salt: the poet who declared "It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works"[28] was soon to start writing an open-ended voluminous work called *The Cantos* that ended only with Pound's death. Indeed, even Pound's early poetry places much less emphasis on the concrete nature image associated with imagism than on prosodic invention (Principle 3). "The Coming of War: Actaeon" (1915), for example, begins:

> An image of Lethe,
>   And the fields
> Full of faint light
>   But golden,
> Gray cliffs,
>   And beneath them
> A sea
> Harsher than granite,
>   Unstill, never ceasing . . .[29]

What makes this lyric so modernist is hardly its imagery: "faint light" and "gray cliffs" had been properties of the Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite poetry Pound imbibed in his youth. But the linear structure is remarkable, the poem tracking the tempo of the observer's perception itself: first the fields "full of faint light," only seen in an afterthought as "But golden." The adjective "golden" may modify "light" or "Gray cliffs." In either case, the vista now opens up, allowing us to see what is below: "A sea / Harsher than granite." Then the spondee ("únstíll") is followed by two trochaic feet ("néver céasing), the reversal of meter capturing the movement itself. Certainly, Pound is here composing "in the sequence of the musical phrase," but the poem is also a bravura piece of the new visual prosody – a prosody available only to an age where the poet is typically composing on the typewriter.

By the time he wrote "The Coming of War: Actaeon," Pound no longer called himself an imagist – he felt Amy Lowell, whose work he disliked, had taken over this movement and turned it into Amygism – but a vorticist: "The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which and through which, and into which ideas are constantly rushing."[30] Pound's vorticist manifesto appears in *Gaudier-Brzeska,* his elegiac memoir of his great sculptor friend, killed in battle in the First World War. As "energy-discharge," the vortex was supposed to be the opposite of the symbol – "Symbolism has usually been associated with

mushy technique" – and Pound associates it with the nonrepresentational art of his vorticist friend Wyndham Lewis and indirectly with the continental futurists and cubists.[31] What counts is motion, structure – the explosion of the "primary pigment" on a flat surface. From here it was only a step to the collage technique of the *Cantos* and, by way of Pound, to the collage form of Eliot's *Waste Land*.

The five-part poetic sequence Pound returned to Eliot in 1922, having made key changes and excisions, contains narrative, dramatic dialogue, song fragment, citation, literary allusion, lyric refrain – the whole arsenal of poetic devices.[32] Proper names, both real and imaginary, are foregrounded. Short passages, often a single line – sometimes in French, sometimes in German or Latin or Italian – are juxtaposed to one another without connectives in what is basically a spatialized construct. Some vestige of the temporal order we expect from a long poem is retained, the climax coming with the dramatic words, "I sat upon the shore / Fishing, with the arid plain behind me," followed by the crucial question, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?" But the poem's final mosaic of fragments leaves that question hanging, despite the stately Sanskrit ("Shantih shantih shantih") of its conclusion.[33]

As a modernist poem, *The Waste Land*, with its amazing orchestration of verbal motifs, rhythmic clusters, and dramatic juxtapositions, is *sui generis*; indeed Eliot was never to write another poem like it. But the experimental mixing of genres, voices, metrical forms, and innovative print layout – an experiment that Pound was to carry much further in his later *Cantos*, placing, say, a set of Chinese ideograms on the page juxtaposed to fragments in Italian or in French army slang, or, for that matter, including numbers and dollar signs – has its counterpart in the poetry of Eliot's French contemporaries Blaise Cendrars and Guillaume Apollinaire. Ironically, Pound and Eliot themselves had almost nothing to do with these contemporaries; French poetry, for them, was primarily the poetry of their precursors – Baudelaire for Eliot, Théophile Gautier for Pound, and Jules Laforgue and Tristan Corbière for both. The two French contemporaries Eliot admired and published in *The Criterion* were the more conservative Paul Valéry and St. John Perse.

Cendrars's *La prose du Transsibérien* (1913) and Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* are often said to derive from Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés*. Although it was Mallarmé who produced the first great experiment with typographical space and layout, sound and silence, his elaborate meditation on language and chance, using the metaphor of the shipmaster who relies on chance (the throw of the dice) so as to save the ship about to perish in the raging sea,

remains in the realm of Symbolism. Its white space represents silence, its typography carries semantic import, and its syntactic norm is the complete sentence. *La prose*, as its very title suggests, wants to deconstruct poetic syntax and continuity, as they had existed in France for centuries. Dedicated to "the musicians," and known best in the beautifully colored pochoir version provided for it by Sonia Delaunay, its free verse often approximates actual conversation:

> "Say, Blaise, are we really a long way from Montmartre?"
> Yes we are, we are
> All the scapegoats have swollen up and collapsed in this desert
> Listen to the cowbells of this mangy troop
> Tomsk Chelyaninsk Kansk Ob'Tayshet Verkne-Udinsk Kurgan Samara
>   Penza-Tulun
> Death in Manchuria
> Is where we get off is our last stop[34]

Here the mix of casual talk – Jehanne's question, repeated as a kind of refrain throughout, and the poet's not very reassuring response, with its absurdities about the mangy goats seen from the train window – is followed by a catalogue of place names, culminating in Manchuria where the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) is raging and which will be the "débarcadère" (landing stage) and last stop on the Transsiberian journey. The poem is more struc- tured than it lets on: in the original one may witness the rhyme of "débarca- dère" and "repaire" and the echo of "dèbarcadère" in the poem's coda, with its address to Paris as "Gare centrale dèbarcadère des volontés, carrefour des inquietudes" ("Central Station, last stop of desires, crossroads of anxieties").[35] But *La prose du Transsibérien* also has a documentary realism unknown to premodernist poetry – a sly homage, as it were, to the daily newspaper where people were now getting their information about war, politics, and geography. Unlike "high" modernists such as Yeats and Eliot, Cendrars was not opposed to technology and progress: a part of him was fascinated by the new modes of transportation, communication, and publicity. Indeed, the September 1913 pub- lication of the Delaunay-Cendrars pochoir version of *La prose* was preceded by a flurry of leaflets, subscription forms, and prospectuses, announcing the impending publication of "le premier livre simultané." Abandoning the con- cept of the bound book, the poem-painting takes the form of a vertical sheet over six feet tall (to make it, four smaller leaves were joined together) and foldable like an accordion into twenty-two panels. The plan was to line up 150 copies of the text vertically and thus attain the height of Cendrars's beloved Eiffel Tower, so variously painted, in these years, by Robert Delaunay.[36]

Having lost his right arm in battle during the war (by a bullet wound astonishingly prefigured by the scenes of battle and amputated limbs in the prewar *Prose du Transsibérien*),[37] Cendrars was deeply disillusioned about the promise of the New Century. Nevertheless, such poems as "Panama, or the Adventures of my Seven Uncles" intersperse advertising brochures and posters into the filmic loose free verse poem, and Cendrars's "Nineteen Elastic Poems" (1919) opens with two lyrics called "Newspaper" and "Tower." The third, "Contrastes," begins with the line, "The windows of my poetry are wide open to the boulevards and in its shop windows / Shine / the jewels of light."[38] *Openness* is central to this, the other modernism. There is even a found poem in the sequence called "Mee Too Buggi" (the name of a native dance), which is a lineated version of John Mariner's 1817 description of native life in the Tonga Islands.

Here and in the later *Kodak* poems, written on his journeys to South America, Cendrars was producing modernist poems that look ahead to conceptualism today. A related experiment is found in Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* (1918). This collection takes us from such prewar cubist lyrics as "Les fenêtres" and "Lundi rue Christine," to the war poems of 1914 and then the actual "calligrammes" – visual poems like "Il pleut" ("It is raining"), where the poem's theme is represented visually, in this case with the words "raining" down the page like water drops. No single volume represents self-consciously modernist lyric more fully than does this one, written under the sign of Apollinaire's war experience and his famous essay "L'esprit nouveau et les poètes" of November 1917. Here Apollinaire, who had long been the champion of cubism and related art movements, makes the utopian case for a poetry that will rival the miracles of science and technology in its ability to surprise and astonish.[39]

A hundred years after its publication, Apollinaire's manifesto may sound naïve and bombastic: his own "picture poems," like "Coeur couronne et miroir,"[40] made of three *calligrammes* – heart, crown, and mirror – have been criticized by most later concrete poets as excessively mimetic. The "mirror," for example, surrounds the name "Guillaume Apollinaire" with an oval made of the sentence, "Dans ce miroir je suis enclos vivant et vrai comme on imagine les anges et non comme sont les reflets" ("In this mirror I am enclosed living and real just as you imagine the angels and not at all like reflections").

More inventive than these early experiments with visual poetry are the "simultaneous" collage poems like "Les fenêtres" ("The Windows"), in

which objects, fragments of conversation, and puns are juxtaposed so as to approximate what is actually seen and felt as the poet looks out the window:

> From red to green all the yellow dies
> When parakeets sing in their native forests
> Giblets of pihis [*Abatis de pihis*]
> There's a poem to be done on the bird with only one wing
> We'll send it by telephone . . .[41]

In these lyrics, the poet's "I" is notably absent, in keeping with the "cubist" program of letting juxtaposition of images and fragments speak for itself. But perhaps Apollinaire's most lasting poems are the less programmatic free verse documentary war poems like "La petite auto," which begins

> August 31, 1914
> A little before midnight I left Deauville
> In Rouveyre's little car
>
> Counting the chauffeur we were three[42]

The succeeding lines detail the poet's vision of the impending war, initially with exhilaration, but culminating in the somber image of the masses as "giant shepherds" leading their "Great silent flocks that nibbled words," being "barked at by all the dogs on the road."[43]

"La petite auto" represents the triumph of the demotic impulse in modern French poetry. Apollinaire may still be writing under the sign of nineteenth-century Symbolism, carefully assembling concrete images to create the epiphany of the conclusion, but Baudelaire's aloofness gives way to engagement, his tight verse forms to the conversational rhythms of free verse strophes, which are structured by anaphora and other forms of verbal and sound repetition.

In American poetry, the great practitioner of what we might call this "low" modernist mode was William Carlos Williams. For Williams, as for Cendrars and Apollinaire, the modern metropolis was neither good nor evil: it simply *was*, with all its noise, dirt, frenetic activity, and excitement. The poem's language was to be as close as possible to actual, colloquial speech – an American speech.

In what I take to be Williams's masterpiece, *Spring and All* (1923), twenty-seven short lyrics are interspersed with sections of prose that partly echo, partly contradict the poetry in their aesthetic claims. The sequence contains some of Williams's most famous poems, like "By the road to the contagious hospital," "To Elsie," and "The Red Wheelbarrow." Here is the opening of ix:

What about all this writing?

O "Kiki"
O Miss Margaret Jarvis
The backhandspring

Miss Margaret Jarvis, we learn in the course of the poem's fragmented narrative, was evidently a nurse at the New York hospital where the young Williams did his training: the "Miss" suggests, in the parlance of Williams's day, not only a single woman but one likely to stay single. She evidently served briefly as the poet's "Kiki"– an allusion to Man Ray's much photographed mistress, Kiki of Montparnasse. From the "skyscraper soup" of the city, with its billboards and neon signs, the poem zeroes in to the lovers in bed in a spare hospital room, where "the chairs, the floor / the walls / which heard your sobs / drank up my emotion – they which alone know everything / and snitched on us in the morning."[44]

Williams's casual language could hardly be more different from the dense ironic mode of Eliot, but in its own way it is just as difficult. For, however literal the images of chairs and walls, the referent of a given pronoun is often missing. Whose "writing," for example, is being talked about in the poem's first line? Is the "backhandspring" of line 4 a sexual posture or a reference to the hospital bed? Or again, when the speaker recalls, "All I said was: there, you see, it is broken," the "it" may be anything from Margaret's hymen to the relationship itself. The poem reaches a surreal crescendo in the passage:

I was your nightgown
I watched!

where the spatial break in the second line creates special anticipation. It is a curious moment of sexual identification mixed with voyeurism. But it doesn't last. The physician must collect himself: "Clean is he alone / after whom stream / the broken pieces of the city – / flying apart at his approaches." In the end, the anecdotal triumphs: "fifteen years ago and you still / go about the city, they say / patching up sick school children."[45]

The Spring and All poem thus enacts the actual process whereby the speaker's mind moves from erotic memory to defensiveness, guilt, involvement, identification, and finally withdrawal. This is a process poem, its ending by no means predictable from the beginning. Such poetry, "luminous details" notwithstanding, is in fact very difficult both to write and to read, its literal images vivid and yet highly ambivalent. "I was your nightgown / I watched!" What does that really mean?

In his later work, Williams pared this style down still further. Here is "Between Walls" of 1938:

the back wings
of the

hospital where
nothing

will grow lie
cinders

in which shine
the broken

pieces of a green
bottle[46]

Here twenty-two ordinary words of a not quite complete sentence (it lacks an initial preposition like "At") are draped over ten lines arranged in five unequal couplets. No two lines are alike: the word count per couplet is 3/2, 2/1, 3/1, 3/2, 4/1, with the fifth line evidently the pivot, containing three verbs, carrying three stresses – "will grów líe." Cut off from its context, each line calls attention to itself, culminating in "the broken," "pieces of a green," and finally the solitary "bottle." It is their dismemberment that gives these perfectly ordinary words their new currency. "A poem," as Williams put it in his introduction to *The Wedge* (1944), "is a small (or large) machine made of words."[47]

No allusions or metaphors: indeed, most of the words are function words like "of the" and "in which shine." The bottle is given no aura, it points to no spiritual truth beyond itself. Yet, for all its minimalism, the poem is tightly woven into its couplets, culminating in the single word "bottle," whose trochaic form has been anticipated by "nothing," "cinders," and "broken" above it. And the title can be seen as aesthetic statement: the poem has limits – walls – between which what Hugh Kenner has called "an audio-visual counterpoint"[48] in the form of a verbal mobile floats before our eyes – a small readymade, so to speak, which contains its own radiance.

It was Hugh Kenner who made the point that, the use of colloquial speech notwithstanding, no one talks like a Williams poem: "Not only is what the sentence says banal, if you heard someone say it you'd wince. But hammered on the typewriter into a *thing made* ... the words exist in a different zone altogether."[49] This proposition is equally true of the lyric of another great

demotic modernist – Vladimir Mayakovsky. Here is "A vy mogli by?" ("And You, Could You?") of 1913:

Ia srázu smázal kártu búdnia	I have blurred the map of every day,
plesnúvshi krásku íz stakána	set paint out of the paint-pot splashing,
Ia pókazál na bliúde stúdnia	I have shown in aspic on a plate
kosýe skúly ókeána	the slanted cheekbones of the ocean.
na chéshué zhestiánoi rýbi	In a metallic fish's scales
prochél ia zóvy nóvykh gúb	I have read the call of future lips
A vý	And you
noktiúrn spigrát'	could you
moglí by	a nocturne play
na fléite vódostóchnykh trúb	on the flute of waterpipes?[50]

At one level, Mayakovsky's is a fairly straightforward lyric. The poet announces his power to transform the everyday into art, to transform so humdrum a thing as a dish of fish aspic into the slanted cheekbones of the ocean, to see metallic fish scales (a logo used on shop signposts) as a woman's lips. And now, turning suddenly to the audience, he asks, "And what about you? Can you play a nocturne on an ordinary drainpipe?" As such, Mayakovsky's miniature futurist manifesto hardly seems remarkable: it insists that the urban landscape with its drainpipes and street signs can become the stuff of "revolutionary" poetry. But, as in the case of Williams, it is the prosody that is remarkable. The Russian poem, we see in the transliteration, begins as a regular iambic tetrameter quatrain rhyming *abab* – a stanza Pushkin might have written. But no sooner does the poem establish its verse parameters than it defies them. The second quatrain begins normally (lines 5–6), but the next three lines look on the page like free verse, the norm not reasserting itself until the final line. But this description is not, in fact, accurate: when read aloud, it becomes clear that lines 7–9 constitute a single iambic tetrameter line, broken into three parts –

A vý / noktiúrn spigrát' / moglí by
And you / a nocturne play / could you

Read this way, the lines constitute the second rhyming quatrain (*rubi, gub, vi, trub*), and the poem's ten lines count as eight.

But why the broken line with its semblance of free verse? Like Williams's "Between Walls," Mayakovsky's poem enacts structurally what is being said; it presents its lyric subject as capable of transforming the "plumbing" of

traditional verse and making it sing. The aggressive challenge to those in the poet's audience (And you – what can you do?) is presented metrically as well as semantically. Then, too, "A vi mogli by" is very tightly structured phonemically: consider the intricate sounding of "*Ia srazu smazal kartu ... krasku iz stakana*" as well as the witty rhyming of *budnia* (weekday, humdrum) with *studnia* (aspic), and of *gub* (lips) with *trub* (pipes).

Mayakovsky's little poem thus takes demotic material – in this case a direct address to the poet's audience – and defamiliarizes that material by means of sound and layout. Such modernist lyric was always designed to be both heard and seen on the page. Williams's particular brand of modernism had an enormous influence on the poetry of the United States. From the objectivist and Black Mountain poets in the 1950s and 1960s to the New York school and the Language poets in the 1980s, Williams was considered a model for what a new, more democratic lyric might look and sound like. In Britain, on the other hand, this "flat" literalist mode never quite caught on. And even on the continent, Williams and Mayakovsky had few heirs before the 1950s and 1960s.

The remarkable poetry of Bertolt Brecht, for example, shared Williams's colloquialism and emphasis on everyday life in the modern city. Brecht adhered to fixed forms – cabaret ballads as well as sonnets and quatrains – that are more reminiscent of *Les fleurs du mal* than of Williams, although Brecht's lyric is intentionally much more transparent and didactic than Baudelaire's. Here, for example, in the vein of Baudelaire's "À une passante" is the first quatrain of Brecht's sonnet "Entdeckung an einer jungen Frau" ("Discovery about a Young Woman") of 1925:

> The morning's sober farewell: she standing there
> Cool between door and threshold, her cool eyes low
> When I observed a grey strand in her hair
> And found I could not bring myself to go.[51]

The discovery, in the morning light, that the prostitute whom he was just leaving is old enough to have a strand of gray hair, curiously rekindles the poet's desire: the sonnet ends "Und es verschlug Begierde mir die Stimme" ("With that my voice gave out, and longing choked me").[52]

Brecht's overt critique of the economic order that makes prostitution the only choice for the aging woman in question – a critique put forward in designedly accessible, straightforward language with a minimum of figuration – is very different, not only from the aesthetic distance of a Baudelaire or Eliot, but from the demotic model of Williams or Mayakovsky as well. Brecht's counterpart in Anglo-American poetry would be the Auden circle of

the 1930s and the Harlem Renaissance, with its more overt embrace of political issues, of the need for engagement. This is a far cry from the aesthetic distance, aloofness, and careful construction of the modernist poem, whether in its high or low incarnations.

Coda

Any narrative of modernist poetics inevitably omits certain key figures – those who don't quite fit in and yet are central to understanding the movement. Let me conclude with a great modernist writer who was *sui generis* – Gertrude Stein.

Stein's work seems to contradict all the usual generalizations about modernist poetry. She is neither a Symbolist nor a purveyor of "Direct treatment of the thing"; indeed her writing is characterized by its abstraction and lack of concrete imagery. She neither celebrates nor descries the urban world or the new technology. Her "poetry," neither in the fixed forms of Baudelaire nor the free verse of Williams or Pound, is primarily written in prose, and yet it is difficult to call it prose poetry: it has, for example, none of the visionary phantasmagoria of *Spleen de Paris* or Rimbaud's *Illuminations*. Indeed, the generic term "poem" seems not quite right for Stein, whose "novels" have no real narrative, whose plays have no real characters, and whose poems are often neither lineated nor do they exhibit the sound repetition that would seem to be the sine qua non of poetry. She disliked nouns, the very lifeblood of most poetry, and preferred function words, conjunctions, prepositions, and pronouns to adjectives and adverbs. And she avoided all forms of punctuation except for the period.

What, then, makes Stein a modernist poet? For one thing, she believed, along with her fellow modernists, that to be an artist was to live for one's art, that to produce, in her own case, important *writing* was what mattered – not politics, not ideas, not philosophy, or religion. For another, Stein shared Eliot's Flaubertian faith in *le mot juste* – she chose each pronoun or article with the greatest care in her effort to *render* the subject to be treated. Here, for example, is "Custard" from *Tender Buttons* (1914):

> Custard is this. It has aches, aches when. Not to be. Not to be narrowly. This makes a whole little hill.
> It is better than a little thing that has mellow real mellow. It is better than lakes whole lakes, it is better than seeding.[53]

Here is the indirection of modernism played in a new key. Custard is made by cooking milk or cream with egg yolk according to just the right proportions to

keep the resulting substance from turning runny or hard. When one makes it (usually in a double boiler), one tests the custard by touching its surface; if it bounces back leaving no imprint (ache), it is done. So in Stein's riddling prose, when it still has aches, it is "Not to be. Not to be narrowly." At the right moment, however, it becomes "a whole little hill." And, as the second paragraph suggests, such custard, when perfectly done, is better than a more elaborate dessert, a "mellow" crème anglaise, let's say, or a charlotte russe. And it is certainly better than a failed custard, one that is too soft and turning into a lake.

But the last word of "Custard" presents problems: why is custard better than "seeding"? Here custard takes on the sexual connotations latent all along – latent, indeed, and sometimes overt in *Tender Buttons,* with the title's allusion to nipples. "Seeding" would involve male input into the perfect "custard," something that is rejected in this lesbian love poem.

What seems a simple description – a kind of lab report – thus turns out to have all the complexity and wit we associate with the modernist poem. It defamiliarizes expository writing at every turn, showing us the power of prose to be poetic, of ordinary words to become radiant *if* the right context is provided. A century after modernism, we are still trying to come to terms with the inventions Stein's brilliant poetry has provided.

Notes

1 *American Poetry: The Twentieth Century,* vol. 1 (New York: Library of America, 2000), 499, 391.

2 Quoted by Carol Clark, "Introduction," *Selected Poems of Charles Baudelaire* (London: Penguin, 2004), xiii.

3 Charles Baudelaire, "Le Soleil," *Les fleurs du mal,* in *Œuvres complètes,* ed. Claude Pichois (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), 79; "The Sun," *The Flowers of Evil,* trans. Keith Waldrop (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2006), 112.

4 Charles Baudelaire, "To Arsène Houssaye," *Paris Spleen,* trans. Louise Varèse (New York: New Directions, 1970), ix–x; *Œuvres complètes,* 229–30.

5 Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 175–81; Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes,* 238–40.

6 Arthur Rimbaud, *Complete Works, Selected Letters: A Bilingual Edition,* trans. and ed. Wallace Fowlie, rev. Seth Whidden (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 373–81.

7 Charles Baudelaire, "Mon coeur mis à nu," section XLIV, *Œuvres complètes,* 1299.

8 Stéphane Mallarmé, "The Book: A Spiritual Instrument," *Selected Poetry and Prose,* ed. Mary Ann Caws (New York: New Directions, 1982), 82–83.

9 Jules Huret, "Interview with Stéphane Mallarmé" (1891), in Henri Dorra (ed.), *Symbolist Art Theories: A Critical Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 141.

10 W.B. Yeats, "The Symbolism of Poetry," *The Collected Works of W.B. Yeats: Early Essays*, ed. Richard Finneran and George Bornstein (New York: Scribner's, 2007), 115–16.

11 W.B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 509.

12 See Walter Benjamin, "Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century," *Writer of Modern Life*, 40–42.

13 *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*, ed. Richard Finneran (New York: Scribner's, 1996), 127.

14 W.B. Yeats, "Essays for the Scribner Edition (1937)," *The Yeats Reader*, ed. Richard Finneran (New York: Scribner's, 2002), 430.

15 Arthur Rimbaud, "Il faut être absolument moderne," *Une Saison en Enfer, Complete Works, Selected Letters*, 302.

16 T.S. Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1952), 3.

17 A good compendium in English is *Fernando Pessoa & Co.*, ed. and trans. Richard Zenith (New York: Grove Press, 1998).

18 Eliot, *Complete Poems and Plays*, 5, 3, 4–6, 60; *Selected Essays* (London: Faber, 1951), 427.

19 Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (New York: New Directions, 2010), 36.

20 See T.S. Eliot, "Hamlet" (1919), *Selected Essays*: "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked" (145).

21 Ezra Pound, "A Retrospect," *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1968), 3.

22 Isabelle Rimbaud, *Reliques*, 2nd edn. (Paris: Mercure de France, 1921), 143.

23 Samuel Beckett, *Watt* (1953; London: John Calder, 1976), 255; Beckett, "Interview with Gabriel d'Aubarède," *Nouvelles littéraires*, February 16, 1961, repr. in Lawrence Graver and Raymond Federman (eds.), *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 217.

24 T.S. Eliot, "Reflections on *vers libre*" (1917), *To Criticize the Critic* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), 187.

25 F.T. Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax – Wireless Imagination – Words-in-Freedom" (1913), in *Critical Writings*, ed. Günter Berghaus, trans. Doug Thompson (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 120–31.

26 Pound, "A Retrospect," 3.

27 Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (1873; repr. New York: Modern Library, 1953), 197.

28 Pound, "A Retrospect," 4.

29 *Selected Poems of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1957), 35.

30 Ezra Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir* (New York: New Directions, 1974), 92.

31 Ibid., 85.

32 See T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts including the Annotations of Ezra Pound*, ed. Valerie Eliot (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971).

33 Ibid., 146.

34 Blaise Cendrars, *Complete Poems*, trans. Ron Padgett (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 21–22 (for the French, see 240).

35 Ibid., 28 (245).

36 See Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture*, rev. edn. (University of Chicago Press, 2003), Chapter 1.

37 See Cendrars, *Complete Poems*, 27: "And at Khilok we met a long convoy of soldiers gone insane / I saw in quarantine gaping sores . . . And the amputated limbs danced around or flew up in the raw air."

38 Ibid., 58.

39 Guillaume Apollinaire, "The New Spirit and the Poets," in Henri Dorra (ed.), *Symbolist Art Theories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 308–14.

40 Guillaume Apollinaire, *Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War (1913–1916)*, ed. and trans. Anne Hyde Greet and S.I. Lockerbee (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 88–89.

41 Ibid., 36–37.

42 Ibid., 105.

43 Ibid., 107.

44 William Carlos Williams, *The Collected Poems,* vol. 1: *1909–1939*, ed. A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan (New York: New Directions, 1991), 200.

45 Ibid., 202.

46 Ibid., 453.

47 William Carlos Williams, "Author's Introduction to *The Wedge*," *Collected Poems,* vol. II: *1939–1962*, ed. Christopher MacGowan (New York: New Directions, 1991), 54.

48 Hugh Kenner, *A Homemade World: The American Modernist Writers* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1975), 86.

49 Ibid., 60.

50 Vladimir Mayakovsky, *Dla Goloda (For the Voice)*, in Kutik Ilya and Andrew Wachtel (eds.), *From the Ends to the Beginning: A Bilingual Anthology of Russian Verse*, http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/mdenner/Demo/index.html.

51 Bertolt Brecht, *Poetry and Prose*, ed. Reinhold Grimm (New York: Continuum, 2003), 40. My translations.

52 Ibid., 40.

53 Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2014), 51.

The Theatre of Modernity

BEN LEVITAS

On December 21, 1879, in the debut of *A Doll's House*, Nora Helmer first danced her second-act tarantella. Over ten years earlier, the play's author, Henrik Ibsen, had declared his project to dramatize "frictions and tendencies of modern life":[1] here, actress Betty Hennings, spinning into abandon before the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, brought that ambition into a clarifying focus that can claim – as much any moment might claim – to be the dramatic entrance of this theatre of modernity.[2] It was not just that *A Doll's House* brought the issue of the emancipation of women from idealized domesticity into new definition. It was that it arrived via an excess: it involved "a little too much nature," as Torvald puts it, "than was, strictly speaking, artistic."[3] Ibsen's intervention recast modern culture as a series of performances, a culture that theatre was in a privileged position to treat. *A Doll's House* asserted the primacy of theatrical form as uniquely capable of treating the "frictions" of its age as both a representation and a manifestation of its subject: the process of liberation layered into formal experiment and social action. Nora's dance begins as a coquettish bourgeois fad, but unwinds out of representation into unrestricted physicality, breaking through the restraint of acceptable public roles. It embodies centrifugal propulsion, directing Nora toward her famous door-slamming exit, and the play toward controversy.

Whereas, a century earlier, Friedrich Schiller had viewed theatre as a keystone of enlightened, romantic nation formation, late nineteenth-century Europe was confronted by the accelerated processes of urbanization, industrialization, crossed lines of gender and class, crises of imperial domain, and the challenge of democratization. In a period of such dramatic upheaval, theatre began to present itself as an analogue of turbulent social processes. Karl Marx, in 1852, described the French bourgeoisie as staging revolution "the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce":[4] an ability to structure events made theatre a metonym from which political crisis could be writ large, and with a long tragicomic shadow. In 1867, Richard Wagner, looking

toward Bayreuth, maintained that theatre could prove "the spiritual seed and kernel of all national-poetic and national-ethical culture."[5] His young friend Friedrich Nietzsche's treatise *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music* (1872) saw instead a "vortex and turning point"[6] originating in the ancient revolution of classical Athens: a joining of Apollonian control with Dionysiac impulse, displacing censorship with festive elaboration of otherwise hidden forces. It prioritized theatre in culture as the *ur*-challenge to routine morality and rationality. Ironically, although Wagner's sweeping *Gesamtkunstwerk* was the inspiration, Nietzsche discovered to his distress (over *Parsifal*) that the maestro's sense of theatre's idealized mission compromised its ethical toughness. Their falling out might have made an apt scene in one of Ibsen's further incarnations of modern social crisis: of moral hypocrisy and sex in *Ghosts* (1881), of democracy and populism in *An Enemy of the People* (1882), of spirituality in *The Wild Duck* (1884), and of feminism (again) in *Hedda Gabler* (1890).

By 1899, the aging Ibsen's triumphant presence at the opening of the National Theatre of Norway was counterpointed by his last play, *When We Dead Awaken*, in which the artist, climbing beyond social convention, collapses form in on itself. What was modernist in theatre was also apparent in this ambivalence to social formation. In a period of conflict – not simply between opinions, but between rational and irrational forces – the theatre of modernity constituted a new civic function at the heart of culture: no longer one of sealing consensus, but of making a breach in convention. With that came the problematic of a form that devolved authority into process. It required an age of makers, not just writers. The innovations in theatrical synthesis produced by the first modern director, Duke Georg II of Saxe-Meiningen, rose to complement the demanding exactitudes of realism (his productions of *Ghosts* in 1886 and of *An Enemy of the People* in 1888 were equally notorious and influential). But Meiningen's airtight interiors paradoxically opened a door to directorial license. Equally, it was a process dependent on a dispersal of social authority, as emerging theatre companies exploited a new ambivalence on the part of governments as pressure for democratization spread across Europe. State restriction began to relax, or at least to consider private subscription as a filter to limit drama's disruptive potential. In Paris André Antoine's Théâtre Libre (1887), in Berlin Otto Brahm's Freie Bühne (1889), and in London J.T. Grein's Independent Theatre (1891) were founded along the fault lines of such semi-censorship. August Strindberg's delineation of new sexual psychology, *Miss Julie*, was instantly banned from public production, but had its private premiere in 1889 at the student union of the University of Copenhagen.

This initial efflorescence quickly proliferated into stylistic variety, producing a modernist theatre newly aware of its constitutive insight into the dialectic of artistic and social function: on one hand reflexively examining theatre's artistic process (metatheatre), and on the other seeking to operate outside and beyond the theatre walls, so to intervene as a cultural recourse and source of a language of change (paratheatre). Symbolist poets began with hostility to performance, confirmed by Maurice Maeterlinck's warning that "a symbol can never sustain the active presence of man."[7] But with the opening of Paul Fort's Théâtre d'Art (1890), they quickly began to adjust to a space that precisely offered metatheatrical examination of this proposal. Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's famous disavowal in *Axël* (1890) – "living? Our servants will do that for us"[8] – carried a more complex connotation on the stage than on the page. A schematic opposition between a physically enhanced Symbolism and a socially transgressive realism opened onto a common ground of theatricality. This ramifying fact became apparent when, at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre (1893), Aurélien Lugné-Poe superseded Fort and made manifest the most daring innovations of the decade. It was precisely eclectic theatricality that marked him out as an influential modern: his otherworldly green and violet staging of Maurice Maeterlinck's high Symbolist *Pelléas et Mélisande* in May 1893 was followed by a dynamically paratheatrical *An Enemy of the People*, in which Lugné-Poe, playing Dr. Stockmann, twinned his fourth-act declamations with a pre-performance lecture by the notorious anarchist Laurent Tailhade (who denounced "all the 'leading men' in French literature and politics" to riotous response).[9] He could stage Wilde's *Salome* (1893) in honor of the imprisoned author in 1896, and in the same year collaborate with Alfred Jarry in staging the watershed *Ubu Roi*.

Complementing this breadth, Maeterlinck transformed his initial dismissals of theatre with a series of one-act works, including *The Intruder*, *The Blind* (at the Théâtre d'Art, 1891), and *The Interior* (at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, 1894). This last play overtly contrasted the staged realist interior, sealed from catastrophe, with alternative interiors of mind and revelation. This suggestive capacity for evoking hidden dimensions within minimal language was particularly significant in its shift from high-flown Symbolist mythologies to the sphere of the commonplace. Maeterlinck posed theatre the problem of external manifestation of hidden life: drama, as he explained in *The Treasure of the Humble*, not of violent action but of "an old man, seated in his armchair . . . giving unconscious ear to all the eternal laws that reign about his house."[10]

Such work emerged in the context, not merely of disciples willing to take up Maeterlinck's challenge (Yeats, Strindberg, Synge, and Marinetti were all devotees), but of dramatists whose Symbolic attention was also parathea-trical in intent. Wilde, Jarry, George Bernard Shaw, and Frank Wedekind were theatrical activists on and off stage. Wilde's famed *Salome* is a play in which language, confronted by the desired body, begins to break down, until dance replaces speech, and finally immobility replaces mobility. Directors made it a calling card of radical intent: for Lugné-Poe in 1896, Reinhardt in 1902, Evreinov in 1908, Xirgu in 1910, Pitoëff in 1922, it was a modernist signature. The opposition between the exotic-secular female body of Salome and the ascetic-Christian male spirit of Jokanaan extolled theatre's exploration of the social operation of sex as symbol, spectacle, and phenomenology. Wilde's comedies of verbal paradox, meeting sentimental morality with cool heterodoxy, were a droll commentary on the same dynamic, with a particular emphasis on the power of speech acts to reinvent identity or create new contexts of being. Yet, as with the alter ego Bunbury in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), the constructions of these theatrical pieces were also formalizations of the Wildean persona, the aphoristic representation of a position in and between art and life. His trial in 1895, two-year imprisonment, and subsequent death in 1900 offered an iconic martyrdom for modernist rebellion. As he recognized in *De Profundis*, he had become "a man who stood in symbolic relations to the art and culture of my age."[11]

A similar theatricalized self was evident in the bohemian eccentricity of Alfred Jarry, who wandered Montmartre carrying loaded pistols. His persona aspired to *cause célèbre*: but his was no simple project of shock tactics. *Ubu Roi* (1896) was a complex combination of anti-literary formalism and satire on the complicity of canonical taste in bourgeois structures of power. The riot that ensued at its premiere signaled a new potency: not only a modernist making-strange, but an avant-garde disruption of verbal forms with physical challenge. A scatological travesty of Macbeth, even the provocative pithiness of its opening "Merdre!" is a verbal corruption. The fat, puppet-like Ubu and a cast of "jerking and hopping ... swearing *gamins* of wood"[12] were outrageously disorienting. With forty life-sized wicker figures of Lords, bankers, and judges cast into the pit in Act III, Jarry conducted cultural transgression to expose the complicity of social nicety in familiar structures of privilege. The production presented a moment, as one critic described it, when "the pavements split and the sewers, like volcanoes, must explode and ejaculate."[13]

To combine social and formal unconventionality was a hallmark of theatrical innovation. The principles of progressive drama had already been explained in Shaw's *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891), and he repeatedly battled the British censor before realizing his vision at the Royal Court Theatre, London (1904). But his rebellion was more than argumentative: where Wilde and Maeterlinck had honed language and Jarry twisted it, the prolix expansiveness of *Mrs Warren's Profession* (banned in 1893), *Man and Superman* (1905), or *Back to Methuselah* (1922) systematically overwhelmed narrative with polemic. His plays came combined with prefaces and pamphlets; argument blurred into dramatic action.

Such activism is also evident in Wedekind, who, like Shaw, found his progress delayed by censorship. The very resistance to *Spring's Awakening* (1891) – not performed until 1906 – and his two "Lulu" plays, *Earth Spirit* (1895/1898) and *Pandora's Box* (1904), confirmed wider involvements in the cultural politics of the 1890s. Wedekind fought the world on multiple fronts: as bohemian figurehead, as cabaret performer and snarling balladeer, as a poet whose public readings were legendary, and as an actor and playwright who tested the boundaries of social permission. *Spring's Awakening* sought both to depict and enact the fracturing of Wilhelmine taboos on multiple levels: as realist study of teen sexuality, as socio-sexual allegory of transition from ignorant puerility to a possible moment of maturity, and as a demonstration of what that moment in culture might look like. Its belated theatrical consummation emerged from the satirical *Kabarett* of Max Reinhardt's "Sound and Smoke" parodies founded in café spaces. The Reinhardt-Wedekind *Spring's Awakening* took Germany by storm, running to 354 performances in the febrile atmosphere of a cult of youth. Fritz Kortner remembered that, as a fifteen-year-old (later to become the expressionist actor par excellence), he "fainted and had to be carried out."[14]

Reinhardt's complex *Regiebuch* notebooks, his meticulous synaesthetic composition, signal the arrival of the director as a locus in cultural modernity.[15] An alert chemist of theatrical elements, he responsively sought dynamic forms at a time when the theory and practice of the theatre were in rapidly developing dialogue. Language, light, space, and scenic art were all materials to be reconsidered in interrelation. Henceforth, a modernist theatre could be as radical in restaging the Greeks or Shakespeare as it could be in producing new texts. Innovations in atmospheric light and suggestive spatial design had been outlined by Adolphe Appia in *Staging Wagnerian Drama* (1895) and *Music and Scenery* (1899); Georg Fuchs subsequently drew attention to the theatrical connection between aesthetic elements and social affect in his influential

essay "The Stage of the Future" (1904), encapsulated in his much-repeated rallying cry "Réthéâtraliser le théâtre!"[16] Such tautologized excess could be manifest either in ostentatious minimalism or in overt exaggeration (the anti-theatrical is thus paradoxically but specifically a form of theatricalized theatre). Edward Gordon Craig, whose theories were outlined in *The Art of the Theatre* (1905) and proliferated through his influential journal *The Mask* (1908–29), recommended both. His devised lighting screens for Yeats at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin (1909–11) and Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theatre (1912) wrought abstract concision; his reflections on the stylized body and masked performer suggested expansive engagement.

The physical performer stood at the center of this restructuring of form. Craig's theories of the *übermarionette*, of a puppet-like or masked figure acknowledging its own symbolic role, stood in twinned polarity with the role of the dancer onstage, as promulgated by Appia and Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, who went on to found Eurythmics at Hellerau in 1910. This manifold development would be apparent as well in the new wave of ballet led by Diaghilev and Nijinsky.[17] It was the express liveness of theatre that reconnected its vocabularies of "actions, words, line, colour, and rhythm," as Craig had put it.[18] Complementing and challenging this shift, forms of modern dance led by women – Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Mary Wigman, Ninette de Valois – counterpointed dramatic presentation expressing anxiety at the advent of the "New Woman" as an emerging feminist presence. Such alternative presentations of the (particularly female) body continued the momentum of social transgression begun in the 1890s. Thus Reinhardt placed Gertrud Eysoldt at the center of his 1902–03 seasons, playing in *Salome*, a double bill of Wedekind's Lulu plays, and Euripides' *Electra*. This triptych of femmes fatales would find further form in opera (Strauss's *Salome* and *Electra* within two years, *Lulu* much later in Alban Berg's 1937 version). In Barcelona, Margarita Xirgu made *Salome* her own, touring from 1910–14 with a production that established her as the most powerful actor-manager in Spain.[19] Such interstices brought home gender roles and sexual power not merely through text but through physical presence that was at once object and subject: symbolic, somatic, social.

These motions beyond realism were often a widening of the theatrical spectrum rather than an explicit rejection of theatre. August Strindberg had considered the naturalism of *The Father* (1887) and *Miss Julie* (1888) not as the theatre of minutiae but of immensity, "where the big battles take place . . . whether these forces are called love or hate, the spirit of revolt or social instincts."[20] This already archetypal sense of social struggle fed into his

attempt to dramatize the "Inferno" of his mental collapse in 1894–96, in which Strindberg's own tortures stood as new symptoms of social malaise. *To Damascus I* (1898), daringly realized by Emil Gradinson at the Dramaten, Stockholm, in November 1900, ushered in the new century with an asylum scene in which a dreamlike set-within-a-set induced "an hallucinatory state induced by fever."[21] The impetus was confirmed in an excited reassessment of Maeterlinck, whose *Treasures* belatedly came into Strindberg's hands in early 1901 ("Listen to this!" he wrote, quoting the Belgian at length to Richard Berg).[22] The radical form of *A Dream Play* (1901/1907) followed, in which the benign goddess Isabella, visiting a world in which well-made causality has fragmented, becomes caught in recurring patterns of personal and social anguish. Denied the powers of a *deus ex machina*, the godlike objective eye of reformist art is humbled into an inescapable and unstable subjective involvement with depicted experience. Culminating in *The Ghost Sonata* (1907), such works proved staging posts between naturalism, Symbolism, expressionism, and surrealism. Equipped with his much-annotated copy of Fuchs's essays – and frustrated at Max Reinhardt's slow uptake of his new material – Strindberg developed his own laboratory for these theatrical recalibrations of subject and society. To give his "Chamber pieces" their chamber, the Intima Teatern was founded (with August Falck, 1907) for the specific purpose of housing "an intimate theatre for *Moderne Kunst*."[23]

Experiment in dramatic form can thus be considered not simply in oppositional terms, but as a development in theatrical modes. In Russia, the Moscow Art Theatre (MAT, 1898), evolved a new realist subtlety refracted by Constantin Stanislavsky through the work of Anton Chekhov and Maxim Gorky. At its core was not mimesis but correspondence between art and life, manifest in a new sense of the actor as a disciplined expressive subject.[24] It was thus a theatre that corroborated Chekhov's understated widening of dramatic focus into ensemble breadth, the individual subject dispersed into a social milieu that Gorky would stretch again with cross-class depiction. And this theatre was consonant, too, with the belated pressures toward democratization in a Tsarist Russia resistant to change. The MAT production of *The Seagull* (1896) in its first season can be considered a design-specific exercise in alternative theatricalities, repositioning the Russian theatre through reflexive, semi-satirical portraits of melodrama (personified by Arkadina), cynical naturalism (Trigorin), and the naïve poetics of Symbolism (Konstantin). In Chekhov's play, the modernist impulse displayed in Konstantin is snuffed out in dejection and suicide. Nonetheless, the fact that Stanislavsky took the part of Trigorin, while Konstantin was played by the

young Vsevolod Meyerhold (Stanislavsky was thirty-five, Meyerhold twenty-four), presciently anticipated a proliferation of theatrical possibilities. The diversification of the MAT into a complementary range of studios would allow Meyerhold and other emerging directors such as Alexander Tairov and Yevgeny Vakhtangov to test their powers, before going on to shape Russian theatre in the revolutionary period. They would seek to reveal the presences Chekhov's character Trofimov had warned privilege to acknowledge in *The Cherry Orchard* (1904): "Can't you see human faces looking out at you from behind every tree-trunk ... Can't you hear their voices?"[25]

Russian theatre's capacity to explore invention and intervention was explicitly worked through by Nikolai Evreinov, for whom "play" constituted a fundamental instinct for transformation. His Wildean assertion of this *Teatral'nost* in *The Theatre as Such* (1913) – "it is not the stage that should borrow from life but life that needs to borrow from the stage"[26] – quickly became a touchstone of the Russian avant-garde, intimating a more dynamic crossing of the footlights. With play, dramatic and social forms were equally open to change. *A Merry Death* (1909) knowingly deployed *commedia dell'arte* in order to assert that performance was engaged in imaginative play that was also inescapably social. Harlequin, the very incarnation of theatricality, cheerily embraces mortality, rupturing traditional form and provoking Pierrot to berate the audience: "Nasty evil people! You're the ones that dreamed up these stupid rules!"[27]

Theatre that combined avant-garde edge with political function was already strong where it engaged questions of identity. For W.B. Yeats, Symbolist ambition was not a matter of art displacing life, but of art decolonizing Ireland. Dramatic poetry, born out of struggle, promised an alternative model of power to the imperial center: "because [Ireland's] moral nature has been aroused by political sacrifices, and her imagination by a political pre-occupation with her own destiny," Yeats argued, "she is ready to be moved by profound thoughts that are a part of the unfolding of herself."[28] The Irish National Theatre Society (1902) – based at the Abbey Theatre from 1904 – politicized from the start, became the centerpiece of a fractious anxiety about national culture, offering the potential for revolutionary poetics in Yeats and Augusta Gregory's *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1902) but culminating in violent antagonism over J.M. Synge's patricidal comedy *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907). Synge's message in consolation to the actor Molly Allgood (his fiancée), who played the central role of Pegeen Mike, "We're an event in the history of the Irish stage,"[29] confirmed that reception was now a dimension of aesthetics. But the estrangement was paradoxically positive: as crisis

merged into revolution, republican affection for Synge's "profanity" grew with it.[30] Ireland's future role as a model for postcolonial resistance emerged from such fissiparous rebellions against bourgeois taste and imperial power.

In Italy, the futurists' combination of art event with nationalist militancy gave this temper of revolt new formal definition. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's reputation for the extravagant recital of his poetry developed into a bid to out-*Ubu* Jarry, initially in the derivative *Le roi bombance* (1909).[31] But discovering more impact in controversial curtain calls, Marinetti joined with like-minded futurists to develop a radical form of avant-garde Variety, the *serate*, in which manifesto and poetry blended into polemical contempt for the past and passivity. The object was to make the theatre a place of and for action – particularly irredentist anti-Austrian action. In 1910 they toured Italy to increasingly violent effect. Venice was harangued for being "soiled with romanticism . . . the *cloaca maxima* of passéism"; a packed Teatro Lirico in Milan descended into chaos as the cry "Glory to war, the sole hygiene of the world!" sparked fistfights. The newspaper *Secolo* reported: "one didn't know if one was in a theatre or in hell."[32]

The futurists entered the no-man's-land between art and event, "throwing nets of sensation between stage and audience."[33] Impatiently blunt dramas presented a distilling synthesis of theatre: *Detonation* (1916) by Francesco Cangiullo has the sole character of a bullet and the single action of a gunshot. Such *Sintesi* took their place among performance poetry, compositions of machine-made noise, cookery, dress, and violent declarations of new aesthetics, intended as transformative cultural behaviors: "cynical, muscular, fugitive, Futurist."[34] However, as the First World War ground on in quotidian slaughter, with attendant horrors of gas attacks and deformed casualties, futurist glorification of machine-age speed and violence was either subsumed in proto-fascism or overtaken by disillusion. In Italy, theatrical experiment turned to the more elaborate investigations of *teatro grottesco*, while in neutral Zurich, Dadaists turned avant-gardist politics inside out. Eyeing artistic populism as "candied diarrhea" and artistic detachment as "a paper flower for the buttonholes of gentlemen," Tristan Tzara founded the Cabaret Voltaire in 1916 to strike out at a culture that manned the engines of catastrophe. Yet Dadaist shock tactics also took on the panache of display. The intent to break up routines of meaning enacted eloquent attacks on eloquence itself, to "spit out . . . amorous ideas like a luminous waterfall."[35] Similarly, the instinct for negation of theatrical form opened fresh opportunities for metatheatrical critique or paratheatrical object. Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) was a descendant of Père Ubu's lavatory-brush scepter.

The Dadaist critique, disrupting normative signification in the arts, had politicized the presumptions of meaning-making itself. The aftermath of war brought new experimentation, responding to different social crises. In Germany and Russia, revolutionary turmoil invested formal adventure with renewed social urgency. In France, with its more secure postwar settlement, playful language combined with a renewed assertion of theatricality as a hub for artistic involvement. In Paris avant-gardism reconnected to the tradition of directorial orchestration taken up by Jacques Copeau, whose Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier (1912) introduced two of the most influential of French interwar directors, Charles Dullin and Louis Jouvet. At the same time, Sigmund Freud's theories refigured the crisis of civilization as a psychosis brought on by sexual repression. In this context, Tzara's *The Gas Heart* (1921) both anticipated and precipitated the recoherence of the fragmented elements of Dadaism into surrealism (the 1923 performance occasioned the brawl that formalized the division). This shift, already foreshadowed in Apollinaire's *Breasts of Tiresias* (written in 1903, performed 1917) was given particular force in Jean Cocteau's multimedia works *Parade* (1917) – with Picasso as designer – and *Marriage on the Eiffel Tower* (1921), in which Cocteau's distinction between "poetry of the theatre" and "poetry in the theatre"[36] was made apparent. The exploration of desire used dramatic reframing to situate the disturbed unconscious, and, as in the 1890s, theatre's libidinal properties emerged to present newly current challenge to established morality. Crommelynck's *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, an exaggerated tale of sponsored adultery, was a keynote sounded by Lugné-Poe in 1920. Antonin Artaud's *Spurt of Blood* (1925, not performed until 1964), in which a prostitute bites God's wrist, spraying the stage as His Hand reaches down, served as a more brutal encapsulation. In Roger Vitrac's surrealist *The Mysteries of Love* (1927), echoes of naturalism are disrupted by arbitrary interventions of fantasy and repressed desire: dramatics of dream that break down and invade presumed realities.

Where the First World War had precipitated social and political crisis, experimental theatre grew more intent on social agency. Early German expressionism had dwelt on universal conflict and transcendence, but emerged from the trenches politically re-engaged. Oskar Kokoschka's *Murderer, The Women's Hope*, a cage-fight version of the gender war, first performed at the Vienna Kunstschau in 1909, introduced the central elements: archetypes in mortal struggle, rhythmic choral presence, an abstract poetics seeking cosmic grandeur, and ecstatic, stylized physicality (nerves painted on the outside).[37] Crazes for Nietzsche and Strindberg kindled a movement that

took the inner subjective angst of the latter into combination with an assertive sense of destiny. Theatre was recast as a hallowed site of contact with the artistic *Übermensch*, leading the way beyond bourgeois morality and compunction. The poet in Reinhard Sorge's *The Beggar* (subtitle: "A Dramatic Mission," 1912) explains: "Masses of workmen will be swept / By intimations of a higher life / In mighty waves." More provocatively, it would also encourage cripples to "toss to death / The fallow refuse that was their lives."[38] Not all work was so messianic: in Georg Kaiser's *From Morn to Midnight* (1912), the embezzler's search for meaning is arrested by corrupting, alienating processes of mass and mercenary entertainments.

Within this variety, expressionism generated new stage vocabularies that would prove as durable as its literary counterpointing of telegrammatic brevity and prolix rapture. Extreme, stylized movement and exaggerated gesture were central to the form: to present such Zarathustras without lapsing into bathos required disciplined performers such as the mesmeric Fritz Kortner, Ernst Deutsch, and Agnes Straub. Similarly, the interplay between external world and inner torment, and between chorus and individual, required daring directorial innovation from the likes of Richard Weichert and Karl-Heinz Martin: harsh spotlights isolating the central figure; tightly choreographed groups indicating the masses.

Once the newly instituted Weimar Republic lifted censorship, productions came in a rush that blurred the distinction between pre- and postwar work. But Ernst Toller's *Transformation* (1919) records his emergence from breakdown in the war to radical leader, and in doing so also depicts the transformation of expressionism itself. Like *The Beggar*, the play ends with an ecstatic leader uplifting the crowd, but with quite a different connotation: political leadership emerged from the trenches to mix bleak humor with earnest horror (the skeletons of a raped girl and soldiers dance on the battlefield: "Fräulein, do away with shame! What's the good? ... Do you see a difference?").[39] The whole play came freighted with a process of paratheatrical agitation. Toller had used his early scene of "The Maimed" for peace protest in 1917, printed redrafts as a pamphlet in the 1918 anti-war strike, and finished the play in prison having led the short-lived Bavarian soviet in April 1919. As Toller put it, his play was "political drama born from the absolute of the revolutionary *Must*."[40] Karl-Heinz Martin, who immediately directed the work in the Tribüne Theater, did so as a continuity of praxis in a pared-down theatre. After *Transformation*, even where expressionism did not share revolutionary intent, the tortured individual came situated as prey to social rather than cosmic forces. Kaiser's *Gas* trilogy, for instance (1917–20), updated

An Enemy of the People into a complex allegory of industrial relations for the age of mechanized destruction.

Such works proved a globally resonant set of themes. In the United States, Eugene O'Neill, Elmer Rice, and Sophie Treadwell developed a tradition of American expressionism, partly rooted in an "expressive culture" anxiously resisting Fordism, and partly feeding off German influence. O'Neill, already deeply interested in Synge, initially combined Irish immigrant, working-class, and black American alienation in his early plays *Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1922). Thus American theatrical modernism directed attention along axes of class and race, and, in the case of Treadwell's *Machinal* (1928), inverted gender presumptions by making the "Mensch" a woman.[41] That the Provincetown Players' director, Robert Edmond Jones, had studied with Reinhardt at the Deutsches Theater meant such plays emerged on the stage fully formed. From there they returned to Europe: in the swirl of the 1920s, Kaiser, O'Neill, and Toller were often influences simultaneously felt as expressionism found its way into works by Irish dramatists Denis Johnston and Sean O'Casey.

The galvanizing process of crisis evident in Germany was no less apparent in Russia. Before the war, Evreinov's theatricalizing mission in St. Petersburg was given new substance at the Crooked Mirror Theatre and the Stray Dog Cabaret. Here performance was combined with inquiry into signification, hosting debates with Marinetti (translator: Roman Jakobson), lectures by Viktor Shklovsky, poetry by Vladimir Mayakovsky, and paintings by Malevich. Meyerhold was an habitué. The adventure culminated in 1913 in the Russian futurist opera *Victory over the Sun*, complete with Malevich's hard-edged costuming.[42] War and the ensuing revolution necessarily accelerated these trajectories. Evreinov's orchestration of the mass spectacle *The Storming of the Winter Palace* in 1920 mobilized huge crowds in participatory expression of revolutionary action. Meyerhold reunited with Mayakovsky and Malevich to produce *Mystery-Bouffe* (1918), in which a medieval morality play is recast as revolutionary allegory. Twinned with Émile Verhaeren's *The Dawn* for the 1920–21 season at the Sohn Theatre, the productions, with onstage crowds, cubist-suprematist designs exposed in harsh light, and declamatory speeches interrupted by bulletins on the progress of the Red Army, performed to a thousand people a night for over five months (admission was free).[43] Meyerhold's constructivist productions tied theatricality and social action by combining *übermarionette* and dancer into rhythmic socialized movement: a "biomechanics" that drew attention to a dialectic not merely art/life but work/life. From *The Magnanimous Cuckhold* (1922) to Mayakovsky's

The Bedbug (1929, music by Shostakovich, design by Rodchenko), Meyerhold marked the energy – and the oppressive negation – of the Russian Revolution.

In Paris, the reconquest of the theatre in the interwar years continued the tradition of eclectic modernism. Directors dominated: Dullin, Jouvet, Gaston Baty, and Georg Pitoëff were christened "le cartel des quatre." But it was the outsider Pitoëff who introduced Luigi Pirandello to Paris, in the process conjoining Italian, Russian, and French traditions of theatricality. Pitoëff's apprenticeship in St. Petersburg with Evreinov at the Komissarjevsky Theatre from 1908–13[44] was a key preparation for his resonant production of Pirandello's work. The descent of the six characters of *Six Characters in Search of an Author* onto the small stage of the Théâtre des Champs Élysées (April 10, 1923), materializing from the lift used to bring furniture down from the flies, instantly encapsulated the conjuring power of theatrical evocation.[45] But just as one acknowledges Pitoëff's potent incarnation, it is worth noting that it came in a context of eclecticism. Elsewhere in the 1922–23 season, Pitoëff produced (sometimes with Jacques Hébertot or Copeau) works by Ibsen, Chekhov, Wilde's *Salome*, Shaw (*Candida* and *Androcles and the Lion*), Tolstoy, and Molnar.

As Pirandello's family of characters from a stock domestic tragedy attempt to lead jobbing actors through a representation of their story, they become overtaken by the momentum of their narrative selves, which they finally, inevitably, embody as lived experience. As the stricken figures exit into the auditorium, they pose a momentary terror: that the nightmare trap of tropes is a universal affliction, a shocking defamiliarization in which madness is universalized. Similarly, the central role of *Henry IV* (1924) involves a fantasy of kingship brought on by a blow to the head: but it is not clear if he is still deluded, or conspires in the illusion of his delusion for his own ends, as a means of managing his resistance to a mundane world. Spectators are required to ask themselves whether they share this unsure condition of (self-) deception and perception, and whether theatre is inevitably our common medium of indeterminate display. The debut of *Six Characters* at the Teatro Valle, Rome, in 1921 had received the necessary signature of the modern classic: violent protest. Pirandello quickly responded by building a play around the event, so as to subsume it once again in the theatrical construction of *Each in His Own Way* (1924) and *Tonight We Improvise* (1930).

Brecht also responded to conceptualized role-play in the context of modernized social positions in the wake of the First World War. Antonio Gramsci had noted that the sociological dimension of Pirandello's aesthetic derived from the interaction of text with "the human complex of the actor and the

material apparatus of the scene."[46] Walter Benjamin commented of Brecht that "the stage is still elevated. But it no longer rises from an immeasurable depth: it has become a public platform."[47] It might be said that each exposed the presumption of artistic autonomy, all the while asserting the theatre's claim to a privileged role as social art, key to determining the problematic of social being.

For Brecht, however, that problematic was overtly political. His precocious early plays *Baal* (1918/1923) and *Drums in the Night* (1920/1922) testified to the crisis of expressionism facing German disillusionment in the wake of the First World War: *Man Is Man* (1926) dispelled the metaphysical expressionist *Mensch*. Galy Gay is not spiritually transformed by war so much as rewired: "a man reassembled like a car."[48] It was a shift in keeping with a tough *Neue Sachlichkeit* pragmatism emerging in Weimar Germany. Brecht's collaboration with Kurt Weill on *The Threepenny Opera* (1928) and *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1927/1930) captured the ebullience of the young republic as well as depicting its corruption, and indeed ironically accused itself of becoming the "culinary" opera it satirized. *Mahagonny* imagined a kind of Weimar, USA, in which the archetypal aspects of capitalist modernity are let rip in a *Kabarett* world, in which commodification consumes its protagonists one by one.

Brecht was not alone in finding new combinations of media as a means to political purchase. Erwin Piscator had begun his career directing at the Volksbühne and staging mass revues for the communist party; by 1927, he opened his own theatre with Toller's ironic post-expressionist play *Hoppla! Such is Life*. Piscator structured the play's social cross-section as a sheer three-story block of cubicles: action exposed as hierarchical structure. As counterpoint, film projections by Curt Oertel, montage backdrops by John Heartfield, and a Charleston-ballet by Mary Wigman performed by skeletons under ultraviolet light, offered movement along alternative planes of travel.[49] Elsewhere, emerging out of the Bauhaus, Oskar Schlemmer experimented with his *Triadic Ballet* and Brecht ventured into radio plays and the theatre for (political) education that came with the *Lehrstück*: all varieties of experiment with possibilities for total art – not to mention participation and mass technology.

But massification also brought crisis. As 1930s Europe witnessed a retreat from democratic society, the construction of a modern theatre with civic purpose changed. Theatrical experimentation had never been a marginal bohemia: Evreinov's *Storming of the Winter Palace* and Reinhardt and Hofmannsthal's *Everyman* at the inaugural Salzburg Festival (both 1920) can

be seen as early attempts to redeem theatre's civic role in the wake of the First World War, seeking new modes of public praxis to secure hopeful commonality. But for emerging authoritarian polities, mass theatre also presented opportunities for social mobilization and control, from Olympic ceremonies to the vast scale of Nazi *Thing* theatre, all of which challenged dissident forms of theatrical modernism practically, aesthetically, and existentially.[50]

In purely practical terms, theatre's tradition of transgression left its personnel vulnerable. Many of the dramatis personae of German theatre culture were either communist or Jewish or both. Brecht and Toller fled Germany when Hitler came to power in 1933, Piscator fled in 1934, Reinhardt in 1938. All became exiles in an America unattuned to their art (Toller committed suicide in 1939; Brecht and Piscator returned to postwar Germany after being targeted by McCarthy). In the Soviet Union, after the 1928 Party Congress attacked modernist "formalism," theatrical possibility became increasingly dangerous. Tairov was kept under close inspection at the Kamerny; Meyerhold was executed by Stalin in 1940. In southern Spain, during a short interval of democracy, Federico García Lorca forged a radical fusion of naturalistic and poetic dialogue in *Blood Wedding* (1932) and *Yerma* (1933): but at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936, he was an early target for Franco's death squads. *The House of Bernarda Alba*, written for his theatrical muse Xirgu, would not debut until 1945, and then in Buenos Aires, to which she had fled in exile.

And in philosophical terms, the dynamic innovation that characterized theatrical response to the First World War was challenged again in anticipation of the Second. Brecht's notes (May 1939) on the "Theatricality of Fascism" observed that fascist spectacle tapped into and manipulated "Siegfried" heroic posturing (treated in the gangster-into-demagogue transformation of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, 1941). But to this he added a subtler point of the Nazi projection of normality, "a *Gestus* which is perfectly petty bourgeois ... where he [Hitler] presents himself as an ordinary *human being*."[51] Theatre's privileged capacity to reveal social and political processes had long precluded artistic autonomy, but circumstances required maintaining a separation that treated, yet kept distinct, art and life. Antonin Artaud's alternative was to attempt a counteroffensive. He attempted to subsume social process as a whole in a shared exposure of primal unity, refashioning Dionysian ritual into what he titled the Theatre of Cruelty (1935). But the ecstatic, cosmic purification outlined in *The Theatre and Its Double* (1938) promised less a removal from fascist intention than a post-expressionist return to the rhetoric of absolutes.[52]

W.B. Yeats's late work was differently disposed. The Japanese Noh-influenced works *At the Hawk's Well* (1916) and *The Dreaming of the Bones* (1919/1931) deployed dance to shadow the ambitions of verse, in a symbolic world prey to violent conflict. Such tensions remained in *Purgatory* (1938), which depicted a complex metatheatre of murderous violence, perpetuated by ghost-performance. The dead become Pirandellian figures, "dreaming back" moments of intensity (here a woman of noble birth procreating with a stable hand), an eternally unalterable vision immune to action. Attempts to seek purification through blood sacrifice only confirm deeper debasement: seeking remedy, the Old Man had once killed his father, and now kills his son, but is "Twice a murderer and all for nothing."[53]

Despite right-wing tendencies, Yeats's emphasis on social-formal antimonies (between "the dancer and the dance") put him closer to the leftist expressionism of British contemporaries such as W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood's *On the Frontier* (1938)[54] than he would have admitted (Irish and British left theatre traditions would later conjoin in Joan Littlewood's production of Brendan Behan's *The Hostage*, 1958). T.S. Eliot's choice of verse form and choral intervention shows another renewal of faith in dramatic effect. For Eliot, as with Yeats and Brecht, poetic force and physical presence combined potencies, but *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), commissioned by a Bishop and staged in Canterbury Cathedral, was less a theatre of conflict than of communion. Influenced by Yeats's *Purgatory*, Eliot sought to modernize this form: *The Family Reunion* (1939) stepped out of church history into evening dress, and *The Cocktail Party* (1949), although it continued to combine Aquinas and classical tragedy, offered the *via negativa* as a route out of empty pleasure. The guardian angels of *The Cocktail Party* reveal two such paths: the enlightened marriage of the Chamberlaynes or the missionary purpose of Celia. Eliot's 1950 Harvard lecture *Poetry and Drama* reveals his form to be correspondingly vocational: "a design of human action and of words, such as to present at once the two aspects of dramatic and of musical order," directly intended to induce "serenity, stillness and reconciliation."[55]

Such Christian proselytism resisted a sense of deeper crisis. Harcourt Reilly, Eliot's agent of urbane divinity (originally played by Alec Guinness), advises his charges to "avoid the final desolation / Of solitude in the phantasmal world / Of imagination, shuffling memories and desires."[56] For Samuel Beckett, however, this "final desolation" was precisely unavoidable, and expression itself was a faltering, shuffling memory. Representation should involve, as he put it in 1937, "somehow inventing a method of verbally demonstrating this scornful attitude vis-à-vis the word ... a whispering of

the end-music or the silence underlying all."[57] The delay between this insight and his plays *Waiting for Godot* (1953) and *Endgame* (1957) is bound up with that search, in which the devastations of the Second World War were focused into a particular crisis of modernism found in the context of occupied France.

With Russian theatre in eclipse and German theatre in exile, the eclecticism of the French stage adapted to its precarious condition partly through disguise. Charles Dullin produced Jean-Paul Sartre's modern Oresteia, *The Flies*, at the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt in 1943, thus cloaking the *théâtre engagé* within the *théâtre théâtral*. Sartre's *Hui Clos* (1944), with its purgatory of eternal acquaintance born out of his incarceration as a political prisoner in 1940, comments ironically on perpetual apoliticality, the trap of personal relations without social purpose: its doomed figures perform a resonant commentary on this specific condition of confined theatricality. Albert Camus, whose *Caligula* acted as coda to the occupation, presented the combination of solipsism and absolute power as both an indictment and a warning. Underpinned by the context of Paul Oettly's September 1945 production at the Théâtre Hébertot (the renamed Théâtre des Arts that Pitoëff had made famous), it served as a reminder of lineages of theatrical positioning.

Beckett's early masterpieces of trapped figures, whose persistence onstage rehearses failures of communication, can be seen to absorb this particular crisis of the dialectics of resistance and complicity. Theatrical modernism had always been a bastardized form: Beckett and his contemporaries carried that tradition forward into complications of postwar modernity, to inform an avant-garde working through the implications of the Holocaust and of Hiroshima. Eugène Ionesco (*The Bald Soprano*, 1950, *The Chairs*, 1952) revisited Dada principles; Brecht's *Mother Courage* (1938) and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1944) appeared in the belated contemporaneity of the first Berliner Ensemble tours (1954–56); Jean Genet turned again to the performance of social selves in *The Balcony* (1956) and *The Blacks* (1958). Each sought new instances of that dynamic excess of theatricality, of metatheatrical and paratheatrical extensions of form into life; and for each the manifestation of the work required manifest collaboration. *Godot* was not produced in a vacuum: its debut at the small Théâtre de Babylone appeared in a season featuring restagings (by Jean-Marie Serreau) of Strindberg's *Miss Julie* and Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule*.[58] That Roger Blin brought Beckett and Genet into a Parisian tradition remains consequent on a genealogy of performance as well as of dramatic literature. It is no mere flippancy to note

that Blin displaced a testicle in his effort to produce the first *Godot*. ("Hope it made it back to base," consoled the playwright.)[59] In the practicalities of socially situated production, as we have seen, modern theatricality remained fascinated by the movement between imaginative and physical worlds.

This interface accounts in part for the longevity of a theatrical modernism that, because it is also a physical art and an avant-garde practice, has lived beyond a postmodern doubt in the power of language. The rediscovery of Copeau and Artaud by Peter Brook and Richard Schechner in the 1960s; Jerzy Grotowski's search for a complete paratheatre of lived performance in the 1970s; the channeling of Dadaist provocation and the feminist dance tradition into the very different theatricalities of Marina Abramovic or Pina Bausch; Ariane Mnouchkine's search for multicultural connection: together, these evidence the adaptive interaction between art and society in the theatre. In a postcolonial – and neoimperialist – world, the combination of formal and social critique in theatrical modernity has proved an adaptable tradition for the hybrid forms emerging from local performance practice across the world.[60] A synecdoche of this vast complication might be found, for instance, in Alfian Sa'at's *Dreamplay* (2010), where Strindberg is adapted to reveal the subaltern experience of LGBTQ communities in Singapore.[61] Whether in revival or in renewal, however, theatre remains modernist in its relentless assertion of historicity, its specifics of time and place. As Marx put it, *"Hic Rhodus, hic salta!"*[62] That is to say (as Irving Berlin nearly translated it), we can only "face the music and dance." Performance is returned continually, like a Pirandellian figure, to a continuing modernity in which it is redefined: just as every production of *A Doll's House* repeats the tarantella, but each time allows Nora to exit to somewhere new.

Notes

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7 Michael Holland, "The Difficult Distance: Mallarmé, Symbolism and the Stage," in Patrick McGuinness (ed.), *Symbolism, Decadence and the Fin de Siècle: French and European Perspectives* (University of Exeter Press, 2000), 72–89 (at 74).

8 Philippe-Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, *Axël*, trans. M. Gaddis Rose (London: Soho, 1986), 170.

9 Michael Meyer, *Henrik Ibsen*, vol. III: *The Top of a Cold Mountain, 1883–1906* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1971), 232–33.

10 Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Treasure of the Humble*, trans. A. Sutro (London: George Allen, 1897), 182.

11 Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Works*, vol. II, ed. Ian Small (Oxford University Press, 2005), 162.

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Translation

EMILY O. WITTMAN

As an international and transhistorical sensibility, modernism takes the act of translation as one of its defining enterprises. Indeed, numerous modernists treat translation as a genre of its own, establishing and adapting its principles in response to the possibilities offered by a range of languages and literatures. Their attitudes and practices are particular and various, as we shall see in the course of this chapter.

Modernist translation was early characterized by shifting attitudes toward accuracy and fidelity in the translation of classical literature. In the nineteenth century, the most notable debates about translation concerned Greco-Roman literature. Victorian scholars and translators, Matthew Arnold and Francis Newman foremost among them, contentiously debated the merits of various paraphrastic approaches. In Arnold's 1860 lecture "On Translating Homer," the Oxford Professor of Poetry reminded his audience that scholars were the only tribunal competent to judge a translator's adherence to the spirit of the original. Modernist translators implicitly rejected Arnold's views and took a resolute stance against the academy and its established custodians of classical literature. They offered a fresh engagement with classical literature, viewing its translation as an interpretive and generative practice, even a form of literary criticism. They largely dispensed with the traditional goal of paraphrastic fidelity, embraced new forms of equivalence, and practiced more extreme forms of translation, including rewriting. For instance, Pound began *The Cantos* with a translation of a medieval Latin translation of the Nekyia episode of Homer's *Odyssey*. Homer's epic also provided the organizational scaffolding for Joyce's *Ulysses*. Both works are modernist translations of Homer.

Modernist translators, including those with scant knowledge of source languages, marshaled classical literature for new ends. Unaffiliated with academic institutions, these translators acknowledged the foreignness of the past while bringing it into conversation with the present. As T.S. Eliot

wrote: "We need an eye which can see the past in its place with its definite differences from the present, and yet so lively that it shall be as present to us as the present."[1] Overall, modernist translators distanced themselves from academic institutions in favor of independent patronage systems that permitted more creative autonomy. Accordingly, the audience for modernist translations was, to a large extent, an elite private readership. Writers translated for a privileged audience that in turn gave value and prestige to both translator and translation. We can see this in the small journals where many modernists published but also in their widely shared disdain for popular success. In part due to their often marginal status, modernist translators were at liberty to set new norms, winning approval both for risk-taking and for restraint.

H.D. is an exemplary modernist translator. In her autobiographical novel *Bid Me to Live* (1960), she demonstrates how her early attempts at translating from the ancient Greek were central to her literary development. This novel offers a firsthand account of the transformative practice of translation, which strengthens protagonist Julia Ashton's devotion to her vocation as a writer even as it tests the limits of her literary strength: "She brooded over each word, as if to hatch it. Then she tried to forget each word, for 'translations' enough existed and she was no scholar. She did not want to 'know' Greek in that sense ... She was arrogant and she was intrinsically humble before this discovery." Ashton pits her approach, with its arrogance and humility, against that of the "grammarians" with their "hoarded treasures."[2]

In *Bid Me to Live*, H.D. identifies translation as a key form of authorship, implicitly dismissing the age-old dictum *traduttore traditore* (translator, traitor). In 1915, full of enthusiasm, she and her husband Richard Aldington launched the Poets' Translation Series. The series published six pamphlets of translations from Greek and Latin classics that had originally appeared in *The Egoist*. "This literature has too long been the property of pedagogues, philologists, and professors," declared its young editors.[3]

For many scholars, Pound's name is synonymous with modernist translation; his work has certainly garnered the most critical attention. In 1913, he wrote of his goal to know "what part of poetry was 'indestructible,' what part could *not be lost* by translation" and which elements "were utterly incapable of being translated."[4] Embracing a Goethean conception of world literature, Pound searched for material in a variety of traditions and languages, including Greek and Latin but also medieval French, Provençal, and Chinese. Some languages he knew well, others not. Much like H.D., Pound marched firmly away from a scholarly approach to translation. According to Hugh Kenner, it

was about 1911 that H.D.'s friend Pound "came to think of translation as a model for the poetic act: blood brought to ghosts."[5]

Pound definitively broke with the canons of faithfulness and fluency embraced by Victorian translators. Pound, who maintained that a classical training could ruin a translator, rejected what Kenner called "the cult of the dictionary": he replaced scholarly footnotes with poetic analogies and employed a broad variety of innovative translational practices.[6] In his essay "Cavalcanti" (1919), he describes how he repeatedly recalibrated his response to "the crust of dead English, the sediment present in my own available vocabulary."[7] In the same essay, *il miglior fabbro* distinguishes between an "interpretative translation," which is prepared as an accompaniment to the foreign text, and "the other sort," which possesses an aesthetic independence and stands on its own.[8]

André Lefevere has demonstrated how translation "often projects the 'fray' of its own times back into the past, enlisting the support of those writers it canonizes for a certain ideology, a certain poetics, or both."[9] In Pound's view, cultures were ancient or modern not because of their proximity in time, but rather due to their guiding forces and social organization. Pound's "Homage to Sextus Propertius" (1919) is exemplary in its appropriation of the past for present concerns. The "Homage," nearly colloquial in tone, drew scathing criticism from scholars. "If Pound were a professor of Latin," one classicist wrote, "there would be nothing left for him but suicide."[10] Pound ridiculed such scholarly censure, objecting, "There was never any question of translation, let alone literal translation. My job was to bring a dead man to life, to present a living figure."[11] Ultimately, Pound's "Homage" is neither paraphrase nor literal translation. Nor was his "Homage" a *belle infidèle*; he rearranged fragments from disparate elegies and gave them a contemporary sound, creating, in Kenner's words, "a Yankee-in-England persona."[12] This served him well in his mission to analogize his experience of the "infinite and ineffable imbecility of the British Empire" in 1917 with Propertius's account of the "infinite and ineffable imbecility of the Roman Empire."[13] With this goal in mind, Pound unapologetically deleted historical and mythological material. His "Homage" offered readers a new view of Propertius, one that "Sextus Pound" deemed highly relevant to the current political situation. Although many of Pound's other translations were even more appropriative, they were not all subject to scathing critique. For instance, the double translations that make up *Cathay* (1915) escaped similar censure in part due to his readers' widely shared ignorance of the Chinese language.

Like his fellow modernists, Pound profited as much from new translations as from translating. In his 1929 essay "How to Read," he convincingly argued that English-language literature "is fed by translation; every new exuberance, every new heave is stimulated by translation, every allegedly great age is an age of translation."[14] A number of significant prose translations fed the English language and radically changed the course of literature in the first part of the twentieth century. The most significant translations include nineteenth-century Russian novels and short stories as well as the works of Sigmund Freud and Marcel Proust.

An enormous body of nineteenth-century Russian literature was translated in the first decades of the twentieth and its impact on modernism was immense. By and large, modernist writers were long mesmerized by this fresh material. As Hemingway recalls in *A Moveable Feast* (1964): "At first there were the Russians; then there were all the others. But for a long time there were the Russians."[15] Virginia Woolf was particularly taken with the Russian novelists. In *Orlando* (1928), the eponymous character has a youthful encounter with a seductive and highly mysterious princess from Russia, a land where sentences are "often left unfinished from doubt as to how best end them."[16] "English," Orlando muses, "was too frank, too candid, too honeyed a speech for Sasha. For in all she said there was something hidden; in all she did, however daring, there was something concealed."[17] While this interest in hiddenness reflects the dimension of the unknown in a foreign language, and so registers the particular stimulus the translation of Russian literature will provide for Woolf's fiction, she also anticipates the change of mind she (and other English modernists) will have about the Russian work, as we shall see. Orlando's own misadventure with Sasha testifies to Woolf's infatuation and subsequent disillusionment with Russian literature.

Nineteenth-century Russian literature in toto, most of it tirelessly translated by Constance Garnett, helped Woolf and numerous others to articulate their dissatisfaction with the current state of English-language letters and its neglect of the inner life. "Russianitis" was D.H. Lawrence's term for this widely shared craze for Russian writing. Such Russianitis lasted well into the twenties, when E.M. Forster, in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927), opined, "No English novelist is as great as Tolstoy," and "No English novelist has explored man's soul as deeply as Dostoyevsky."[18]

Ivan Turgenev, published first in French translation, was the first Russian writer to arouse significant interest among English-language readers, most notably Henry James and Conrad. However, as Forster's comments indicate, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy came to dominate the modernist imaginary.

Hemingway wrote that Tolstoy's *Sevastopol* had taught him to write about war.[19] Ford Madox Ford lavishly praised Tolstoy, arguing that he lacked "some of Shakespeare's faults."[20] As a critic, editor, and biographer, Constance Garnett's husband, Edward, perhaps did the most to broaden the readership for his wife's translations by means of numerous introductions, reviews, and essays, as well as biographies of Tolstoy and Turgenev. Modernist infatuation with Russian literature also extended to the Russian people at large, particularly émigrés, and, in some cases, to their nascent revolution.

Modernist writers found in Russian literature dynamic characters and compelling experiments with narrative time. Most significantly, they found works in which a study of the inner life was the principal subject matter. In "Modern Fiction" (written 1919 as "Modern Novels," then revised and published 1921), Woolf identifies a new approach to literature in Chekhov's short story "Gusev." In "Gusev," a shipload of soldiers, many of them ill, return home after they are discharged from military service. "No one but a modern," she writes, "no one perhaps but a Russian, would have felt the interest of the situation which Tchekov has made into the short story."[21] In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1923), Woolf muses on Dostoevsky, invoking "characters without any features at all," characters that require the reader to "go down into them as we descend into some enormous cavern."[22] She connects developments in contemporary English-language literature with Russian literature, particularly with respect to Joyce: "The most elementary remarks upon modern English fiction can hardly avoid some mention of the Russian influence."[23] This is particularly true of the "resentful despair" and "inconclusiveness" previously so alien to contemporary British literature.[24]

Several modernist writers with a barely rudimentary knowledge of Russian also took a stab at translating Russian literature. The Woolfs, Lawrence, and Mansfield, among others, polished the cribs produced by Samuel Solomonovich Koteliansky, or "Kot," a Russian Jewish émigré and late Bloomsbury addition. These co-translations included supplementary or critical texts and letters by established writers as well as memoirs and fiction by less recognized writers. Eight of the Hogarth Press's twenty-seven early publications were Russian translations.[25] These translations helped transform it into a notable press that would publish translations of Rainer Maria Rilke, Italo Svevo, C.P. Cavafy, and, most notably, the numerous books and case studies that would become the Standard Edition of Freud's work.

In the banner year 1922, the Hogarth Press published Woolf and Kot's co-translations of Dostoevsky's *Stavrogin's Confessions* and *The Plan of the Life of a Great Sinner* (1922). Despite this effort, Woolf wondered in 1925 if

"the simplicity, the humanity" that attached English readers to Russian literature was not itself the necessary by-product of translation.[26] In her view, translations, in which "every idea is slipping about in a suit badly cut and many sizes too large for it," affirm "the nature and importance of what we call style." In 1928, she wrote even more dismissively of "our prolonged diet" of Russian fiction "rendered neutral and negative in translation."[27]

Woolf's misgivings at this time were perhaps informed by her own difficulties learning Russian with Kot. She nevertheless acknowledged that translation, the "suit badly cut," productively questions "our fitness as readers."[28] Tolstoy, "alien, difficult, a foreigner," was particularly valuable in this respect."[29] Woolf linked the problems associated with translation to the challenges posed by difficult contemporary literature. These insights did not make her generous to translators of her own work. She was notoriously cruel to the young Marguerite Yourcenar, who had braved the channel while translating The Waves (Les Vagues, 1937). To Ethel Smyth she complained of "a French translator who's wasted one of my rare solitary evenings."[30]

Both Woolf's praise and her misgivings serve to highlight her enormous debt to Garnett's translations, particularly those of Tolstoy. In 1929 Woolf wrote to Vita Sackville-West about the role of Russian literature in the development of English literature: "It wasn't Wells, or Galsworthy or any of our mediocre wishy washy realists: it was Tolstoy. How could we go on with sex and realism after that?"[31] Russian literature stood firmly in the way of an easy literary trajectory by introducing the inner life, "this cloudy, yeasty, precious stuff, the soul" in the place of more blunt novels of social injustice.[32] Russian writers had complicated and even rendered irrelevant easy Victorian distinctions between good and bad.

Katherine Mansfield extolled Russian literature. She registered her debt to Chekhov in a 1917 journal entry: "Tchehov makes me feel that this longing to write stories of such uneven length is quite justified."[33] In a 1919 letter to Kot, she compared Russian literature to a treasure: "When you think that the english [sic] literary world is given up to sniggerers, dishonesty, sneering dull, dull giggling at Victorians in side-whiskers and here is this treasure – at the wharf only not unloaded."[34] For Mansfield, like so many of her contemporaries, it was Constance Garnett who stood at the wharf bravely unloading the treasure. In 1921, Mansfield, who would later translate Maxim Gorky's Reminiscences with Kot, wrote to Garnett apropos of "the whole other world" offered in her translation of War and Peace: "Your beautiful industry will end in making us almost ungrateful ... Yet my generation (I am 32) and the younger generation owe you more than we ourselves are able to realize.

These books have changed our lives, no less. What could it be like without them!"[35] Mansfield was right about ingratitude. Not two years before she had likened Garnett's ("Mrs. G's") approach to translating Chekhov to that of a dentist who "takes the nerve from a tooth."[36]

We do not know why Mansfield's opinion of Garnett changed so dramatically although such dramatic shifts certainly characterize her reception. For most modernists, however, disappointment eventually replaced enchantment and had less to do with Garnett's skills than with the Russian writers she translated. Lawrence is exemplary in this regard. His early *engouement* changed quickly to disillusionment, disgust even. Lawrence, who had co-translated both Leo Shestov and Ivan Bunin with Kot for the Hogarth Press, was initially attracted in equal measure to Russian literature and the nascent revolution. A manic 1917 letter to Kot testifies to this early enthusiasm: "I feel that our chiefest hope for the future is Russia. When I think of the young new country there, I love it inordinately. It is the place of hope ... *Nuova speranza – la Russia. – Please send me a grammar book.*"[37]

By 1929, however, Lawrence had grown contemptuous of what he saw as the Russian novel's predictable plot in which a protagonist rejects sin for salvation. For Lawrence, these religious plots explicitly stifled the value that he located in the inner life. He defined his vitalist views against Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's life-denying Christianity, eventually declaring that Russian literature was "all masturbation," inhabited by characters who seek "unspeakable humiliation for themselves and call it Christ-like."[38] "The more Dostoievsky gets worked up about the tragic nature of the human soul," Lawrence wrote, "the more I lose interest."[39] Although disillusioned with Russian literature, he remained loyal to his friend Constance Garnett, praising her "magical" industry.[40]

Ford Madox Ford also traveled the path from admiration to disillusion. Despite his own religious leanings, he shared with Lawrence a growing fatigue with "variations of the Christ legend."[41] Yet he acknowledged the impact that Russian literature had had on the course of English literature and gave high praise to its primary translator: "I wish I knew, in the meantime, how to pay a tribute to Mrs. Garnett for her translations from the Russian ... It is dreadful to think of what books in English would be if we had not her translations."[42] For Ford, Russian literature served as both inspiration and foil for English writers who remained "enormously indebted" to Constance Garnett.[43] Ford maintained that Garnett, as a female translator, deserved particular recognition as she had "proved herself capable of such a labour as few men could have carried through, and of a sense of phrase vouchsafed to

few of us, whether we be men or women."[44] The famously anti-Russian Conrad also praised Constance Garnett, declaring to her husband: "Turgeniev for me is Constance Garnett and Constance Garnett is Turgeniev ... She has done that marvelous thing of placing the man's work inside English literature."[45] The impact of Garnett's translations on modernist writers suggests the extent to which, as Lawrence Venuti notes, "the translation of a canonical text can itself acquire canonicity."[46] For Hemingway, the journey to the highly influential Tolstoy was a journey to Garnett's translation: "I remember how many times I tried to read *War and Peace* until I got the Constance Garnett translation."[47] Garnett correctly speculated of the younger generation that her translations "*could* not leave them unchanged."[48] Although they were later subject to criticism and the originals retranslated, it was her translations that influenced modernist writers.

The vivid internal landscapes characteristic of much modernist literature are also indebted to Virginia and Leonard Woolf's Hogarth Press, which published the first official translations of Sigmund Freud's work. Fellow Bloomsbury member James Strachey, Lytton Strachey's younger brother, translated these works, often in concert with his wife, Alix. These translations played an extraordinary role in the development of modernist literature by expanding the range of acceptable themes and by changing the English language. They made acceptable previously taboo subjects and widened the meaning of a broad array of English words, including cure, complex, fixation, symptom, compulsion, and regression. Strachey's translation also introduced compelling neologisms such as id, cathexis, and psychodynamic.

A proud stylist, Freud rarely repeated the same word. Strachey was later criticized for using one word where Freud used many and, conversely, for fastening the meaning of a word that Freud had used polyvalently. Early critics objected that Strachey made Freud's poetic language stodgy and overly scientific by using obscure Greek and Latin words to translate Freud's vivid and vital German. Strachey countered that his goal was to translate the stylistically rich language of the Austrian scientist into the English of a "man of science or wide education born in the middle of the nineteenth century."[49] Strachey called this approach "literal translation."

> For wherever Freud becomes difficult or obscure it is necessary to move closer to a literal translation at the cost of any stylistic elegance. For the same reason, too, it is necessary to swallow whole into the translation quite a number of technical terms, stereotyped phrases and neologisms which cannot with the best will in the world be regarded as "English."[50]

Strachey's translations covered up Freud's ambiguities.[51] They offered readers a comparatively accessible Freud with distinct words that expanded and augmented the English language even if, as with Garnett, his methods would later come under scrutiny. The literary terrain was particularly ripe for this infusion of new words, topics, and hermeneutic tools. The impact of these translations was quickly apparent. Modernist writers were "yung and easily freudened," as Joyce wrote in *Finnegans Wake*; they devoted increased attention to dreams, childhood experiences, and family dynamics.[52] By 1929, Robert Graves could quip: "'Very Freudian' as one says now."[53]

Due primarily to his status as a scientist, Freud escaped legal censorship in the English-speaking world despite his frank analysis of sexuality. He could, however, count a number of literary opponents among the modernists. Lawrence was particularly skeptical about Freud's theories of the unconscious mind: "Imagine the unspeakable horror of the *repressions* Freud brought home to us. Gagged, bound, maniacal repressions, sexual complexes, faecal inhibitions, dream-monsters."[54] He particularly resented critics who identified an Oedipus complex in his *Sons and Lovers* (1913) and strove repeatedly to outline another view of the unconscious mind. Mansfield was disturbed by the nearly immediate influence of Freudian theory on contemporary writing. In 1920 she wrote to her husband, J.M. Murry: "I am amazed at the sudden 'mushroom growth' of cheap psycho analysis everywhere. *Five* novels one after the other are based on it: its in everything. And I want to prove it won't do – its turning Life into a *case*."[55] As is indicated also in the chapter on Freud in this *History*, Woolf feared Freud's influence and read the translations only after his death and shortly before her own. At that time, she became intrigued by the concept of ambivalence, which, reinforced by Freudian thinking, may reflect the stimulus she and other modernists found in the indeterminacy and suggestiveness of translation itself. This interest was manifest in her final novel *Between the Acts*, as well as "A Sketch of the Past," both written in 1939.

Proust made less of an immediate splash. His oeuvre found its way into English letters first via writers such as Conrad and Henry James who could read him in French. Others had to wait for the indefatigable C.K. Scott Moncrieff's celebrated English-language translations, which stretch from the publication of the first volume of *Remembrance of Things Past* in the banner year 1922 (also the year of Proust's death) until his translation of the final volume, unfinished at his death in 1930. Although Moncrieff's translations have been scrutinized and criticized, they, like Constance Garnett's, achieved canonical status and introduced readers to yet another possible way to narrate inner life.

The response to Proust was mixed but rarely indifferent. Some writers feared that such a rich account of inner life would have too strong an influence. "It seems to be a tremendous experience," Woolf wrote to E.M. Forster in 1922, "but I'm shivering on the brink, and waiting to be submerged with a horrid sort of notion that I shall go down and down and down and perhaps never come up again."[56] In 1927, Lawrence summarily dismissed Proust's highly stylized prose: "*Proust* too much water-jelly – I can't read him."[57] Conrad, as with the Russian novelists and Garnett, preferred Moncrieff's translation to the original. He praised Proust for "disclosing a past like no one else's, for enlarging, as it were, the general experience of mankind by bringing it something that has not been recorded before."[58] He also contended that Proust covered some of the same terrain as Freud but "pushed analysis to the point when it becomes creative."[59] Conrad echoed the widely shared view that Proust's magnum opus broke new ground by magnifying and enriching everyday experience.

"For those who began to write at the end of the twenties or the beginning of the thirties," Graham Greene wrote, "there were two great inescapable influences: Proust and Freud, who are mutually complementary."[60] Such was the success of Moncrieff's translation of *La recherche* that, since 1965, his name has been used for the most prestigious annual prize for English-language translators of French literature.

Proust had been strongly influenced in turn by translations into French, in particular George Eliot's novels *Middlemarch* and *The Mill on the Floss*.[61] In *Within a Budding Grove* (original French 1919), Albertine's friend Andrée translates an Eliot novel. From Eliot, Proust learned how to develop a character over a long stretch of time and in the face of severe circumstances and challenges, an approach he applied to everyday events and concerns in his own work. Proust thus took from and gave back to English literature.

The history of Anglo-American modernism is, in part, the history of its translation, promotion, and consecration by French writers. No one did more to create a French reading public for English-language modernists than fellow *passeurs* André Gide and Valery Larbaud. Both Gide and Larbaud saw the translation and promotion of foreign writers as a literary duty and called for every French writer to enrich French literature through translation.[62] They were also both associated with the prestigious literary journal *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (*NRF*), whose companionable group of contributors was frequently likened to the Bloomsbury group. *NRF* editor Jacques Rivière believed that French literature would "seize upon the foreign novel and melt it into its blood."[63] Accordingly, both Larbaud and Gide oversaw and

prefaced countless translations. Gide's translation of Conrad's *Typhoon* was published in 1916. In the reverse direction, James and Lytton Strachey's sister Dorothy Bussy translated into English Gide's voluminous oeuvre, with its frank treatment of homosexual themes.

Larbaud repeatedly drew attention to "the role played by translators in literary history."[64] Like Gide, and in the tradition of Jerome, Larbaud privileged paraphrastic translations, translations loyal to the spirit of the original. Perhaps the most significant struggle of Larbaud's career was his fervent campaign to find both a translator and a publisher for Joyce's *Ulysses*, which Rivière had rejected, deriding it as so much trivial nonsense. Larbaud's encomiastic 1921 lecture at Adrienne Monnier's La Maison des Amis des Livres persuaded Sylvia Beach to publish Joyce's opus. Translated into English by T.S. Eliot for the first issue of *The Criterion*, Larbaud's lecture arguably offered the first significant Joyce criticism in any language. Larbaud believed that *Ulysses* would only improve in translation. It was not an easy task – *Ulysse*, published by Monnier in 1929, was translated by Auguste Morel and Stuart Gilbert and revised by both Joyce and Larbaud.

Like Joyce, Samuel Beckett was a notable *loupé* (missed opportunity) for the *NRF*. His oeuvre exemplifies the struggles and feats of self-translation. In the twenties and thirties he translated professionally both from and into a number of European languages. He was one of the original contributors to the group translation of Joyce's "Anna Livia Plurabelle," a section of the novel that would eventually be titled *Finnegans Wake*, itself a "multilingual architectural feat of total unification."[65] The final translation of "Anna Livia Plurabelle," reworked and completed by Eugène Jolas, Yvan Goll, Adrienne Monnier, Alfred Péron, Philippe Soupault, Paul Léon, and Joyce, was published in the *NRF* in 1931. The lengthy group effort by Joyce's "Septuagint" exceeded the translation of *Ulysses* as a "triumph over seemingly impossible obstacles."[66]

"Anna Livia Plurabelle" sharpened Beckett's skills as a translator into French. For a decade following the Second World War, he wrote almost exclusively in French. During this time Beckett, who rejected any sentimental attachment to his native English, returned to it almost exclusively through self-translation. Unlike Emil Cioran and Vladimir Nabokov, among other writers with bilingual oeuvres, Beckett relished the departure from his native tongue and initially hoped to co-translate his work or else leave it to other translators. In the early fifties, he joined forces with Patrick Bowles, a young South African, to translate *Molloy*. Gravely disappointed with the outcome of their shared effort to create "a new book in a new language," Beckett became his own principal translator *faute de mieux*.[67]

Despite his formidable training, Beckett translated his work with extreme difficulty and undertook many translations after a considerable delay. "Wish I could discover why my cursed prose won't go into English," he complained to Pamela Mitchell.[68] Beckett was quite often dissatisfied with the results of his work. Of his English translation of *Waiting for Godot*, he wrote that if it were not already under contract, he "wouldn't allow it in English at all."[69] Of all the modernists, Beckett best details the arduous labor translation involves. By his own account, his self-translations crippled his productivity and exhausted him. For instance, he struggled for several years with the English translation of *L'Innommable* (*The Unnamable*). "How sick and tired I am of translation," he complained to Thomas MacGreevy in 1957.[70] Beckett nevertheless continued his lifelong project of writing in both French and English and translating from one language into the other. He also meticulously assisted Elmar Tophoven with the German translations of his work. Perhaps with some relief, he deemed untranslatable the short novel *Worstward Ho* (1983), one of his final prose works. His frustration with translation led him, toward the end of his writing life, to a new approach: immediate translation. Beckett avoided the time lag of translation by composing a number of shorter texts almost simultaneously in French and English. Beckett's frustration with translation only led to further innovation.

The status of Beckett's translations depends on norms for translation, norms that change dramatically over time, and from one audience to another. He dispensed radically with any traditional form of equivalence. Overall, his translated works are so different from the originals in both sense and structure that they put any original/translation binary into question. Untranslatable puns and frequent cross-lingual play invite us to consider the French and English versions of a work as two components of one bilingual text. By means of his highly experimental and ludic translations, Beckett ultimately created an oeuvre ideally suited for a bilingual reader who could register the playfulness as well as the violence of his translations.

Later translators followed the trajectories opened by high modernists and continued to recalibrate their approach to translation and their commitment to ever-changing norms for equivalence. The elderly Pound offered unstinting support to translator poets who created translations with aesthetic independence, set original texts in contemporary settings, and dispensed to varying degrees with philological accuracy. These translations include Louis and Celia Zukofsky's homophonic translations of Catullus (1968–69), Marianne Moore's verse translation of the *Fables of La Fontaine* (1954), and translations from several languages by Robert Lowell and Kenneth Rexroth.

The translations are widely divergent in approach but united in continuing two of the fundamental projects of modernism: foiling readerly expectations and demanding new ways of reading.

Notes

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20

Literature Between Media

DAVID TROTTER

"That there should be some significant relation between aesthetic modernism and new media," Michael North remarks, "seems true almost by definition. Modernism, after all, stakes its initial claim to fame on new modes and new methods, innovations so drastic they seem not just to change the old arts but to invent new and unrecognizable ones."[1] The debate about the nature, scope, and extent of the relation between modern literature and modern media, already gaining momentum when North wrote these words, has since become as vigorous as any in the field, its urgency in no way diminished by our own unquenchable enthusiasm for the yet more drastic technological innovations of the digital era. Assessments of the significance of that relation vary, of course. But they rarely depart from the terms of North's argument that aesthetic modernism responded to the proliferation of unrecognizably new media in the period after the end of the First World War by developing unrecognizably new modes and methods in literature and the other arts. The argument has proved immensely productive. But it does not tell the whole story of literature's significant relation to the array of new media that took shape in the period between the world wars. Telling the whole story will require us both to broaden considerably our understanding of the depth and breadth of that array; and to examine once again the strengths and limitations of the concept of aesthetic modernism. In what follows, I confine myself to the part of the story that concerns literature in English.

When literary historians speak of modernism's relation to new media, they usually have one medium in particular in mind: cinema. Nobody could doubt the size of the cultural shadow cast by cinema during the first half of the twentieth century.[2] More often than not, modernist literature's reckoning with that shadow has been described as an exercise in emulation, parallelism, or defensive adjustment. The great majority of the inquiries into modernism and cinema undertaken during the past thirty years have been committed implicitly or explicitly to argument by analogy. The literary text is *structured like a*

film, the argument goes, in whole or in part: It has its "close-ups," its "tracks" and "pans," its "cuts" from one "shot" to another. Thus modernist technique has emulated cinema.[3] Other critics prefer to speak instead of the *parallel* histories of media that evolve separately, but in response to a shared stimulus.[4]

Both these approaches envisage modernism as the means literature (finally) found to embrace the modern. Hugh Kenner once argued that modernist "difficulty" can be understood as literature's attempt to evolve "parallel technologies of its own."[5] If you can't beat them, join them. But such para-technological maneuvers might also – or alternatively – have constituted a *refusal* to embrace the modern: difficulty as a way to remain singular amid general convergence. A point must have come, as Julian Murphet puts it in his challenging account of a "multimedia modernism," when the augmentation of existing arts and media by new communications technologies "assumed something like a critical mass, and (quantity becoming quality) began to be thought of and responded to as an integrated *system*." At that point, it may be, the older arts and media had no choice but to "circle the wagons": to integrate themselves into a competing (and competitively boisterous) system of their own. For Murphet, Wyndham Lewis's *Blast* constitutes a vorticist "membrane" interposed between the new media array and a reconfigured *système des beaux-arts*. Built to resist the stimuli bombarding it from all parts of the universal techno-sphere, the modern work retreats in practice into a coterie-bound performance of the materiality of its own medium and, at the same time, lays expansive theoretical claim to a common idiom of abstraction designed to integrate it into a new synthesis.[6] Thinking along roughly similar lines, Mark Wollaeger has described the evolution of a dialectic or "cultural agon" between literary modernism and the multimedia "ecology" or "environment" established by First World War British propaganda.[7] Counter-bombardment, if not wagon circling, was very much the order of the day in 1914.

Oddly enough, given the emphasis they both place on system, ecology, and environment, the cultural agons Murphet, Wollaeger, and others have chosen to explore more often than not involve a single writer and a single medium. Foremost among the examples Wollaeger proposes is Ford Madox Ford's engrossingly duplicitous *The Good Soldier* (1915), its impressionism the other side of the coin to the lies propagated by the popular patriotic press.[8] Foremost among Murphet's are Gertrude Stein's word-portraits of Matisse and Picasso, first published in Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Work* in 1912, understood as a response to the crisis of representation brought about by photography; and the "chiasmic" relation of Ezra Pound's imagist poems to the montage effects prominent in early Biograph films by D.W. Griffith.[9] Taken

as a whole, the scholarship on modernism and new media has given us substantial reason to suppose that modernist literary experiment was in significant measure the product of a series of agonistic encounters between a writer and a medium (usually cinema): the medium's specific newness provoking further – correlated – specific newness in literature.

The historiographical pattern revealed by this brief initial survey has considerable implications for the approach it has hitherto been possible to take to literature's encounter with new media. For the most part, the spotlight has fallen on canonical writers: e.e. cummings, H.D., John Dos Passos, T.S. Eliot, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Lewis, Marianne Moore, Pound, Dorothy Richardson, Stein, William Carlos Williams, Virginia Woolf, Louis Zukofsky. That, perhaps, is to be expected. Of greater consequence has been the weighting of critical attention toward earlier canonical works, especially where European writers are concerned: *Ulysses* (1922) rather than *Finnegans Wake* (1939); *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) rather than *Between the Acts* (1941). The newness provoked in literature by the new medium of cinema has very largely been understood as a newness provoked by the new (for a while) medium of *silent* cinema.[10] Critics have tended to correlate modernist literature's newness with the newness of a set of techniques – montage, above all, but also close-ups, pans and tracks, and so on – manifest in European and American cinema long before the arrival of synchronized sound in 1927.[11] Where American writers are concerned, one might expect a different weighting of attention. The long shadow cast by Hollywood as institution, symptom, and occasional workplace has ensured a full account of the cinematic propensities of American fiction of the 1930s in particular.[12] Even here, however, the tendency has been to trace the origins of an engagement with cinema back to the early 1920s (or in some cases to before the First World War). Study after study, often supported by evidence from contemporary letters, essays, and reviews, treats the cinematic dimension of 1930s American literature as primarily a *visual* dimension: a new way of seeing through words. Writers, it would seem, did not go to the movies in order to learn how people speak, or what a floor sounds like when someone walks across it. Griffith, Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov are the directors thought to have mattered most to modernists, before *and after* the arrival of sound. When Julian Murphet speaks of Zukofsky's "putting of literature to film school," the school he has in mind is that of Soviet montage aesthetics (a school already attended, with evident enthusiasm, by Dos Passos).[13] Charlie Chaplin, who stubbornly went on making silent films well into the sound era, did not thereby sacrifice his iconic status in avant-garde circles.

Despite some recent critical attention to the media of sound within modernism, where the agonistic model of interaction remains strongly in play, it wouldn't be too much of an exaggeration to say that the story hitherto told concerning modernism and new media has been a story concerning modernism and silent cinema.[14] By no means the least virtue of Andrew Shail's *The Cinema and the Origins of Literary Modernism* is that, while making no bones about such a concentration of focus, it vigorously scouts an alternative to the agonistic model. For Shail, the revolution of the word arose out of, and did not outlast, the turn from the early cinema of attractions to the development of cinema as an art of narrative integration in the period before, during, and after the First World War. What mattered most, until the arrival of sound in 1927, was not cinema's agon-inducing formal properties, but its articulation, as a preeminent mode of "empirical thought," of ideas concerning language, time, and consciousness that also took shape during the same period in popular philosophy, crowd-theory, government propaganda, and so on. The emphasis remains on literary experiment conducted under pressure from the sudden apparent ubiquity of a new medium (or in this case an old medium put to new uses). But while others ponder intermedial shields, membranes, and coins, Shail characterizes the cinema of narrative integration as one among several elements constituting literary modernism's "cultural furniture."[15] Although not especially informative in itself, the metaphor indicates the need, when speaking of cinema, for a notion of "media environment" comparable to that proposed by Wollaeger when speaking of propaganda. That need becomes paramount once we begin to take proper account not just of the proliferation of new media from the late 1920s onward, but of the competition provoked between them by their ever-increasing efficiency, ease of use, and glamour.

Sound cinema, for a start, was pretty much a whole media environment in itself. The transition to sound in cinema had been made possible by advances in microphony themselves driven by the requirements of the radio and phonograph industries. Synchronous sound was not just an additional feature, or supplement. As Charles O'Brien observes, it "wholly transformed the phenomenology of film." He continues:

> Although attempts to link motion pictures and phonographs dated from the late nineteenth century, the new sound films, with their powerful electronic amplification and, in the case of films with optical soundtracks, their lock-tight synchronization, impressed viewers as absolutely novel. Essential in this regard was the strong sense of the clarity and immediacy of actors' performances enabled by electronic sound recording and reproduction, with its vastly expanded frequency range.[16]

So compelling was the requirement for clarity and immediacy that the big Hollywood studios marketed film as a technological complement to radio, at least, if not telephony. As Paul Young observes, advertising for the rival processes (Warners' Vitaphone, Fox's Movietone, RCA's Photophone) "encouraged the public to consume sync sound films in terms of the technologies of recording and amplification that made telephony, phonography, and radio possible." Hollywood, Young continues, wrapped its experiments in talkativeness in the "aura" of radio.[17] Sound cinema struck its initial audiences not just as a combination of media, but as a combination of media based on entirely different principles and methods: the representation in public of images captured somewhere else at some other time (silent narrative cinema); and the direct broadcast in real time to individual listeners in the privacy of their own homes of live news and entertainment (radio).

The paradigm of an agonistic encounter between writer and medium has consistently illuminated high modernist practice. But it will not do once we get to 1927. By this time, the potential of at least two new inventions – telephony and television – had become hard to ignore, and this joint force was added to the expanding powers of the rotary press, film, and radio.[18] One reason to describe the period between the world wars as the first "media age" is the evolution at that time of a widespread awareness of the multiple coexistence of mass media: some old, some reconfigured, some new, some barely conceivable.[19] Mark Goble thus argues convincingly both that modernism "desired communication" – as a way to insist that the "power of media technologies" was already its own – and that modernism's desire for communication differs from the "still more delirious and visceral experiences of technology," which new media theorists have understood as central to the practices of a convergent digital culture.[20] The difference lies, of course, in the emergence of the computer as a "universal media machine," in Lev Manovich's phrase, that converts "all cultural categories and concepts" into algorithm.[21] What will concern me here, as distinct both from high modernist agon and from postmodern (or post-postmodern) delirium, is not literature's relation to a medium, but its relation to the relation between media.

The Uses of Media

The rivalry between media that has most fully absorbed the attention of media and literary theorists alike is that between old and new. But there was, and still is, something else going on in the rapidly evolving media environment: a further rivalry as likely to set old against old and new against new as

old against new. That further rivalry has always had to do with the political and aesthetic principles or values that, at any given historical moment, the different social, economic, and cultural functions of particular media could be understood to articulate. We need to define those values and principles in terms other than "old" and "new." There is a useful though by no means absolute distinction to be made, where the uses of media are concerned, between the representational and the connective.

Representational media attract the "-graphy" suffix. They involve the storage and deferred release of information: that is, a *writing* in light, in sound, in movement. The record (the writing in light, sound, or movement) makes the image or sound originally captured at another time in another place *present again*, as we watch or listen. The axiom of representational media might be: two places at two times (the place where the image once left its imprint on emulsion, or wax, and the place where it has now been projected). The principle or value articulated by representational media arises out of that double removal in time and space. Representational media, it could be said, enable us to reflect upon a reflection of our world. The axiom of connective (or "tele-") media, by contrast, is two places at one time. Their primary emphasis has always been on instantaneous, real-time, and if at all possible interactive one-to-one communication at a distance. Digitalization has of course hugely enhanced the scope of connective media. Connectivity, too, can be understood as a principle or value. Its promise of flexible efficiency produces that close alignment of technique and technology – of what people know how to do and what they are able to do – fundamental to both industrial and post-industrial societies. In such societies, representational media, whether old or new, find themselves called upon to reinstitute an element of slack between technique and technology: a space for reflection upon reflection.

Of course, the distinction between representational and connective media should not be drawn in absolute terms. Representational media connect, after a fashion, while connective media offer, as Lisa Gitelman puts it, "keenly persuasive representations of text, space/time, and human presence."[22] It is a matter of emphasis; or, rather, of the ways in which a particular medium has been defined and put to use in a particular place at a particular time. No medium has remained wholly representational or wholly connective in definition and use throughout its history. But the distinction between emphases will nonetheless help us to establish the nature and scope of the principles or values articulated by the use to which a particular medium has been put in a particular place at a particular time.

Literature's relation to media has often most instructively been a relation to the relation established, at a given historical moment, by the unceasing rivalry between media technologies and institutions.

One text caught up equally in discussions of literature's relation to media and in discussions of what modernism had come to by the end of the 1930s is Virginia Woolf's last novel, *Between the Acts*, published posthumously in 1941. The novel's incorporation as its main event of a performance of a traditional (or neotraditional) pageant-play has understandably raised questions concerning the attitude it might be thought to express toward modernity. Jed Esty has argued persuasively for an "anthropological" or "cultural" turn in late 1930s English writing, which gave rise to a "redemptive discourse of Anglocentrism." By that turn, English modernism, projecting the "reintegration of art and culture" through an inquiry into "shared rituals and traditions," became something else altogether.[23] In the particular instance of *Between the Acts*, however, fantasies of reversion compete with fantasies concerning new media. The text's hesitation between old and new makes it an important example for any argument concerning literature's relation to media. The most colorful personality in the neotraditional pageant-play that occupies much of *Between the Acts* is a fully functioning, state-of-the-art gramophone. Esty points out that by revising her characteristic "narration of consciousness" so as to incorporate gramophone speeches as well as the "collective discourse" of the audience's critical commentary on the play, Woolf addressed the "two great challenges to the liberal/modernist subject in 1930s culture: the machine and the masses."[24] Backwards is by no means the only direction of travel in *Between the Acts*. To what extent, then, did an awareness of the machine – of the whole new media array – inflect English modernism's anthropological turn?

For the most part, studies of the representation of media in *Between the Acts* have stuck to the agonistic model, seeking out evidence of the "impress" made by the mechanical reproduction of sound on the novel's style and substance.[25] Woolf, however, allows not just for communication by means of a variety of media, but for a fundamental difference in the uses to which such media had begun to be put in Britain in the 1930s. This difference is visible in the heightened attention the novelist gives to the various channels and types of communication between characters.

After breakfast on the morning of the pageant-play, the nurses Amy and Mabel trundle the perambulator containing young Caro Oliver along the terrace: "and as they trundled they were talking – not shaping pellets of information or handing ideas from one to another, but rolling words, like sweets on

their tongues; which, as they thinned to transparency, gave off pink, green, and sweetness."[26] Woolf goes out of her way to explain how Amy and Mabel do and do not communicate. The nurses use language to express or represent themselves to each other, giving off sweetness. Giving off sweetness is what Woolf wants on this occasion to catch them at. But she knows, too, that people as often communicate for the purpose of conveying "pellets of information" as they do for the purpose of giving off sweetness. Novels of the kind she wrote give off sweetness in the act of representing sweetness given off. The modernism is in the sweetness: the taste of the literary word rolled on the writer's tongue is intended not just to approximate, but to out-perform, the sensation it describes. This is not to say, however, that such novels remain oblivious to the other uses to which people regularly put language. Isa Oliver's first significant act on the morning of the pageant-play is to ring the fishmonger to order a consignment of filleted sole for lunch (*BTA*, 15). It is not just the pieces of fish, but the words summoning them, that have been filleted. The efficient conveyance of messages of this kind was what the telephone was supposed to be for in Britain in the 1930s. Telephony had not yet been fully invented as a social medium: except, perhaps, in literature. Writers made something of a cult of the kinds of intimacy at a distance telephony made possible for its more imaginative or more worldly-wise exponents – sexual intimacy among them.[27] So it quite possibly isn't by chance that the last thing Isa does before phoning the fishmonger is to indulge the feelings aroused in her the previous night by the physical presence of a neighboring "gentleman farmer" (7). She fervidly imagines this erotic connection to "lie between them like a wire, tingling, tangling, vibrating" (15): as indeed it would tingle, tangle, and vibrate, were her first call of the day to be to the farm along the road rather than to the fishmonger.

The first use to which sound technology is put in *Between the Acts*, then, is connective rather than representational. Thereafter, the pellets of information continue to fly, some of them dispensed by a medium whose significance in the novel Karin Westman has rightly reminded us of: the newspaper.[28] This, too, as Woolf conceives it, is primarily a connective medium.

> "The forecast," said Mr Oliver, turning the pages till he found it, "says: Variable winds; fair average temperature; rain at times."
>
> He put down the paper, and they all looked at the sky to see whether the sky obeyed the meteorologist. Certainly the weather was variable.   (*BTA*, 20)

It's noticeable that, when confronted by the spectacle of someone dispensing mediated pellets of information, Woolf should once again dispense some

pellets of her own, by means of deadpan narrative description, as she had done previously when rendering Isa's phone-call to the fishmonger. This novel will do something other than, or as well as, give off modernist sweetness.

Further, by Woolf's account of mediation, what has been mediated once can always be remediated. Isa, in the library, reading a story in the *Times* about a young woman raped by soldiers in a barrack room, projects a little film.

> That was real; so real that on the mahogany door panels she saw the Arch in Whitehall; through the Arch the barrack room; in the barrack room the bed, and on the bed the girl was screaming and hitting him about the face, when the door (for in fact it was a door) opened and in came Mrs Swithin carrying a hammer. (*BTA*, 19)

The story of the rape ran in the *Times* in June and July 1938.[29] Representing the newspaper's pellet of information as though it were a film, Isa in some measure represents (or speaks for) the young woman. At the very least, she has created a space for reflection upon the fantasy so vividly "reflected" on the screen of the mahogany door panels. The representation remains with her while Lucy and Bart consult the newspaper, as they routinely do, for pellets of information concerning the weather (20). *Between the Acts* re-asserts the value of representation (of experiencing again, at a distance, what might once have been experienced) against the value of connectivity (of being instantly in the know). No representation of a world always already there, literature exists as a relation to the relation between media, between newspaper and cinema.

Throughout *Between the Acts*, Woolf distinguishes carefully between media used primarily to represent (pageant-play, gramophone, literature) and media used primarily to connect (telephone, newspaper). "The gramophone, while the scene was removed, gently stated certain facts which everybody knows to be perfectly true." This statement, however – like the scenes that precede and follow it, but unlike a telephone order or a weather forecast – is the representation of a feeling. It is understood as such by some members of the audience, if not all. "The tune said, more or less, how Eve, gathering her robes about her, stands reluctant to let her dewy mantle fall" (*BTA*, 95). Less rather than more would appear to be the audience's verdict where the play itself is concerned. Nobody quite knows what the tune said. Representation always fails, in some measure. That the play's director, Miss La Trobe, is modernist enough to understand that representation always fails in some

measure we might deduce from her attempt to conjure up the "present day" in its final scene, when the cast turn fragments of mirror to face the audience. "Here," Esty notes, "Woolf and her authorial surrogate confront a representational crisis that is both *in* and *of* the novel: the problem of rendering the community to the community, of performing an anthropology of the here and now."[30] The Reverend G.W. Streatfield's concluding remarks are conclusive primarily in their failure to discern the "producer's intention" (*BTA*, 134). In this respect, Woolf's novel resembles Miss La Trobe's pageant-play. All its representations have failed knowingly, from Isa's vision of the young woman in the barrack room – interrupted when the door opens to reveal Miss Swithin carrying a hammer – onward. We can assume that they will continue to fail.

Representational crisis was the making of modernism, its signature and its great subject matter. By the end of the 1930s, however, the "crisis of representation" was itself in crisis. It had gone on for too long. Worse than that, it could go on for ever, in its own endlessly absorbing terms, and still have nothing to say to a world being transformed in the image of connectivity. The novel's most provocative moment is also its most banal, its least formally innovative: the weary refrain that greets the knowledge that the pageant is over and done with, for another year at least. "Tomorrow the telephone would ring: 'Did I leave my handbag? . . . A pair of spectacles in a red leather case? . . . A little old brooch of no value to anyone but me?' Tomorrow the telephone would ring" (*BTA*, 140). Connectivity resumes. Pellets of information are dispensed. The light breeze which the meteorologist had foretold flutters Mrs. Manresa's skirt as she departs (140). If Isa were in any number of other 1930s novels, and in a sense she is, she would get on the phone right away to the gentleman farmer, to ask whether the pair of spectacles in a red leather case belonged to him. It's often been said that *Between the Acts* positions itself not merely between the acts of a play, but between principles that are at once political and aesthetic: between narration and performance, between mediated and unmediated representation. It might be truer to say that it positions itself, in a place more awkward still than modernism, between the different uses to which media can be put: between representation and connectivity.

I have chosen to concentrate on a text written at what is usually understood to constitute modernism's historical limit. But literature had been finding itself between media – between the uses to which media can be put – since the late 1920s. To acknowledge as much is to open up a new perspective on some of the most pressing concerns of a historically inflected

modernist studies. Take, for example, the Harlem Renaissance "passing" novel and its vivid staging of performative identity. Much has rightly been made of the importance of looking and being looked at in such novels.[31] Cinema certainly had a part to play in the exercise of the gaze in passing. In Jessie Redmon Fauset's *Plum Bun* (1928), for example, Angela Murray moves from Philadelphia to New York, where she will change her name and pass as white, in order to pursue her artistic ambitions. She starts to experience film differently: "she found herself studying the screen with a strained and ardent intensity, losing the slight patronizing skepticism which had once been hers with regard to the adventures of those shadowy heroes and heroines; so utterly unforeseen a turn had her own experiences taken."[32] According to David Seed, Angela has through this loss of skepticism reinvented herself as a different kind of spectator.[33] Fauset, however, imagines her poised on "the threshold of a career totally different from anything that a scenario writer could envisage" (*PB*, 92). Looking at films, and being looked at as though one were in a film, will not be enough fully to establish that difference. Angela, in fact, already knows that there is another and perhaps more effective way to pass. Her experience growing up in Philadelphia had taught her that nothing disguises race quite like the telephone used skillfully (59, 73–74); in New York, her relationship with a wealthy (and racist) white lover is conducted largely by means of the telephone (120, 146–47). Telephony becomes the very medium of passing. It is not just the novel, but social, sexual, and racial identity, that finds itself between media.

Emergent Media

Media take shape slowly, over time, and in accordance with purposes and meanings contingently attributed to them. Radio, for example, began as a connective medium enabling instantaneous, real-time, one-to-one telegraphic communication, most often between ship and ship, or ship and shore. It did not establish itself as a broadcast medium until the early 1920s. Even then, while amply representing the world through reportage, chronicle, and fiction, it retained its connective credentials. Like telephony, radio appeared to speak directly to the individual listener in her or his own home. "Listening in" became the term for such absorption. Since literature's business is with the processes by which purpose and meaning are attributed, it is no surprise that the new telecommunications media that turn up in the novels, poems, and plays of the period sometimes display an indeterminacy since then overlain by habitual use. Television, for example.

The patents for the first workable television system had been filed in 1884. The "Nipkow disk," a mechanical scanning system that transmitted live images over a short distance, was to shape the development of television into the 1930s. By 1925, C. Francis Jenkins, in America, and John Logie Baird, in Britain, were both claiming dramatic success in their attempts to "see by wireless." In 1927, AT&T went public with its long-distance television system, relaying images over phone lines at the rate of eighteen frames a second.[34] Baird's "televisor" went on the market in Britain in September 1928. His Television Development Company first broadcast experimentally from a studio in Long Acre on September 30, 1929, transmitting sound and pictures alternately in two-minute bursts to a grand total of around thirty viewers.[35] The "picture," on this occasion, was a silhouette the size of a saucer. The first fully fledged BBC broadcast took place on August 22, 1932. Regular coverage of state, sporting, and other events began on November 2, 1936. By that time, cathode-ray technology was producing a higher-definition image than anything mechanical systems could achieve. But the new excellence did not get the chance to establish itself. On September 1, 1939, the BBC's television service was suspended due to the outbreak of war. There were fears that the transmissions might guide enemy bombers to the center of London.

Television eventually became television when it started to mean broadcast news and entertainment. The fact that viewers could by that time actually see what they were looking at mattered less than the fact that they now knew what it meant: which, with sharp variations in content and format, and a massive surge in additional providers, is more or less what it means today. But it was not always so. The initial promotion of television as a radio for the eyes, broadcasting news and entertainment in formats more or less indistinguishable from cinema, did not for some time altogether obscure its potential as a kind of "visio-telephone": a medium of instantaneous, real-time, one-to-one communication at a distance. Television did not so much promise instantaneity as *enact* it.[36] Dynamic becoming, incomplete, without precedent, was television's signature. Television, like radio, came to be understood, when it was understood at all, primarily in terms of its distinctive *liveness*.

No wonder, then, that it was initially conceived as a way to connect as well as, or rather than, to represent. When Baird first marketed his "televisor" sets in September 1928, nobody knew what they were *for*. Earlier that year, visitors to the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia had been able to inspect a house containing a similar device positioned not in the living-room, as we might now expect, but in the study, where it keeps company with the

electronic regalia appropriate to a titan of finance: wireless transmitter and receiver, tele-text machine, and so on.[37] To the designer of this particular Ideal Home, television meant business rather than pleasure. It meant narrow-cast (one-to-one) rather than broad-cast (one-to-many) communication. And it meant purposeful interactivity, rather than couch-potato indolence.

Baird hedged his bets. The televisor was a window on the world. It showed actual events at the moment of their occurrence. But it also provided the kind of intimate contact at a distance that had hitherto been the preserve of the telephone, the first fully accessible, interactive, real-time telecommunications medium. "Practical television is here!" the Television Development Company announced in August 1928. Their new "dual receiving apparatus and televisor" would be on view for the first time at the Radio Exhibition at Olympia from September 22 to 29. "The Baird Televisor will show, on your screen, the head and shoulders of the person being transmitted and give a living picture with perfect synchronism of movement and sound."[38] From the outset, then, Baird's "seeing in" set was advertised as an improvement on radio's "listening in" equivalent as a live broadcasting medium. "We can all imagine for ourselves," the advertisements prompted,

> that the day cannot be far distant when, without leaving our chairs at home, we shall be able to see Ascot in all its excitement and glory, or a Test Match at Lord's (or at Sydney, for that matter) – see, that is, the actual events themselves at the moment of their occurrence, not just moving photographs of them some time afterwards.

Television was an "instantaneous process" not to be confused with "photo-telegraphy," the mechanical reproduction of photographs and other records transmitted from a distance. There would be no harm done, however, the advertisers evidently felt, by confusing it with connectivity's benchmark medium, the telephone. The Baird Televisor, we learn, carries sight across thousands of miles of space, "enabling distant events to be witnessed, at the moment of their occurrence, as easily as distant sound is heard by means of wireless telephony."[39] Instantaneity was all. The advent of the Televisor constituted a watershed as momentous as the advent of sound in cinema the previous year, though a good deal less remarked on.

For a while after it arrived, nobody seemed to know what the new medium meant, but that interval of uncertainty saw the publication of a story which makes its rawness palpable. *The Television Girl* (1928), by Gertie de S. Wentworth-James, the veteran author of vaguely mystical romances, features

a fabulously authoritative and up-to-date osteopath who in best Ideal Home style has installed all the latest gadgets in his spacious bachelor apartment, including a "Blair" (that is, Baird) televisor. This device is a telephone with a screen.

> The osteopath went across to the side of the room where, standing on what looked like a large walnut box with a ground glass front (the Blair televisor) was the phone.
> He sat down and took off the receiver in the usual way, then, almost immediately there appeared on the receiving screen the face of the operator (so far, Piccadilly Exchange was not automatic).

A wrong number fortuitously connects the osteopath to his "television girl," and it is love at first sight. But this is not love at first sight as it might have been imagined in a medieval romance or a troubadour song. For a relationship begun by television is thereafter for quite a while conducted solely by that means. The lovers develop a "televisor playfulness" that takes them and their feelings for each other in unexpected directions.[40] Online works better for romance than offline, is the message. As we have seen, such risky playfulness was regarded as one of the most important consequences of telephony's slow transformation, from the late 1920s onward, into a social medium. Where texts such as *The Television Girl* are concerned, literature's relation is not to the relation between different media, but to the relation between different uses of the same medium.

When media "emerge" – that is, take shape in public consciousness – they often do so by means of technical or quasi-technical vocabulary ("televisor," and all that). Description brings them into being. A literature alert to vocabulary in general was never likely to pass up the opportunity provided by Baird and his fellow-inventors. James Joyce, mopping up new media terms, thereby witnessed a conflict over definition and use. "Television kills telephony in brothers' broil," *Finnegans Wake* declares. "Our eyes demand their turn." In *Finnegans Wake*, II.3, a scene from the Crimean War floods the "bairdboard bombardment screen" set up in Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker's Dublin pub with an immediacy beyond the power of cinema.[41] *Finnegans Wake* has been said to belong to the prehistory not just of television, but of cyberspace and virtual reality, as "the unacknowledged basis for our thinking about technoculture."[42] The more plausible assumption might be that Joyce kept himself informed concerning the analog technologies of his day. There was certainly no shortage of popular scientific explanation in newspapers and magazines.[43] When Joyce termed the "bairdboard" televisor screen a "bombardment" screen, he knew

what he was talking about. "Down the photoslope in syncopanc pulses" stream the light brigade at Balaclava, and the electrons in a cathode-ray tube, in each case "borne by their carnier walve." In televisor set and valley of the shadow of death alike, "the scanning firespot of the sgunners traverses the rutilanced illustred sunksundered lines" (FW, 349). Given his enduring interest in "verbivocovisual" presentation (341), it's not unlikely that Joyce thought of the printed page as a kind of bombardment screen – and not at all in the way that Wyndham Lewis had done in the years immediately before a previous world war. The words at the *Wake*, each one forever incomplete in itself, aspire to "become dynamically" as they are read. An incessant excitation, at which we are perceptually present, has superseded written text understood as the historical expression of thoughts that took shape somewhere else at some other time. That is just about as close to televisual connectivity as the literature of the period was to get.

Literature may well have found ways other than the ones described above to get between media in the years after 1927. None of these efforts is likely to have a great deal of light thrown on it by the agonistic model of modernism – innovation met by innovation – that has proved so successful in illuminating some of the more remarkable encounters between literature and media in the years before 1927. After 1927, literature's relation was necessarily to the relation between media; or, rather, to the relation between the uses to which media might be put. I have argued that the specific relation established in texts like *Between the Acts*, *Plum Bun*, and *Finnegans Wake* lays bare a distinction between representational and connective uses of media which continues to this day to inform our understanding of what, in the end, such devices are *for*. It remains to be seen whether a more expansive definition of modernism as a special self-consciousness in art about the conditions of its own historical present will further illuminate that relation.

Notes

1 Michael North, *Camera Works: Photography and the Twentieth-Century Word* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), v.

2 Laura Marcus, *The Tenth Muse: Writing about Cinema in the Modernist Period* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

3 Susan McCabe, *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

4 See Garrett Stewart, *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis* (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 266. See also David Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).

5 Hugh Kenner, *The Mechanic Muse* (New York and Oxford University Press, 1987), 10. See also Sara Danius, *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

6 Julian Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism: Literature and the Anglo-American Avant-Garde* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 15, 123–65.

7 Mark Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900 to 1945* (Princeton University Press, 2006).

8 Ibid., 129.

9 Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism*, 61–79, 110–22.

10 Michael North ably describes the consternation caused in avant-garde circles, and in particular to contributors to *Close Up*, the first British journal of film theory, by sound cinema: *Camera Works*, 83–105.

11 For Michael Wood, the "principle of montage" is "quintessentially modernist": "Modernism and Film," in Michael Levenson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 217–32 (at 222–23).

12 David Seed, *Cinematic Fictions: The Impact of the Cinema on the American Novel in the Twentieth Century* (Liverpool University Press, 2009).

13 Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism*, 183. When Susan McCabe concludes that Stein, Williams, H.D., and Moore were attracted to the "most cutting-edge medium of the age," the medium she has in mind, even when considering work written after 1927, is silent cinema: *Cinematic Modernism*, 231. David Seed describes Faulkner's 1930s novels as novels made not just for the eye, but for the cinematically trained eye. These are texts which conduct the "reader's visual attention" by montage, changes of shot-scale, and so on: *Cinematic Fictions*, 116.

14 Douglas Kahn, *Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), provided the major stimulus to the new interest in sound media. The agonistic model informs much of the most lively recent criticism along these lines. See, for example, Pamela L. Caughie, "Virginia Woolf: Radio, Gramophone, Broadcasting," in Maggie Humm (ed.), *The Edinburgh Companion to Virginia Woolf and the Arts* (Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 332–47; and Debra Rae Cohen, Michael Coyle, and Jane Lewty (eds.), *Broadcasting Modernism* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009).

15 Andrew Shail, *Cinema and the Origins of Literary Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2012), 93, 196.

16 Charles O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 3. See also James Lastra, *Sound Technology and the American Cinema: Perception, Representation, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

17 Paul Young, *The Cinema Dreams Its Rivals: Media Fantasy Films from Radio to the Internet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 88–91 (at 88). For a discussion of film as radio and film as phonography at this time, see Rick

Altman, "Introduction: Sound/History," in Altman (ed.), *Sound Theory/Sound Practice* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 113–25.

18 See William Uricchio, "Historicizing Media in Transition," in David Thorburn and Henry Jenkins (eds.), *Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 23–38 (at 26).

19 David Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

20 Mark Goble, *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 3, 8.

21 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 47. William Uricchio describes this moment of development as the "digital" or "algorithmic" turn: "The Algorithmic Turn: Photosynth, Augmented Reality and the Changing Implications of the Image," *Visual Studies*, 26/1 (2011), 25–35.

22 Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 4.

23 Joshua Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* (Princeton University Press, 2004), 10, 12, 88–90. For intriguing variations on the theme of reversion, see Marina MacKay, *Modernism and World War II* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 22–43; and Sam See, "The Comedy of Nature: Darwinian Feminism in Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts*," *Modernism/Modernity*, 17/3 (2010), 639–67.

24 Esty, *Shrinking Island*, 101.

25 Michele Pridmore-Brown, "Of Virginia Woolf, Gramophones, and Fascism," *PMLA*, 113/3 (1998), 408–21 (at 412). See also Melba Cuddy-Keane, "Virginia Woolf, Sound Technologies, and the New Aurality," in Pamela L. Caughie (ed.), *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Garland, 2000), 69–96 (at 75, 90–93); and Bonnie Kime Scott, "The Subversive Mechanics of Woolf's Gramophone in *Between the Acts*," in Caughie (ed.), *Virginia Woolf*, 97–113.

26 Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1953), 11. Henceforth *BTA*.

27 For a full account both of campaigns to promote telephone use, and of the uses to which it is put in the fiction of the period, see Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age*, 38–85.

28 Karin E. Westman, "'For Her Generation the Newspaper Was a Book': Media, Mediation, and Oscillation in Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts*," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 29/2 (2006), 1–18.

29 Stuart N. Clarke, "The Horse with the Green Tail," *Virginia Woolf Miscellany*, 34 (1990), 3–4.

30 Esty, *Shrinking Island*, 93.

31 Lori Harrison-Kahan, "Her 'Nig': Returning the Gaze of Nella Larsen's *Passing*," *Modern Language Studies*, 32/2 (2002), 109–38.

32 Jessie Redmon Fauset, *Plum Bun: A Novel Without a Moral* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 91–92. Henceforth *PB*.

33 Seed, *Cinematic Fictions*, 221.

34 Donald Crafton, "Mindshare: Telephone and Radio Compete for the Talkies," in John Fullerton and Jan Olsson (eds.), *Allegories of Communication: Intermedial Concerns from Cinema to the Digital* (Rome: John Libbey, 2004), 141–56 (at 150–51).

35 "Television," *Times*, October 1, 1929, 26.

36 For the "real-time" element in television, see David Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 135–37.

37 "The House of the Future," *Illustrated London News*, February 18, 1928, 258–59.

38 "Practical Television Is Here!" *Times*, August 4, 1928, 4.

39 "Television for All," *Times*, June 22, 1928, 23.

40 Gertie de S. Wentworth-James, *The Television Girl: A Novel* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1928), 12–13, 66.

41 James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (London: Faber, 1968), 52, 349. Henceforth *FW*. On *Finnegans Wake* between media, see Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age*, 12–13, 166–68.

42 Donald F. Theall, "Beyond the Orality/Literacy Dichotomy: James Joyce & the Pre-History of Cyberspace," in David Vichnar and Louis Armand (eds.), *Hypermedia Joyce* (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2010), 17–34 (at 17).

43 For example, "The Technique of Television: A New Scientific 'Miracle' Enabling Fireside 'Telescanners' to See Distant Events," *Illustrated London News*, February 23, 1935, 306–07.

Art and its Others 1: The Aesthetics of Technology

NICHOLAS DALY
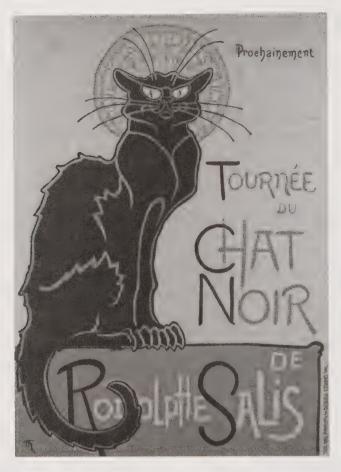
Modernism first emerged during the transformations of time and space wrought by the age of steam, and it came to dominance against the background of the "Second Industrial Revolution." This revolution, which was really more of an intensification of earlier processes, was driven by, inter alia, the exploitation of electricity and the internal combustion engine, the use of early plastics (celluloid, and later Bakelite), the oneiric power of the cinematograph, the sound-reproduction technology of the phonograph, and the communications technologies of the telephone, and later the radio. In theoretical terms one could argue that there is no space between the aesthetics of modernism and these technological shifts: they are bound together in a common culture. But for practical purposes we can describe a set of relations between the two: modernism incorporated technological change as historical content; it appropriated new representational means for its own artistic practices; and at times it self-consciously drew on the machine world for aesthetic models. The flurry of innovation in mechanical reproduction, that is to say, in technologies of communication and representation, brought the materiality of older media into sharp contrasting focus.[1] For some, of course, the era of mechanical reproduction appeared to undermine lingering conceptions of the artist as romantic creator, or as bohemian rebel. Further, modernism entered its mature phase during the industrialized slaughter of the First World War, and was imbued with an awareness of the lethal potential of modern technology and of the fragility of the human body. Keeping such factors in mind, in this chapter I will consider, among other things, the new cultural forms that were directly made possible by technology; the way in which human–machine relations were imagined in these years; and the development of "machine" aesthetics.

Modalities of the Visible

In the visual field, the potential of reproductive technologies emerged in commercial art before fine art, and some of the most powerful images of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are the chromolithographic advertising posters of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Pierre Bonnard, Théophile Steinlen, and Leonetto Cappiello. Color lithography had, in fact, been around for quite some time, but it is only at the end of the century that its potential for advertising was realized, and bold, eye-catching ads were part of the transformation of the visual culture of everyday urban life.[2] Among the most iconic of these images are Steinlen's poster for the Chat Noir Cabaret, and Toulouse-Lautrec's for the Moulin Rouge and Les Ambassadeurs. The artists exploit chromolithography's effectiveness in reproducing blocks of two or three vivid colors, while deploying the flattened perspective learned from Japanese prints. Subsequent post-impressionist art would draw on both of these techniques, while the fledgling science of advertising learned lessons about how to engineer attention, and how to make a lasting impression on the consumer.

Arriving at roughly the same time as the modern poster boom, the cinematograph was to have an even more powerful effect on the visual field.[3] The development of motion-picture technologies by the Lumières, R.W. Paul, Thomas Edison, and others depended on advances in camera technology, but also on the exploitation of the first real plastic polymer, celluloid. Invented in 1862, it was only in the 1880s that celluloid was used to replace glass plates in photography; and in the 1890s, it provided the flexible film stock for the first moving pictures. Unlike other Second Industrial Revolution machines, the cinema could produce self-conscious narratives about its own impact: R.W. Paul's *The Countryman's First Sight of the Animated Pictures* (1901) is a well-known example, dramatizing the consternation of a naïve viewer who takes the moving image for reality. While some pioneers used cinema to defamiliarize everyday space, Georges Méliès, a former magician, showed that the cinema had its own magic, and that it could be used to produce wholly imaginary landscapes and fantastic voyages. Both approaches are captured in Walter Benjamin's account of the cinema as bursting asunder the "prison-world" of space with "the dynamite of the tenth of a second."[4]

As cinema developed in the 1910s through the Italian "super-films" (e.g., Giovanni Pastrone's *Cabiria*, 1914), and D.W. Griffith's epic features, a filmic grammar developed around such features as the use of close-ups, medium

21.1 Commercial art, fine art: Steinlen's poster for the Chat Noir Cabaret.

and long shots, tracking shots, point of view, and continuity montage. The unique role of montage in particular was seized upon by the pioneers of modernist filmmaking, including Fritz Lang, Sergei Eisenstein, Lev Kuleshov, Dziga Vertov, Luis Buñuel, and Man Ray. Not only could a new imaginary space be constructed by cutting from one shot to another, but a whole range of emotional and intellectual effects could be created in the mind of the viewer. Eisenstein theorized that cutting could be "dialectic," that is, that complex ideas could be evoked by cutting from one shot to something very different to suggest their metaphorical linkage. Buñuel, collaborating with Salvador Dalí, harnessed these techniques for surrealism, creating startling

juxtapositions and shocking close-ups: the intercutting of clouds passing across the moon with the apparent slitting of a woman's eyeball in the opening sequence of *Un chien andalou* (1929) is an infamous example.

Motion pictures helped artists to understand the specificity of photography as a practice, as we see in the work of Alfred Stieglitz, Man Ray, and others, just as photography gave fine-art painters a new sense of the materiality of their work. As it emerged from the daguerreotypes and calotypes of the 1830s and 1840s, photography became a sophisticated art form in the work of such pioneers as Oscar Rejlander and Julia Margaret Cameron. The Victorian pioneers tended to rely on the compositional practices of fine-art painting (allegory, for example, in the elaborate photomontages of Rejlander), and this orientation toward easel painting lingers even in Stieglitz's work, though he began to take photography in a new direction in his stylized close-ups of Georgia O'Keeffe, and in the cloud photographs he first published as *Songs of the Sky* (1923).

Stieglitz also came to champion the avant-garde in the journal *Camera Work*, and at his "291" gallery, at 291 Fifth Avenue, one regular visitor was Man Ray (Emmanuel Radnitzky), a young painter and creator of Dadaesque "assemblages."[5] His "Portrait of Alfred Stieglitz" was painted the year of the Armory Show, and is one of the better-known instances of his work in this period; a broadly cubist painting in oils, its intersecting planes present a stylized Stieglitz, an urban landscape, and the number "291." Man Ray began by photographing his own work in other media, but his exposure to surrealism and Dada in New York and later Paris helped to make him one of the most innovative photographers of this period. Among his most arresting images are those that spotlight resonances between the human and the nonhuman, as with his "Violon d'Ingres" (1924), which shows the back of his model Kiki de Montparnasse, seemingly endowed with the f-holes of a violin; and his primitivist "Noire et blanche" (1926), which juxtaposes the heavily made-up face of the same model and an African ceremonial mask. Elsewhere he seems to gesture toward a visual realm beyond the quotidian. His "Rayographs," for example, were created without the use of a camera – by placing objects directly onto photosensitive paper.[6] The resulting images have an otherworldly aspect, though they also recall the history of the medium: among the earliest photo-images are the ghostly traces of lace and leaves captured by William Henry Fox Talbot through a similar process, which he named photogenic drawing. Bauhaus artist László Moholy-Nagy also experimented with this technique, calling his object-pictures photograms.

21.2 New and old New York: Stieglitz, composed photograph of New York in early 1920s.

Artists in other media were scarcely immune to what was happening in photography and film. Nineteenth-century painters had early realized the usefulness of the camera for their realist canvases: W.P. Frith used photographs by his friend Robert Howlett to create the complex subgroups of his panoramic "Derby Day" (1858); James Tissot, whose work had been denounced by John Ruskin as "mere colored photographs of vulgar society," increasingly used photographs after 1875 as the basis of his works.[7] But we have also come to realize that photography influenced the more "painterly" styles that began to evolve from midcentury, including the impressionism of James McNeill Whistler and his French peers: the capturing of a specific moment, the pre-eminent role of light, and the focus on the everyday present are all aspects of impressionism that were also

facets of the evolving art of photography. Similarly, the break that cubism represents coincides with the appearance of motion pictures. As Gerald Noxon noted many years ago, cubism has in common with the cinema a technique of "fragmentation and re-synthesis": the cubist canvas rejects traditional perspectival space, replacing it with a synthetic perspective. One could also argue that the cinema's extension of the viewed subject in time inspires cubism, which compresses a sequence of perspectives into a multi-perspectival moment.[8] In other respects, of course, the post-impressionist turn in the fine arts seems more like an embrace of the specifically painterly (color, composition, distinct brush-strokes), a reaction against rather than an adoption of the regime of the camera.

Writers also drew on photography and cinema for models or metaphors for their own practices. The "Camera-Eye" sequences in John Dos Passos's monumental *USA* trilogy (1930–36) are a familiar instance of the direct influence of the new medium on prose fiction.[9] But critics have also made claims for the centrality of cinema to an understanding of texts in which it is less of an announced presence. For instance, Sara Danius argues that in *Ulysses,* Joyce – himself a one-time cinema entrepreneur – reproduces the techniques of the film camera just as he incorporates other visual media into his encyclopedic text, from telegrams and newspapers to mutoscopes.[10] David Trotter takes a different view, replacing theories of influence with the idea of a "will-to-automatism" shared by writers and early filmmakers, the desire for pure mimesis in tension with the idea of a nonhuman recording of the world.[11] The middle section of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927) can be seen to be an example of this "will-to-automatism" at work. Some writers addressed the potential of the new form directly, hoping to rescue it from commercialism: H.D., Bryher (sc. Annie Winifred Ellerman, who supported the venture financially), and Kenneth Macpherson co-edited the monthly film journal *Close Up*, which promised on its cover wrappers to be the first review to "approach films from the angles of art, experiment, and possibility," and promised "Theory and Analysis – No Gossip".[12] Published between 1927 and 1933, by the POOL collective (Macpherson and Bryher), *Close Up* brought the work of Eisenstein to the attention of a wider audience, pioneered psycho-analytic approaches to spectatorship, and was largely hostile to Hollywood and other mainstream commercial film; contributors included the editors themselves, Dorothy Richardson, Gertrude Stein, and Marianne Moore.[13] The editorial trio also made films, the most famous of which is the avant-garde *Borderline* (1930), which featured H.D., Bryher, and Paul and Eslanda Robeson among its cast, with Macpherson directing.

Sound

Among the first of the new sound technologies of the modernist years were the phonograph and the telephone, which both appeared while Queen Victoria still had some twenty years left of her reign. While we now largely think of it as a medium for interpersonal communications, the telephone might also be thought of as the first broadcast medium. Invented in 1876, its potential as part of a telecommunications network was not fully grasped for some time, and its first commercial uses included the broadcasting of concerts and plays to the private homes of the wealthy. Budapest had telephone concerts from 1893; in London, the Electrophone Company promised to offer a similar service, and it broadcast the national anthem from Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket in 1899 – Queen Victoria, listening at Windsor, was "amused."[14]

Writers of fiction recognized the new distance-annihilating technology at different paces. Henry James, for instance, was interested less in the instrumental role than in the symbolic and affective aspect of the electric telegraph and the Parisian pneumatic post, even in his later fiction, as Pamela Thurschwell and Mark Goble have shown in different ways.[15]

Among others, however, Proust and Joyce were drawn to the new medium. Danius argues that the perceptual framework of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* is shaped by the telephone, among other technologies. For instance, in describing a telephone conversation with his grandmother in *The Guermantes Way*, Proust's narrator discusses how the telephone reifies her embodied voice as abstract sound, but it also makes him think of a time in the future when she will be further reified, separated from him by the long-distance line of death.[16] Along with other new technologies, the phone makes a number of cameo appearance in Joyce's *Ulysses* – we hear half a telephone conversation in the busy newspaper office of the Aeolus episode, and such things are clearly taken for granted as part of everyday communication. For Danius, such technologies also allow Joyce to imagine the representation of the world in terms of autonomized sounds and sights.[17] Mark Goble suggests, by contrast, that the telephone's role in Gertrude Stein's *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) is less to do with questions of pure sound, and more about a vision of modern America as integrated by the circulation of celebrity, money, and communication as an end in itself.[18] Arguably, it is in the "popular modernism" of the cinema that the telephone achieves its greatest recognition as an index of the modernity of the networked city. From Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922) and *Spies* (1928) to the film noir of the 1940s and beyond, the telephone is both

symbolic presence and narrative device; it projects a new kind of imaginative space, where separate locations are sutured into a network of surveillance, or crime, or community, even as it presents a new kind of romantic intimacy, mediated by machines.[19]

Patented just after the telephone, the phonograph likewise allowed the separation of voice from the speaking (or singing) subject, but it also enabled that voice to cross time as well as space: for the first time, sound could be archived. Echoes of the new technology ring, for example, through Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), in which the voice of Kurtz is a powerful presence even after death, as well as in the intelligent and elegant Shakespeherian Rag of T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922), which echoes the actual *Shakespearean Rag* of 1912.[20] Recorded sound effects soon became a part of theatre and later radio performances, but the key example of a stage play that takes recording as its structural principle is, of course, Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958). As the title indicates, Beckett deploys a tape-recorder rather than a phonograph in this one-act play, in which the elderly protagonist is making a sort of aural diary entry, and listening to and commenting on a recording made by his younger self. The relations of selfhood and time are one theme here, but so is the homology between recording and death: soon there will be no Krapp, and only tape. Some twenty years later, Roland Barthes would come to a similar view of the link between the indexical photographic trace and death in *Camera Lucida* (1980).

Radio arrived quite a bit later than the sound technologies I have mentioned, but by the 1930s, it already enjoyed a powerful media position: broadcasting directly into the intimate sphere of the home, and molding national imagined communities, it is radio, not cinema, that anticipates television. Many modernists wrote for the radio, or made broadcasts, including Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, Bertolt Brecht, Samuel Beckett, and – infamously – Ezra Pound. Yeats, for example, gave a reading for Radio Athlone in Ireland, made nine broadcasts for the BBC, and wrote a number of poems specifically for his radio readings; Eliot made some eighty broadcasts between 1929 and 1963.[21] If the cultivation of small, coterie readerships through "little magazines" and small, independent presses shows one facet of modernism's relationship to the public, this enthusiasm for the radio's mass reach displays a rather different one. However, as Debra Rae Cohen points out, the modernist will to experiment was often at odds with state and broadcasting elite efforts to control the new medium, and some of the more innovative work produced for the radio, for example, by F.T. Marinetti and Antonin Artaud, was never broadcast.[22]

In the field of music, emergent sound technologies made available wholly new musical instruments, as opposed to enhancements to existing ones such as the electric piano, and electric guitar. The first of the new "electronic" instruments was the theremin, patented by Léon Theremin in 1928, which worked by frequency modulation. The eerie sound of the theremin has mostly given it a place in radio, film, and television scores to connote mental agitation, or the supernatural. Its more high-profile appearances have included Dmitri Shostakovich's score for *Alone* (1931), and Miklos Rozsa's scores for Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945) and Billy Wilder's *The Lost Weekend* (1945).[23] A similar instrument, the ondes Martenot, was taken up by composer Olivier Messiaen, among others. The possibilities of making new kinds of purely electronically generated music attracted such late modernist figures as Karlheinz Stockhausen, who also experimented with splicing together sections of recorded sound.

Industrial Death

New technologies gave new tools to creative artists, or offered inspiration for new ways of using established media, but, as I noted in my introduction, modernism came to maturity at a very particular moment, that of the industrial carnage of the First World War. Critics have argued that this is not just a question of the war as historical context. For some, the war crystallized out of a modernist worldview; for others, the war's fracturing of the language of liberal modernity directly informs modernism.[24] More literally, of course, modernist practices were part of the war effort. C.R.W. Nevinson and Paul Nash worked as official war artists; the camouflage devised in France by Guirand de Scévola acknowledged its debt to cubism; the vorticist artist Edward Wadsworth supervised the painting of many British vessels in "dazzle" camouflage during the war, and after the war drew on this work in his fine-art painting.[25] One might also argue that propaganda posters in both world wars learned from modernist techniques for engineering attention.

While the changes in communications and representations technology that we have been tracking had the most direct connection to literary modernism, the new technologies of death left their mark. Tanks, planes, zeppelins, long-distance rifles and artillery, machine guns, and gas transformed the nature of modern warfare, and their catastrophic effects on humanity could not but affect the way in which industrial culture more generally was interpreted. Echoes, sometimes faint, sometimes loud, of the

war can be heard in most of the major modernist artifacts of the 1920s: *The Waste Land*; *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925); *Women in Love* (1920); Hemingway's short stories and early novels are all "about" the war at some level. The dead that haunt *The Waste Land* are not simply the literary dead, fragments of whose works echo through the poem, but the recent war dead. *Mrs. Dalloway* likewise is a novel about the war's reverberations: Septimus Smith, whose consciousness has been irrevocably damaged by the war, is the most obvious representative of the recent conflict, and of the lasting effects of "shell-shock." Septimus's scattered mind, in thrall to the horrors of the war, can be seen to be an extreme version of Clarissa's, in which the past is a forceful but not menacing presence; like him she experiences a sense of connection to others that at times annihilates the harder edges of the self. But modern warfare has done psychic damage to him that modern medicine cannot easily repair.

By contrast, in the work of Lawrence and Hemingway, memories of the war underwrite a variety of modern primitivisms. In *Women in Love* (1920), the mine-owner, Gerald Crich, is a lover of mechanical efficiency and life-denying forms of modern thought; his death in the snow of the Alps symbolizes the logical end of his investment in icy abstraction. Birkin, by contrast, believes that there is a way out of modernity through the embrace of the senses, a modern primitivism. A similar polarity structures *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), in which Sir Clifford Chatterley returns crippled from the war; that he gets about in a motorized wheelchair further marks him as a product of the bad mechanical modernity that Lawrence rejects. His wife, Constance, is drawn to the earthy masculinity of the gamekeeper, Mellors, and their passionate sexual encounters represent the novel's alternative to the life mechanical. Sensuality in these novels has become a last refuge from the deathly worldview that produced the war, and that issued from it.

Hemingway's war-tinged modernism resembles Lawrence's primitivism in that the natural world is similarly seen to represent an escape from a hostile, mechanized modernity. But in his case this turn leads to a radical limiting of his canvas: modern, urban America rarely appears, and instead his characters move through a series of alternative landscapes: the backwoods of America, Africa, rural Spain, the sea. Urban Spain features in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), but it is a place in which the primitive survives in the form of the *corrida*. Hunting and fishing likewise allow for a kind of symbolic remasculinization of men who have been damaged by industrial warfare.

Bodies, Machines, Creation

The postwar primitivism that locates the human body as a last nature reserve, a sort of anti-machine, is of course only one strain within modernism. There is a long tradition of seeing the human body itself as a machine, or as a body electric rather than as an organic entity.[26] At times this idea has been expressed in terms of gothic: the nameless monster of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) is the classic romantic instance of the assembled body as nightmare; both industrialism and ideologies of individual creativity are assailed. The Second Industrial Revolution and the war drove the reactivation of that mythic text in countless film versions in which Shelley's articulate monster becomes something very different. These range from the robotic false Maria (Brigitte Helm) of Thea von Harbou and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927), to Boris Karloff's lurching Frankenstein monster (1931, 1935). The narrative of hypnotic control, borrowed from George du Maurier's popular fin de siècle success, *Trilby* (1894), represents another version of this body-as-machine theme. Such human automata include the somnambulist Cesare (Conrad Veidt) in Robert Wiene's expressionist *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), and the mesmerized victims of Fritz Lang's Dr. Mabuse in *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922) and *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933).

The idea of the body as a conduit for other forces appears in a different guise in automatic writing. Despite the nominal association of this practice with machines, and illustrating the essential if opposite complementarity of the mechanical and the natural in this era, some versions of automatic writing represent another strain of modernist primitivism, an attempt to tap into the non-rational mind. This practice becomes particularly important in the work of the surrealists, who rejected ideas of individual craftsmanship and genius in favor of collective creativity and the power of the unconscious mind. (Automatic drawing was also developed by the surrealists, in particular by André Masson.) However, it should not be assumed that the emphasis on the automatic was always a rejection of craft. André Breton carefully revised what came by letting the writing flow through him. By contrast, the non-surrealist William Carlos Williams believed in preserving the raw flow of his thoughts, publishing some of this material as *Kora in Hell: Improvisations* (1920).[27] Not all automatic writing derived from the idea of the unconscious: for W.B. Yeats and his wife, Georgie Hyde-Lees, the power that drove such writing was the spirit world. It is tempting, though, to see all forms of automatic writing as a negotiation of what it meant to be creative in an industrial world, as residual romantic conceptions of the artist were reimagined.

That the artist is a romantic figure who creates the artwork ex nihilo from the fiery crucible of the imagination was problematized also in the practice of modernist collage, which turned the *disjecta membra* of industrial culture into art. Picasso and Braque are usually seen as the earliest proponents of the use of this technique. For example, in Picasso's "The Letter" (1912, now lost), an actual postage stamp is affixed to a painted letter. From the point of view of form, as Clement Greenberg noted, such inclusions complicate the pictorial space by drawing attention to the difference between the flattened cubist perspective of the canvas and the flattened space of the printed page – this is quite a different use of print to that which we see in nineteenth-century *trompe l'oeil* pictures.[28] In Dada, the use of cut-out pictures, newspaper headlines, and other "found" material takes on a less painterly aspect, as we see in the Merzbilder of Kurt Schwitters, in which the flotsam and jetsam of postwar Germany are turned into art. This is even more true of the work of Richard Huelsenbeck and George Grosz, in which direct political commentary is intended.

Perhaps the most radical use of found objects in these years was not within collage, but in what one might term found sculpture or installation: Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917), which turned a porcelain urinal into an art exhibit by signing it (R. Mutt) and displaying it in a gallery. It is a piece whose assessment of art as a cultural institution still resonates: that it is the art institution, rather than the artist, that consecrates something as art. As with collage, however, it also suggests that even the most banal, industrially produced object has the potential to be seen and experienced as art.
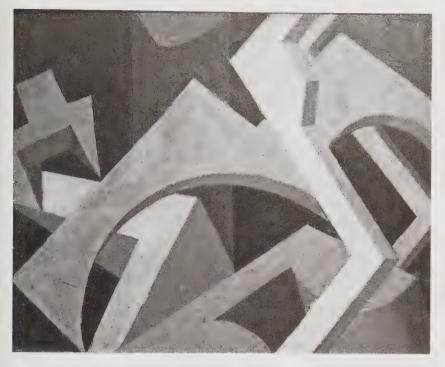
Embracing the Machine

In the early years of the twentieth century, we see the fetishization of the machine itself as a subject of art in futurism, vorticism, and other manifesto-driven movements. Sometimes this mechanical turn is at the level of content, but in places it becomes something more fundamental. It provides a belated recognition that the machine offers a model for the artwork itself: efficient, shorn of anything that does not contribute to function.

In what we might consider the first phase of this development, there is a coming to terms with modern mechanical culture as theme. This involved a rejection of nineteenth-century pastoral and its underlying assumption that humanity's fundamental affinity is with the natural world. Futurism's great propagandist, Marinetti, celebrated the mechanical turn in 1909: "A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes that seems to ride on grapeshot is

more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*."[29] Consonant with this machine aesthetic was futurism's investment in movement and the urban, as we see in such paintings as Umberto Boccioni's "The City Rises" (1910). Such ideas spread quickly, not least because the newspaper industry was in a phase of expansion, and "a symbiosis prevailed between modernist groups hungering for publicity and newspapers eager to report their most outrageous acts to a readership that thrived on scandal."[30] In London, where Marinetti was invited by C.R.W. Nevinson to give readings, Wyndham Lewis wanted to distinguish his own vorticism from futurism, but it is difficult not to see the similarities of the two movements. Lewis came to consider that "the world of the machine [was] as real to us, or more so, as nature's forms ... and that machine forms had an equal right to appear on our canvases."[31] Jacob Epstein's *Rock Drill* (1913) is a landmark piece in this embrace of machine culture. At times, the mechanical turn in futurism and vorticism coincided with fantasies of thrusting masculinity, in part, perhaps, as a deliberate eschewal of the popular image of the previous generation of artists as effete.[32] But there were female vorticists too, such as Jessica Dismorr and Helen Saunders, whose work also shows an affinity with the abstract and the geometric, and an impatience with natural forms. Elsewhere machine art took different forms, appearing in the United States, for example, in the work of the precisionists (e.g., Joseph Stella, Charles Demuth, and Elsie Driggs), which also drew on the geometric shapes and clean lines of machine culture, but was less marked by abstraction. Other exponents of machine art saw its humorous possibilities, as with Francis Picabia's witty *portraits mécaniques*, "Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz" (1915) and "Portrait d'une jeune fille américaine dans l'état de nudité" (1915). Neither of these pieces was deferential to mechanical culture; rather, they poked fun at the way the mechanical had come to saturate everyday life.

This same saturation might be considered the subject of the film that Fernand Léger made with Dudley Murphy and Man Ray, *Ballet mécanique* (1924). Léger regarded the technology of the cinema as transforming our perception by making us see things we had previously only half noticed: "the beautiful is everywhere," he pronounced.[33] In the film, repetitive montage and other techniques are deployed to make everyday objects (whisks, saucepans, among other things), close-ups of a human mouth and eyes, printed words, and geometric shapes, all "dance" and flash before the eye. In this heady mixture of futurism and surrealism, the more anthropocentric sequences show a woman seeming to climb the same section of stairs over and over again; people in a mechanical fairground ride; and an abstracted

21.3 Impatience with nature: Jessica Dismoor, "Abstract Composition."

Charlie Chaplin figure. Intercut with these images is footage from a factory, showing the balletic movements performed by machines themselves, presumably the inspiration for the film's title. Just as striking is the score for the film, composed by George Antheil, which uses a mechanical piano and a police siren, as well as orchestral instruments, to produce a heavily percussive sound and repetitive effect. If a machine could compose, Antheil seems to suggest, this is what it would sound like. More arguably, perhaps, one can see Arnold Schoenberg's adoption of twelve-tone serialism, in place of composition around keys, as partaking of this same analytic and machine-inspired tendency, though permutation and variation have, of course, long been part of orchestral composition.

A later wave of machine-inspired visual art appears in the linocuts of Walter Claude Flight, a member of the Seven and Five Society, and the work of his pupils, including Lili Tschudi, Cyril Power, and Sybil Andrews.[34] Their colorful geometric images of such subjects as the London Underground, speedway racing, and electricity pylons are celebratory, and lack

the sinister aspect of the earlier work of Epstein and Nevinson. With their work we come closer to the design aesthetic of art deco, in which the clean lines of machines – planes, ships, racing cars – promise a brightly lit world of pleasure, speed, and adventure. Cassandre's posters promoting transatlantic travel, images of the *Normandie* and the *Atlantique*, are among the most frequently reproduced of this strain of what one might consider popular futurism.

The delight in the geometric was not simply a question of absorbing mechanical content: it involved a basic transformation at the level of form. Its nearest equivalent in literature is probably imagism, which grew up alongside vorticism, with Pound and Lewis uneasy colleagues. Where the imagists rarely take the machine as subject matter, they follow the geometric turn in adopting the machine as a model of aesthetic value. Paring down, removing "decorative" features from poetry, reducing the role of the feeling "I" of lyric poetry: in these ways the imagist poem imitates the action of the efficient machine. Here are Ezra Pound's precepts from *Poetry*, March 1913: "Use no superfluous word, no adjective which does not reveal something . . . Go in fear of abstractions."[35] The tumblers of imagist theory and practice were never entirely in alignment, however, and the ethos of machine efficiency by no means suffused the first anthology. It is not there, for example, in James Joyce's one poem in the same anthology, "I Hear An Army," which is more redolent of 1890s neoromanticism than a poetry of the concrete: "My love, my love, why have you left me alone?"[36] Nonetheless, as Hugh Kenner points out, imagism's functionalist program shows a modernist sensibility thoroughly infused by machine culture. No longer did the cultural artifact have to represent machines: henceforth, it could go one step further, and *be* a machine.[37]

There was no single way in which modernism and technology came together. As we have witnessed, the innovations of machine culture provided, at different times, subject, means, and formal model for an artistic generation whose members were seeking to break free of the gravitational pull of the past.

Notes

1 See, for example, Michael North, *Camera Works: Photography and the Twentieth-Century Word* (Oxford University Press, 2005); and Julian Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism: Literature and the Anglo-American Avant-Garde* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

2 See, for example, John Hewitt, "*The Poster* and the Poster in England in the 1890s," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 35/1 (Spring 2002), 37–62.

3 Standard works on the early period include Rachael Low's seven-volume *The History of British Film* (1949–85; London: Routledge, 1997); Charles Musser's *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); and subsequent volumes in the University of California Press's History of the American Cinema series.

4 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217–51 (at 236).

5 William Innes Homer, *Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1977); on Man Ray's career, see Arturo Schwarz, *Man Ray: The Rigour of Imagination* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1977); on the complicated interrelations of avant-garde painting, photography, and the written word in *Camera Work*, see Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism*, 39–79.

6 Schwarz, *Man Ray*, 236–38.

7 Anne Labourdette, "James Tissot et la photographie," in Cyrille Sciama (ed.), *James Tissot et ses maîtres* (Nantes: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, 2005), 93–107 (at 93).

8 Gerald Noxon, "Cinema and Cubism (1900–1915)," *Journal of the Society of Cinematologists*, 2 (1962), 23–33.

9 For a discussion on the way in which writers aspired to a camera-like "impersonal" vision, see David Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).

10 Sara Danius, *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 147–88. On Joyce and the mutoscope, see Katherine Mullin, *James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

11 Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism*, 11.

12 James Donald, Laura Marcus, and Anne Friedberg (eds.), *Cinema and Modernism* (London: Cassell, 1998), 2, 8.

13 Ibid., 7. On the significance of cinema for the work of Moore and H.D., see Susan McCabe, *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 133–225.

14 Asa Briggs, *Victorian Things* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), 384.

15 Pamela Thurschwell, *Literature, Technology and Magical Thinking, 1880–1920* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 86–114; Mark Goble, *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 29–84.

16 Danius, *Senses of Modernism*, 12–13.

17 Ibid., 156–57.

18 Goble, *Beautiful Circuits*, 85–150.
19 See, for example, Tom Gunning, *The Films of Fritz Lang: Allegories of Vision and Modernity* (London: BFI, 2000).
20 On Conrad and the phonograph, see Ivan Kreilkamp, *Voice and the Victorian Storyteller* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 179–204.
21 Emily C. Bloom, "Yeats's Radiogenic Poetry: Oral Traditions and Auditory Publics," *Éire-Ireland*, 46/3 and 4 (Winter 2011), 227–51 (at 227, 229); Todd Avery, *Radio Modernism: Literature, Ethics, and the BBC, 1922–1938* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 113.
22 Debra Rae Cohen, "Modernism on Radio," in Peter Brooker, Andrzej Gasiorek, Deborah Longworth, and Andrew Thacker (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 582–98.
23 Albert Glinsky, *Theremin: Ether Music and Espionage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 253–54.
24 See Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989); and Vincent Sherry, *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (Oxford University Press, 2003). For a good summary of the arguments on this issue, see Marina MacKay, "Violence, Art, and War," in Brooker et al. (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, 461–76.
25 Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 303–04.
26 Among the most influential studies of the body in relation to nineteenth- and twentieth-century machine culture are Mark Seltzer's *Bodies and Machines* (New York: Routledge, 1992), and Tim Armstrong's *Modernism, Technology, and the Body: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).
27 Ernesto Suárez-Toste, "Spontaneous, Not Automatic: William Carlos Williams Versus Surrealist Poetics," in Viorica Patea and Paul Scott Derrick (eds.), *Modernism Revisited: Transgressing Boundaries and Strategies of Renewal in American Poetry* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 161–74 (at 165–66).
28 Greenberg, "Collage," *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 70–83.
29 Kern, *Culture of Time and Space*, 119.
30 Milton A. Cohen, *Movement, Manifesto, Meleé: The Modernist Group, 1910–1914* (Lanham: Lexington, 2004), 157.
31 Walter Michel, *Wyndham Lewis: Paintings and Drawings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 443–44.
32 Peter Brooker, *Bohemia in London: The Social Scene of Early Modernism* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 99.
33 Danius, *Senses of Modernism*, 168.
34 See, for example, Clifford S. Ackley (ed.), *British Prints from the Machine Age* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008).

35 "A Retrospect," in T.S. Eliot (ed.), *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* (London: New Directions, 1968), 3–14 (at 4–5).

36 *Des Imagistes: An Anthology* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1914), 40.

37 Hugh Kenner, *The Mechanic Muse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 37–59. See also Cecelia Tichi, *Shifting Gears: Technology, Literature, Culture in Modernist America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

Art and its Others 2: Advertisement and the Little Magazines

AMANDA SIGLER

Raising the Wind

When James Joyce added the "Aeolus" headlines for the 1922 book publication of *Ulysses*, he signaled the episode's deep investment in the periodical culture from which it originated.[1] This quintessential modernist text in turn supplies the headlines that frame this chapter about the origins and import of modernist periodicals. At the fin de siècle, large commercial magazines had long dominated the publishing scene. It was time, as Ezra Pound notes in the *English Journal*,[2] for an artistic revolution that would radically change the way writers disseminated their works to the public. Accordingly, modernist "little magazines" (or "small magazines," as they are sometimes also called) developed as a reaction against the commercial press. Such magazines, according to the definitional standards set out by Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich in their landmark study of the field, are "designed to print artistic work which for reasons of commercial expediency is not acceptable to the money-minded periodicals or presses."[3] The bibliographers point out that "little" does "not refer to the size of the magazines,"[4] though the magazines did tend to be physically small. With low page and audience numbers, the little magazines frequently printed subversive or experimental literature unattractive to the popular press. Hence the narrative theme of Andreas Huyssen's Great Divide – the story of a formative antagonism between art and commercialism – initially seems to have been enforced by the practices of modernist magazines themselves.

As more recent scholarship has shown, however, little magazines like the *Little Review*, *Poetry*, and the *Masses* embodied a vital exchange between artistic and consumer culture. Mark Morrisson goes so far as to describe the contemporary feeling about the relationship as one of "optimism."[5] As an analogue to the actual material conditions of modernism in the early twentieth century, early twenty-first-century scholarship witnesses a rising interest

in periodical studies and in advertisement. The turn in New Modernist Studies toward material culture was augmented by the rediscovery of advertisements that had been largely forgotten, since libraries frequently eliminated advertising pages from periodicals in the rebinding process. Working from rebound periodicals, one might easily, and erroneously, assume that early twentieth-century magazines published literature without advertisements. Only the originals – or full-scale reproductions made from the originals – contain the full story. So it is telling that the 2006 *PMLA* article by Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, "The Rise of Periodical Studies," devotes a substantial amount of coverage to a discussion of these lost advertising pages, reclaiming the importance of the space devoted to ads in original publications.[6] Though Latham and Scholes's analysis of twentieth-century periodicals focuses on the commercial magazines, some of which literally contained hundreds of advertising pages, it is crucial to remember that many little magazines actively sought out advertisers too, even if their relationship to consumer culture was at times uneasy, and even if they produced such ads in more modest numbers.

In spite of their suspicions of popular opinion, modernist magazine editors frequently turned toward mass culture, not against it, when they were looking for business and promotional strategies. This tendency is reflected not only in their pursuit of advertisers, but also in the way they promoted the movements and artistic agendas to which they were committed. Whether these commitments centered on civil rights in the *Crisis*, feminism in the *Freewoman*, socialism in the *Masses*, vorticism in *Blast*, surrealism in *Littérature*, Dada in *Dada*, or a host of other social, political, and artistic movements in modernism's vast array of flourishing magazines, they frequently involved manifestos and self-promotional advertisements that at once repudiated commercial culture and drew upon its conventions.

As divergent as their commitments may have been, many modernist magazines exchanged advertisements and copies of journal issues, revealing a wide-ranging and deeply interconnected network of international periodical activity. Frequently they shared contributors as well: through various chains of association, this system linked magazines such as the *Egoist*, the *English Review*, and *Blast* in England with the *Little Review*, the *Dial*, and *Poetry* in America, which were in turn linked with *Der Sturm* and *Die Aktion* in Germany and the *Mercure de France* and *transition* in France. In this flurry of transatlantic activity, it was not unheard of for magazines to relocate or even to cross the seas: the *Little Review*, for example, slowly trekked eastward, beginning in Chicago, moving to New York, and ending up in Paris. And this

magazine's brief stint in California is missed in the geographic chronology recorded by Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich.[7] In the other direction, *Broom* trekked northward and westward: it began in Rome, was re-inaugurated in Berlin, and then resurfaced in New York.[8]

With impressive international connectivity, such magazines functioned as small yet powerful cultural forces that influenced the reception of foundational literary texts as well as major historical events such as the First World War. Joyce's *Ulysses* debuted on cheap wartime paper in the *Little Review*, a far cry from its later de luxe book publication in 1922, while T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* was originally published in the *Criterion* and the *Dial*. More than mere venue providers, magazine editors bravely championed these works of art, often at great financial or legal cost: the *Dial* offered Eliot $150 for his poem (a substantial sum in 1922) and gave him the $2,000 Dial Award for Literature as well.[9] The *Little Review* was famously suppressed and taken to court for publishing the scandalous *Ulysses*. Other little magazines faced similar troubles owing to their artistic daring or their controversial political positions. In 1917, the *Masses* lost "its mailing privileges ... under the Espionage Act" because of its pro-socialist, anti-war stance.[10] The First World War could provide an impetus for social action and protest, but it could also derail those very social movements. *Blast*, off to an explosive start in 1914 with its arresting pink cover and bold vorticist declarations, came to an end after just two issues, struck down not by censorship but by the disruption of war.

Magazines explicitly devoted to such movements typically did not last for long. According to Malcolm Cowley's memorable formula:

> Usually the history of a little magazine is summarized in its format. The first issue consists, let us say, of sixty-four pages, with half-tone illustrations printed on coated paper. The second issue has sixty-four pages, illustrated with line cuts. The third has only forty-eight pages; the fourth has thirty-two, without illustrations; the fifth never appears.[11]

While many little magazines did survive beyond the fifth issue, there were those that did not survive beyond the first. Others such as *Poetry* have persisted into the twenty-first century. These survivors are exceptions, nonetheless. The standard path is the one taken by avant-garde magazines and bibelots, a kind of smaller cousin to little magazines. Bibelots proliferated in fin-de-siècle years, anticipating the trend of high modernist magazines that, like fireworks, flamed up and then out in brief displays of glory. "Their titles," Brad Evans notes, "read like self-fulfilling prophecies of their ephemeral appearance": *Chips* (1895–96), *The Fad* (1896–97), *The Fly-Leaf* (1895–96),

even *A Little Spasm* (1901).[12] These bibelots set the stage for modernist magazines' fleeting and often paradoxical relationship to time.

Although little magazines usually have a short life span, they tend to elongate the reading process when it comes to serialized fiction. Linda K. Hughes and Michael Lund point out that periodical readers may well have taken two years to reach the end of novels that book readers would typically finish in two weeks.[13] Though Hughes and Lund are referring to Victorian fiction, the same is true of modernist fiction, with the added caveat that censorship of scandalous modernist works such as *Ulysses* meant that readers could devote two or more years to a novel and still never reach the end. After being serialized for nearly three years (March 1918 to December 1920), *Ulysses* in the *Little Review* abruptly stopped at Chapter 14 ("Oxen of the Sun"), following the provocations in the Gerty MacDowell scene of Chapter 13 ("Nausicaa"). Hughes and Lund's Victorians wait anxiously for serial installments that will arrive at regular, usually short intervals; modernists tend to wait longer for serial installments and magazine issues that may never arrive. If fragmentation and inconclusive endings are key characteristics of modernist works, these effects appear to have been heightened by serialization. Whether readers were waiting for the next installment of fiction, the next editor's column, or a promised new poem by a favorite author, the magazines generated a sense of anticipation and uncertainty that differed significantly from previous experience in serial reading.

As with modernism, the question of periodization and dating also arises with respect to the little magazines. When did little magazines first come into existence? Pound, himself a central figure – indeed, *the* central figure – in modernist periodical circles, dates the launch of the "active phase of the small magazine in America" to 1911, with the founding of Harriet Monroe's *Poetry*, though Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich point out that her magazine actually produced its first issue in 1912.[14] Edward Bishop identifies an earlier start, writing, "The little magazine flourished for about forty years, from 1895 to 1935."[15] The multivolume *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* takes an even more expansive view, stretching from the founding of the Pre-Raphaelite magazine the *Germ* in 1850 to little magazines founded in the aftermath of the Second World War. Admittedly, as the editors acknowledge, this century-long time span includes publications that may more accurately be defined as "precursors" or "successors" to the little magazines flourishing at the high point of modernism. Nevertheless, the more attention scholars pay to the modernist little magazine, the more expansive the definition seems to become.

Links with Bygone Days of Yore: Predecessors
and Forerunners

The early little magazines are significant for the way they establish, right from the beginning, the artistic community's vexed yet intricate links with commercial culture.[16] The *Yellow Book* (1894–97), an oft-studied early magazine, illustrates this tension through its own wavering position between art and commodity: its signature visual images, Aubrey Beardsley's drawings, clearly combine the appearances of aesthetics and advertising. As Bishop notes, the *Yellow Book* "was radical in that it was to deal entirely with art and literature; there were to be no commercial book reviews, no politics."[17] Yet, as Bishop also notes, "*The Yellow Book* is a sort of coffee table book of Decadence," and its status as a "luxury at low cost" item indicates how cleverly the publisher John Lane "had cornered the market in Decadence, as it were, buying into it as into a futures commodity."[18] This practice feeds into the larger cultural trend that Lawrence Rainey identifies in modernism. This is the

> strategy whereby the work of art invites and solicits its commodification, but does so in such a way that it becomes a commodity of a special sort, one that is temporarily exempted from the exigencies of immediate consumption prevalent within the larger cultural economy, and instead is integrated into a different economic circuit of patronage, collecting, speculation, and investment.[19]

From the standpoint of periodical studies, "the work of art" may designate not merely an individual text, but an entire magazine. Like the single-author texts Rainey also discusses, little magazines became imbricated in the "circuit of patronage, collecting, speculation, and investment." The *Yellow Book* stands out in the crowd because, as its title suggests, it was a magazine (thus belonging to a class of ephemera) that sought to claim the permanence of a book. Tellingly, Bishop has remarked that its competitor the *Savoy* "is more like a true little magazine."[20] And it may be a truly modernist "little magazine" insofar as the *Savoy*'s list of contributors – W.B. Yeats, Ford Madox Hueffer, George Bernard Shaw, Havelock Ellis, and others – features "names that came to define Modernism."[21]

Although marketed like a collector's item, seeking to exemplify "the Total Work of Art in its artistic design, durable book-like appearance and unity of aesthetic vision,"[22] the *Yellow Book* did include an advertising supplement. What does it mean for a "Total Work of Art" to include advertisements in its pages? Was the magazine betraying the purity of its aesthetic ideals?

Or are ads part of this total work of art, alongside painting and literature, perhaps even necessary for a *Kunstwerk* to become a *Gesamtkunstwerk*? Anne Diebel claims that the *Yellow Book* "took a putatively Jamesian stance against commerce and its vulgarizing effect on literature by refusing to print advertisements other than publishers' lists."[23] In a sense, then, the *Yellow Book*'s selectivity in advertising underscores the magazine's devotion to literature; on the other hand, there is something ironic about the way the magazine's advertising policy turns esteemed books into commodities to be bought and sold. Similarly, one could consider the implications for the many little magazines that marketed modernist masterpieces. Advertisements for these masterpieces remind us that even the most elite literary productions could be converted into dollars and pounds, though it is equally true that their value extended beyond their price tags.

Yet even this analysis does not paint the full picture. The *Yellow Book*, like later modernist magazines, also ran ads for presses publishing "the very kind [of] books which were often scathingly dismissed in the mother periodical."[24] These ads intermingled with those for more "literary" presses. Since the *Yellow Book*'s "loose" advertising supplement could "easily" be removed from the magazine,[25] one may just as easily assume that Lane did not intend for the ads – whether for his own press, for prestigious publishers such as Cambridge, or for "Hurst and Blackett's popular 'Three-and-Sixpenny Series'"[26] – to be a permanent part of the production. However, when one sees the magazine as it was initially packaged, it is hard to regard this advertising material as throwaway. Indeed, these ads contribute to the composite quality and form of the magazine. Seen this way, the pages of these magazines offer an expanded definition of art, allowing us to recognize, on the flip side of David Earle's *Re-Covering Modernism: Pulps, Paperbacks, and the Prejudice of Form*,[27] that avant-garde magazines – intentionally or not – promoted the legitimacy of popular fiction by granting it advertising space within their exclusive volumes.

Just as the *Yellow Book* served as an organ of Decadence and aestheticism even while it worked in dialogue with consumer culture, other early magazines promoted their literary agendas by learning from the techniques of commerce. In Ireland, *Samhain* and *Beltaine* "showcased and polemicized on behalf of some of the triumphs of an emergent Irish modernism, in particular the drama of Yeats and Synge."[28] Alex Davis highlights an issue of *Samhain* that capped off multiple articles about the Abbey Theatre's opening and future plans with an ad for the "Abbey, which 'can be hired for Concerts, Lectures, Entertainments, &c.'"[29] In a way, the whole issue

could be viewed as one large advertisement for the Abbey Theatre. Advertisements in little magazines could be run as more or less seamless complements to literary content.

The linkage systems and succession paths of these many little magazines constituted a formative network for modernism. Magazines like the *Yellow Book*, the *Savoy*, *Samhain*, and *Beltaine* paved the way for modernism and the avant-garde in England and Ireland, just as *Van Nu en Straks* (1893–94, 1896–1901) pioneered "Naturalism, Impressionism, Aestheticism, and Symbolism" in Belgium.[30] *Pan* ("the first truly avant-garde journal to emerge in Germany," initially running 1895–1900) influenced the Viennese Secession and its organ *Ver Sacrum* (1898–1903).[31] The New York-based *Camera Work* (1903–17) invented and promoted "Photo-Secession" in America "with the Viennese and other Continental Secessionist groups in mind."[32] And the Paris-based *Mercure de France* (1889–1965) influenced Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford)'s London-based *English Review* (1908–37), which "was the first journal to bring together the most brilliant of the Edwardian lights – Conrad, Wells, Bennett, Galsworthy, and Hudson – with the new talent of young modernist writers such as Pound, Lewis, and Lawrence."[33] The *Mercure de France* was itself influenced by *La Pléiade* (1886–90) and *Le Scapin* (1885–86), the last of which "inherited ... advertising technique[s]" from "Montmartre magazines like *Le Chat Noir*, or *La Plume* – famous for its dinner parties" that "allowed 'little magazine' contributors to build up their network."[34] Alexia Kalantzis's term "inherited" is telling here, for it highlights how little magazines operated not in isolation but as part of larger, interconnected artistic communities, with both horizontal and vertical modes of transmission. Little magazines shared with (or sometimes, like rival siblings, competed with) their contemporaries on the one hand and learned from their predecessors on the other.

The genealogy of modernism[35] is a genealogy of magazines. The early little magazines formed intimate international networks that were essential to the birth and development of modernism. Moreover, as we trace this genealogy, we see that, as little magazines looked to their forebears, they inherited not only contributors and intellectual frameworks but also successful propaganda and advertising strategies.

We See the Canvasser at Work: Advertising Strategy

Advertisements function as a gateway between highbrow and lowbrow culture.[36] Because we find commercial ads in literary magazines and literary

ads in commercial periodicals, we can view advertisements as providing a cross-pollinating service. *Die Aktion* in Berlin promoted modernism and expressionism even while publishing advertisements for "menswear, cosmetic soap, bicycles, art supplies, and musical instruments."[37] Similarly, even while being middlebrow and allegedly anti-avant-garde, the *London Mercury* published ads that accorded commercial products a literary value. There, even "whiskeys are advertised as having 'literary tastes.'"[38] While magazines like the *London Mercury* and *Die Aktion* succeeded in marketing modernism to larger audiences by virtue of their higher circulation numbers, the little magazines succeeded in procuring large commercial advertisers for their smaller coterie audiences.[39] In *My Thirty Years' War*, Margaret Anderson recounts how she ambitiously canvassed for ads when she started the *Little Review*. In addition to attracting publishers, Anderson procured agreements from the Mason and Hamlin music company and from Goodyear Tires, among other businesses. With even greater success, the *Dial* courted companies including Colgate, American Express, the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, and the Underwood Typewriter Company.

Typically, as with the *Yellow Book*, modernist magazines allotted a separate and distinct space for advertisements, placing them at the beginning or end of the periodical, but this was not always the case. In fact, closer inspection of modernist magazines reveals that they could be quite creative in the way they integrated advertisement with literary content. The *Dial*, for example, paginated advertisements separately, but it also printed an ad declaring, "In Advertisements / *There is a distinct news value*."[40] Physical separation does not necessarily imply intellectual exclusion. Although advertisements were once viewed as so antithetical to literary content that they were jettisoned from periodicals in the rebinding process, they became integral parts of many little magazines. In many cases, what began as economic necessity transformed into exciting new opportunities for the expansion of art into the realm of advertising and of advertising into the realm of art.

While some magazines resisted advertisement, and especially the influence of advertisers, other magazines actively sought to display advertisements alongside art to demonstrate an ongoing interaction between the two. Magazines such as *Rhythm* and *Ver Sacrum* created continuity between art and advertisement by repeating recognizable visual motifs. *Rhythm* accomplished this by having its artists help design the ads.[41] As a result, in the January 1913 issue, "the same woman's face is used as a decorative border for an article on The Savoy Theatre" and in an ad for "a London art gallery."[42] Similarly, *Ver Sacrum* in Vienna preserved the "Secession style from cover to cover" by having Secession

22.1 Advertising art: decoration used in both literary and advertising sections, *Rhythm*, January 1913. Courtesy of the *Modernist Journals Project*.

artists create advertisements as well as "decorative elements and illustrations within the periodical itself."[43] In an even edgier move, Tristan Tzara's avant-garde magazine *Dada* published a kind of montage of art, literature, and ads, "apparently indiscriminately" yet very deliberately mixing these seemingly disparate languages.[44] As Debbie Lewer notes, Dada's visually arresting innovation prompted Francis Picabia to include advertisements in his journal, *391*.[45] Advertising in one magazine could actually inspire advertising in another.

On the other hand, certain modernist magazines became more modest in their advertising sections. Sometimes, this reduction was due to an inability to attract advertisers, but at other times it was due to a change in editorial policy and vision. For example, in October 1912 the German expressionist magazine *Der Sturm* "stopped accepting commercial advertising and began using the final pages to promote in-house exhibitions, lectures, and sales of art reproductions."[46] Initially, editor Herwarth Walden's decision may seem like a rejection of commercialism, but his substitution of commercial advertising with artistic advertising implies an equation between the two. Art and commercial products become interchangeable. Or, to put it more bluntly, art becomes a commercial product here. Douglas Brent McBride describes Walden as having moved "from critiquing to selling art."[47]

Advertising pages were not the only places where advertising occurred. Realizing the value of art as both a cultural achievement and a promotional tool, Harriet Monroe marketed *Poetry* to potential backers as "the most important aesthetic advertisement Chicago ever had."[48] Monroe viewed her entire magazine, including the poetry therein, as an advertisement for the cultural opportunities the city had to offer. Interestingly, Monroe herself eventually became a commodity advertised in the magazine.[49] Indeed,

as J. Stephen Murphy and Mark Gaipa have shown, little magazines became promotional tools for modernist writers, whether those writers surfaced in advertisements or in the regular contents. Murphy and Gaipa demonstrate a striking symbiotic relationship between the reviews and the advertising pages in the *Egoist*. As they record, "a whopping 88.2 percent of *Egoist* reviewers are mentioned in *Egoist* ads."[50] This overlap once again attests to the way literary contents and advertising operate in tandem in many little magazines. Moreover, it suggests that the distinction between reviews and advertisements may become significantly blurred. Readers may potentially look to either for reading recommendations, and indeed contemporary guidebooks instructed them to do so.[51]

Memorable Battles Recalled: War and the Avant-Garde

Ads and promotional materials often assumed a militaristic tone, particularly in avant-garde magazines.[52] Of course, "avant-garde" itself originates from military terminology, referring to the vanguard of an army. In these magazines, fights for artistic and social freedom rage alongside political battles. Writing in the midst of the First World War to Harriet Monroe of *Poetry*, Pound portrayed "little magazines as armies on the battlefield, laying the groundwork for an understanding of modernism as a great war."[53] This militaristic aesthetic was so pervasive that even magazines devoted to joyful, fresh perspectives adopted bold martial language to convey their youthful ideals. Along these lines, an ad for Egmont Arens's *Playboy* somewhat incongruously declares that the magazine will "fight" for "Joyousness in the Arts" with "weapons OF ART & SATIRE."[54] This martial tone is frequently carried over to scholarly analyses such as Andrzej Gasiorek's article on *Blast*, "The 'Little Magazine' as Weapon." The title of *Blast* itself suggests the loud noise of a weapon, and the magazine has been described as embodying "typography's closest approximation to dynamite."[55] True to its name, *Blast* "calls for a violent destruction of all things Victorian."[56] To fulfill its mission, it uses "the visually striking typography of mainstream commercial advertising: oversize, boldface type, capital letters placed only for emphasis, and unlineated text with large white spaces."[57] Drawing lessons from commercial advertising, little magazines developed what Sean Latham has termed an "aesthetic of embattlement" as they fought for the value of experimental art even while their contributors were fighting on the battlefields.[58] For them, war was both a metaphor and a reality.

In a time of rising international tensions, the explosive vorticist call to arms in England's *Blast* paralleled the violent emphasis of syndicalism and the apocalyptic tropes of expressionism in Germany. In an eerie move before the outbreak of the First World War, *Die Aktion* in Berlin printed a 1912 manifesto by Ludwig Rubiner that proclaimed, "The poet intervenes in politics, which means he rips open, he exposes. He must believe in his intensity, in his explosive power."[59] McBride explains, "This, in a nutshell," – one might say bombshell – "was the philosophy of syndicalism theorized by Georges Sorel. For Sorel, the only valid form of political expression was an open-ended manifestation of violence that destroys the existing order with no map for the future."[60] Scholes and Wulfman argue that manifestos are a "form of advertising" that makes "the case for the new modes of art and writing . . . as persuasively as possible."[61] In the case of *Blast* and *Die Aktion*, one might say that the case was put as violently as possible.

These modernist magazines' manifestos and "rhetoric of military antagonism"[62] anticipate the military antagonism that actually erupted in 1914. Of course, many modernist magazines (such as the *Masses*) took an anti-war stance and became sites of protest, whereas commercial magazines such as *Scribner's* adopted a more patriotic tone and published advertisers who proudly linked their products to the war effort.[63] The war also spawned avant-garde movements such as surrealism, which "tentatively emerged in response to the 'defeatism' engendered by war," and Dada, which André Gide describes as a "venture of negation" resulting from war.[64]

Even more interestingly, Richard Ohmann has discovered that ad men would use military metaphors in describing their efforts to woo customers. They would speak of "ammunition," "scores," "making successful attacks on the public," "quick surrender," and "complete victory."[65] Thus, both avant-garde movements and ad men turned to the common trope of military combat to articulate their strategies for success and their plans to "win" the public. On the one hand, commercial advertisement and modernist publications were competing with each other for persuasive power; on the other hand, they learned from each other and deployed common weapons. And sometimes, they even fought side by side.

Interview with the Editor: Margaret Anderson at the *Little Review*

Advertising went on behind the scenes as well.[66] For instance, to procure advertising copy, magazines first had to market themselves to potential

advertisers. Margaret Anderson discusses some of these marketing schemes in her autobiography, but her innovation was to publicize these negotiations in the *Little Review*. The June–July 1915 issue contained multiple pages with spaces where commercial businesses and publishing firms might have advertised but did not. These famous pages were blank except for smaller boxes of text that both chastised advertisers and invited them to do business. With language that was at once plaintive, defiant, and vaguely threatening, Anderson publicly declared how she would proceed to carry on private negotiations: "A. C. McClurg and Company could have used this page to advantage. They have lots of books to advertise and they ought to want to advertise them in a Chicago magazine. I am willing to wager that they will: I plan to interview them once a week until they succumb."[67] Anderson is essentially offering these companies free advertising, but she is also exposing the machinery of advertising and business deals in the first place. Readers are restrained from making impulsive purchases and instead are prompted to contemplate the process by which advertisements come to appear in magazines. Just as dramatists like Luigi Pirandello would promote metatheatre, or novelists like Joyce would enjoy their metafictional moments, so Anderson crafts a discourse of meta-advertising that is at once promotional and self-reflective.

Interestingly, Anderson employed a similar technique of utilizing blank spaces to advertise for art and literary submissions one year later in the September 1916 issue. On the first page, Anderson explains, *"The Little Review* hopes to become a magazine of Art. The September issue is offered as a Want Ad."[68] The number is often referred to as the "blank issue,"[69] and many of the pages were indeed left blank, but the issue also included nonfiction articles, a cartoon depicting an editor's day, and several advertisements, as well as letters to the editor that debated the quality of art appearing in the *Little Review*. Just as the June–July 1915 issue had provided a behind-the-scenes look at ad solicitation, then, the September 1916 issue provides a behind-the-scenes look at the editor's activities. The cartoon illustrates Anderson's personal passion for piano playing, portraying how she "TAKES HER MASON AND HAMLIN TO BED WITH HER."[70] Because the Mason & Hamlin company advertised in other issues of the *Little Review*, the cartoon highlights the editor's business loyalties as well as her private interests and activities. Shockingly, readers are invited into the editor's bedroom, where they see her in her nightgown.

Swinging from the personal to the public, the cartoon also illustrates the editor's commitment to social and literary movements. She converts

22.2 Cartoon in the *Little Review*, September 1916. Courtesy of the *Modernist Journals Project*.

"THE SHERIFF TO ANARCHISM AND VERS LIBRE" and suffers "FOR HUMANITY AT EMMA GOLDMAN'S LECTURES."[71] The next page of cartoons provides a witty hieroglyph for the editor's poverty: we see her being photographed on a well-fed horse, and then we see the emaciated horse, dubbed the "INSECT," that she actually rides.[72] And the point is hard

to miss: just as the blank pages are an ad for artistic submissions, the vibrant pages of illustrations immediately following them are an implicit ad for financial contributions. Somewhat akin to the *Dada* montage, the cartoon in the *Little Review* mixes discourses of advertising, art, poetry, and social activism. In the life of an avant-garde editor, these activities were of necessity intertwined. What is missing from the cartoon is a scene of Anderson editing – because she has nothing to edit for this issue. Instead of functioning as a publisher of literature, she is forced to act as an advertiser for literature. Notably, the gaming tactics of commercial advertising shape her strategy for acquiring works of superior literary merit.

The *Little Review* published ads for products ranging from chocolates and restaurants to books and magazine subscriptions. Although there are exceptions, these ads tend to be predominantly insular, with advertisers often making conscious attempts to connect their ads to art and to intellectual pursuits. In some ways, the ads are prescriptive, insofar as they instruct readers what else they should be reading (as well as what languages they should be learning, what musical instruments they should be playing, and what typewriters they should be using). Almost all the ads could be tied to the cultivation of an artist.

As Alan Golding notes, the *Little Review* falls into the category of little magazines written for other artists.[73] The ads instruct readers how to become a part of this community: if aspiring authors want to meet other artists, where do they go for lunch? Christine's, a restaurant for "VISITORS SEEKING A GLIMPSE OF ARTISTS."[74] If they want to learn a new language, where can they do it? The Berlitz School of Languages.[75] What should be on their reading list? The *Little Review* presents a host of publishers, from Dodd, Mead to Houghton Mifflin and Nicholas L. Brown. If readers want to be up-to-date on the latest intellectual conversations, to which other magazines should they subscribe? The *Egoist*, the *Dial*, *Poetry*, and a host of other little magazines, as well as a few commercial ones (but they receive less advertising space). If aspiring artists reach the stage where they are ready to begin composing their own poems and stories, what typewriter should they buy? The Multiplex Hammond Writing Machine.[76] What if a subscriber is a visual artist looking for paint and brushes? Try the Colony Art Supply Shop on Sixth Avenue.[77] What sort of refreshments do intellectuals eat while they are working? Spoehr Confections, "known to the discriminating,"[78] and Crane's Mary Garden Chocolates, "the finest" ever tasted by the opera singer.[79] Mary Garden was in fact mentioned earlier in that same issue, namely in a reader's letter complaining about previous editorial articles devoted to the

singer. Readers begin to wonder where editorial ends and advertisement begins. In the *Little Review*, then, we see a successful yet sometimes risky cultivation of advertising content that intersects with literary content.

Short but to the Point

Just as the number of recognized modernist little magazines has expanded, the definition of advertising and propaganda has expanded too.[80] Publishers' announcements, manifestos, book reviews, cartoons, and editorial columns have all come to be seen as vehicles for advertising. At times, even the distinction between literary content and advertisement becomes blurred. Yet it must be remembered that little magazines were founded primarily for art's sake, not for profit's sake. Editors may have sought out companies to advertise in their pages, and they may have adopted business strategies in the promotion of art, but they did not want to be controlled by advertisers. The *Masses* was so insistent upon this point that it refused to take money for the ads it published,[81] and the *Little Review* carried the motto "MAKING NO COMPROMISE WITH THE PUBLIC TASTE." As Morrisson writes, both magazines "tried to draw ideas from the extremely successful commercial press (even as they lambasted it) to help them reach mass audiences for a content that was too controversial to appear in the popular press."[82] Little magazines may be distinguished by their freedom from popular opinion on the one hand and their reliance on popular marketing strategies on the other.

The effect of their ads has changed over the years, however. As with the frequently short-lived modernist magazines, ads too have an expiration date that will affect the audience's ability to respond to their appeals. Moreover, whether popular or highbrow at the time, the readership of early twentieth-century periodicals changed as these magazines transitioned from being current periodicals to archival artifacts. As Scholes and Wulfman note:

> In the beginning, behind every ad there was a commodity, which the ad urged its readers to consume, whether this were an object to acquire or an opportunity to go somewhere or do something. Over time, however, the commodity and the original target of advertisements have faded away ... Reading the same material a century later, we are drawn by nostalgia for a vanished past, for objects that have disappeared and opportunities that can no longer be seized.[83]

Owing to the passage of time, paths of acquisition and communication that are open to original readers are shut down to us. If original readers cut out an

order form for another journal subscription, they are clipping away at an ephemeral piece of paper to broaden their cultural horizons; if we cut out an order form, we are mutilating a collector's item. Scholes and Wulfman conclude that advertisements' "power to please us has increased, as their power to persuade us has decreased."[84]

But have ads lost their persuasive power, or are they just persuading us in different ways? We cannot buy a subscription to the *Egoist* or the *Dial*, but if scholars encounter ads for these magazines in the *Little Review*, they might well be persuaded to read the *Egoist* or the *Dial*. They may even be persuaded to go to greater lengths than original readers to obtain their copies: instead of merely filling out a subscription blank and waiting for the magazine to come to their mailbox, they may travel across the country to any number of repositories. If scholars are fortunate, they may find a digital copy of their choice periodical on the *Modernist Versions Project*, the *Modernist Journals Project*, or the *Blue Mountain Project*; in these cases, they could instantaneously gain access to multiple issues at the click of a mouse, instead of having to wait for monthly or quarterly intervals like original subscribers. While it is true that certain products may no longer be available, and others are certainly no longer available for the prices advertised, the ads for literary products seem to be regaining their persuasive power, prompting scholars to explore previously neglected texts and authors, as the burgeoning field of periodical studies attests. Little magazines may have generated issues and life spans that were short, but through clever alliance with advertising they continue to attract audiences and, like the period at the end of Joyce's "Ithaca," make their point more visible than ever.

Notes

1 "RAISING THE WIND": James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler (New York: Random House, 1986), 121 (*u* 7.995). As per Joycean custom, quotations from *Ulysses* will be cited by episode and line number henceforth. "Raising the Wind" is also the title of editor Sean Latham's introductory column for the *James Joyce Quarterly*.

2 See Ezra Pound, "Small Magazines," *English Journal*, 19/9 (November 1930), 689–704. The article is available for download on the *Modernist Journals Project*, http://modjourn.org/essays.html.

3 Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton University Press, 1947), 2.

4 Ibid., 3.

5 Mark Morrisson, *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences, and Reception, 1905–1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 6.

6 See Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, "The Rise of Periodical Studies," *PMLA*, 121/2 (March 2006), 517–31.

7 Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich, *Little Magazine*, 245. Margaret Anderson discusses her magazine's move to California in *My Thirty Years' War* (New York: Horizon Press, 1969), 110–35.

8 Malcolm Cowley, *Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s* (New York: Penguin, 1979), 188–89.

9 Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Random House, 1983), 231; Edward Bishop, "Re:Covering Modernism – Format and Function in the Little Magazines," in Ian Willison, Warwick Gould, and Warren Chernaik (eds.), *Modernist Writers and the Marketplace* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 287–319 (at 309).

10 Morrisson, *Public Face of Modernism*, 177.

11 Cowley, *Exile's Return*, 188.

12 Brad Evans, "'Ephemeral Bibelots' in the 1890s," in Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (eds.), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (Oxford University Press, 2012), vol. II, 132–53 (at 134).

13 Linda Hughes and Michael Lund, *The Victorian Serial* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 2.

14 Pound, "Small Magazines," 689; Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich, *Little Magazine*, 7, 36.

15 Bishop, "Re:Covering Modernism," 287.

16 "LINKS WITH BYGONE DAYS OF YORE": *U* 7.737.

17 Bishop, "Re:Covering Modernism," 288.

18 Ibid., 291, 288, 290–91.

19 Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 3.

20 Bishop, "Re:Covering Modernism," 291.

21 Ibid., 291–92.

22 Koenraad Claes and Marysa Demoor, "The Little Magazine in the 1890s: Towards a 'Total Work of Art,'" *English Studies*, 91/2 (April 2010), 133–49 (at 148).

23 Anne Diebel, "'The Dreary Duty': Henry James, *The Yellow Book*, and Literary Personality," *Henry James Review*, 32/1 (Winter 2011), 45–59 (at 49).

24 Claes and Demoor, "Little Magazine in the 1890s," 145.

25 Ibid., 144.

26 Ibid., 145.

27 David M. Earle, *Re-Covering Modernism: Pulps, Paperbacks, and the Prejudice of Form* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

28 Alex Davis, "Yeats and the Celtic Revival," in Brooker and Thacker (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (Oxford University Press, 2009), vol. I, 152–75 (at 175).

29 Ibid., 165.

30 Francis Mus and Hans Vandevoorde, "'Streetscape of New Districts Permeated by the Fresh Scent of Cement': Brussels, the Avant-Garde, and Internationalism," in Brooker, Sascha Bru, Thacker, and Christian Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (Oxford University Press, 2013), vol. III, 336–60 (at 340).

31 Introduction to "Germany, Austria, Switzerland," in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 700.

32 Caroline Blinder, "Through an American Lens," in Brooker and Thacker (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. II, 271–92 (at 274).

33 Morrisson, *Public Face of Modernism*, 17. This list of early magazines and movements, as with the chapter as a whole, is not meant to be exhaustive, but is rather meant to survey and highlight a few representative magazines that illustrate larger patterns.

34 Alexia Kalantzis, "The 'Little Magazine' as Publishing Success," in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 60–75 (at 63).

35 To borrow Michael Levenson's book title, *A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine 1908–1922* (Cambridge University Press, 1984).

36 "WE SEE THE CANVASSER AT WORK": *U* 7.120.

37 Douglas Brent McBride, "A Critical Mass for Modernism in Berlin," in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 773–97 (at 776–77).

38 J. Matthew Huculak, "*The London Mercury* (1919–39) and Other Moderns," in Brooker and Thacker (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. I, 240–59 (at 248).

39 The circulation of *Die Aktion* eventually reached 30,000, according to McBride, "Critical Mass," 795. The subscription base of the *London Mercury* topped 12,000, according to Huculak, "*London Mercury*," 247.

40 Advertisement in the *Dial*, 69/1 (July 1920), xi.

41 Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 115.

42 Andrew Thacker, "Modern Tastes in *Rhythm*: The Visual and Verbal Culture of Advertisements in Modernist Magazines," *Katherine Mansfield Studies*, 2/1 (2010), 4–19 (at 14).

43 Diane Silverthorne, "Vienna's 'Holy Spring' and Beyond," in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 992–1013 (at 996).

44 Debbie Lewer, "The Avant-Garde in Swiss Exile 1914–20," in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 1032–56 (at 1047).

45 Ibid.

46 McBride, "Critical Mass," 781.

47 Ibid.

48 John Timberman Newcomb, *"Poetry's* Opening Door: Harriet Monroe and American Modernism," in Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam McKible (eds.), *Little Magazines & Modernism: New Approaches* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 83–103 (at 92).

49 Scholes and Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines*, 123.

50 J. Stephen Murphy and Mark Gaipa, "You Might Also Like... : Magazine Networks and Modernist Tastemaking in the Dora Marsden Magazines," *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, 5/1 (2014), 27–68 (at 48).

51 Ibid., 57.

52 "MEMORABLE BATTLES RECALLED": *U* 7.358.

53 Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam McKible, "Introduction," in Churchill and McKible (eds.), *Little Magazines & Modernism*, 11–12.

54 The ad occurs in *Little Review*, 6/8 (December 1919), n.p.

55 Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich, *Little Magazine*, 244; Andrzej Gasiorek, "The 'Little Magazine' as Weapon," in Brooker and Thacker (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. I, 290–313 (at 297).

56 Jill Richards, "Model Citizens and Millenarian Subjects: Vorticism, Suffrage, and London's Great Unrest," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 37/3 (Spring 2014), 1–17 (at 7).

57 Paige Reynolds, "'Chaos Invading Concept': *Blast* as a Native Theory of Promotional Culture," *Twentieth Century Literature*, 46/2 (Summer 2000), 238–68 (at 238).

58 Sean Latham, "Cyril Connolly's *Horizon* (1940–50) and the End of Modernism," in Brooker and Thacker (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. I, 856–73 (at 865).

59 McBride, "Critical Mass," 782.

60 Ibid.

61 Scholes and Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines*, 128.

62 To borrow the language of Churchill and McKible, from their "Introduction" to *Little Magazines & Modernism*, 11.

63 Scholes and Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines*, 133.

64 Raymond Spiteri, "'What Can the Surrealists Do?'" in Brooker, Bru, Thacker, and Weikop (eds.), *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, vol. III, 219–43 (at 219, 224).

65 Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996), 110.

66 "INTERVIEW WITH THE EDITOR": *U* 7.970.

67 *Little Review*, 2/4 (June–July 1915), 60.

68 *Little Review*, 3/6 (September 1916), 1.

69 See, for instance, Katherine Mullin, "Joyce through the Little Magazines," in Richard Brown (ed.), *A Companion to James Joyce* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 374–89 (at 380).

70 *Little Review*, 3/6 (September 1916), 14. Mullin attributes the drawings to Anderson's co-editor, Jane Heap.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 15.

73 Alan C. Golding, "*The Dial, The Little Review*, and the Dialogics of Modernism," *American Periodicals*, 15/1 (2005), 42–55 (at 50).

74 *Little Review*, 7/2 (July–August 1920), n.p.

75 See, e.g., the back cover of *Little Review*, 5/3 (July 1918).

76 This ad also occurred ibid., on the back cover, among other issues.

77 *Little Review*, 6/8 (December 1919), n.p.

78 See, e.g., the back cover, ibid.

79 See, e.g., ibid., n.p.

80 "SHORT BUT TO THE POINT": *U* 7.272.

81 Morrisson, *Public Face of Modernism*, 246. As Morrisson notes, the *Masses* instead "exact[ed] a percentage from items sold" via its magazine (246).

82 Ibid., 174.

83 Scholes and Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines*, 126.

84 Ibid., 127.

Art and its Others 3: Aesthetics as Politics

ANDRZEJ GASIOREK

Anyone trying to come to grips with that perplexing and vexing topic – the politics of modernism – swiftly confronts its sheer irreducibility to some kind of totalizing account. What Raymond Williams describes as its "contradictory character," while adding that the terms "modernism" and "avant-garde" are at best sketchy designations, is everywhere in evidence.[1] If modernism, however we choose to define and periodize it, takes a wide range of forms and is an internally conflicted set of artistic and cultural practices, then the politics associated with those variable practices are no less complex. Modernist politics runs the gamut from fascism to communism, taking in a number of intermediate positions along the way, and the issue becomes still more complicated when we consider that many modernists' political convictions were by no means stable; we must recognize as well that their artworks do not simply "express" prior beliefs in some straightforward, unmediated way. Characterized by different writing styles, competing aesthetic commitments, and rival philosophical beliefs, modernism disclosed a contradictory set of responses to political issues, and these variable engagements should not be seen in unitary terms.

Perhaps the central problem that arises again and again within modernism is the question of political commitment. Put another way, to what extent (if at all) should writers and artists consciously turn to politics in their work? This question can be subdivided, for it might mean that modernists should either promote a specific cause (fascism or communism, say) or engage with contemporary politics even if they are not urging a particular viewpoint or plan of action. Some modernists saw themselves as educators whose role was to wake the public from their ignorance or apathy, though it should be noted again that they did so from a range of political positions. We may call to mind Bertolt Brecht, Vladimir Mayakovsky, and Alexander Rodchenko on one side, for example, and D.H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, and the later W.B. Yeats on the other side. Politically far apart, what connects these writers is their shared sense

that their creative work existed not in a hermetically sealed realm of the "aesthetic" but rather was an active force in daily public life. In contrast to these writers, we may instance a number of significant figures who addressed contemporary issues but were hostile to the idea that their work should serve a political purpose, because they maintained that art was an open-ended and speculative mode. Among these writers, we may include Wyndham Lewis, Thomas Mann, and Robert Musil.

While the various forms of cultural modernism are rightly seen as attempts to break away from the conditions of an old and dilapidated culture in the name of a bold new one, a significant difference exists between the spirit of revolt that breathes through the supercharged manifestos of the Italian and Russian futurists on one hand and, on the other, the considered modernism of the late Henry James or the existential pessimism of Joseph Conrad. Whereas the latter looked in weary resignation upon an entropic world, suggesting that a pointless universe existed solely to amuse the sardonic observer, the likes of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and David Burliuk hymned the future to come and depicted themselves as its harbingers. In the "Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" (1909), the radically anti-*passéist* Marinetti announced that to live in the midst of an ancient culture was to "emerge fatally exhausted, shrunken, beaten down" and to waste one's energy by pouring it "into a funerary urn instead of hurling it far off, in violent spasms of action and creation."[2] Proclaiming a radical cult of youth, Marinetti demanded the overthrow of a decrepit society in the name of technology, speed, crowds, violence, danger, and noise. "Take up your pickaxes," he urged his followers, "and wreck, wreck the venerable cities, pitilessly!"[3] In turn, Burliuk and his Russian futurist cohort addressed their "Slap in the Face of Public Taste" (1912) to the readers of their "New First Unexpected" and boldly asserted: "*We* alone are the *face* of *our* Time. Through us the horn of time blows in the art of the word."[4] These manifestos celebrate the aggressive language of revolt in order to demand an experimental linguistic practice that will jettison the literature of the past in the name of a future that only their youthful writers can inaugurate.

The years before the First World War were no less eventful in England. Marinetti galvanized modernists like Lewis and Pound, who were briefly linked with futurism before they established the countermovement of vorticism. Like Marinetti, Lewis and Pound saw modern art as the means by which a new vision of the world could be communicated and a decayed bourgeois culture overthrown. Andreas Huyssen's reference to "the historical avant-garde's insistence on the cultural transformation of everyday life" is pertinent in this context, as is

Williams's view that the avant-gardes perceived themselves as "the militants of a creativity which would revive and liberate humanity."[5] However, vorticism's conceptual open-endedness – which is evident from the dialogic structure of *Blast*, the magazine in which it made its first appearance – distanced it from the call for direct political action. By liberating itself from "the picturesque and representative element" of naturalism, vorticist art sought to rid itself of "the embarrassments of its former [ethical] influence" because the artist "is NOT a useful figure," and painting "should be saved the odour of the communistic platform or the medicine chest."[6]

Vorticism was committed to the twin tasks of interpretation and transvaluation. In keeping with Pound's conviction that artists were the antennae of the race, vorticism tried to imagine what a future life might look like if artists' creative visions were ever to be realized. The modern industrial urban environment was not a source of anxiety but an aesthetic opportunity, urging the modern artist to be aware of "the new possibilities of expression in present life."[7] At the same time, vorticism was committed to critique, its manifestos bludgeoning the cultural attitudes it deplored and cursing a public it imagined would "hang over" its provocations "with SILLY CANINES exposed."[8] This hostile attitude to a benighted majority would become especially prominent in Pound's work, though it is already visible in the prewar period, and it isn't hard to see how his belief "that we ain't bolcheviks, but only the terrifyin' voice of civilization, kulchuh, refinement, aesthetic perception" could in time lead him to valorize a dictatorial politics.[9]

From the 1920s onwards, following in part from his interest in economics, Pound was moving closer and closer to the fascism he would come to espouse and that he referred to in shorthand as "the new synthesis, the totalitarian."[10] Always looking to launch a cultural renaissance, Pound sought in the *Cantos* and in his political polemics to argue that the socioeconomic order should be transformed. By 1936, living in Italy and influenced by the war in Abyssinia, Pound was writing essays suggesting, as Timothy Materer puts it, "that Rapallo should become a center of Fascist thought."[11] Pound's desire to be involved in the making of history led him to combine aspects of his poetry with the political activism he believed to be necessary in the proselytizing elements of the *Cantos* and in the identification of Mussolini's Italy as the home for a new political order.

Pound's turn to fascism must be contrasted with the modernisms that – though no less committed to the politicization of art – drove it in a radically leftist direction. Brecht is one obvious example of this tendency. So too are the various Russian writers and artists who, to varying degrees, put their work in the

service of the 1917 revolution, and who were involved also in the development of futurism, constructivism, and suprematism. It is no less important in this context to note how difficult it was for committed figures like Mayakovsky – who killed himself in 1930 – and Rodchenko – who became disillusioned by the betrayal of the arts under Stalin – not to lose faith either in the new society they were trying to build or in the radical art they were making on its behalf. As Rodchenko, echoing the tone and imagery of earlier futurist manifestos, put it in a construct-ivist piece from 1921: "ART *which has not entered life* will be numbered and handed over to the archaeological *museum* of ANTIQUITY ... Work in the midst of *everyone*, for *everyone*, and *with everyone*. DOWN with monasteries, institutes, ateliers, studios, offices, and islands."[12]

Explicit here is the constructivist's avant-garde desire to be involved in everyday life while remaking it from within. This is a radically participative vision. If it rejects the antiquated past it does so, not in the name of a vaguely energized future to come, but in the name of a future that has arrived and is being built in the here and now by all members of a revolutionary new society. Seeing themselves as "the vanguard division of revolutionary art," Rodchenko and a host of other modernist writers and artists (among them such figures as Osip Brik, Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Mayakovsky, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova, Vladimir Tatlin, Sergei Tretyakov, and Nadezhda Udaltsova) transformed Russian art, architecture, literature, theatre, and cinema in their search for modes of expression that would both glorify the revolution and advance its cause.[13] As Mayakovsky put it in "Order No. 2 to the Army of the Arts" (1921), which celebrated industrial production and called for an appropriate modern art to match it: "While we dawdle and quarrel / in search of fundamental answers, / all things yell: / 'give us new forms!'"[14] Announcing its political commitment, the poem goes on: "Comrades, / give us a new form of art – / an art / that will pull the republic out of the mud."[15]

Mayakovsky recognized, however, that there was a possible conflict between his interests and those of the workers for whom he strove to writ∵. In a poem titled "Back Home" (1925), for instance, we find lines like these:

Proletarians
        arrive at communism
                from below –
by the low way of mines,
            sickles,
                and pitchforks –

    but I,
        from poetry's skies,
                    plunge into communism,
   because
       without it
            I feel no love.[16]

Just as Rodchenko calls for an art that would be an integral part of the community's daily life, so Mayakovsky expresses a longing for his poetry to be bound up with, and seen as on a par with, ordinary human labor. There is a dream here of a society in which art and industry are not opposed to each other in class terms (the privileged pen-pusher forever separated from the blue-collar worker) but united, pulling together in a shared direction. The poem thus imagines Stalin delivering "reports / about verse in the making / as he would about pig iron / and the smelting of steel."[17]

This is rhetorically rousing, but what might it mean in practice? Trotsky, for one, was skeptical about such calls, criticizing what he saw as a premature "ultimatum for the fusion of art with life." Arguing that "one must have a little historic vision," he insists that artists had to understand "that between our present-day economic and cultural poverty and the time of the fusion of art with life ... more than one generation will have come and gone."[18] For Trotsky, in other words, there was still a fundamental gap between the art that extolled the revolution and a society that was still being built but had not yet been completed. And Mayakovsky, like Rodchenko, would come to feel intense frustration at what he saw as the betrayal of the revolution. Whereas an overtly propagandist poem like "Left March" asserts, "The Commune can never go down," the mocking "Re Conferences" expresses disgust with the hydra of communist bureaucracy, portraying its worthless apparatchiks as permanently absent from their offices because they are all attending Party conferences.[19] The poem ends with the enraged Mayakovsky bursting "like a lava" into one such meeting, only to find that its attendees have split themselves into two halves, their legs going to one conference and their torsos to another, this being the only way they can cope with the demands on their time. "Oh for just / one / more conference," the poet expostulates, "regarding the eradication of all conferences!"[20]

The frustration and anger disclosed by such poems and in plays like *The Bedbug* (1929) and *The Bathhouse* (1930) become ever clearer toward the end of Mayakovsky's life, as the conflict in him between the propagandist communist and the anarchic futurist poet increasingly comes to the fore. In a key

work from as early as 1923 – *About This*, which included photomontages by Rodchenko – Mayakovsky expresses his anger at the direction Soviet society was taking. With corruption, cronyism, and bureaucracy on the rise, it appeared that the ideals for which he had fought were being abandoned, even as the Soviet writer was being pressurized to conform to externally imposed political strictures. What gets played out in Mayakovsky's life (with tragic consequences), then, is a conflict within the politically committed writer: a desire to put his work in the service of the communist cause, subordinating all else to an overarching social end, confronts an equally powerful faith in freedom of conscience and personal authenticity, which manifests itself as a belief in the importance of speaking truth to power, no matter what the cost.

This conflict became intolerable in the months before Mayakovsky's death in 1930. In the foreword to the catalogue of an exhibition devoted to twenty years of his work, he distinguishes himself from lyrical aesthetes who profess to inhabit the rarified realms of pure literature, arguing that the "newspaper, the poster, the slogan, the debate, the advertisement . . . are shown here as a most important type of literary weapon."[21] He was not only challenging the division of art into "high" and "low" forms, but also suggesting that the latter, because they belonged to ordinary life, could be particularly effective when adapted by the artist to the purposes of propaganda. (This was an ultimate form of the composite genre.) This line of argument melded with a related claim, namely that "literature" should refer not simply to written or recited words but to an expanded range of public and political activities: "The work of the revolutionary poet does not stop at the book; meetings, speeches, front-line limericks, one-day agit-prop playlets, the living radio-voice and the slogan flashing by on the trams – are all equal and sometimes very valuable examples of poetry."[22]

But this agit-prop aesthetic sat uneasily with the other side of Mayakovsky's creative personality – his view of poetry as an act of witness – because his faith in unfettered truth-telling clashed with his desire to advance a particular political cause. As he put it in a debate about his writing and his activism: "I have always managed to upset somebody. My main work – is criticising all that I think is wrong, against which I must fight."[23] The intractable nature of this internal conflict is nowhere better dramatized than in "At the Top of My Voice" (1930), one of the last things Mayakovsky wrote. In this poem he describes himself as "a cesspool-cleaner / and water-carrier, / mobilised and drafted / by revolution" who "came / to the front from the lordly horticulture / of poetry" – a self-portrait that depicts him as a laborer

who has seceded from the pretensions of "literature" – but he also admits both that he yearns to be a different kind of poet and that he has paid a high price for his self-chosen self-suppression: "I'm fed / to the teeth / with agit-prop, too / I'd like / to scribble love-ballads / for you / they're profitable / charming and halcyon. / But I mastered myself, / and crushed under foot / the throat / of my very own songs."[24]

The suggestion here is that the writer who subordinates his individual sense of things to the demands of an externally imposed aesthetic program or political cause will risk compromising his personal vision, the very thing that needs to be protected if it is to maintain its integrity. The question, then, is whether a politically committed art can remain a personally authentic one, and modernists responded to it in very different ways. Lewis, for one, was anxious about direct interference in the arts and about the subtle ideological pressure that could be put on writers to address certain themes or to write in certain ways. And if some Marxists – especially in the politicized 1930s – did indeed call for literature and art to be written from an explicitly leftist (or, more narrowly, communist) point of view, this was by no means a universally held position.[25] Engels, famously, had criticized the idea of the "point-blank socialist novel, a '*Tendenzroman*,'" on the grounds that the "more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better for the work of art."[26] This led to a capacious theory of realism, which featured prominently in the influential work of the Hungarian Marxist Georg Lukács. Like Engels, Lukács maintained that writers whose politics he disagreed with nonetheless had the power to see more deeply into the problems of society if they wrote in a suitably realist manner than novelists who had a clear didactic aim. For Lukács, Balzac (though he had some reservations about his work) was one example of this kind of writer, and Thomas Mann – whose novels he hugely valued – was another. In order to see why this was so, we can turn briefly to *The Magic Mountain* (1924), a novel in which Mann turned his satiric eye on a prewar society that he portrayed as doomed.

Lecturing to an American audience about his novel, Mann described it as "the swan song" for a specific "form of existence," that is, "a capitalist economy that was still functioning well and normally."[27] The theme of this swan song has been much debated, but its oblique approach to the state of Europe in the years before the First World War suggests that the society based on this economy is neither normal nor functioning. This view is given sharp point by the presumed death of Hans Castorp in a conflagration that is a quintessential product of European great power politics.[28] Mann saw *The Magic Mountain* as a diagnostic text; it sought "to present the inner

significance of an epoch, the prewar period of European history."[29] In short, it aspired to typify its time by bringing to light the key features of the age, which provided the main point of Lukács's appreciation.

To embark on such a task was to address the problem of genre; for a writer who proposed to trace the shape of a historical crisis couldn't assume that the realist novel – with its roots in the epoch he was suggesting had passed away – offered the best form for that task. It is thus no accident that *The Magic Mountain* is a hybrid production, indebted as it is to the grandeur of myth and epic, the playfulness of a garrulous, scene-stealing narrator, the technique of the Wagnerian *leitmotiv*, the enchantment of the fairy-tale, the probing of philosophical and political issues allowed by the essay form, and, above all, to the open-endedness of a dialogic mode, through which fundamental social, philosophical, and political issues are at once debated with the utmost seriousness and subjected to teasing irony.[30]

Early reviewers of *The Magic Mountain* were puzzled by this question of genre. What kind of text were they being asked to read? Did it belong to the respected German tradition of the *Bildungsroman*, or was it something else altogether? The novel's unresolved nature is inseparable from the social crisis it adumbrates and from the difficulties Mann experienced in coming to terms with a changed political situation as he moved from the nationalist conservatism he had advocated during the war – and which he articulated in *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man* (1918) – to the cautious democratic republicanism he espoused after it. This position features in *The Magic Mountain* as one alternative to the politics of the prewar world, but it isn't clear if this or any of the political views proposed in the novel is actually tenable.[31]

The difficulty of articulating a particular politics is partly a matter of Mann's biography and partly a question of the European novel as an inherited genre, especially in the context of German life. Lukács identified the problem in 1913. Describing naturalism as "the last unifying movement" available to writers, he argued that Germany lacked "an inner spiritual and intellectual unity, a common orientation"; as a result, social disgust manifested itself in literature. However, this despairing *Weltanschauung* lacked "positive significance – be it a hero or an elevating destiny," with the further result that "its form-giving energy declared bankruptcy."[32] The malleable Castorp can be regarded as a hapless antihero while the two arch rivals, Settembrini and Naphta, can be seen as the deluded proponents of philosophies that are equally compromised, one for its preposterous optimism, the other for its dangerous fanaticism.

There is an obvious irony in the fact that Naphta was modeled on Lukács, given that the latter was so preoccupied with the morality of revolutionary

politics, which, he suggested, might require the committed individual to "become a cruel *Realpolitiker* out of a mystical ethic" who is prepared "to violate the absolute commandment: 'Thou shalt not kill.'"[33] For all their differences, Settembrini and Naphta both represent the dangers of "taking a stand," especially when this entails a refusal to countenance the possibility that one's opponent might have anything of value to say, a way of thinking that was alien to Mann's sense that, as Judith Marcus puts it, "there are two sides to every thought."[34] Thus Mann's own part in the novel moves to a middle from which Settembrini's views are ironized for their naïve faith in intellectual enlightenment, industrial progress, and the imminent arrival of a "universal brotherhood of man," while Naphta's belief in revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the pursuance of good by way of violence, is portrayed as a farrago of Jesuitism and Bolshevism.[35] Naphta has from childhood associated "piety" with "cruelty," the "idea of the sacred and the spiritual" being inextricably linked in his mind "with the sight and smell of spurting blood." This linkage explains his zeal for the cleansing violence of the revolutionary proletariat, whose "task is to strike terror into the world for the healing of the world."[36] Revealingly, this way of thinking chimes with the beliefs of real terrorists, like Nechaev and Savinkov (in whom Lukács saw "a new type of man that we should become familiar with"), and of such fictional avatars as the chilling Professor in Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907) or the "terrible Nikita" in his *Under Western Eyes* (1911).[37]

Lukács was unperturbed by the connection between Naphta and himself. He argued not only that Mann had the right to draw on real-life models but also that what mattered was whether a fictional character successfully embodied a "type." In the figure of Naphta, Mann had "obviously succeeded in his intention," so there was "nothing wrong with Naphta at all."[38] This view makes sense when it is considered in the light of Lukács's wider position on literary realism, which, he argued, depended on a typological account of society and the individual as they went through different historical phases. The critical point was whether a given novel was capable of disclosing "the contradictions within society and within the individual in the context of a dialectical unity"; insofar as it could do so, it depicted the typical character as "a dimmer reflection of the contradictions always existing in man and society," and thus brought these contradictions to light.[39]

For Lukács, Mann was an exemplary instance of the novelist who, despite his bourgeois stance, had the capacity to represent social life in a way that exposed its problematic nature. Avoiding the formlessness and lack of purpose visible in naturalism, Mann's writing was aesthetically motivated:

"Each section of a portrayed totality is placed in a concrete social context; the significance of each detail, its meaning for the evolution of society, is clearly defined."[40] This positive reading of Mann, in turn, functions in part as the means by which Lukács is enabled to attack Musil, while the criticism of Musil serves a still wider purpose: an assault on modernism *tout court*.

It is striking how often Lukács turns to Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* as an example of "the ideology of modernism" he seeks to expose. For though he admits that modernism takes different forms, he nonetheless tries to isolate its defining features, which he takes to be the subjectivization of reality, the loss of critical perspective, the inability to relate individuals to social totalities, and an ahistorical (static) conception of life, which robs human action of meaning. Musil is important to Lukács's negative account of modernism because he is read as a writer for whom psychopathology (a key issue in *The Man Without Qualities*) is a pointless protest against capitalism. Because Musil is unable to see beyond psychopathology to an alternative form of life, he turns it into "the *terminus ad quem*" of his "artistic intention," and the result is a flight from reality: a failure to measure the society that is being criticized against any contrasting norm, and a denial of the historical nature of human life, which presupposes the possibility of change.[41] *The Man Without Qualities* is for Lukács the symptom of a more widespread ideology of modernism, in which present-day problems are turned into "an immutable *condition humaine*," a strategy that dismisses politics from the outset.[42]

The symptomatological approach taken by Lukács pays scant attention to the problem of form, which is dismissed as a "bourgeois-modernist" obfuscation – an "exaggerated concern with formal criteria, with questions of style and literary technique."[43] This is an essential move for Lukács because it allows him to present literary form as a cloak that conceals the modernist "ideology" it is his duty to uncover. But Lukács's inattentiveness to the stylistic differences between literary works leads to a disastrous flattening out of modernism in all its variegated confusion. In contrast to this dismissal of form, Musil's diary entries show how deeply he was concerned with it in all his work and especially in the construction of his fragmentary magnum opus, which he feared was "overburdened with essayistic material that is too fluid and does not stick."[44] He adjured himself in 1936 to "put [him]self only in the position of a minor character, a spectator," and proceeded to suggest that "everything depends on this kind of basic perspective."[45] This emphasis on perspective maintains Musil's belief that the stance of the observer (not the active participant) offers the best means of coming to grips with the pressing social issues he sought to explore.

Lukács's hostility to Musil can be explained with reference not only to the latter's belief in the detached stance and to his political agnosticism (*"Role of the creative writer 'in politicis.' Powerless onlooker"*) but also to his mysticism.[46] *The Man Without Qualities* remains skeptical about all possible solutions to the problems confronting Europe before the First World War. This disbelief is so profound that the novel seems unable even to assume the vantage point from which it could offer the kind of critique that might be inferred from Mann's work and that Lukács so valued in it. Furthermore, if Ulrich is a symptomatic figure, then his inability to move from reflection to action might be seen as another sign of the fatalism that Lukács associated with modernism. But *The Man Without Qualities* can be read as a text mired in psychopathology only if the critic fails to see that it is trying to grasp the reasons why the search for meaning and action has come to seem so problematic in the modern world.[47] Refusing to offer premature solutions to the social, historical, and political issues with which he was preoccupied, Musil produced a speculative sketch that treated all calls for action to a severe but searching irony. As Ulrich puts it: "We live in a time of passage. It may go on like this until the end of the planet if we don't learn to tackle our deepest problems better than we have so far. Even so, when one is placed in the dark, one should not begin to sing out of fear, like a child. And it is mere singing in the dark to act as though we knew how we are supposed to conduct ourselves down here; you can shout your head off, it's still nothing but terror."[48]

The refusal to cede absolute power to nothingness allows occasional glimpses of the possibility – the creation – of alternative realities. The text's modus operandi is committed to the insights offered by counterfactual thought – not programmatic doctrines – as is made clear when the novel's narrator contrasts "a sense of reality" with "a sense of possibility," which he describes as "a conscious utopianism that does not shrink from reality but sees it as a project, something yet to be invented."[49] Ulrich, then, lacks "qualities" not because he is an apolitical nihilist but because he cannot take seriously his ailing society's values, beliefs, norms, and aspirations. In contrast to the benighted patriots around him, his "sense of reality" is "a sense of possible reality," which the novel associates, however, with a never-to-be-realized mystical nirvana.[50]

The Man Without Qualities is not a ghostly text, as Lukács avers, but is firmly rooted in the reality of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its imperial delusions are ironized through the depiction of Kakania and the portrayal of the Parallel Campaign, which has been instigated with the vainglorious aim of celebrating a monarchy that is about to disappear.[51] But if Kakania is

associated with civic muddle, then the notion of "a planned solution to all problems, a solution in which all those concerned must participate," is given short shrift in a text that treats nationalist messianism, technocratic managerialism, and revolutionary socialism, with equal disdain.[52] *The Man Without Qualities* presents prewar Austria as a paralyzed organism, then, but its Tolstoyan view of history prevents it from acceding to any of the political alternatives on offer.[53] Frustrated though Ulrich is that he and his fellow citizens appear to be at the mercy of events (see chapter 83), he nonetheless holds to the anti-teleological belief that history "resembles the movement of clouds, or the path of a man sauntering through the streets, turned aside by a shadow here, a crowd there, an unusual architectural outcrop, until at last he arrives at a place he never knew or meant to go to."[54]

In *The Man Without Qualities* Musil treats those who would impose themselves on the historical process as dangerous pretenders, forerunners of the dictators who emerged from the ashes of the First World War. From the perspective of the 1930s, the breezy 1913 claim that the "problem of civilization" will be solved by "the appearance of a new type of man," who is characterized by "an inner vision and a pure will," must be read as a biting criticism of the messianic nationalism that keeps cropping up in the novel and that prefigures the Hitlerite nightmare to come.[55] If Musil found it impossible to subscribe to any of the political "solutions" on offer, this was because he was committed to a modernist ethics of critique. His view required the writer impartially to analyze the various ideologies vying for a confused public's attention and patiently to bear with the frustration of living in a state of constant perplexity, where the breaking down of old political beliefs as well as established artistic genres lays the basis for some of the greatest creative work of modernism.

Notes

1 Raymond Williams, *Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (London: Verso, 2007), 49.
2 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Selected Writings*, ed. R.W. Flint, trans. Flint and Arthur A. Coppotelli (London: Secker & Warburg, 1972), 43, 42.
3 Ibid., 43.
4 David Burliuk, Alexey Kruchenykh, Vladimir Mayakovsky, and Velimir Khlebnikov, "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste," in Mary Ann Caws (ed.), *Manifesto: A Century of Isms* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 230.

5 Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 7; and Williams, *Politics of Modernism*, 51.

6 Wyndham Lewis (ed.), *Blast*, 2 (1915), repr. in *Blast*, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1981), vol. 1, 70, 40.

7 Wyndham Lewis (ed.), *Blast*, 1 (1914), ibid., vol. 1, 41.

8 Lewis (ed.), *Blast*, vol. 1, 17. For more on this point, see Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (1927), ed. Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1993), 37–38.

9 Ezra Pound, *Selected Letters, 1907–1941* (New York: New Directions, 1971), 237.

10 Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur* (London: Peter Owen, 1966), 95.

11 Timothy Materer (ed.), *Pound/Lewis: The Letters of Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis* (London: Faber and Faber, 1985), 182.

12 Aleksandr Rodchenko, *Experiments for the Future: Diaries, Essays, Letters, and Other Writings*, ed. Alexander N. Lavrentiev, trans. Jamey Gambrell (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2005), 142–43.

13 Ibid., 237. For more detail, see Stephen Bann (ed.), *The Tradition of Constructivism* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1990); John E. Bowlt and Matthew Drutt (eds.), *Amazons of the Avant-Garde* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1999); and John Milner, *A Slap in the Face! Futurists in Russia* (London: Philip Wilson, 2007).

14 Vladimir Mayakovsky, *The Bedbug and Selected Poetry*, ed. Patricia Blake, trans. Max Hayward and George Reavey (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 149.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., 185.

17 Ibid., 188–89.

18 Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1957), 136–37.

19 Vladimir Mayakovsky, *Mayakovsky*, trans. and ed. Herbert Marshall (London: Dennis Dobson, 1965), 129.

20 Ibid., 147.

21 Ibid., 398.

22 Ibid.; and further: "a revolutionary writer takes a very active part in the everyday life and building of Socialism" (400–01).

23 Ibid., 399.

24 Ibid., 403, 404. Hayward and Reavey render these lines as follows: "Agitprop / sticks / in my teeth too, / and I'd rather / compose / romances for you – / more profit in it / and more charm. / But I / subdued / myself, / setting my heel/ on the throat / of my own song" (Mayakovsky, *The Bedbug*, 225).

25 See, for example, Edward Upward, "A Marxist Interpretation of Literature," *The Mind in Chains: Socialism and the Cultural Revolution*, ed. Cecil Day Lewis (1937; London: Frederick Muller, 1938), 39–56. For a contemporary rejection of

this view, see Harry Kemp, Laura Riding, Robert Graves, and Alan Hodge, *The Left Heresy in Literature and Life* (London: Methuen, 1939).

26 David Craig (ed.), *Marxists on Literature: An Anthology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 270.

27 Thomas Mann, "The Making of the Magic Mountain," in Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Vintage, 1969), 717–27 (at 719).

28 In keeping with the unresolved nature of his text, Mann's narrator refuses to confirm Castorp's fate: "We even confess that it is without great concern we leave the question open" (ibid., 716).

29 Ibid., 723.

30 "The leitmotiv," Mann explained, "is the technique employed to preserve the inward unity and abiding presentness of the whole at each moment" (ibid., 718). For the anti-realist implications of Mann's use of the *leitmotiv*, see Hugh Ridley, *The Problematic Bourgeois: Twentieth-Century Criticism on Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks and The Magic Mountain* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994), 98–99.

31 For a detailed account, including discussion of his political differences with Heinrich Mann, see Donald Prater, *Thomas Mann: A Life* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 95–151. Prater suggests that *The Magic Mountain* "by implication . . . argues for a humane, enlightened democracy" (149).

32 Georg Lukács, *Selected Correspondence, 1902–1920: Dialogues with Weber, Simmel, Buber, Mannheim, and Others*, trans. and ed. Judith Marcus and Zoltán Tar (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 215, 216.

33 Ibid., 248. It was, Lukács explained, "the ethical problem of terrorism that matter[ed] most" to him (245). For an analysis of the relationship between Mann and Lukács, and of the extent to which Naphta was based on the latter, see Judith Marcus, *Georg Lukács and Thomas Mann: A Study in the Sociology of Literature* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1994).

34 Marcus, *Georg Lukács and Thomas Mann*, 60. Though we might note how hard Mann found it to think in such terms when he fell out with his brother Heinrich over their respective attitudes to the war.

35 Mann, *Magic Mountain*, 155. Mann compounds the ironies in his final chapter. Confronting the war, his narrator observes: "We look at it, our humanistic-aesthetic eye pictures it among scenes far other than these: we see these youths watering horses on a sunny arm of the sea; roving with the beloved one along the strand, the lover's lips to the ear of the yielding bride; in happiest rivalry bending the bow. Alas, no, here they lie, their noses in fiery filth" (714). Thus is Settembrini's faith in universal fraternity rewarded.

36 Ibid., 441, 404.

37 Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), 306. Savinkov (who wrote under the name Ropshin) was responsible for several

assassinations. He was the author of *The Pale Horse* (1909) – the book in which Lukács was interested in 1915 – and *Memoirs of a Terrorist* (1917).

38 Georg Lukács, *Record of a Life: An Autobiographical Sketch*, ed. István Eörsi, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1983), 94.

39 Georg Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John Mander and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), 31.

40 Ibid., 79.

41 Ibid., 29.

42 Ibid., 31.

43 Ibid., 17.

44 Robert Musil, *Diaries: 1899–1941*, trans. Philip Payne, ed. Mark Mirsky (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 411.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid., xxiii. See especially chap. 135 ("Holy Discourse: Erratic Progress") in Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins and Burton Pike (London: Picador, 1997), 818–37. For a discussion of Lukács's view of Musil's work and of critics inspired by his line of argument, see Tim Mehigan, *The Critical Response to Robert Musil's The Man Without Qualities* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), 38–66.

47 Musil's response to the kind of criticism proffered by Lukács was unequivocal: "Art too seeks knowledge: it represents the indecent and the morbid in terms of their relationship to the healthy, and that means nothing other than: it furthers the knowledge of the decent and the healthy." Quoted in David S. Luft, *Robert Musil and the Crisis of European Culture 1880–1942* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 104.

48 Musil, *Man Without Qualities*, 232.

49 Ibid., 11.

50 Ibid., 12, 947.

51 For the patriotic origins of the directionless and ill-starred Parallel Campaign, see ibid., chaps. 21 and 22 (87–96).

52 Ibid., 393.

53 For more on this point, see Luft, *Robert Musil*, 18–21; and Klaus Amman, "Robert Musil: Literature and Politics," in Philip Payne, Graham Bartram, and Galin Tihanov (eds.), *A Companion to the Works of Robert Musil* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2007), 53–86.

54 Musil, *Man Without Qualities*, 392.

55 Ibid., 212. The novel portrays extreme nationalist politics as a form of scapegoating: "ethnic prejudice is usually nothing more than self-hatred, dredged up from the murky depths of one's own conflicts and projected onto some convenient victim" (461).

The "New Women" of Modernism

CRISTANNE MILLER

If I don't drive around the park,
I'm pretty sure to make my mark.
If I'm in bed each night by ten,
I may get back my looks again.
If I abstain from fun and such,
I'll probably amount to much;
But I shall stay the way I am,
Because I do not give a damn.
                    Dorothy Parker, "Observation" (1926)[1]

The international phenomenon of the New Woman has been one of the most extravagantly documented since the 1880s, when it first became a focus of literature and popular debate. The New Woman was featured in novels, poetry, dance, films, photographs, periodicals, and advertising – often as a symbol of everything exciting or frightening, or both, about modernity. While much of that attention focused on either a white suffragist or bourgeois rebel who represented female independence through activities ranging from political reform to bicycle riding or dancing the Charleston, "new" women were equally prevalent in various ethnic communities, in educational and professional contexts, and in all socioeconomic classes. Manifestations of this New Woman in fact and in representation differed by region. nation, race, ethnicity, and class, and, as times changed, by the decade.[2] Modernist art and literature contain numerous images of New Women, revealing modernism's preoccupation with gender issues and the question of how changes in women's lives heralded the transformation of all institutions and relationships in modern life. Whereas most discussion of the New Woman in literature focuses on prose and on the proto-modernist writers of the 1880s and 1890s, this essay also examines the continuing and shifting manifestations of the New Woman in another modernist genre, with

attention to the often more abstractly theorized depiction of new possibilities for women's lives in poetry.

The term "New Woman" was popularized by an 1894 exchange between Sarah Grand and Ouida, which set off a lively international public debate as to whether the New Woman was immoral, degenerate, unnatural, and a type of demonic Amazon, or an idealized, well-educated beacon of social and moral reform, evolving appropriately to the demands of the new century. This debate continued through many genres well into the twentieth century. In her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1924), Virginia Woolf claims the somewhat belated date of "on or about December 1910" as the moment when "human character changed"; novelists in the 1920s, she argued, still needed to catch up with that change by writing new kinds of realism focused on women's lives. For her, such realism constituted a break with the past so radical that it was perceived as dangerous: "Thus it is that we hear all round us, in poems and novels and biographies, even in newspaper articles and essays, the sound of breaking and falling, crashing and destruction."[3] While realistic representations of the New Woman began long before 1910, literature up through the 1920s rarely depicted the full degree of change occurring in women's lives or manifested by their actual accomplishments.[4] By largely eschewing narrative description, however, modernist poetry was in some ways more radical than fiction in calling for new conceptions of womanhood and women's life choices.

Historical Contexts

At the turn of the century, the range of women's educational, legal, economic, professional, creative, and public social opportunities constituted an illuminating barometer for change – whether in public life or "human nature" or both. While changes occurred at different rates in different regions or countries, there could be no doubt that women's new opportunities were transforming family life, standards of morality, expectations about the contours of public life, and (especially but not only white) men's expectations about the privileges they could take for granted in domestic and professional spheres. Generally, women had better access to public education and legal rights in the United States than elsewhere during the nineteenth century but even there such rights were limited. In the mid-nineteenth century in most countries, women could not matriculate at universities, hold a bank account, or undertake legal action under their own name; vote; or appear unescorted in public without being suspected of moral turpitude or impropriety.[5] By the

turn of the century, many of these conditions had changed, and by 1920 women could vote in national elections in the Weimar Republic, in Britain (women over the age of 30), and in the United States; legislation was expanding marital rights and protections and granting women greater financial independence and access to university and professional degrees; and women had something between measured and nearly full access to public spaces without social opprobrium.[6] This was the case not just because of employment opportunities that required women to leave the home and the rise of department stores and tea rooms but because of clubs and other organizations, including nightclubs in Berlin, opened exclusively for women.[7]

Changing conceptions of sexuality and of sexual normalcy contributed to this shifting landscape. Psychologists like Otto Weininger, Sigmund Freud, and Havelock Ellis encouraged new theorizing about the nature of sexuality, and debates raged about the naturalness of both homosexuality and women's sexual desire. Women like Annie Besant, Aletta Jacobs, and Margaret Sanger campaigned internationally for birth control and other sexual rights for women. In Berlin, Magnus Hirschfeld founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee (1897) and the Institute for Sexual Research (1919) to advocate for homosexual and transgender rights. In New York City, women formed the Heterodoxy Club in 1912 to discuss the politics and personal ramifications of women's unconventional life choices. An increasing number of female characters during this period also express sexual desire for both men and women, demand their right to sexual pleasure and abandon, or mock the sincerity of romantic sentiments. As the openly bisexual poet Edna St. Vincent Millay wrote in "First Fig" (1920), a title itself satirizing the supposed natural modesty of Eve behind her fig leaves, "My candle burns at both ends; / It will not last the night; / But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends– / It gives a lovely light!"[8] Dorothy Parker similarly celebrates female independence in "Now at Liberty," where the speaker mourns the loss of her "Little white love" in stock sentimental phrases: "Once you go out, it's done, it's done / All of my days are gray with yearning"; she ends each stanza, however, with a spunky rejoinder in a parenthetical aside, such as "(Nevertheless, a girl needs fun)."[9]

Feminist challenges to conventional gender definitions and women's roles stimulated backlash theories of sexual differences, speciously arguing that, because sex roles were biologically determined, women harmed their reproductive systems by sitting in classrooms, pursuing careers, or engaging in any activities culturally defined as "unfeminine." Women in turn criticized

such theories, especially in the fields of medicine, economics, and education. By the 1910s, the word "feminism" had become an international signifier for transgressive ideas supporting women's independence. Like "New Woman," the term "feminist" covered a broad array of attitudes, from those of women engaged in sports or community reform to socialists and free love advocates.

While the 1920s has been the most heralded moment for such changes because of the plethora of mass media images and films from and about this era, the most radical harbingers of the New Woman and changes in women's lives occurred in fact in previous decades, when changing employment opportunities for women coincided with changing expectations of independence in their adult lives. From the mid-1880s on, illustrations, cartoons, ads, stories, and poems depicted sporty women in bloomers as well as suffragists and other "new" women. Andrew Lang's satiric "The Ballade of the Girton Girl" (1885), for example, both mocks "Ladies" learning Latin and critical "evaluat[ion]" at places like Girton College as "unmaidenly" and suggests that such changes are here to stay.[10] The New Realism of the 1880s and 1890s anticipated the depiction of actual female lives that Woolf later advocated.

THE WEAKER SEX
THE YOUNG MAN IMAGINES HIMSELF THE LATEST VICTIM OF SOME FAIR ENTOMOLOGIST.

24.1 A new entomology: image from *Life*'s 1904 *Gibson Calendar*.

While membership in women's clubs and sports or other social organizations grew exponentially around the turn of the century, by 1920 the younger generation saw these institutions as old-fashioned. After the passage of voting rights legislation in Germany, England, and the United States, women's movements in part lost their momentum, as white feminists turned increasingly to demands for personal freedoms, often based on new understandings of psychology, with an emphasis on the corporeal and sexual. Advertising aimed at women's self-improvement and physical attractiveness (to men) encouraged this shift of attention, marking women as the primary consumers of products to transform their appearance, wardrobe, and domestic spaces. In the United States, expediency in seeking women's voting rights encouraged an acceptance of racism within the predominantly white women's movement, which in turn encouraged African American women to form their own reform movements, more focused on labor and maternal rights. Working-class, black, and ethnic New Women were underrepresented in popular media, fiction, and poetry, although immigrant novels like Anzia Yezierska's *Salome of the Tenements* (1923) and *Bread Givers* (1925) depict women's daily struggles to overcome poverty, as do Gertrude Stein's *Three Lives* (1909) and Lola Ridge's *The Ghetto, and Other Poems* (1918).[11] Irmgard Keun's *Das Kunstseidene Mädchen* (*The Artificial Silk Girl*, 1932) deals frankly with the relation of poverty to prostitution.

The New Woman in Fiction and Visual Art

For the most part, fiction portrayed the New Woman as so far ahead of her time that her leading a successful, fulfilled, or happy life was all but impossible. Early representations frequently depicted a woman unhappy in bourgeois domestic circumstances who makes some move toward independence, whether marital, sexual, intellectual, creative, or financial – marking her power to determine at least in part the directions of her life but frequently concluding with her unhappiness or death. These representations reveal both the period's widespread fascination with this character and its ambivalence toward or outright fear of her, and they imply that however admirable her newfound independence there was no place for it in current society. Henrik Ibsen's Nora Helmer in *A Doll's House* (1879) walks out of an infantilizing marriage; his intellectually and emotionally frustrated title character in *Hedda Gabler* (1890) commits suicide. Similarly unhappy are Henry James's Daisy in *Daisy Miller* (1878), who dies of a fever contracted as punishment for her impropriety; Isabel Archer (*Portrait of a Lady*, 1881); and feminist reformer

Olive Chancellor (*The Bostonians*, 1886). The latter two protagonists do not die, but Isabel returns to a loveless marriage and Olive loses her beloved companion Verena Tarrant to marriage with an anti-feminist southerner who is unlikely to give her lasting love or fulfillment: James assures his readers that the tears Verena sheds at the novel's conclusion will not be her last. In 1893, two British novels portray heroines who die, one of a fatal accident (the feminist Bernardine Holme in Beatrice Harraden's *Ships that Pass in the Night*, 1893) and the other of syphilis contracted from her husband (the domestic Edith in Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins*, 1893; in the same novel, Evadne becomes hysterical and attempts suicide because of her stultifying marriage).[12] In 1895, in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, the educated, free-thinking Sue Bridehead returns to a loveless marriage after her stepson kills himself and her children (born out of wedlock).

Such fiction proliferates at the turn of the century: in the United States, Kate Chopin's Edna Pontellier commits suicide in *The Awakening* (1899); Charlotte Perkins Gilman's unnamed wife goes mad in "The Yellow Wall-paper" (1899); Edith Wharton's Lily Bart also commits suicide in *The House of Mirth* (1905); Theodore Dreiser's heroine in *Sister Carrie* (1900) is profession-ally and financially successful as an actress but unfeeling, amoral, and always unsatisfied. In 1909, Gertrude Stein follows her title characters in *Three Lives* to their deaths, two unhappily: Melanctha dies from consumption after a life of "wandering" sexually and emotionally, and Lena dies following the birth of her child in a loveless marriage that leaves her isolated and "dull," "as if she had no feeling," "always ... more and more lifeless."[13] While especially "Melanctha," with its mixed-race heroine, insistent repetitions, grammatical complexity, and focus on emotional states rather than plot, is distinctly modernist in style and in its handling of racial, gender, and sexual construc-tions, it concludes with what can be read as punishment for its protagonist's "too complex" and vague desires; Melanctha "wondered often how she could go on living."[14] In the late 1920s, Nella Larsen depicts middle-class African American women in *Passing* and *Quicksand*, which arguably conclude with similar punishment: one ends with a heroine's murder of the friend to whom she was erotically attracted and the other with extreme disillusionment about the possibilities of finding fulfillment in marriage, in a kind of intellectual and emotional death.

Other fiction of these decades represents New Women more encour-agingly, and some stories by women function in effect as manifestos for women's greater social, personal, and sexual freedoms. Grant Allen's *The Woman Who Did* (1895) celebrates a heroine who rejects marriage and

promotes free love relationships. Sarah Orne Jewett's *Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896) focuses on a financially independent writer who periodically retreats to a female-dominated rural community in Maine, where she maintains an affectionate and mutually supportive relationship with her landlady. Stein's "The Good Anna" (1909) portrays a long-lived servant, whose life (which includes an implied romance with her female employer) is "not unhappy" despite losses and her aging, "always more tired," "strained, worn-out body" (51).[15] *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* (1912) by Eurasian Sui Sin Far (Edith Maude Eaton) includes short stories protesting personal and institutional racism and sexism or, as in her title story, an immigrant woman's preserving both her integrity and satisfying relationships in the midst of change. In 1915, Willa Cather published *The Song of the Lark*, a portrait-of-the-artist featuring Thea Kronborg as an ambitious and eventually successful opera singer.[16] In the same year, sociologist and writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman published the utopian fantasy *Herland*, about a two-thousand-year-old society made up exclusively of women, who reproduce through parthenogenesis and live free of war and patterns of domination. Nonfictional works of this period go further than the fiction: for example, Gilman's *Women and Economics* (1898) argued that it was necessary to establish women's economic independence and improve their educational levels in order to modernize (and ultimately save) the institutions of marriage, motherhood, and domestic industry. South African Olive Schreiner's *Woman and Labour* (1911) proposed socialist solutions to the problem of gender inequality.

From the 1890s on, painters and photographers also increasingly featured images of the New Woman, in ways ranging from liberating to misogynistic. Early photographic pioneer Gertrude Käsebier (1852–1934) extensively photographed mothers and Native Americans, and promoted photography as a serious career for women. Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946), founder of the little magazine *Camera Work* (1903–17), frequently photographed his wife, Georgia O'Keeffe, depicting her strengths through focus on features like her hands. Pablo Picasso developed cubism through paintings featuring portraits of women that were disturbing to some European and American eyes; for example, his "Les demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907, first titled "The Brothel of Avignon") borrowed features of African masks for the women's faces, giving them a mixed-racial, savage appearance. Picasso's portrayals of women had a powerful influence on modernist art but also continued the tradition of painting female nudes and portrayed women as frighteningly alien. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner also painted prostitutes, as in *Strasse Berlin* (1913) and

Potsdamer Platz (1914). In contrast, feminist Hannah Höch created photomontages juxtaposing androgynous figures with New Women and representatives of patriarchal militarism and the state, as in "Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany" (1919). Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986) painted magnified flowers and other objects that were suggestively both feminine and sexual, initiating the development of a female iconography in art – for example, in *Black Iris* (1926). Höch and O'Keeffe have also been influential on later artists, especially women.

Ann Ardis has argued that the popularity of New Woman novels in the late nineteenth century contributed to the critical establishment's valorization of formalist aesthetics, although it simultaneously condemned such fiction to the non-literary realm.[17] Sally Ledger similarly sees New Woman writers as harbingers of modernism, even though they are ignored in modernist genealogies.[18] Andreas Huyssen has famously argued that modernists reacted against a feminized mass culture, which by the 1910s almost by definition included fiction by women about women.[19] Suzanne Clark, however, argues that modernism continued to be influenced by significant characteristics of popular sentimentalism in verse and fiction.[20] The relation between gender emancipation, popular culture, and modernism is complex and remains contested. Without question, however, many high modernist male writers combined radical aesthetics with condemnations of the feminine, including conventional or even misogynistic portrayals of women. As Marianne Moore sardonically questions in a largely positive review of Ezra Pound's *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, "Is not the view of woman expressed by the Cantos older-fashioned than that of Siam and Abyssinia?"[21]

Pound was not alone in such views. Franz Kafka never represents a New Woman. Thomas Mann portrays sexually frustrated women with sympathy, perhaps through the lens of his own homosexuality, but no New Woman. T.S. Eliot imagines modern women as mechanical, hysterical, or otherwise ineffectual objects of desire or agency – best represented by his teatime typist who, after indifferently suffering sex with a "small house-agent's clerk," "smoothes her hair with automatic hand, / And puts a record on the gramophone" (*The Waste Land*, 1922).[22] Hemingway's women are either similarly ineffectual or emasculating – like the promiscuous Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) – and William Faulkner portrays no admirable women of the New Woman type.

Other male novelists write more affirmatively about women's changing lives. F. Scott Fitzgerald's women are magnetic in their zest for living but

they are typically self-centered and remain secondary to their male counterparts. D.H. Lawrence writes with great sympathy about women's sexual desire and entrapment within bourgeois conventions, but in *Women in Love* (1920) he portrays the homoerotic bond of his male protagonists more powerfully and affirmatively than the relationships of either Ursula (who is repeatedly described as "unconscious") and Rupert or Gudrun and Gerald, whose intensity of relationship involves as much revulsion as desire. And although James Joyce's Molly Bloom is famous for her affirmation of sexual pleasure, *Ulysses* depicts primarily a world of men, where women are wives, sexual partners, or desirable as potential sexual partners. With a few notable exceptions, then, the men of high modernism are not "making it new" when it comes to depictions of women. In contrast, female modernists construct some of the most radical images of New Women and theorize the social and psychological changes required for women to live "new" lives in a new century, although even they typically represent women to be more conventional than they are themselves. Some of this experimental work shows most notably in poetry.

The New Woman in Poetry

Because poetry does not require the definition of character, delineation of physical or otherwise gendered characteristics of its speaker, or any teleological narrative projection, it enables a more radical depiction of the "New Woman" than fiction. At the same time, this vision is less popularizable, insofar as modernist poetry articulates its concerns through disjunctive, incomplete, or highly complex syntax and grammar, or through abstract and metaphorical indirection. An extreme example of feminist resistance to easy interpretability occurs in the work of Else Lasker-Schüler, a German Jewish poet, novelist, artist, and playwright who lived a strikingly "new" life as well as writing repeatedly about gender, Jewishness, and other aspects of inherited or chosen identity. Like many female writers of this period, Lasker-Schüler engaged in extensive self-naming, most provocatively as Prince Jussuf of Thebes. For Lasker-Schüler, adopting this name was a performance of double gendering, as was her occasional donning of a turban and Turkish pants for performance-art readings and her sketching of a series of self-portraits as Prince Jussuf, complete with stylized Arabic male clothing. She never disguised her German and Jewish femaleness while fictionally assuming the privileges, exoticism, and different marginalization of an Arab prince.

Lasker-Schüler's poems similarly present a speaker who is indeterminate in gender and sexuality. In her love lyrics, for example, it is not clear whether her first-person speaker is male, the female poet masquerading as a man (Jussuf), or a woman – a fact complicated by the fact that Lasker-Schüler depicts homosexual male couples in poems like "David and Jonathan" and addresses at least one love poem to a woman. In these poems, Lasker-Schüler blurs binary divisions between male and female, homo- and heterosexual, or art and author. For example, in "Dem Barbaren" (To the Barbarian), she uses radical metaphors of interpenetration to suggest intercourse without making either body exclusively phallic or feminine; each receives, each penetrates the other: "I dig without tiring in your breast … Your diamond dreams / Cut my veins open … You delight in the alarmed murmur / Of my shells. / / But your heart lets in no more seas."[23] Writing of Stein's "Melanctha," Marianne DeKoven theorizes that "it is the conflation of nonwhite race and the working class, embodied in the undecidable (dangerous, fascinating) feminine that produces Modernist form."[24] Similarly, Lasker-Schüler's Jussuf is an unstable conflation of cultures, social status, and gender/sexuality, a conflation that is key to her highly metaphorical and disjunctive writing.

The British expatriate poet, fiction writer, and artist Mina Loy more explicitly theorized the necessity and possibilities of gender change. Among her earliest compositions is a "Feminist Manifesto" (1914; published 1982), which counters assertions such as Filippo Marinetti's that futurists "will fight moralism, feminism, every opportunistic or utilitarian cowardice."[25] At the same time, Loy lambasts the "feminist movement as at present instituted" as "**Inadequate**."[26] Women must cease to adhere to patriarchal values that construct them as objects of desire and economic exchange, "destroy[ing] in themselves, the desire to be loved." As a part of this destruction, she writes, "the first and greatest sacrifice you have to make is of your '*virtue*,'" outrageously and satirically recommending that, "as a protection against the man made bogey of virtue – which is the principal instrument of her subjection," women undertake the "*unconditional* surgical *destruction of virginity* through-out the female population at puberty" (154).

Loy's early poems are also satirical in their portrayal of women's lives. "The Effectual Marriage or the Insipid Narrative of Gina and Miovanni" (1915) narrates the tale of a couple living within strict gender binaries, Miovanni residing in his library and Gina in the kitchen "among his pots and pans / Where he so kindly kept her" (36). The poem breaks off when the narrator learns that Gina is "mad" – as Loy implies any woman must be whose only wish is "that still / Miovanni would love her to-morrow" (38).

In "Parturition" (1914), Loy's speaker contrasts the agonizing labor of birthing with her husband's frivolous infidelity: he visits his mistress while she "succeeds in unifying the positive and negative poles of sensation" in a painful but "cosmic reproductivity" (6, 7). In "Songs to Joannes" (1917), Loy satirizes the boy-god Love as a comically phallic "Pig Cupid his rosy snout / Rooting erotic garbage," yet also acknowledges the experience of mutual sexual pleasure – albeit short-lived: "laughing honey // And spermatozoa" mingle "In the milk of the Moon" (55, 56). Loy more openly celebrates the power of female intellect and creativity in "Gertrude Stein," describing her as a "Curie / of the laboratory / of vocabulary," who extracts from "the tonnage / of consciousness" "a radium of the word" (94).

Stein's own *Tender Buttons* (1914) constructs a more affirmative although less direct depiction of the New Woman by inscribing relationship within the domestic environment and activities of ordinary women's lives. Organized around the categories of Objects, Food, and Rooms, *Tender Buttons* uses puns, suggestive juxtaposition, and other kinds of implication to celebrate, evaluate, or bemoan aspects of a lesbian domestic economy. "A Long Dress" puns on the matched labors of dress making and writing, through references to the "line" and the "current," which comprises the electricity running the sewing machine and the moment precipitating thought: "Where is the serene length, it is there and a dark place is not a dark place . . . A line distinguishes it. A line just distinguishes it."[27] "A Petticoat" erotically proposes "A light white, a disgrace, an ink spot, a rosy charm" (22). "A Time to Eat" humorously establishes the gentle tyrannies of household order: "A pleasant simple habitual and tyrannical and authorized and educated and resumed and articulate separation. This is not tardy" (23).

In contrast to these short pieces, the seven-page "Roast Beef" seems to encompass all the rhythms of a day, anticipating Woolf's extended narrating of the rituals of domestic community in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), where Mrs. Ramsay's *boeuf en daube* is "a perfect triumph" that brings a kind of solemn peace to the table where she presides, "like a fume rising upwards, holding them safe together." Helping a guest to a second helping of beef amounts to "carefully helping [him] to a specially tender piece, of eternity . . . Of such moments, [Mrs. Ramsay] thought, the thing is made that endures."[28] Stein's "Roast Beef" is predictably less triumphant and more contradictory, but toward its conclusion Stein writes "Calmness, calm is beside the plate . . . and the evening is long . . . The result the pure result is juice and size and baking and exhibition and nonchalance and sacrifice and volume and a section in division and the surrounding recognition and horticulture and no

murmur" (39). One feels some of the same conjuring of community established through the ritual of offering food in Stein's words as later in Woolf's: "to satisfy a singularity and not to be blinder, to sugar nothing darker and to read redder, to have the color better, to sort out dinner, *to remain together*" (38, my emphasis). For Stein and Woolf, being and working in relationship or community is a primary value – although they, like their male peers, also explore problems of the New Woman's loneliness and unfulfilled desire and Stein is generally less directly engaged in her work with questions of "New" womanhood.

In *Tender Buttons*, Stein repeats words like "dirt" or "cut" to suggest socially despised or painful aspects of lesbian life. At the same time, her radically non-narrative prose poems construct no delimiting trajectory or conclusion for female or lesbian desire and agency. For her, as for writers like Lasker-Schüler and Loy, newness adheres in part in preventing binary, traditional, or other closed epistolary and ontological categories, just as in their lives these women variously rebelled against restrictive boundaries and forged emancipating relationships of their own.

These modernist women writers were significantly enabled by male editors, friends, family members, lovers, or husbands. In both Britain and the United States, aspects of feminism were a shared commitment of male and female writers; even men who represented New Women with at best uneasy ambivalence in their art often admired and supported New Women writers and artists. For example, Wyndham Lewis published Rebecca West's "Indissoluble Matrimony" (1914) – a vitriolic portrait of a married couple, focusing on the weak husband's psychotic, ineffectual, and needy hatred of his wife – in the first issue of *Blast*, where he also praises suffragettes as "brave Comrades."[29] And Pound is as famous for supporting female editors and poets in their publication as for descriptions like that in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, where he describes "a myriad" of men dying in the First World War for "An old bitch gone in the teeth, / For a botched civilization."[30] While this support has been represented as female dependence on male advisors, men were in fact dependent on women for publishing much of their work, for the first time in literary history, during the 1910s and 1920s.

Women founded and edited major periodicals and presses and they edited significant anthologies publishing modernist literature. In Ireland, Evelyn Gleeson founded the Dun Emer Industries and Press in 1902 (renamed the Cuala Press in 1908), which was managed and run entirely by women. In England, in 1911 Dora Marsden founded the *Freewoman* (later renamed the *Egoist*). In Chicago, in 1912 Harriet Monroe founded *Poetry Magazine*, which

she edited until her death in 1936, while in New York in 1914, Margaret Anderson founded the *Little Review*, probably the most consistently radical little magazine in its aesthetics, and Jane Heap joined her in an editorial role in 1916. Again in 1916, African American novelist Pauline E. Hopkins founded the *New Era*. Amy Lowell edited three anthologies of imagist poetry between 1915 and 1917; Virginia Woolf co-founded the Hogarth Press in 1917; and Irish-born Lola Ridge was associate editor of *Others* (1918–19) and American editor of *Broom* (1922–23). From 1919 to 1927, Jessie Fauset was literary editor of the *Crisis*, and in 1927 Gwendolyn Bennett guest-edited *Black Opals*. Marianne Moore edited the *Dial* from 1925 to 1929; and H.D., Bryher, and Kenneth Macpherson edited the first film journal in English, *Close Up* (1927–33). Among them, these New Women published virtually every significant writer of early and high modernism.

Major Modernist New Woman Writers

While one hears often of the modernist "Men of 1914," one might regard the ("New") Women of 1914 as at least equally influential in the development of modernist aesthetics, in the publication of modernist literature, and in the profundity of their responses to modernity. These would include at minimum Anderson, H.D., Lasker-Schüler, Loy, Monroe, Moore, Stein, West, and Woolf. Allowing for the fact that the 1914 date has been mythologized by the outbreak of the Great War, and that activities focused in that fabled year were ongoing already or subsequently, it was on or about 1914 that Anderson founded the *Little Review*; H.D. became literary editor of *The Egoist*; Lasker-Schüler published her greatest book of poems, *Hebräische Balladen*; Loy published her first poems and Moore submitted her first poems to little magazines – with initial publication in 1915; Stein published *Tender Buttons*; West published her first short story; and Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out*, was at the press, although its publication was delayed until 1915.

In fiction and poetry, these and other women composed and published works initiating practices like narrative dislocation, stream of consciousness, grammatical and syntactic disjunction or incompletion, a foregrounded use of myth or symbolism, and intensified imagism.[31] In addition to writing literature, women wrote commentary and reviews, in some cases campaigned for women's rights, and lived privately and publicly in ways that broke the old rules for female behavior. Even the most radical representations of women in fiction do not rival the range and seriousness of accomplishment of this first generation of modernist women, who reformulated the

possibilities of women's lives and literary practice. This point can be made most clearly by looking at the lives and accomplishments of three women who are rightly regarded as being among the most important female modernists, and who represent different aspects of the New Woman in their lives and as writers: H.D. (Hilda Doolittle, 1886–1961), Marianne Moore (1887–1972), and Virginia Woolf (1882–1941). H.D. and Moore were two of the most influential poets of Anglo-American modernism, writing and publishing from the 1910s into the 1960s. Woolf was a major theorist of gender in modern life and literature and the most influential female novelist of the twentieth century. These women represent distinct types of the New Woman at her most ambitious, successful, and profound. Moreover, the poetry of H.D. and Moore suggests ways that poetry bypasses what can be the traps of fictional representation of New Women by avoiding narrative trajectories that embed ideas or speakers in restrictive, oppressive, or indifferent relationships and communities.

Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) helped develop the practice of imagism, before leaving its abbreviated intensity behind for a more personal myth-based, Symbolist, often disjunctively narrative poetry. This stylistic development led her eventually to the composition of two poetic sequences that radically revised the genre of epic, *Trilogy* (1944) and *Helen in Egypt* (1952–53, published 1961). H.D. married more than once, had a daughter conceived out of wedlock, and maintained a lifelong connection with her friend and lover, Bryher (Winifred Ellerman). Together with Bryher and Kenneth Macpherson, who was Bryher's husband and H.D.'s lover, she acted in and helped produce the film *Borderline*, on an interracial romance. H.D. also wrote several novels and memoirs, some of which represented versions of her own conflicting experiences of heterosexual and lesbian desire never handled in her poems. Instead, her poems explore and theorize the challenges of relationships for a creative woman seeking emotional and psychic fulfillment and of spiritual survival in the midst of trauma, most powerfully in *Trilogy*, which she began during the London blitz of the Second World War. In the first part of *Trilogy*, she writes, "we passed the flame: we wonder / what saved us? what for?"[32]

H.D. repeatedly represents aesthetic and gender conventions as interwoven. Her 1916 "Sea Rose" celebrates a rose "marred and with stint of petals," dripping "acrid fragrance," as "more precious / than a wet rose" – the flower that had represented femininity in sentimental and masculinist literature for centuries (5). By giving no context to her comparison of these types, but declaring a preference for the rose strong enough to be "flung on

the sand," H.D. suggests that the sea rose provides a model for both her "new" minimalist verse and the life of the unconventional New Woman. Both can be "acrid," and may appear "marred" in comparison to earlier norms, but they will survive as independent entities. "Sheltered Garden" is more explicit, announcing, "I have had enough" and concluding with a call for "a new beauty" impossible in sheltered cultivation but potentially to be found "in some terrible / wind-tortured place" (19, 21). In "Fragment Thirty-Six," H.D's speaker muses in the first stanza on the female artist's choices rather than her nature or aesthetic:

> I know not what to do,
> my mind is reft:
> is song's gift best?
> is love's gift loveliest?   (165)

The apparent dilemma posed between devotion to art or love, however, is undercut by the fact that the question is posed in the form of strikingly lyric verse. This stanza's four iambic lines constitute a pentameter couplet. At the same time, the strongly stressed rhythm in lines 3 and 4 and question mark after "best" push against a perceived iambic pentameter; similarly, the multiple preceding rhymes work against a sense of completion in the expected, line-final off-rhyme of "reft" and "loveliest." "Reft" resonates with the repeated "gift"; "best" rhymes with "loveliest"; and the homophonic and assonantal repetitions of "song's gift" and "love's gift loveliest" gather the reader's attention within the stanza's last two lines, again syncopating our hearing of the lines as a traditional couplet. Just as H.D.'s question seems plaintively conventional but undercuts the seriousness of its query through its form, her nuanced play with formal features suggests that for this female speaker the "gift" of art is not optional; it is not something she discards in favor of "love" even if the conventions of life seem to pose that binary decision. This poem's free verse rarely returns to such poised pentameter units, but it maintains extraordinary lyricism as the poet asks "will the sound break, / rending the night / with rift on rift of rose / and scattered light?" (167).

H.D. questions how to make sense of a violent and chaotic world while affirming the role of individual "song" and spirit. An extended sequence of lyrics in three parts, *Trilogy* rewrites the traditional heroic war epic by instead presenting anti-authoritarian, revisionist mythologies and a spiritual quest drawing from more than one religious tradition. In *Trilogy*, it is repeatedly the "small, static, limited" and "indigestible" being that can "beget, self out of

self // selfless," creating the possibility of survival but also of life that empowers, that itself gives life: "it is the seed of a lily ... that smallest grain, / *the least of all seeds* / that grows branches // where the birds rest ... it is heal-all, / everlasting" (514, 585). This epic offers no narrative of an individual woman or teleological conclusion – no victory, no promise of assured "haven/heaven" through any practice or belief, but also no conclusively suicidal or depressed protagonist. Instead, it provides a way of thinking through multiple cultures, myths, and beliefs. H.D. models a feminist or "New Woman" response to the world's violence, without openly thematizing it or giving it representation through a fictional character.

Marianne Moore, who never married and had no children, lived with her mother until the latter's death in 1947, when Moore was sixty. An active suffragist who dressed in masculine-tailored women's suits, Moore seemed old-fashioned in comparison to other modernists. Her version of the New Woman contained no element of the popularized image but had to do with economic independence, ambition, and the unabashed demonstration of her formidable intelligence. At the same time, her poems display exuberant pleasure in physical being through their extravagantly detailed descriptions of places, animals, or objects. In "When I buy pictures," she muses on the "imaginary" possession of "what would give me pleasure in my average moments" – followed by eight examples of visual details "'lit with piercing glances into the life of things.'"[33] As Linda Leavell notes, although her influence on other poets is rarely noted, she "epitomized what other modernists aspired to," and poets with mutually exclusive aesthetics like Eliot and William Carlos Williams "nearly idolized" Moore's poetry.[34]

Like H.D., Moore wrote repeatedly about gender equality in ways that conflate demands for a new aesthetic with those for new patterns of behavior and thought. In "Roses Only," Moore challenges women to remember that "we are justified in supposing / That you must have brains" – however they might try to disguise the fact. Substituting "brilliance" for beauty as the quality most to be admired, she concludes with praise not of the traditionally celebrated fragrant feminine petal but of "thorns": they do not protect against "mildew":

> but what about the predatory hand? What is brilliance without coordination?
>   Guarding the
>   infinitesimal pieces of your mind, compelling audience to
>   the remark that it is better to be forgotten than to be re-membered too violently,
>   your thorns are the best part of you.[35]

If women valued their brains and used them to secure their independence from predation, Moore implies, they might live up to their capacity for brilliance. Like most of Moore's early poems, "Roses Only" uses syllabics to highlight the artificialities of form while maintaining precisely patterned stanza structures of varying line lengths – and, in this case, also maintaining a rhyme scheme of abcba. Such form more radically alters the poetic line than any poet since Whitman by categorically divorcing lineation from syntax: her syllabic lines may end on a function word ("the") or midword ("ac- / cident" in "The Fish"), whereas other free verse of the period usually occurs in syntactically defined lines.[36] Moreover, Moore accents the arbitrariness of the line through her pioneering rhyme on unaccented syllables, creating an aural syncopation of almost imperceptible deftness – for example, rhyming "the" and "violently" in the lines above. In praising "thorns," Moore implies that her verse values not the beauty of lyricism or strong personal voice but the thorniness of complex thought and syntax, ordered into stanzaic forms that seem to make no sense until they conclude in a brilliantly forceful suspended coincidence of syntactic and stanzaic closure.

Moore's poems critique militarism ("Military Progress," "To Statecraft Embalmed"); national, racial, and ethnic prejudices ("England," "The Labors of Hercules"); and cultures of oppression ("The Jerboa"), as well as gender prejudice and inequality, focusing on an ethics of behavior in the face of relational, institutional, natural, or other challenges. As is consistent with the patterns of her quietly "New Woman" life, she foregrounds issues of choice and celebrates as heroes those who prevail against their own fears as well as against prohibiting assumptions and prescriptions. "Marriage" (1923) unsentimentally insists that this "institution / perhaps one should say enterprise" requires "all one's criminal ingenuity / to avoid!"[37] Sympathizing with the sexual urges leading couples into this "strange paradise," Moore nonetheless condemns both male and female egocentrism as responsible for marital failure while reminding her readers that "men have power / and sometimes one is made to feel it." Both sexes may be at fault, but they are not equally empowered in a patriarchal society.

Virginia Woolf was a leading member of the influential London Blooms-bury Group. In 1912, she married Leonard Woolf, with whom she collaboratively founded the Hogarth Press. Woolf also had an affair with novelist Vita Sackville-West, memorialized in *Orlando* (1928), in which the central characters move among the centuries and change sexes, so that the only stability lies in their powerful attraction to each other and in Orlando's ingenious creativity. Woolf suffered repeated nervous breakdowns (due in part to the

sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of half-brothers) and committed suicide at the age of 59.

Like Moore more than H.D., Woolf's astutely ethical analysis of patri-archal institutions tends to focus on aspects of dailiness, although she is more explicit in condemning fascism, the dangerously limiting prejudices of the medical profession, war, and other forms of inhumanity. Her novels typically focus on relationships within families, celebrating characters who exercise their creativity within a range of contexts, from Mrs. Dalloway's and Mrs. Ramsay's domestic managing to Lily Briscoe's painting. Her nonfiction, however, pointedly critiques patriarchal culture. In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), she astutely analyzes the conditions hindering women from writing great literature by following a fictional narrator through a day of contem-plation on the importance of communal opportunities for women's educa-tion and learned exchange. At the same time, she insists that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" and she must have "the habit of freedom" – that is, she must be able to think of herself and other female artists in relation to reality not as exceptional but unself-consciously, as a matter of course.[38] Such habit can only be based, Woolf argues, on economic, psychic, and creative liberty that is passed from one generation to the next. For women to take up the pen, she asserts, will be "for [women's] good and for the good of the world at large," since women's relative marginality and upbringing provide them greater attentiveness than men to human relationship and to details of social reality.[39] Like *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf's fiction often follows the meanderings of an individual's thought. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), for example, merges omniscient narration, speech, and interior reflection in developing the intersecting lives of its characters. No novel to this point had so fully and realistically portrayed the thinking patterns and concerns of a woman's life. The bourgeois Mrs. Dalloway spends her day planning a party but in the process of doing so exhibits an independence, integrity of judgment, and sympathy for others that is integral to her profound reflections on the demands of an ethical, caring life.

The concept of the New Woman is necessarily relative: "new" to whom and to what point in time? By the end of the 1920s, it was largely outdated, since the behaviors regarded as transgressive in the 1880s and 1890s seemed outmoded to many women and men. On the other hand, from the 1920s until the 1960s, there was a gradual international retrenchment in support for women's emancipation. Social pressures attempted to reverse early twentieth-century assumptions that women might appropriately and in

significant numbers prefer the challenges of professional and creative lives to those of relatively isolated domestic devotion. Consequently, books like Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) seemed shatteringly new rather than extensions of earlier feminist analysis. The lack of explicitly feminist fictional characters – especially in the works of modernist literature that were by then canonized – helped erase the cultural memory of the revolutionary politics of early modernist women's lives and writing, and even more of the popular fiction of the 1880s and 1890s, which paved the way for definitively modernist work. At the same time, increasingly conservative gender politics contributed to the conception of modernism as unconcerned with gender or sexuality except as a bulwark of masculinism, and to the midcentury canonization of non-feminist texts in all genres. It was only later in the twentieth century that the modernist New Woman and early modernist feminist were rediscovered as having shaped major concerns, styles, and publications of modernism through their art and the unconventional choices of their lives.

Notes

1 *The Collected Poetry of Dorothy Parker* (New York: Random House, 1944), 70.
2 Discourse featuring the phrase "the New Woman" represented only a small part of the debate on feminism or women's rights, which in turn corresponded to multiple other discourses of modernity: the New Negro, New (American) South, New Psychology, New Empire, New Realism, New Morality, and New Science. Martha Patterson shows many of these intersections in Patterson (ed.), *The American New Woman Revisited: A Reader 1894–1930* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008).
3 Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (London: Hogarth Press, 1924), 4, 20.
4 Ann Ardis has argued that the New Woman is "conspicuously absent from modernist stories about its own genesis" and that the urgent debates on this subject in the 1880s and 1890s were followed largely by silence, in *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 2. While I do not find silence, I agree that modernist genealogies do not account for the influence of late nineteenth-century feminist realism.
5 Women did attend special colleges or universities in some countries (the USA and Russia) and in the USA some major universities were coeducational from their inception, for example, the University of Chicago.
6 In England, franchise was extended to women over the age of twenty-one in 1928.

7 For information comparing the status of women in Germany, France, Russia, England, the USA, Canada, and Mexico, see Cristanne Miller, *Cultures of Modernism: Marianne Moore, Mina Loy, Else Lasker-Schüler* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005); see also Elizabeth Otto and Vanessa Rocco (eds.), *The New Woman: International Representations in Photography and Film from the 1870s through the 1960s* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011). Marsha Meskimmon describes lesbian clubs in Berlin, in *We Weren't Modern Enough: Women Artists and the Limits of German Modernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 207.

8 Edna St. Vincent Millay, *A Few Figs from Thistles* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1922), 9.

9 *Collected Poetry of Dorothy Parker*, 42.

10 Girton was England's first residential college for women, established in 1869. *The Poetical Works of Andrew Lang*, vol. 1, ed. Mrs. Lang (London: Longmans, Green, 1923), 189–90.

11 See Charlotte Rich, *Transcending the New Woman: Multiethnic Narratives in the Progressive Era* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009).

12 Only Angelica, of the three heroines of Grand's novel, receives what might be considered a happy ending – although her dream of emancipating women from social constrictions fails.

13 Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives and Q.E.D.*, ed. Marianne DeKoven (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 172, 174.

14 Ibid., 54.

15 Ibid., 51.

16 Other of Cather's novels, like *My Ántonia* (1918), reveal greater ambivalence about female ambitions: although Antonia is strong-minded, she is entirely domestic in her desires and concludes the novel presiding over her large family and a farm's similar fertility.

17 Ardis, *New Women, New Novels*, 4–5, 170–71.

18 Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester University Press, 1997).

19 Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).

20 Suzanne Clark, *Sentimental Modernism: Women Writers and the Revolution of the Word* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

21 *Complete Prose of Marianne Moore*, ed. Patricia C. Willis (New York: Viking Press, 1987), 272.

22 T.S. Eliot, *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), 62.

23 Else Lasker-Schüler, *Werke und Briefe: Kritische Ausbage*, vol. 1, ed. Norbert Oellers (Berlin: Suhrkamp Jüdischer Verlag, 1996), poem #179. Translation mine.

24 Marianne DeKoven, "Modernism and Gender," in Michael Levenson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 174–93 (at 185).

25 F.T. Marinetti, "Manifesto of Futurism" (1909), in Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman, Olga Taxidou (eds.), *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 251.

26 Mina Loy, *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger Conover (New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1996), 153. Subsequent references to this edition are given parenthetically in the text.

27 Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (Los Angeles, CA: Sun & Moon Classics, 1990), 17. Subsequent references to this edition are given parenthetically in the text.

28 Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), 158.

29 Wyndham Lewis (ed.), *Blast*, 1 (1914), repr. in *Blast*, 2 vols.(Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1981), vol. 1, 151.

30 *Selected Poems of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1976), 64.

31 On women writers as anticipating their male peers in developments of high modernist style, see DeKoven, "Modernism and Gender," 175–76. Cassandra Laity argues that women modernists were more open to "alternative sexualities and linguistic excesses" than their male peers, in "H.D. and A.C. Swinburne: Decadence and Modernist Women's Writing," *Feminist Studies*, 15/3 (Autumn 1989), 461–84. Peter Nicholls describes Anglo-American male modernists' rejection of the feminine as preventing their recognition of the value of identification as an aspect of desire, and consequently in part the less objective, or impersonal stylistic innovation of their female contemporaries, in *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 197.

32 H.D., *Collected Poems, 1912–1944*, ed. Louis L. Martz (New York: New Directions, 1983), 511. Subsequent references to this edition are given parenthetically in the text.

33 Marianne Moore, *Becoming Marianne Moore: The Early Poems, 1907–1924*, ed. Robin G. Schulze (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 101.

34 Linda Leavell, *Holding on Upside Down: The Life and Work of Marianne Moore* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), xviii.

35 *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 83.

36 Stein's prose poems in *Tender Buttons* may be more radical in eschewing the line altogether as a unit of composition, but for poetry written in lines Moore's verse represented a dramatic break from both metrical and free verse conventions.

37 *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 115.

38 Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957), 2, 117.

39 Ibid., 113.

"The Men of 1914"

COLLEEN R. LAMOS

"The Men of 1914": the phrase just won't go away. Despite years of dispar-agement, it keeps turning up in discussions of modernist literature. Dis-credited as perpetuating the myth of the founding geniuses of modernism and debunked as a masculinist period designation, it nevertheless remains in use. In a recent essay, for instance, Rachel Blau DuPlessis quotes the phrase in order to censure it: "He [Ezra Pound] and the other (young) 'men of 1914' (a phrase that is a claim of temporal power in the Now made precisely by those men) wanted to professionalize poetry, cleanse or purge poetic diction and return syntax (like sexuality) to its natural order."[1] The phrase seems destined for an afterlife as shorthand for a reactionary version of Anglo-American modern literature. Indeed, "The Men of 1914" has become such a commonplace that some readers may assume that, like phallocentrism, it has been around forever, almost. The phrase has taken on a life of its own and now circulates anonymously, simply as part of the lingua franca of modern-ism, like "the lost generation" or "make it new." The quotation marks that enclose it designate it as "what everybody knows," not as the property of an original speaker or writer. Why, though, is it so resilient, and what does that resilience reveal about efforts to define Anglo-American literary modernism? Is it merely a particularly good example of "bad" modernism?[2] The phrase invites consideration of the perceived as well as pronounced masculinism of modernist literature, and it opens for our analysis best from the perspective of its originator, who is also one of its promoters, Wyndham Lewis.

Lewis coined the phrase in his 1937 memoir, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, in which he used it nine times, almost always in quotation marks, to designate himself, James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound.[3] Unlike the others, Lewis served in the First World War, as an artillery officer, and much of the book is devoted to an account of his experiences on the Western Front. By contrast, Joyce, Pound, and Eliot did not participate in it at all. Whereas the rhetorical

power of the phrase derives from its reference to the Great War, its intended, literal reference is to the four "great" writers of modern literature.

Lewis's practice of placing "the Men of 1914" in quotation marks, *from the very first time he uses it*, transforms the phrase into what linguists call a "mention." As Donald Davidson observes, quotations are demonstrative or indexical signs, pointing to a previous iteration; the *content* of the quotation, however, is not referential. He draws on Alfred Tarski's dictum that "in quotation, the quoted material is not used"; rather, it depends upon a prior, now absent sign for its meaning.[4] However, Lewis cites no antecedent source for the phrase. Rather, his ostentatious *use* of "the Men of 1914" as a *mention* creates the misleading impression of authorizing origin.[5] In short, "the Men of 1914" is a counterfeit quotation. Instead of celebrating the founders of modernism, the phrase turns out, upon closer inspection, to expose the contrivance in Lewis's attempt to devise his own authority. Is this scourge of artistic imitators, in *The Apes of God*, himself an empty echo, reproducing a sound that was never there?

Viewed from a rhetorical perspective, "the Men of 1914" possesses considerable illocutionary force as a declarative performance.[6] Always capitalizing the noun as though it were a headline, Lewis unfurls the phrase like a banner. In so doing, the phrase enacts or performs the fame and virile power that it states – that is, "I pronounce us 'the Men of 1914.'" Its continued mention by critics confirms the success of Lewis's annunciation, despite the fact that few remember that he was one of them. Indeed, one might regard it as a "marketing ploy," as Martin Puchner does *Blast*, a title that is effectively a commercial "branding technique" designed to corner the market in modernist literature.[7] Lewis's invention of "the Men of 1914" certainly seems to be an attempt to write himself into literary history by including himself in the fabulous four. However, some later readers may draw a blank at his name. Wasn't he a fascist, others may ask when the name registers, and didn't he publish that avant-garde magazine with the loud title? His works go in and out of print and, when he is recollected, it is often as the bad boy of modernism – badder, even, than Ezra Pound. After all, Pound was awarded the Bollingen Prize, and he has even had an era named after him.[8] In the spirit of Lewisian satire, one might say that his most lasting achievement is the phrase itself.

The resiliency of the phrase is easily attributable to the date itself – *1914* is seared in European memory – and its epochal importance is unquestionable, unlike other dates offered by literary historians to mark the "origin" of modernism. The fateful conjunction of Hilda Doolittle and Ezra Pound in

the British Museum reading room in 1911 is regarded by some as the moment of the conception of modernism. In *End to Torment*, she describes Pound reading her poem, "Hermes of the Ways," and signing "H.D., Imagiste" at the bottom.[9] This nativity scene makes great pedagogical theatre, perhaps because of Pound's brazenness at authorizing himself by forging H.D.'s signature – a bravura performance![10] Less theatrically, Virginia Woolf asserted in her 1924 essay, "Character in Fiction," that "On or about December 1910, human character changed," resulting in the production of literature like her own.[11] Although "'the Men of 1914'" may seem like another ploy in a literary parlor game, its martial connotation, in Erik Svarny's view, "captures the antagonistic, rebarbative cultural posture" adopted by Lewis and Pound, while its masculinity draws attention to the patriarchal, generational assumptions that typically underpin literary periodization.[12]

Assigning names and dates is, of course, a practical necessity for literary historians, but doing so engages one in question-begging. In *A Genealogy of Modernism*, Michael Levenson argues that "dating is necessary to parsing" its structure, yet recognizes that interpretation, or "parsing," is necessary to dating.[13] "The Men of 1914" evades the appearance of arbitrariness on the basis of its indubitable extra-literary significance. For Lewis, though, 1914 was the high watermark of his career – which, ironically, was truncated by the event for which that year is best remembered. *Blast*, his vorticist manifesto, appeared on July 2, 1914, thirty-three days before England declared war on Germany.[14] Twenty-three years later, in *Blasting and Bombardiering*, he describes the coincidence between the publication of *Blast* and the outbreak of hostilities as an unfortunate accident: "All Europe was at war and a bigger *Blast* than mine had rather taken the wind out of my sails" (85). Although he published a second, "war number" of *Blast* the following year, the London avant-garde in which he played a central role withered during the war, and none of his postwar work met with equal acclaim. Nevertheless, in a further ironic twist, in 1914 Lewis envisioned himself at war with the artistic establishment, thinking of vorticism as a violent insurrection. An essay that he published on July 18 of that year – "Kill John Bull with Art!" – confirms his recollection that "Art and War in those days were intermingled" (63). "*Putsches* took place every month or so," he recalls. In particular, Marinetti "made an extraordinary amount of noise. A day of attack upon the Western Front . . . was nothing to it" (33). Those other "Men of 1914" – Pound, Eliot, and Joyce – had not been soldiers and were certainly not bomb-throwing street fighters, but the phrase retained, for Lewis, the implication of a revolutionary band of brothers.

In *Blasting and Bombardiering,* Lewis also describes "the Men of 1914" as a "youth racket" organized by Pound: "He had a streak of Baden Powell in him, had Ezra, perhaps more than a streak. With Disraeli, he thought in terms of 'Young England.' He never got us under canvas it is true," but "Ezra's boyscoutery" succeeded in giving "the appearance of a *Bewegung* [movement]. It was Pound who invented the word 'vorticist': it was Pound who introduced Joyce to Miss Harriet Weaver – indeed, thrust him down her throat . . . it was Pound who tirelessly schooled and scolded Eliot" (252). In short, Pound as Boy Scout leader as well as Boy Scout is the common figure that allows Lewis to create a group portrait of the four men, who (as he admits) were never together under one roof. As an imaginary Boy Scout troop, most importantly, "the Men of 1914" share a manly camaraderie, one that comes together as well under the sign of an avant-garde formation, which draws equally strongly (though not exclusively, as cultural historians now recognize) on masculine personnel and masculinist values. In this wise they appear aggressively unlike their archrivals, the "Bloomsbuggers," in Pound's abusive idiom. "I and the people about whom I am writing are of course not a herd or flock . . . in the sense of the French *cénacle* [coterie] or the London 'Bloomsburies.'" And moving from Pound's homophobia to his own trademark effeminophobia, Lewis assures his readers:

> It is only natural that I should have intoxicated myself while forming an acquaintance with James Joyce, just as I certainly should never have drunk more than a cup of tea . . . with the author of *Queen Victoria* [Lytton Strachey] . . . But I need not labour this point. I think it is clear what I mean.[15] (14)

Any reader of Lewis must have a strong stomach for homophobic slurs and misogynistic slanders, and any account of "the Men of 1914" must come to terms with what Jessica Burstein aptly calls the "heteromasculinism" of this "club" (Lewis's term, eschewing the effeminate "coterie"). "Despite being obvious," she remarks, "the conclusion is accurate."[16] The very banality and pervasiveness of this problem, and the conceptual abstraction and generality of heteromasculinism, effeminophobia, and such, make it difficult to address critically. On the one hand, the issue is too massive and unwieldy; on the other hand, it is too common, even tedious. How can one gain a purchase on it?

Of the many critics who have tackled this problem, I offer the examples of two approaches, which, together, comprise the terrain and provide models for different understandings. Burstein goes for rhetorical *accumulatio*:

> There is no denying the diminishing and at times outright loopy dynamics of modernists who conceive of art as a male or masculine endeavor, and females and femininity as a factor in an artistic economy that necessitates sanitising, naturalising, excision, inseminating, educating, reification, ignoring or silencing ... The system is based on [sexual] difference ... and beyond that there is no budging.[17]

In practice, Burstein examines a few sculptures by Gaudier-Brzeska that blend (masculine) abstraction and (feminine) empathy – the aesthetic opposition, advanced by Wilhelm Worringer and adopted by T.E. Hulme, that heavily influenced vorticism.[18] She is but one of many critics whose local, molecular readings of particular works of art reveal fissures in the monolith of masculinist modernism. At the larger molar level, literary historians try to rewrite the modernist narrative – for example, Bonnie Kime Scott supplants "the Men of 1914" with "the Women of 1928" – or to dissect "modernism" as a comprehensive concept, so to expose its foul and contradictory entrails, as does Peter Nicholls in his analysis of the theoretical quandaries of "the Men of 1914."[19]

I propose to address the banal edifice of heteromasculinity as embodied in the phrase, "the Men of 1914," on two fronts. First, we may examine how it was conjured into existence by its superannuated creator. Insofar as it did exist in the mind of Lewis, it was born dead. Second, by avoiding the unhappy mimicry of the language of heteronormativity in Lewis's work – a susceptibility that even the best of critics can fall into – we may attend to the lapses of masculinity and heterosexuality therein, and so be able to "budge," or at least nudge, the intractability of sexual difference in it. Briefly, I suggest we stop loving to hate "the Men of 1914" and begin reading them better.

Some critics believe that, as a group, "the Men of 1914" possesses an integral unity.[20] However, demonstrating such a unity proves to be quite a strain. The most strenuous effort may be that of Dennis Brown, who employs the clumsy tools of group psychology to explain the coherence of the four writers, producing the following story: Lewis, the first "group leader," was its dynamo, followed by Pound, its "entrepreneurial leader." After the latter left Paris for Italy, Eliot became its "guardian." Joyce, always the outlier of the group, nevertheless fits in because it was Lewis who challenged him "to go beyond his late Victorian style and write *Ulysses*."[21] The most persuasive evidence Brown adduces for their bonding is their practice of passing around dirty poems and excluding women, confirming the cohesiveness that increasingly sounds and smells like that Boy Scout troop. Nonetheless, his narrative follows the version of "the Men of 1914" shared by many literary historians.[22]

The actual narrative of overlaps between the four authors supports the idea of a group identity and shared consciousness for these "Men of 1914" even less strongly. To begin with, the dates are all wrong. Lewis cannot remember when he met Pound – around 1910 – and he was introduced to Eliot by Pound only in 1915. Neither he nor Eliot met Joyce until August 15, 1920, in Paris, when the three met at the "old brown shoes" (a parodic gift to the impoverished author) encounter engineered by Pound, who as yet had not met Joyce. Pound and Eliot did meet in September 1914, and while the former began his correspondence with Joyce in mid-December 1913, they did not come face to face until that comic encounter of 1920. The four were never physically present in the same room at the same time. For even a figurative meeting of minds, 1914 is an impossible date.

Lewis's curious account of the moment when "the three principal members of the Pound Circus came together" (264) reveals the narrative challenge that he faced, seventeen years later, composing his fiction of "the Men of 1914" in *Blasting and Bombardiering* What ought to have been a climactic convergence of geniuses "turned out to be as matter-of-fact a social clash as the coming together of two navvies, or the brusque *how do you do* of a couple of dogs" (267). Joyce had moved to Paris a few weeks earlier and had previously written to Pound complaining of his poverty.[23] Having already planned to vacation together in France, Lewis and Eliot agreed to convey a large package, "slovenly swaddl[ed] [in] damp British brown paper" (268), from Pound to Joyce without knowing what was in it. When he arrived at the Hôtel de l'Élysée, where Lewis and Eliot were staying, and the three were gathered around a "Second Empire marble table, standing upon gilt eagles' claws" (269), as Lewis vividly recalled, Joyce's elegant, "stilted," even "arrogant" manner offended both of them.[24] The punch line of the story is Joyce's shame upon his discovery of Pound's gift of a pair of secondhand shoes. So injurious was it to his vanity that he insisted that Giorgio, his son, take it away at once. Lewis interprets the incident as an amusing misunderstanding on the part of Pound, compounded by Joyce's "Irish pride." Nonetheless, his elaborate account attests to his puzzlement – Was Pound playing a nasty joke on them? Was Joyce really so disdainful of him and Eliot? – and fear that "the Men of 1914" was never a group at all.

One begins to suspect that Lewis describes this famous encounter in order to perpetuate Joyce's humiliation – that is, to make him ashamed of his shame.[25] The three evidently postured and preened. Lewis presents himself as naïve but suspects, rightly, that "Joyce . . . [had] read everything I had ever written. He pretended however not to have done so" (266).[26] At the dinner

following this embarrassing scene, during which Joyce remarked on Pound's literary band, Lewis recalled that "four people more dissimilar in every respect than himself, myself, Pound and Eliot respectively, it would be difficult to find." "Surely the vanity of classification ... was never better exemplified, than in the persons of these four *Zeitgenossen!* [contemporaries]." Although he devotes the previous page of his memoir to deriding temporal coincidence as the basis for "groupification," Lewis is, finally, thrown back on 1914: "There is only one sense in which any such a grouping of us acquires some significance – we all got started on our careers before the War" (293–94). Such is the inauspicious origin of "the Men of 1914."[27]

Is the phrase nothing more than Lewis's fantasy, retrospectively devised when his own career was in decline, and is its perpetuation simply an indication of the heteromasculinism of twentieth-century modernist literature? Is it possible to interpret it otherwise than as a symptom? To put it another way, is there a future understanding for "the Men of 1914," where the phrase may open into a more searching recognition of the actual complexities of gender in modernist consciousness? My aim is neither to debunk a myth nor to redeem a reprobate but to pose a few questions that may unsettle our assumptions about them.

As a way into this inquiry, I return to Lewis's intentions in writing *Blasting and Bombardiering*: "By the end of this century the movement to which, historically, I belong will be as remote as predynastic Egyptian statuary ... With an egoistic piety, I have made it my business to preserve in these pages something of the first-hand reality" (254). Lewis addresses us, twenty-first-century readers, in a voice from beyond the grave. One might say that his memoir is a self-eulogy.[28] When he attempts to explain what "the Men of 1914" tried to do, indeed, his tone becomes grimmer. From the vantage point of 1937, he ruminates like a veteran telling his war stories. Moreover, the belatedness of his claim for the importance of "the Men of 1914" drains it of what DuPlessis calls its "temporal power"; indeed, Lewis writes of its defeat:

> We were all in the post-war, but that period produced nothing but a lot of sub-Sitwells and sheep in Woolfe's [*sic*] clothing, and we were not of it. I call us here "the Men of 1914." Nothing occurred in England, [in the] highbrow line to put up a challenge for the supreme highbrow laurel until Auden came along. (249–50)

Lewis thus proceeds to describe a visit that W.H. Auden and Stephen Spender paid to him about ten years earlier. The paragraph concludes with an offhand comment regarding Auden: "I should not be surprised if he were

'fey'" (250). The fact that Lewis interrupts his *sic transit gloria mundi* lament to speculate on Auden's homosexuality should alert us to his singular preoccupation, a subject so fundamental we will return to it after providing context for Lewis's remark.

Concluding his retrospective, Lewis draws upon Hulme's distinction between modernist (classical and "hard") and romantic (Victorian and "soft") aesthetics:

> What I think history will say about the "Men of 1914" is that they represent an attempt to get away from romantic art into classical art ... into the detachment of true literature ... And what has happened – slowly – as a result of the War, is that artistic expression has slipped back ... The attempt at objectivity has failed. The subjectivity of the majority is back again, as a result of that great defeat, the Great War. (250)

Whether or not modernist literature was, in truth, "objective" or "subjective," Lewis just previously sees "the Men of 1914" defeated by a feminized mass culture – "the Sitwells and Woolfes"– attributing their aesthetic failure to the "great defeat" that was the First World War. Thus far, his chronology more or less tallies with the historical record of the decline of vorticism. However, for Lewis, the situation is actually much worse.

Modernism was strangled in the womb. 1914 began as a promising year; with the proliferation of expressionism, post-impressionism, vorticism, and so forth, "it looked to many people as if a great historic 'school' was in the process of formation ... Such a school as was then foreshadowed" would have been momentous, but it never happened. *"The day was lost for art at Sarajevo"* (257–58, emphasis mine). Strictly speaking, vorticism was stillborn inasmuch as Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914, almost a week before *Blast* entered the world. "The Men of 1914," Lewis writes, were not "'the last men of an epoch' ... *We are the first men of a Future that has not materialized.*" Those who fancy themselves "advanced" writers in fact move "backwards, now, towards that impossible goal, of the prewar dawn" (256, emphasis Lewis). The nostalgia of an elegy has given way to a bitter obituary. At the least, Lewis's rebarbativeness has gotten the better of his vanity. In any case, with the tide of history turned preemptively against them, "the Men of 1914" were, *at the moment of their annunciation*, already dead for aesthetic purposes.

Lewis's peculiar argument sheds light on the constitutive paradox of modernism: that no enunciation of modernity can coincide with that which it represents. The failure of "the Men of 1914" is, thus, the failure of every

attempt to "make it new"; or (to quote DuPlessis again) every "claim of temporal power in the Now" is defeated by the ephemerality of that moment. In "Literary History and Literary Modernity," Paul de Man contends that creative writing – or the creation of any artwork, for that matter – is "essentially modern" inasmuch as it is a generative or orginary act. By contrast, the succeeding interpretation that represents it, especially in those manifestos that are a trademark of early twentieth-century modernism, are not only self-defeating but, in de Man's words, "end up by putting the possibility of being modern seriously into question." For instance, in *The Painter of Modern Life*, Baudelaire's

> claim to being a new beginning turns out to be the repetition of a claim that has always already been made. As soon as Baudelaire has to replace the single instant of invention, conceived as an act, by a successive movement that involves at least two distinct moments, he enters into a world that assumes . . . time, an interdependence between past and future that prevents any present from ever coming into being.

Given the Beckettian predicament of modernism – always trying, and always failing, to begin again – Lewis's "Men of 1914," as a figure for a modernism that is always already belated, is far more apt than his attempt with *Blast* to freeze the "Now" in a graphic record. Moreover, insofar as 1914 implies 1918 and all the world-shattering events between, the phrase possesses what de Man calls "the prospective self-knowledge of its end."[29] Instead of a sequential development, time runs backward in *Blasting and Bombardiering*, and the militancy of the avant-garde "Men of 1914," like the masculine bellicosity that often attends it, becomes retrospective and elegiac and even defeatist.

The defeat of "the Men of 1914" brings us to the central issue: the possibility of reading Lewis in a way that disturbs rather than confirms his heteromasculinity, and so undermines the apparent intransigency of sexual difference in his oeuvre. Thus, the question that I address in the concluding pages is how gender and sexual inversions operate in Lewis's work, and what bearing those operations have upon our understanding of "the Men of 1914." *The Apes of God*, Lewis's 1930 novel, may be read thus in conjunction with *The Art of Being Ruled*, his 1926 nonfiction treatise on socialism, women, and inversion.[30] The two texts are linked historically and conceptually.

An inkling of such a possibility lies in *Blasting and Bombardiering*, in a chapter on Ronald Firbank, whose portrait he sketched. Lewis describes him as "the reincarnation of all the Nineties – Oscar Wilde, Pater, Beardsley, Dawson all rolled into one, and served up with *sauce créole*" (224). Of course,

Firbank "fluttered" during the sitting. Noting that he is buried next to Keats in the Protestant cemetery in Rome, Lewis imagines him in the grave, making a pass at the "unravished bride." His tone throughout is amiable. Indeed, he recounts a dinner the two shared with a young American who, disconcerted by Firbank's fey manner, hissed, "'There seems to be a lot of *fairies* round here!' And he sniffed the air as if he could detect the impalpable aroma of an elf" (228, emphasis Lewis). The butt of this joke is not Firbank but the beef-eating, fairy-hating Yank and his pretended sophistication.

Many critics of Lewis are like that callow Yank, assuming that the "degenerate" characters that populate *The Apes of God* are the object of the author's scorn. Lewis's satire is notoriously difficult to fathom, however, inasmuch as it is often multivalent and self-reflexive, so that, if its scorn settles anywhere, it might be on the credulous reader.[31] For instance, the novel parodies artists who "ape" or mimic true genius. Yet, if everyone in it is a sham, and if the narrative mocks imitators, isn't the novel, too, a fraudulent knock-off? Furthermore, the motif of false imitation goes hand in hand with the sexual inversion that permeates the novel, which Lewis understood to be a reversed, inferior copy of heterosexuality – "the soul of a woman in the body of a man."[32] In Lewis's plainer words, a male invert is "a man who transforms himself into a woman."[33] His satire on "apes" fits hand in glove with Judith Butler's argument in "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," where she asserts that the gender and sexual norms that we accept as natural are, in fact, the consequence of innumerable simulations of an imaged but nonexistent original "man" and "woman."[34] The characters in *Apes of God* caricature masculinity and femininity, and their consistently deviant libidinal inclinations lampoon normalcy.

Before turning to the novel, it is worth noting that critics interpret Lewis's representations of inversion or homosexuality in terms of two presumed equations: homosexuality = moral decadence (exemplified by the nineties and its recrudescence after the Great War) and homosexuality = scandal. In the case of the former, critics assume without question that Lewis was contemptuous of homosexuals. For example, Michael Hallam says that Lewis "wrote against male homosexuality as . . . a 'demasculinization' of society."[35] Indeed, some critics mention the topic only in the context of the scandal created by the publication of Lewis's novel *Doom of Youth*, a satire on Alec Waugh's *Loom of Youth*, a memoir of his schooldays. Waugh sued Lewis for libel, alleging that the latter implied that he was a pedophile. A subset of the equation of homosexuality and scandal is the practice of reading Lewis's fiction as *romans-à-clef*. The novels are reduced to guessing "who's who,"

with critics engaging in the sort of social gossip that Lewis loathed.[36] In each of these instances, critics fail to engage directly with Lewis's texts; instead, they look for their significance in extratextual sources, thereby evading, at least in the case of *The Apes of God*, confrontation with the complexity of the subject. Indeed, the critical strategies I have outlined virtually rule out any contemplation of same-sex desires and cross-gender identifications in his work. The presupposition of heteronormative masculinity goes unchallenged, even unnoticed.

The newcomer to Lewis will be surprised to discover that nearly every character in *The Apes of God* is inverted or otherwise perverse. The experience is a bit like that of reading *Remembrance of Things Past*, in which one character after another – from the virile Saint-Loup to the insignificant Legrandin – is revealed to be queer. When the main character of Lewis's novel, Horace Zagreus, discourses at length upon Proust, the parallel is confirmed but its valence is uncertain. Moreover, structural similarities between the two novels – both social satires with lengthy digressions on aesthetic matters – compel one's attention yet frustrate it insofar as Lewis's disjointed narrative and rhetorical fireworks are worlds away from Proust's elegant style. The Proustian intertext is especially pertinent because, in *The Art of Being Ruled*, Lewis singles out Proust as "an arch sex-mixer." Despite the felicity of the phrase, it is immediately followed by the peculiar assertion that Proust is "a great enemy of the intellect. For he desires to see everything converted into terms of sex, to see everybody on that violent, scented, cloying, and unreal plane" of "sensation" (244). We witness here the recurrent, gendered division between mind/body, abstract/concrete, and reason/sensation that characterizes much of Lewis's work. Nonetheless (from one "enemy" to another), Proust seems almost a temptation, luring him to cross those lines. In any case, the narrator of this novel moves through the same world as his characters, where he seems unprotected by any self-exempting irony about their mercurial sexualities. On the evidence of his literary fiction, Lewis is also a roguish "sex-mixer."

Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of inversion in *The Apes of God* is its utter ordinariness. "Homosexuals are as common as dirt," one character says, to which another replies, "It is now the non-homosexual who is abnormal" (427). Although quotations from Lewis's fiction are always subject to ironic reversals, often with no discernible limit, sexual deviance is the rule in the novel, and matter-of-factly so. Its plot centers on Zagreus's education of Dan Boylen in the ways of the world, a frankly pederastic affair; indeed, his fondness for beautiful young men is renowned. Dan is the

gorgeous dumb object of everyone's desires. Virile and handsome in a Hellenic fashion, he is besotted with Zagreus yet offended by what "that horrid word" means: "Homo and something – the word was beastly" (434). The discrepancy between his homoerotic impulses and their cultural pro-scriptions locates the zone in which the consciousness of this novel does some of its most significant work, undoing the authority of a culturally sanctioned heteronormativity.

Finally, and most important for our purposes, gender attributes are fre-quently detached from biological sex in *The Apes of God*; femininity is typically ascribed to nominal males, and virility is usually a female attribute. This "sex-mixing," overlaid upon the inversion theme and, especially, the novel's insistent satire on fraudulent imitation, produces many carnivalesque scenes as well as much chaos. A particularly amusing example of the intertwining of these motifs is an episode in which Dan, distraught by his unrequited love for Zagreus, visits his friend, a faux artist named Mélanie Blackwell. A straight woman who has long been attracted to Dan, she seizes the opportunity to seduce him. His only means of escape is to club her over the head with one of her worthless paintings, but Mélanie holds the upper hand. Indeed, one of her ploys is to threaten to spank him (buttocks are the most prominent body part in the novel). When that fails, she pleads, "Be a man, Dan!"(112), but he refuses, so she takes up the mantle of masculinity and rapes him.

In a chapter of *The Art of Being Ruled* entitled "Call Yourself a Man!" Lewis makes the startling observation: "A man . . . is made, not born." Oddly anticipating Simone de Beauvoir, he elaborates: "Men were only made into 'men' with great difficulty even in primitive society: the male is not naturally a 'man' any more than the woman. He has to be propped up into that position with some ingenuity, and is always likely to collapse" (247). Men, he says, do not even want to be a "man" "*if [they] can possibility help it*" (248, emphasis Lewis).

Lewis's acknowledgement of the artificial construction of manhood casts his invention of "the Men of 1914" in a light quite different to that of its presumptive understanding. Among his companion talents, Lewis is the figure who seems the least likely to be moved from the position in which he has been fixed by subsequent literary and cultural history, but this positioning obscures such sensitivities as may be seen, on a closer look, as already in place or in anticipation in his work. More revealingly than others, then, Lewis shows the pressure that the consciousness of modernism is applying not only to the established genres of literary and artistic history but to the types and kinds of human identity.

Notes

1 Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "'Virile Thought': Modernist Maleness, Poetic Forms and Practices," in Natalya Lusty and Julian Murphet (eds.), *Modernism and Masculinity* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 19–37 (at 23).

2 See Heather K. Love's discussion of the paradoxical status of good "bad" modernist texts versus bad "good" ones, especially in a movement that prized transgressiveness, in "Forced Exile: Walter Pater's Queer Modernism," in Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (eds.), *Bad Modernisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 19–43.

3 Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937; repr. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

4 Donald Davidson, "Quotation," *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 79–92 (at 81).

5 T.S. Eliot's use of citations in *The Waste Land*, some of which appear to be fabricated, appears in this way as a gesture of affiliation with the "fathers" of the Western literary tradition. I explore the practice of what I call "citationality" in *The Waste Land* in *Deviant Modernism: Sexual and Textual Errancy in T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

6 See J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 14–17.

7 Martin Puchner, "The Aftershocks of *Blast*: Manifestos, Satire, and the Rear-Guard of Modernism," in Mao and Walkowitz (eds.), *Bad Modernisms*, 45–67 (at 53–54).

8 Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

9 H.D., *End to Torment: A Memoir of Ezra Pound*, ed. Norman Holmes Pearson and Michael King (New York: New Directions, 1979), 18.

10 Peter Nicholls attempts to differentiate (commendable) bravura from (condemnable) bravado, in "Bravura or Bravado? Reading Pound's *Cantos*," in Lusty and Murphet (eds.), *Modernism and Masculinity*, 233–54. His careful scholarship runs up against the persistent problem facing readers of "the Men of 1914": should we distinguish between ethically "good" and "bad" modernism and, if so, how?

11 Virginia Woolf, "Character in Fiction" (1924), revised as "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," *Collected Essays of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Leonard Woolf, vol. 1 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), 319–47; repr. in Michael J. Hoffman and Patrick D. Murphy, *Essentials of the Theory of Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 24–39 (at 24).

12 Erik Svarny, *"The Men of 1914": T.S. Eliot and Early Modernism* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1988), 2.

13 Michael H. Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine 1908–1922* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), 37.

14 The official publication date is June 20, 1914, which is the date given by Lewis in *Blasting and Bombardiering*, but its actual publication was delayed by two weeks.

15 The tea party is a recurrent trope in Lewis's work for Bloomsbury's homosexual cabal: the "writing and painting world of London [was] . . . like the afternoon tea-party of a perverse spinster" (273). See also Part 7 ("Pamela Farnham's Tea-Party") of *The Apes of God*.

16 Jessica Burstein, "Stag Party: Henri Gaudier-Brzeska and Vorticist Organicism," in Lusty and Murphet (eds.), *Modernism and Masculinity*, 216–32 (at 221).

17 Ibid., 227.

18 Burstein builds upon Levenson's analysis of *Abstraction and Empathy* and its adoption by Hulme in *Genealogy of Modernism*.

19 Bonnie Kime Scott, *Refiguring Modernism: The Women of 1928*, vol. 1 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), chap. 8, "Modernity and the 'Men of 1914.'"

20 See, e.g., Stephen Sicari, *Modernist Humanism and the Men of 1914: Joyce, Lewis, Pound, and Eliot* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011).

21 Dennis Brown, *Intertextual Dynamics Within the Literary Group – Joyce, Lewis, Pound, and Eliot: the Men of 1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), 66.

22 See, for instance, Svarny, *"The Men of 1914."*

23 James Joyce, letter to Ezra Pound, June 5, 1920, *Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed. Richard Ellmann (New York: Viking Press, 1957), 253.

24 "Stilted" is Lewis's term, "arrogant," Eliot's. My description of this scene is drawn from *Blasting and Bombardiering*, 265–70, 291–98, as well as Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, rev. edn. (Oxford University Press, 1982), 492–95.

25 Dominique Groeneveld examines the self-perpetuating dynamics of shame in modernist literature in her unpublished manuscript, *The Spoils of Shame*. I am grateful for her insights.

26 See Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 492, 495. As Lewis (292) remembers, "Joyce betrayed no knowledge of" Eliot's poetry, an affectation that Ellmann informs us was also disingenuous. Likewise, when he was introduced to Marcel Proust, he feigned never to have read *Remembrance of Things Past*, insisting that the latter's work bore no resemblance to his own. He told Frank Budgen that "Our talk consisted solely of the word 'No'" (509). Joyce did not recognize himself as a member of a group.

27 For the feelings of the others regarding "our band," see Levenson, *Genealogy of Modernism*, 213–14, in which he cites Pound's hostile reaction to Eliot's 1932 reference to "our own" group.

28 This stance is also taken by many of the speakers in *The Waste Land*. I have argued that this poem and others work as homoerotic elegy, in "Eliot's Elegiac Love," in Cassandra Laity and Nancy K. Gish (eds.), *Gender, Desire,*

and Sexuality in T.S. Eliot (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 23–42. In this sense, Eliot's and Lewis's texts have much in common with English literature produced in the decade after the Great War, in which homoeroticism and elegiacism are interwoven motifs.

29 Paul de Man, "Literary History and Literary Modernity," *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 151–52, 161, 159.

30 In *The Art of Being Ruled*, ed. Reed Way Dasenbrook (1926; Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1989), Lewis consistently uses the sexological term *inversion*, whereas in *The Apes of God* (1930; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965) he uses it interchangeably with *homosexuality*.

31 In the Afterword to *Art of Being Ruled*, Dasenbrook appropriately cautions the reader that Lewis's prose is typically ironic and double-voiced, so that it "is remarkably difficult for most of the book to define Lewis's position on the issues he is discussing," giving homosexuality as an example (436).

32 Lewis recognized sexual inversion as it was defined by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds (after Karl Heinrich Ulrichs) in *Sexual Inversion* (1896): *anima muliebris in corpore virile inclusa*. Like Symonds, Lewis distinguished congenital from acquired inversion: "When acquired or affected as a social asset it is snobbery rather than a vice," often marked by effeminacy (*Art of Being Ruled*, 271). By contrast, "the true blue invert ... [is] often entirely free of that feminine bias" (213). Both types appear in *Apes of God*.

33 *Art of Being Ruled*, 245.

34 Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in Diana Fuss (ed.), *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 13–31.

35 Michael Hallam, "In the 'Enemy' Camp: Wyndham Lewis, Naomi Mitchison, and Rebecca West," in Andrzej Gasiorek, Alice Reeve-Tucker, and Nathan Waddell (eds.), *Wyndham Lewis and the Cultures of Modernity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 57–76 (at 63).

36 See, e.g., Ian Patterson, "John Rodker, Julius Ratner and Wyndham Lewis: The Split-Man Writes Back," in Gasiorek, Reeve-Tucker, and Waddell (eds.), *Wyndham Lewis and the Cultures of Modernity*, 95–107.

Modernism and the Racial Composite:
The Case of America

MARK WHALAN

... the young African from Senegal
Carries back from Paris
A little more disease
To spread among the black girls in the palm huts.
He brings them as a gift
    disease –
From light to darkness
      disease –
From the boss to the bossed
          disease –
From the game of black and white
    disease
From the city of the broken cubes of Picasso
    d
        i
    s
  e
    a
      s
    e

                        Langston Hughes, "Cubes"[1]

Hughes's poem (first published in the *New Masses* in 1934) is one of his most direct statements on the interconnections between race, modernism, and global capital. Most obviously, it asserts that modernity is a "game of black and white." Not only a chess match of races, Hughes's "cubes" are also trading units in a global scramble for aesthetic as well as commercial resources to fuel the imperial metropole: the Fang mask at the Trocadéro, which inspired Picasso's cubism, was after all only there in the first place because of the colonial economies that brought such primary commodities as diamonds, lumber, and rubber to Europe. Hughes's poem therefore indicts

experimental European modernism as complicit with exploitative colonial regimes, as the serpentine lineation of "disease" at the poem's close locates modernist form as a representational vector transmitting imperial "infection" from center to periphery. The radically lineated style of "Cubes" is unusual for both Hughes and the Harlem Renaissance in general, but the problematic the poem embodies was typical of much African American writing from the first half of the twentieth century: a participation, at once complicit and suspicious, in a modernity and a modernism founded in a globalized, profoundly unequal racialism whose compositing dynamics were as evident in Harlem as they were in Paris or Senegal.

The Harlem (or "New Negro") Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s produced a black modernist literature responsive to the forms and forces of American modernity: modern urban landscapes and technologies, mass culture, mass migration, expanding imperial ambitions, and the increasingly extensive and rationalized practices of racial segregation. Modernist aesthetics informed the work of African American writers, who drew fruitfully from experiments in imagism, free verse, Decadence, expressionism, and the little magazine. Conversely, depictions of interracial bohemias, and of the increasingly stratified nature of urban space that was so crucial to European-American modernist representation, were pioneered by African American writers.[2] Progressive interracial institutions like the National Urban League and the NAACP formed in 1910 and 1909, respectively, or the presence of African American writing in left-wing magazines (like *The Liberator* or the *New Masses*) and centrist journals (like the *Nation* or the *American Mercury*), offered new hope for what interracial artistic and political collaboration could achieve. The new economies of mass culture made national and international stars of performers like Josephine Baker, Bessie Smith, Paul Robeson, and Bert Williams, but it also proliferated racist imagery, from the huge success of *Amos n' Andy* to *The Birth of a Nation*'s mass mediation of lynching as a terrorizing spectacle. Whether considered in terms of institutions, culture industries, national or international politics, or at the level of literary form, the complex, generative, and often antagonistic dynamics of the racial composite undergirded Harlem Renaissance culture and American modernism.

African American writers experienced that composite as both global and national. In 1915 W.E.B. Du Bois published "The African Roots of War" in the *Atlantic Monthly*, which charged that European competition over limited African resources had initiated the First World War. The Pan-African Congresses of 1919 and 1921, as well as Marcus Garvey's transnational Universal Negro Improvement Association, were the most important political expressions of the

thoroughgoing African American effort in the 1920s to explore their economic, historical, and cultural connections to a colonized Africa. Often, this connection was understood as belonging to a silenced, global majority; as the poet Ann Spencer put it in 1923, "Black men are most men; but the white are free!"[3] Yet she also observed that Europeans had "turned the blood in a ruby rose / To a poor white poppy flower," and this sense that European civilization and aesthetics had been drained and discredited by the war informed much of the excitement about African American culture among black and white intellectuals and audiences in the 1920s, both in the United States and in Western Europe. This concern underwrote the moment when "the Negro was in vogue," in Hughes's phrase – when African American artists obtained unprecedented access to mainstream publication and entertainment venues partly due to the "primitivist" craze that gripped Western, white consumers in the 1920s from New York to London, Berlin to Paris. White New Yorkers flocked to Harlem's segregated Cotton Club to see light-skinned chorines dance in front of jungle scenery to Duke Ellington's or Fletcher Henderson's jazz band, helping to transform Harlem into New York's principal entertainment district; meanwhile "slave bracelets" and "slave collars" were hot fashion items.[4] In Europe, the primitivist craze often dovetailed with a postwar fascination with American culture; in France, postwar Parisian audiences who had "lost confidence in European rationalism, science and materialism" turned the St. Louis-born teenager Josephine Baker into an international star for her near-naked performance of the "Danse Sauvage" in the Revue Nègre at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 1925.[5] This performance demonstrated that primitivism had both popular and intellectual appeal; Jean Cocteau, Francis Picabia, and Blaise Cendrars attended the premiere.

Such primitivist appetites presented opportunities and problems for African American writers. As Michael North points out, Anglo-American authors consistently adopted the "black mask" of African American speech and culture as an iconoclastic vehicle for distancing themselves from earlier cultural traditions. As younger African American writers began fashioning their own vernacular modernisms, however, they found that this "fashionable white usage of the same language stood in their way as a disabling example."[6] Nonetheless, such enthusiasm helped interest major publishing houses in black writing; a new generation of white publishers (including Blanche and Alfred Knopf, Horace Liveright, and Alfred Harcourt and Donald Brace) forged enduring relationships with many leading Harlem Renaissance authors, which worked in consort with their promotion of a

new generation of Anglo-American modernists. This facilitated publication of an unprecedented volume of African American writing that influenced black literary culture across the century and the globe. Yet African American authors often agonized over the expectations of their expanded audience. Hughes's early career, for example, was assisted by the white novelist and columnist Carl Van Vechten and by Charlotte Osgood Mason, a wealthy socialite who became his patron; yet he resisted their advice in the 1930s to tone down his left-wing radicalism and refocus on dialect poetry. (In his 1939 poem "Poet to Patron," he complained "What right has anyone to say / That I / Must throw out pieces of my heart / For pay?"[7]) As poet, novelist, and NAACP secretary James Weldon Johnson put it in 1928, African American writers often faced an inflexible and "divided audience," white and black. For Johnson, white Americans wanted to see African Americans either as "a simple, indolent, docile, improvident peasant; a singing, dancing, laughing, weeping child" or as "an impulsive, irrational, passionate savage, reluctantly wearing a thin coat of culture." In contrast, African American audiences were "a segregated and antagonized minority . . . unremittingly on the defensive," who rightly saw culture as a key forum for their racial-political struggles and therefore resisted "exhibiting to the world anything but their best points."[8]

Many African American intellectuals at the time perceived such divisions as just the cultural component of a broader "problem of being a citizen and yet not a citizen (and, by extension, of being simultaneously human and not quite human legally, socially, and culturally) in an increasingly urbanized, industrialized, and imperialist United States."[9] Politically, this situation had been cemented by recently implemented systems of segregation and disenfranchisement, which transformed state legislation between the 1880s and the 1910s to drastically undermine the protections against racial discrimination intended by the post-Civil War constitutional amendments. Although forms of segregation were operative nationwide, by the 1920s the "great migration" of millions of African Americans from the worst of these conditions in the South had established some of the most important northern urban districts for black modernism, including Harlem in New York and Chicago's South Side. This development was bolstered by immigration from the Caribbean; by the mid-1920s, almost 25 percent of Harlem's adult residents had been born overseas. Yet these districts were far more racially homogeneous than the working-class districts of twenty years earlier. Paradoxically, this urban migration fueled the primitivist craze, as "the physical compression of more black bodies into slim belts of urban space and concentrated vice helped construct black communities as foreign reserves that had been 'discovered.'"[10]

Moreover, as Matthew Pratt Guterl argues, after the First World War America moved to a system of "bi-racialism" and away from earlier, more multiple systems of racial classification. The category of "mulatto" disappeared from the national census after 1910, and in the 1920s the "foreclosure of European immigration . . . the postwar growth of superpatriotism . . . [and] the development of a racialized consumer society speeded the absolute assimilation of immigrant groups (previously understood as racially distinct) into a singular 'white race.'"[11] The black–white binary was therefore becoming increasingly important as a political, geographical, and identificatory model just as modernism was emerging – meaning that, as James Smethurst observes, African American authors were early attuned to "the representations of fragmented subjectivities that became standard operating procedure of much U.S. modernism."[12]

Even as they navigated the competing demands of Johnson's "divided audience," Harlem Renaissance authors made this racial binarism a formal and thematic preoccupation – whether in the "passing" novel, the cabaret scene, their frequent recourse to the sonnet, or their schematization of racial violence. The most innovative of such formal and thematic racial composites was Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923). Toomer's circle included members of the Harlem Renaissance, including Alain Locke and Georgia Douglas Johnson, but also white Greenwich Village "Lyrical Left" modernists such as Lola Ridge, Gorham Munson, and particularly Waldo Frank. Frank's call for a more racially and ethnically plural account of American culture in his 1919 manifesto *Our America* had caught Toomer's attention – as did the socialist flavor of Frank's cultural politics. The two formed an intense and short-lived friendship, and Frank's editorial abilities and his expressionistic fiction left their mark on *Cane* – just as Frank's literary contacts smoothed *Cane*'s path to publication. Their collaboration is just one example of many cross-fertilizing exchanges between black and white American modernisms, exchanges that were particularly rich on the political left and in new articulations of American cultural nationalism.[13]

Cane carries echoes of Ezra Pound, Robert Frost, Sherwood Anderson, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Paul Laurence Dunbar as well as Frank, even as Toomer's imagination of Georgia was distinctively and influentially his own. Also unique was Toomer's ambition to place the text pieces of *Cane* widely across the cultural field, irrespective of a magazine's racial politics: sections appeared in the NAACP's house journal, the *Crisis*; in modernist little magazines such as *Broom* and the *Little Review*; and in the segregationist, New Orleans-based *Double Dealer* (sections were rejected by the *Dial* and *Secession*).

Such institutional catholicity aligned well with Toomer's multiple sense of his own racial identity; as he said, "None of the standard color labels fit me. I am not white. I am not black. I am not red. I am not yellow. I am not brown . . . I have never lived within the 'color line,' and my life has never been cut off from the general course and conduct of American white life."[14] While the veracity of such statements has been much debated in Toomer scholarship, the power of *Cane* draws on a force field of racial interaction as much as animosity: a social imperative toward bichromatic racial classification works in consort and contrast with the complexities of lived racial experience and cultural genealogy, which often refused such binary simplification.

Cane is a mixture of poems (including sonnets, work songs, imagist lyrics, octaves, blasons, and prose poems), short fiction, and drama. It is split into three parts, with parts one and three set in Georgia – modeled on Toomer's experiences of working for three months as acting principal of the Sparta Agricultural and Industrial School in 1921. These parts elegize a vanishing rural African American folk culture – he later lamented its "folk spirit . . . walking in to die on the modern desert" – and register how an American history of racial atrocity and exploitation saturate all aspects of that culture and landscape.[15] Part two is set in Washington, DC, and Chicago, two cities transformed by the great migration and wracked by race riots in 1919.

In all three sections, *Cane* offers an assault on ideologies of racial purity: its texts track embodied and formal histories of interracial exchange, histories that are often buried by the imperatives of America's racial mores. It stages and encourages the excavation of racial secrets, existing as what Scruggs and VanDemarr call a "gothic detective story." In this regard "Toomer's narrators want to look and want not to look, for what they see always draws them deeply into the matters of 'race' and American identity. Where the writing is most brilliant is where that tension between looking and not looking creates a tortured, imagistic text."[16] This divided imperative drives the narrative and the eroticism of part one, which focuses on a series of portraits of young African American women with varieties of skin tone, tones that register semi-hidden embodied histories of miscegenation. In this way, the text participates in American modernism's obsession with the mixed-race subject, a subject who embodied and thereby negotiated the intense and multiple anxieties and fascinations at work in US culture and politics over the emerging implications of a national system of racially segregated social space, as James Smethurst so ably discusses in his essay in this volume. In *Cane*, the overloaded investment in such figures registers with particular force on the northern narrator of part one; he is both attracted to and frightened by these mostly silent

women. They elude him both sexually and representationally, at least partly because he recognizes them as overdetermined ciphers who figure forth complex and overwhelming southern histories of illicit interracial sexual violence and domination. As was recognized right from the outset, Toomer's brilliance in this first section was to condense these composited histories and identities into a powerful affect of place, one redolent of pine smoke, folksong, canebrakes, lingering sunsets, and a secretive, violent erotics – where history and environment combine to produce a compelling sensorium of the South.

Such dynamics are less evident in *Cane*'s urban section, however, which begins with an iconoclastic sense of swagger. It predicts that the "unconscious rhythms, black reddish blood" of African American culture and mass migration, personified as "Bootleggers in silken shirts," in "Ballooned, zooming Cadillacs / Whizzing, whizzing down the street-car tracks," will split the "stale, soggy wood" of white Washington.[17] These words come from the prose poem "Seventh Street," a street at the center of the 1919 riot and which, Toomer enthused, was newly full of "dash and bravado" in the era of the great migration and prohibition.[18] He lamented that this northern, urban life and culture was no longer "pure Negro," but he also celebrated it as "jazzed, strident, modern." This energy of mixture was fueled by the new spaces and practices of modern commercial entertainment and by the new technologies of communication and transport that were structuring America's expanding cities. Toomer saw urban life as involving both new (and usually oppressive) forms of rationalization, and new kinds of fluidity. On the one hand, social rationalization was resulting in residential segregation, as both class and race became geographically stratified in America's urban areas. Yet he also saw the anonymity and social fluidity of the city as facilitating the liberating practice of racial passing. As certain migrant bodies became geographically detached from family or community histories, they became increasingly racially illegible – and consequently more culturally and affectively generative (producing a compelling admixture of anxiety, fascination, and erotic attraction). This dynamic informs *Cane*'s short story "Bona and Paul," where the white, southern Bona is attracted to the light-skinned Paul partly because of her uncertainty about his racial identity. This narrative scenario was multiply replayed in the Harlem Renaissance, a replaying that frequently updated the "passing tradition" in African American fiction inherited from works like James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912) or Charles Chesnutt's *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900), texts which in some ways served as ethical conduct literature.

As Carla Kaplan notes, in many of the Harlem Renaissance passing texts "an erotics of race takes the place of an ethics of race," as the erotic charge of racial transgression supplants a narrative tradition that saw passing as the dereliction of racial duty. In consequence, and as James Smethurst explores further in his essay in this volume, passing in Harlem Renaissance literature frequently "destabilizes available ideas of race but at the same time is animated by the very race fascinations and longings it seems designed to critique."[19]

Toomer's "Bona and Paul," and *Cane*'s urban section, end ambiguously, reflecting Toomer's own ambivalence about northern, urban futures for African Americans. It is telling that this ending occurs outside the Crimson Gardens cabaret, one of many instances in the Harlem Renaissance when cabarets became a privileged site for framing transgressive sexuality. Indeed, cabarets were often represented in Harlem Renaissance writing as places of both interracial exploitation and interracial possibility, as sites where race was simultaneously intensively commodified and thoroughly deconstructed. This ambivalence reflected a broader pattern of writers' engagement with mass culture, which was "an especially hopeful and harrowing site for a diversity of African Americans," in the words of Davarian Baldwin. It provided at once the location of a proliferating series of racist stereotypes and "a major site where black residents – old settlers and newcomers – made themselves over as modern."[20] Harlem Renaissance writing was full of conflicted representations of this mass culture – the blues "race records" that sold millions of copies, movies, the cabaret, the vaudeville theatre, and the commercial dance hall.

For the novelist Nella Larsen, mass culture had thoroughly conditioned the racially composited experience of identities forged across the so-called "color line." Her novels drew on her own biography as the child of a black, West Indian father and a white, Danish mother, and her later marriage to a successful doctor living in Harlem. Her novels *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929) deal with light-skinned, middle-class women negotiating the complexities of race, class, and gender in the urban 1920s, particularly in relation to a (mass) cultural environment that privileged spectacle. The protagonists of her two novels – Helga Crane, Irene Redfield, and Clare Kendry – visit cabarets and circuses, charity balls and cocktail parties, and are incorrigible shoppers. They are arch-consumers who are themselves continually visually "consumed," both trapped and empowered by how this cultural economy spectacularized race and gender. They are never purely objectified by the male gaze, which they attract from black and white men alike; instead, they "appear," in Liz Conor's parlance, enacting a performance of visual identity

in which women could actively "make a spectacle of oneself ... configure oneself as spectacle ... [and] apprehend oneself and be apprehended as image."[21] In the final third of *Quicksand*, we see that Helga Crane has learned "to expect and accept admiration as her due," using a combination of "courageous clothes" and "deliberate lure" to succeed in Harlem's social scene.[22] In *Passing*, the mercurial Clare Kendry, who has "passed" into white society and married a wealthy, racist businessman, has controlled her appearance so carefully that she retains the erotic charge of "darkness" without its essentialist associations (her husband nicknames her "Nig," because she is "gettin' darker and darker").[23] Yet, although Helga and Irene often manage to turn the desirous attentions they receive to their own advantage, they struggle to understand and articulate their own sexual desires. After all, bourgeois black female identity of the time was heavily invested in resisting the stereotype that "colored [women were] only ... a gross collection of desires, all uncontrolled," as the young essayist Marita O. Bonner put it in 1925.[24] The narrative motor of both *Quicksand* and *Passing* is Helga's and Irene's search for a way to articulate to themselves the objects and the full scope of their desires, especially their sexual desires, in a society which generally saw black female sexual desire in the terms of racial pathology. In both books, the contorting pressure of that search is the cause of tragedy.

The global iterations of race were considered extensively in the Harlem Renaissance and so, too, in *Quicksand*. Helga's quest for personal fulfillment takes her from teaching at a southern Industrial school (modeled on Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute) to Chicago, Harlem, Copenhagen, Harlem again, and finally rural Alabama. These different localities each involve different lived practices of race. In Harlem, Helga is advised not to discuss her white, Danish mother, because of the social stigma around biracial children. In Copenhagen, Helga's relatives clothe her in bright colors and risqué outfits to stoke the primitivist fantasies of their social circle, and to parade her before eligible suitors. In Alabama, her light skin is resented as part of what is felt to be her presumptuous claim to class privilege. As Laura Doyle argues, this plotline therefore cuts against the dominant Anglo-American narrative that saw freedom (and nationality) as racialized, guaranteed, and produced by the act of international travel. Instead, Atlantic mobility offers Helga no means of escaping a series of social orders that subordinates her to a debilitating set of racial, colonial, and gendered coordinates.[25]

However, several writers found more hope in global mobility than Larsen. Principal among them were Langston Hughes and Claude McKay, the

leading poets of the Harlem Renaissance, whose careers stretched consider-
ably beyond its spatial and temporal boundaries. Both travelled widely –
McKay from his native Jamaica to Tuskegee and Kansas, then New York,
London, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, Marseilles, Barcelona, and Tangier; and
Hughes from his native Missouri to Kansas, Ohio, Mexico, New York, West
Africa, Paris, Genoa, Cuba, Haiti, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and Madrid
during the Civil War siege (which is only a selective list of their significant
stop-offs in the years preceding the Second World War). Both were engaged
in global and multiracial Marxist debates around race, nationalism, and
aesthetics, debates that sought to generate a racially composite literature of
proletarian revolution – and not just at the high- (or low-) water mark of the
Depression, but throughout the 1920s. And both had global audiences that
were often receptive to this message of revolutionary radicalism, which also
brought both writers under long-term surveillance by the FBI.

In their individual experiences of this widening global exposure, the poets
felt the excitement as well as the challenges of the roles into which they had
been cast. Undertaking what he would call his "Magic Pilgrimage," McKay
received rock-star treatment in Moscow in 1923, where he met Trotsky,
addressed the Fourth Congress of the Comintern with a report on the
"Negro question," and was feted as "an emblem of a whole race's sympathy
for Bolshevism."[26] His activities caused both the FBI and the British intelli-
gence services to prevent his re-entry to either Jamaica or the United States
for over a decade. In the end, it took James Weldon Johnson (who had
worked as US consul to Venezuela and Nicaragua early in his career) to
intercede with the State Department to secure McKay a visa for return to the
United States in 1934, a lingering testament to the fact that in 1921 "the F.B.I.
and the State Department had pronounced McKay the single strongest link
between Harlem's ascendant race capital and Moscow's Vatican of global
communism."[27] This history has led critic William J. Maxwell to identify
McKay as one of the major participants in what he terms "state-sponsored
transnationalism," wherein journeys compelled by state security services as
much as those undertaken by free choice set the pattern for the international
dynamics of individual cultural practice – a phenomenon he finds particularly
present in the history of black modernism and one regularly overlooked in
often celebratory accounts of modernism's global circuits.[28]

In both his playwriting and his verse Hughes was part of a global
community of leftist writing in the 1930s; he translated or swapped tech-
niques with writers such as Vladimir Mayakovsky, Louis Aragon, Nicolás
Guillén, and Maxim Gorky. Like McKay, his work was highly influential to

the francophone négritude movement of the 1930s. He was also widely translated in the Caribbean and Latin America, where he became one of the most famous US poets of the century. Traditional modernist scholarship has often failed to map these routes and exchanges, in large part because the formal choices of both men did not usually resemble what used to be called "high" modernism. Yet both men often saw literary form as a medium for imagining transnational relationships based on political or racial affinity. Both helped define the cultural and affective ties of the black diaspora, but also outlined its disconnections and silences; and both strove to create a proletarian voice that could transcend race and nationality.

Such ambitions were for many years read as faults or aberrations in a critical heritage that has often relied on the yardstick of racial authenticity. For McKay, such reactions usually focused on his choice of the sonnet for his most famous poetry, which was largely written between 1919's "red summer," which was rife with labor unrest and race riots, and 1922, when his landmark collection *Harlem Shadows* was published. As William Maxwell notes, by the late 1910s McKay had moved *away* from the Jamaican dialect verse of his first collections, *Constab Ballads* and *Songs of Jamaica* (both 1912), toward a more conventional approach to verse form and poetic diction. This move swam against the tide of a poetics of vernacular speech being developed as a cornerstone of the Harlem Renaissance's cultural nationalism by poets such as Hughes, Sterling Brown, and James Weldon Johnson. In contrast, McKay's stylistic shift toward anglocentric conventionality sought to internationalize his readership and audaciously turn the rich resources of the sonnet tradition to a black revolutionary politics.

McKay was well-versed in high modernist style through his contacts in Greenwich Village, and particularly his experience with the *Liberator*, the successor to the most important American socialist-modernist magazine of the era, the *Masses*. Yet in his preface to *Harlem Shadows*, McKay explains that he favored "adher[ing] to such of the older traditions as I find adequate for my most lawless and revolutionary passions and moods."[29] For McKay, the sonnet proved an ideal medium for such revolutionary lawlessness: less white than transnational, it appeared to him as a form whose journey from Italy across Europe and into the library of his Jamaican patron, Walter Jekyll, matched the kind of migrant restlessness that propelled his adult life and fueled his writing.[30] Moreover, its history as a vehicle for erotic praise (and intrigue), as well as for a romantic-era critique of modern industrial economy, offered the kind of jagged temporal and thematic disjunctions that marked his own experiences as a colonial subject entering the political and

aesthetic avant-gardes of the imperial metropolises of the Atlantic littoral. McKay often wrote about the dislocations of metropolitanism, of being a visionary but temporally and geographically alienated subject "born, far from my native clime, / Under the white man's menace, out of time."[31] He also recurred to the paradoxical intoxication of these "White Cities," as he called them, whose speed and energy invigorated him just as the racial-economic order that had facilitated their construction fueled his hatred. Similarly, McKay's most famous sonnets carry a sense of being both within and outside the form itself; and their tone of generative estrangement and dislocation, combined with their startling ability to reassemble resources from the anglophone literary tradition, brings this poetry closer to the strategies of more canonical modernists than has often been recognized.

McKay subsequently turned his energies to exploring how the novel form could articulate alternatives to a global-imperial racial economy. This initiative results in what Gary Holcomb has called his "black queer Trotskyist manifesto trilogy" of *Home to Harlem* (1928), *Banjo* (1929), and the unpublished *A Romance in Marseilles* (1929–32), "a cluster of three little black bombs to be hurled into the discourses of state nationalism, racism, capitalism, and imperialism."[32] All three are urban picaresques interested less in individual character development than in constellated moments of sociability among a black lumpen-proletariat; this formal looseness is signaled in *Banjo*'s subtitle, "A story without a plot." This "story" features a society of intellectuals, sailors, pimps, musicians, vagabonds, prostitutes, "sweetmen," and soldiers from across the diaspora; the novels follow the activities of this composite social class in the imperial port cities of New York and Marseilles (the latter is described as a place where it was as "if all the derelicts of the seas had drifted up . . . to sprawl out the days in the sun").[33] These itinerants use the transport routes of imperial trade and war to facilitate their own global mobility, often through transgressive or illegal practices, which trouble the discourses of nationalist coherence and security. McKay was particularly fascinated with how the musical and performance subcultures of these cities mobilized utopian scenes of diasporic community – one of *Banjo*'s most memorable moments features a group of Senegalese, Martiniquans, North Africans, Jamaicans, Madagascans, and African Americans assembling in Marseilles to hear an impromptu band play the American jazz tune "Shake that Thing." The music sets off a storm of sexual and violent energy in the bars and brothels the group visits to play the song, but it also provides occasion for a host of nationalized musical and dance cultures to come together ecstatically. As Brent Hayes Edwards has argued, it is music in *Banjo* that becomes the

singular, utopian place where a black diasporic community can become institutionalized, and where the most profound and "active threat" to capitalist norms emerges.[34] What McKay called the "composite voice of the Negro ... speech, song, and laughter," which is confrontationally manifest in such musical moments, "evokes an autonomous system ... at the fringes of modernity: irrepressible, goading, infuriating the civilization that would crush it."[35] Such compositing draws strength from the differences and the continuities across the diaspora, and also from elements of a racialized modernity it serves to protest and challenge.

The key writer to develop a poetics of musical racial authenticity in the Harlem Renaissance, however, was Langston Hughes, who did much to define the contours of vernacular-based poetry in the African American literary tradition. The central poetic debate of the Harlem Renaissance was about the potential of African American dialect; in 1922, James Weldon Johnson declared it irredeemably toxic from years of association with the minstrel stage, which rendered it capable of "but two full stops, humor and pathos."[36] But in two collections, *The Weary Blues* (1926) and *Fine Clothes to the Jew* (1927), Hughes demonstrated that dialect speech – often placed in his poetic reconfiguration of the blues stanza – could communicate love, desire, joy, racial protest, economic critique, and elegy. The seeming simplicity of this verse masks the audacity of Hughes's innovations in transfiguring this secular, sexual music into the poetic canon, a shift he accomplished in the face of considerable criticism from all corners of the black political spectrum in the 1920s. It is also easy to overlook his blending of the tradition of the dramatic monologue with that of the blues, pooling their resources for irony, audience interpellation, and characterization. Such innovations in black vernacular verse have been poorly recognized within traditional canons of modernism, just as its complex stylizations have often been "systematically naturalized as an authentic index of racial otherness."[37] It is worth remembering that Hughes did not so much represent "authentic" African American speech and music as he did invent its modern poetic language.[38]

The success of that project has often overshadowed the diversity of Hughes's stylistic experiments and generic range beyond that of cultural nationalist par exemplum (he was also a novelist, short story writer, children's author, librettist, playwright, essayist, newspaper columnist, and war correspondent). The past fifteen years have seen substantial revisionary scholarship on Hughes, which has clarified his extensive interracial and hemispheric networks. This has included new attention to his internationalist, proletarian writing of the 1930s, which was long considered an embarrassing aberration

from his life's core project of representing the African American folk, but has more recently been read as formative of his mature poetic style.[39] The more expansive vision of Hughes also draws from his two compelling autobiographies, *The Big Sea* (1940) and *I Wonder as I Wander* (1956), which chart a number of multilingual, indeed composited moments of diasporic, hemispheric, and proletarian communication – and frequently also misunderstanding. The activities these texts recount – from Hughes's uneasy participation in an American merchant vessel plying its trade down the West African coast, to his ill-fated work on a Soviet film project addressing African American life, to his extensive connections to artistic avant-gardes in Havana, Port-au-Prince, and Mexico City – have led Vera Kutzinski to identify Hughes as a primary exponent of "fringe modernism," a modernism developed in "spaces worldwide in which we find avant-garde literary practices typically excluded from modernist studies for being too 'transparent,' too 'realistic,' too 'ethnic,' or too 'political' – or simply for using languages other than English."[40] Hughes was widely read in Latin America in translations that torqued his United States-based antiracism into articulations of a hemispheric anti-imperialism – but also often adapted his verse to local politics of race and nationalism. Pigeonholing Hughes for his "simple" style, then, or for being merely a poet of naturalized racial authenticity, risks overlooking not only the specifics of how Hughes's poetry was taken up on modernism's "fringes," but also the detail of how his style changed during his career in response to his shifting political and international commitments.

Nonetheless, a self-conscious cultural nationalism anchored both Hughes's work and the Harlem Renaissance as a whole. This culturalist turn in political activism was led by the era's two most influential anthologists, James Weldon Johnson and Alain Locke, who contended that the African American cultural contribution to American life was a credential for national political enfranchisement. In his landmark 1925 anthology *The New Negro*, Locke argued that culture was African Americans' best political strategy, as "the revaluation by white and black alike of the Negro in terms of his artistic endowments and cultural contributions" would allow African Americans to "[lay] aside the status of a beneficiary and ward for that of a collaborator and participant in American civilization."[41] Such arguments drew on recent theorizations of pluralized models for cultural and political democracy in the United States then being developed in philosophy, political theory, and anthropology. Most influential for the Harlem Renaissance was the work of the anthropologist Franz Boas. His cultural relativism was rapidly displacing the methods of evolutionary, comparativist anthropology of writers like

James George Frazer, rejecting its temporal hierarchies of "primitive" and "civilized" in favor of what Susan Hegeman terms the "spatial articulation of the culture concept."[42] As George Hutchinson notes, "Boasian concepts became bedrock assumptions among 'New Negro' authors of virtually every persuasion," both as ammunition to counter scientific racism and because they stressed the integrity and value of distinctive ethnic and racial cultures in contrast to a faith in universalized standards.[43] It was Boas's student, Zora Neale Hurston, who used her anthropological fieldwork to make the most forceful case for the distinctiveness and complexity of rural, southern African American culture, positioning the makers of that culture not just as quaint curios, or the foil helping to define a rapidly modernizing urban northern "New Negro," but as rural *and* modern subjects vital to any accurate apprehension of American society.[44]

Hurston published two ethnographic collections of black folk tales (or what she called "lies"), religious practices, and social mores. In her short stories, and the novels *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934) and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), she adapted these materials and methodologies into the composite genre of ethnographic fiction. In this genre, the narrative momentum is often suspended for extensive descriptions of storytelling, social gatherings, or verbal competitions among her rural, black subjects; or it depicts characters reflecting on the intricate processes, skill, and functionalities of storytelling. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, these stories are regularly told at the town's communal center, the porch-front of the general store; this is where sexual rivalry and contests of social hierarchy are played out, but also where debates occur on whether infant behavior is governed by nature or nurture, on the ethics of how to treat animals, and on the appropriate ritual forms for commemorating the end of slavery. Such lore, then, was neither stagnant nor thematically restricted: it was adaptable to pressing issues in twentieth-century American society, occurring across a range of intellectual registers, and capacious enough to manage their complexity. Moreover, Hurston's characters' social success relies on their skill in these performance forms: telling "lies," but also the insult-banter of "playing the dozens" (in which elaborate insults are traded until one participant triumphs by forcing their opponent to lose their cool), delivering sermons or ceremonial speeches, or playing the blues. The sophistication of these performances is also embedded at the level of the novel's form; much of it is narrated by the heroine Janie Crawford, in what has often been taken as a feminist *Künstlerroman* – one that follows a storyteller learning to perfect her voice as she gradually achieves artistic, economic, and sexual agency.

Janie's ability to craft her own language (and thereby shape her own destiny) is showcased through bravura verbal performances that not only show mastery of African American verbal traditions, but compile and compound elements from dramatically different ethnic, spiritual, and cultural locations. Such dynamic verbal skill, innovating through an assured command of a range of ethnic and racial cultural traditions, resolved some of the linguistic dilemmas Hurston faced in her ethnographic fieldwork. In her autobiography, she complained that the straitened, academic formality of what she called "carefully accented Barnardese" made her rural black interlocutors suspicious and reluctant to share their knowledge with her.[45] Ultimately, Hurston's novel prefigured some of postmodernism's critiques of ethnographic authority – that it was based on an unstable epistemological distance from the subjects it observed, and that it had problems dealing with cultural dynamism and cultural hybridity.[46] Boas's theorizations of the methodologies of fieldwork, and the impact of his anti-racist project, were important to Hurston, but her fiction registers her own divergent suspicions about the authority of any singular linguistic register, and of the idea that folk cultures represented static objects of study. And even as her work argued for the centrality of a vital and dynamic African American culture to any constellated view of a national cultural terrain, she was committed to a vernacular strategy similar to that of Langston Hughes and Sterling Brown – that "a fluid and alive folklore aesthetic can open onto a nonessential idea of race, [where] race itself is an endlessly modified idea without a source original, and which, therefore, remains open to endless reinvention and even play."[47]

<center>*</center>

In 1922, Jean Toomer wrote to Waldo Frank, "I cannot think of myself as being separated from you in the dual task of creating an American literature." This affirmation of cross-racial collaboration turned out to be prophetic for American literature between the wars, in suggesting that the national literary future would often be a composite of racial-aesthetic exchange.[48] Whether it was the cultural nationalism of interracial American modernism; the ambition to forge a global, proletarian, anti-capitalist literature; or the project to reconfigure the textual recording of human cultures away from evolutionary narratives: black and white writers alike regularly described their objectives in similarly collaborative terms. At the same time, many global modernisms prized a reified notion of blackness, as "the primitive" became both a critical

perspective and a storehouse of imagery for assaulting traditional Western aesthetic and cultural systems. While European and Anglo-American modernists eagerly used such imagery as leverage for their own iconoclastic projects, black writers struggled with the mixed implications of essentializing race to challenge central principles of Enlightenment modernity. Both these types of interracial exchange informed the Harlem Renaissance's composite modernism. Writers wrote themselves into "Western" traditions of the sonnet, changing the racial and political capacities of that tradition as they did so; others took the "passing" novel into an age of urban spectacle and so modernized embodied concepts of the racial composite. Authors like Hughes and McKay considered the affinities and disconnections between proletarian and black identities, whereas Hurston fashioned an ethnographic fiction both enriched by Boasian comparativism and cautiously aware of its limitations. Hughes's "game of black and white" was both rigged and fruitful, economic and cultural, national and global; and the authors of the Harlem Renaissance carefully played their hand, constantly aware that the cultural project of fashioning an iconoclastically "New Negro" was inextricable from the activities of white, Euro-American modernism, even if their objectives did not always align.

Notes

1 *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, ed. Arnold Rampersad (New York: Vintage, 1995), 175–76.
2 See James Smethurst, *The African American Roots of Modernism: From Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).
3 Ann Spencer, "White Things," in Venetria K. Patton and Maureen Honey (eds.), *Double-Take: A Revisionist Harlem Renaissance Anthology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 228.
4 Susan L. Hannel, "The Influence of American Jazz on Fashion," in Linda Welters and Patricia A. Cunningham (eds.), *Twentieth Century American Fashion* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 57–77.
5 Petrine Archer-Straw, *Negrophilia: Avant-Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 18.
6 Michael North, *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language, and Twentieth-Century Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 11.
7 Hughes, *Collected Poems*, 212.
8 James Weldon Johnson, "The Dilemma of the Negro Author" (1928), in Henry Louis Gates and Andrew Jarrett (eds.), *The New Negro: Readings on Race,*

Representation, and African American Culture, 1892–1938 (Princeton University Press, 2007), 378–82 (at 379, 381).

9 Smethurst, *African American Roots of Modernism*, 29.

10 Davarian L. Baldwin, "Our Newcomers to the City: The Great Migration and the Making of Modern Mass Culture," in W. Fitzhugh Brundage (ed.), *Beyond Blackface: African Americans and the Creation of American Popular Culture, 1890–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 159–89 (at 170).

11 Mathew Pratt Guterl, *The Color of Race in America, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 6.

12 Smethurst, *African American Roots of Modernism*, 64.

13 This is the central argument of George Hutchinson's *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1995).

14 Jean Toomer, "The Crock of Problems," *Jean Toomer: Selected Essays and Literary Criticism*, ed. Robert B. Jones (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 55–59 (at 56).

15 *The Wayward and the Seeking: A Collection of Writings by Jean Toomer*, ed. Darwin T. Turner (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1983), 123.

16 Charles Scruggs and Lee VanDemarr, *Jean Toomer and the Terrors of American History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 136.

17 Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1923; New York: Boni & Liveright, 1993), 39.

18 *The Letters of Jean Toomer, 1919–1924*, ed. Mark Whalan (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 108.

19 Carla Kaplan, "Introduction," in Nella Larsen, *Passing* (1929; New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), ix–xxvii (at xxi).

20 Baldwin, "Our Newcomers," 163, 160.

21 Liz Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 7.

22 Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (1928; London: Serpent's Tail, 1989), 98.

23 Nella Larsen, *Passing* (1929; New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 29.

24 Marita O. Bonner, "On Being Young – A Woman – and Colored" (1925), in Patton and Honey (eds.), *Double-Take*, 109–12 (at 111).

25 Laura Doyle, "Transnational History at Our Backs: A Long View of Larsen, Woolf, and Queer Racial Subjectivity in Atlantic Modernism," *Modernism/Modernity*, 13/3 (2006), 531–59 (at 549, 554).

26 William J. Maxwell, *New Negro, Old Left: African American Writing and Communism Between the Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 74; see also Maxwell, "Introduction," *Claude McKay: Complete Poems*, ed. William J. Maxwell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), xvii.

27 William J. Maxwell, "F.B. Eyes: The Bureau Reads Claude McKay," in Bill V. Mullen and James Smethurst (eds.), *Left of the Color Line: Race, Radicalism, and Twentieth-Century Literature of the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 39–65 (at 44).

28 William J. Maxwell, "Global Poetics and State-Sponsored Transnationalism: A Reply to Jahan Ramazani," *American Literary History*, 18/2 (Summer 2006), 360–64.

29 McKay, *Complete Poems*, 315.

30 See Maxwell, "Introduction."

31 Claude McKay, "Outcast," *Complete Poems*, 174.

32 Gary Edward Holcomb, *Code Name Sasha: Queer Black Marxism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 19.

33 Claude McKay, *Banjo* (1929; New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1957), 18.

34 Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 239.

35 Ibid., 225.

36 James Weldon Johnson, "Introduction," *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, ed. Johnson (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922), xl.

37 Vera M. Kutzinski, *The Worlds of Langston Hughes: Modernism and Translation in the Americas* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 139.

38 David Chinitz, *Which Sin to Bear? Authenticity and Compromise in Langston Hughes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

39 See James Smethurst, *The New Red Negro: The Literary Left and African American Poetry, 1930–1946* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 94.

40 Kutzinski, *Worlds of Langston Hughes*, 8.

41 Alain Locke, "The New Negro," in Locke (ed.), *The New Negro* (1925; New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 3–16 (at 15).

42 Susan Hegeman, *Patterns for America: Modernism and the Concept of Culture* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 12.

43 Hutchinson, *Harlem Renaissance in Black and White*, 62, 77.

44 See Eve Dunbar, *Black Regions of the Imagination: African American Writers between the Nation and the World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013), 30.

45 Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road: An Autobiography* (1942; London: Virago, 1986), 175.

46 Dunbar, *Black Regions of the Imagination*, 43.

47 Carla Kaplan, "Zora Neale Hurston, Folk Performance, and the 'Margarine Negro,'" in George Hutchinson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Harlem Renaissance* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 213–36 (at 230).

48 *Letters of Jean Toomer*, 59.

MODERNISM IN PERSON, MODERNISM IN COMMUNITY

"Modernism in Person, Modernism in Community" features many of the major figures of literary, musical, visual, and critical modernism in dedicated treatments. These chapters take the artistic biography not as an item of personalized interest but as a story developing in relation to modernism as an evolving consciousness, which is developing its concepts, attitudes, and practices through their individual lives but mainly through their contacts. Thus the individual figures appear in the contexts of the communities of modernism that they establish and are established by. These communities are understood variously as personal and professional, intimate and distant, lived in at close range and constructed in retrospect according to shared characteristics. This section narrates the lives and contacts of forty-five of the major figures from the transatlantic and pan-European compasses of modernism. In each of these threesomes, one figure often provides some unexpected point of resemblance with the other two and so, in the triangulated pattern, offers a newly revealing view. Each of these groups usually includes artists working in different genres, different media, different nations or different generations, as such encompassing a transhistorical and multigeneric as well as international constituency of modernism; the triangulated narratives combine to provide a history of the faceted and variegated consciousness of modernism as it evolved through circumstances shared in

various ways. There is also special attention to the miscellaneous accomplices of modernist coteries, those figures who may not have produced the best-known work but who constitute the thickness-through of the artistic cultures which the assignably "major" figures dominated. This census is representative but not exhaustive, and there are inevitable absences. Such lacunae are, as it were, the white space on the canvas where these smaller patterns of three provide the forms for this larger design. These featured artists are presented then as case studies of modernism in person and in groups, as individuals developing in productive relation to the main lines of a modernism that is in process with them and that is embodied in the works of the artists with whom they are associated in the individual chapters and, in large, in this section as a whole. This comprehensive category of modernism is the ulterior frame of reference for each story and it provides, in sum, a sort of "elsewhere community" for all these individual figures who, in variously explicit ways, expressed their sense of generational membership.

These biographies are enriched as they are framed by two essays preceding them. These chapters serve, in effect, to focus the major issues attending the new conceptions of the personal subject in modernism. They show how the "individual" of a specifically nineteenth-century liberal tradition is being reconstructed in ways that serve, on one hand, to open new sources of expressive content in art and, on the other, to foster the broader conception of generational membership. The first essay takes up the importance of Freud and of Freudianism; it tells its story in the framework of cultural history, showing how the autonomous subject of liberal tradition is unmade and remade as a source of individual authority and so is opened into a new dimension of psychological or subconscious content, which modernism is commonly understood to have tapped. The next chapter frames the work of some of the major female modernists in relation to these issues, taking as its staging area the journal the *New Freewoman*, which on January 1, 1914 became the *Egoist*, perhaps the first venue of a nascent literary (and visual) modernism in England. It pays special attention to the subtitle preserved by both journals, *An Individualist Review*. Following the model of the editor Dora Marsden, female modernists take the category of individuality (gender-restricted by cultural tradition) as a target of radical revision, thus opening the personae of literary art in particular to new potentials of expressive depth and supra-individual understanding that is one of the formative bases of the feeling of a modernist generation.

A Technique of Unsettlement: Freud, Freudianism, and the Psychology of Modernism

MAUD ELLMANN

In a 1935 essay assessing the impact of Freud on modern culture, W.H. Auden declares this enterprise impossible. "To trace, in the manner of the textual critic, the influence of Freud upon modern art, as one might trace the influence of Plutarch upon Shakespeare, would not only demand an erudition which few, if any, possess, but would be of very doubtful utility."[1] A precocious reader of psychoanalysis who absorbed Freud's writings as a schoolboy, Auden recognizes that their cultural repercussions are incalculable. In his later elegy to Freud (1939), Auden describes the founder of psychoanalysis as "no more a person / now but a whole climate of opinion / under whom we conduct our different lives." Pro-Freud or anti-Freud, we live in "the world he changed." Auden does not deny that Freud was often "wrong and, at times, absurd," or that "some traces of the autocratic pose, / the paternal strictures he distrusted, still / clung to his utterance and features," but this was a "protective coloration" adopted in the face of hostility. What Freud gave the world, Auden suggests, was not an infallible dogma but a "technique of unsettlement," together with a new enthusiasm for the "fauna of the night."[2]

If Freud could be absurd, so could his disciples and detractors. Both factions were prone, as they still are, to travesty Freud's insights, particularly with regard to sexuality. In an essay entitled "'Wild' Psycho-Analysis" (1910), Freud objects to the common error of exaggerating the "somatic" factor of sexual life at the expense of its psychic component.[3] Against this misunderstanding, Freud explains that the psychoanalytic concept of what is sexual "goes lower and also higher than its popular sense" (*SE*, XI:222). Lower, in that infantile sexuality is "polymorphously perverse" (*SE*, VII:191), capricious in its aim and object and ill distinguished from the excremental functions; higher, in that sexual desire is the force that fuels the loftiest productions of

the mind. W.B. Yeats, commenting on this theory, writes: "The passions, when ... they do not find fulfillment, become vision."[4]

In "wild" psychoanalysis, by contrast, this complex concept of "psycho-sexuality" is reduced to the desire for coitus, thereby reinforcing the hetero-genital norms that Freud regarded as excessively constrictive (*SE*, XI:223). Auden parodies this popular distortion of psychoanalytic theory: to "the man in the street," he mocks, "Sexual pleasure is the only real satisfaction. All other activities are an inadequate and remote substitute."[5] Auden himself, however, was not immune to wild psychoanalysis, as exemplified by his misogynistic ballad "Miss Gee" (1937), in which a spinster with "no bust at all" dies of cancer, supposedly brought on by prudery and sexual abstinence.[6] Nonetheless, in his essay "Psychology and Art To-Day" (1935), Auden mocks such vulgarized versions of psychoanalysis in which "the cure for all ills is *(a)* indiscriminate sexual intercourse; *(b)* autobiography."[7]

The second of these supposed panaceas – autobiography – has certainly prospered in modern literature and popular culture, ranging from the mag-nificent autobiographical novels of Joyce, Proust, Musil, Mann, and Svevo, to the tell-all confessions of the Oprah Winfrey show. Freud's own works, which emerged out of their author's self-analysis, could be seen as both a symptom and a cause of this autobiographical explosion. Yet the practice of autobiographical confession long predates Freud; as a Catholic cardinal fulminates in Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, what the "atheistic doctors" of psychoanalysis imagine they invented "is nothing but what the Church has been doing from the beginning: exorcising the Devil and healing the possessed."[8] Musil's cardinal thus anticipates Foucault's contention that psychoanalysis perpetuates the "immense and traditional extortion of the sexual confession" enshrined in the Catholic Church, while adapting this ritual to a supposedly scientific framework.[9] In this way the "unconscious" has been substituted for the devil, the doctor for the priest, the abreaction for the exorcism. What draws the patient to the consulting-room, just as it drew the penitent to the confession-box, is the pleasure of verbalizing sexuality: "They let their secret sins be discussed because they enjoy it," the cardinal scoffs.[10] In the talking cure as in the confessional, this discussion provides its own *jouissance*, at least as erotic as the sexual acts and fantasies divulged.

Foucault rightly argues that psychoanalysis arose out of the prolific sexual discourses that pervaded scientific and literary culture at the turn of the century. But he underestimates Freud's awareness of the cultural formation of sexual desires and identities. This awareness also marks the work of Freud's modernist contemporaries, especially such "dialecticians of human

sexuality" as Schnitzler in Vienna, Proust in Paris, and Joyce in "Trieste-Zurich-Paris 1914–1921" (the last words of *Ulysses*).[11] Freud's psychoanalytic works, however, rarely allude to living writers, apart from an extended analysis of Wilhelm Jensen's Pompeian fantasy *Gradiva* (1902).[12] Instead Freud's literary tastes reflect his traditional humanist education at the Sperl Gymnasium in Vienna, where he studied Homer and Sophocles, Shakespeare and Milton, Goethe and Schiller. By Graham Frankland's computation, most of Freud's literary allusions are to Goethe, especially to *Faust* Part One, followed by Shakespeare, with *Hamlet* garnering more than half the citations. Heine comes third – mainly due to multiple citations of this poet's witticisms in Freud's book on jokes – closely followed by Schiller. Apart from these writers, Freud refers most frequently to Sophocles, especially to *Oedipus Rex*, the source of the most famous psychoanalytic complex.[13]

The centrality of these classics to psychoanalysis has bolstered the one-sided view of Freud as bourgeois Viennese doctor, hidebound in his literary tastes as in his family life, a view that oversimplifies both the man and his adopted city.[14] In point of fact, the Viennese avant-garde was neither so reckless nor its bourgeoisie so narrow-minded as these intersecting groups are frequently portrayed. These intersections meant that psychoanalysis was bound to be affected by the avant-garde, despite Freud's somewhat standoffish attitude toward modernism. Freud's Vienna, we are frequently reminded, was also home to Mahler, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele, Loos, Kraus, Schnitzler, Musil, and Wittgenstein.[15] The decline of the Austro-Hungarian Empire created the conditions in which Vienna's greatest writers, together with its painters, psychologists, and art historians, turned their attention to the problem of the nature of the individual in a crumbling society. It was these intellectuals, according to Carl Schorske, who brought about the transition from "rational man," the autonomous subject of the nineteenth-century liberal tradition, to "that richer but more dangerous and mercurial creature, psychological man."[16] To borrow Schorske's (dated) epithet, "psychological man" arose out of political frustration with the collapse of liberal culture, compromised since the 1860s by its alliance with the monarchy and the imperial bureaucracy, riven by ethnic divisions, and ultimately crushed by modern mass movements.

This is the world that Musil in *The Man Without Qualities* portrays as the hyper-ironical Kakania, a name that puns on "k.k." (an abbreviated form of *kaiserlich und königlich*, "imperial and royal," referring to the Habsburg monarchy) and *caca*, the nursery word for shit. In a brilliant discussion of Musil's Kakania, Malcolm Bowie suggests "Freud's multisystemic 'psychical apparatus'

was to some extent the psychological model that Viennese high culture needed in order to understand its own predilection for irony."[17] This psychical apparatus could also be compared to the structure of Musil's sprawling modernist masterpiece, with its journalistic cuts, jumps, and juxtapositions, its devious networks and short-circuited liaisons, together with the figure of the madman Moosbrugger lurking at the heart of its romantic and political intrigues, like the psychotic core of a disintegrating personality. Moosbrugger's homicidal mania also foreshadows the bloodbath of the First World War, the omens of which are lost on Musil's voluble and ineffectual Kakanians.

As far as influence is concerned, Freud never read *The Man Without Qualities*, which was not published in full until 1978, and Musil was more familiar with the psychological theories of Ernst Mach than those of Freud. Yet both Freud and Musil belonged to a culture obsessed with the investigation of "psychological man" (although psychological woman, especially the fashionable hysteric, played a leading role in the development of the "talking cure," a nickname invented by Josef Breuer's patient Anna O).[18] The paradoxical effect of this intensive focus on the self was to reveal what Freud called the "internal foreign territory" of the mind (*SE*, XXII:57). *"Je est un autre,"* as Rimbaud famously remarked.[19]

If Freud was unaware of Musil's great unfinished novel, he was by no means unaffected by Vienna's literary revolution. He praised his neighbor Arthur Schnitzler, for example, as a "colleague" in the investigation of the "underestimated and much-maligned erotic."[20] In fact Freud seemed to find this intellectual affinity too close for comfort, using the term *Doppelgängerschen* (fear of encountering one's double) to explain why he avoided meeting Schnitzler until 1922.[21] Freud was also intrigued by the works of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, especially by his psychoanalytic adaptation of Sophocles' tragedy *Elektra*, to which Freud devoted a special meeting of the Wednesday Psychological Society (later known as the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society) in May 1905. While Hofmannsthal's play infused Freudian theories into an ancient literary form (as some contemporary critics noted with disapproval), the play itself might have influenced those theories in return by persuading Freud to distance himself from Jung's concept of the "Elektra complex."[22] In the second of three "Vienna letters" published in the *Dial* in 1922, Hofmannsthal pays tribute to Freud as the central intellectual force in Vienna, describing this city as the *"porta Orientis,"* at once the gateway to the East and to "that mysterious Orient, the realm of the unconscious. Dr. Freud's interpretations and hypotheses are the excursions of the conscious *Zeitgeist* along the coast of this realm."[23]

Freud's theories fostered this *Zeitgeist*, enticing modernists into this mysterious Orient, yet his theories also owe their own emergence to the iconoclasm of the avant-garde. As Mark S. Micale has emphasized, psychoanalysis and modernism were "*mutually originative* and *reciprocally enriching.*"[24] It is therefore telling that André Brouillet's famous painting of Charcot's lecture on hysteria, "Une leçon clinique à la Salpêtrière" (1887), a reproduction of which hung in Freud's consulting room at Berggasse 19, features two novelists, a politician, and an impressionist artist among the audience, all transfixed by the spectacle of a gorgeous hysteric swooning into the arms of the psychologist Joseph Babinski.[25] This eclectic audience confirms Judith Ryan's point that "literature and psychology have never before or since been so closely articulated."[26] At the turn of the century it was Paris, rather than Vienna, which was regarded as the hotbed of the new psychologies, and "psychoanalysis was only one of many emerging models of mind that comprised the coming of early dynamic psychiatry and that contributed to the constitution of the modern psychological self."[27]

These models often overlapped with concurrent fads for spirit-raising, mesmerism, and animal magnetism, all of these contributing to an intellectual environment in which science and pseudoscience were difficult to disentangle. Freud himself made use of mesmerism, like his mentor Charcot, in his early treatment of hysteric patients, and was also interested in spiritualism and the occult; it is worth noting that the first lecture in Britain on Freud's work was given in 1893 by the President of the Society for Psychical Research, Frederic Myers.[28] Psychoanalysis and the occult also converged in the enthusiasms of the avant-garde. The surrealists, who rhapsodized about the new psychologies, were equally fascinated by mesmerism, mediumistic phenomena, multiple personality, states of possession, and other paranormal experiences.[29]

Freud's most famous confrontation with the avant-garde occurred in his correspondence with the surrealist writer and publicist André Breton. Trained in psychiatry, Breton served as a medical intern in the First World War, during which he experimented with Freudian methods in treating shell-shock victims. As he explains in the *First Manifesto of Surrealism*:

> Completely occupied as I still was with Freud at that time, and familiar as I was with his methods of examination which I had had some slight occasion to use on patients during the war, I decided to obtain from myself what we were trying, namely, a monologue spoken as rapidly as possible without any intervention on the part of the critical faculties, a monologue consequently unencumbered by the slightest inhibition and which was, as closely as possible, akin to *spoken thought.*[30]

In *Nadja* (1928), Breton reaffirms his admiration for psychoanalysis, which he praises as "a method I esteem and whose present aims I consider nothing less than the expulsion of man from himself."[31] Nonetheless, the relationship between Breton and Freud proceeded to be shaken by what Jean-Michel Rabaté describes as "a series of attempts at seduction followed by rejection and absurd bickering, in short, by a movement that might call up the very logic of hysteria,"[32] which eventuated, among other things, in Freud pretending not to understand what surrealism was about.[33]

Despite these spats, surrealism and psychoanalysis share a belief in the unconscious, although they approach this psychic hinterland in different ways. Breton boasts that automatic writing offers an "open sesame" to the unconscious, circumventing the barriers of repression, whereas Freud stresses the subterfuge of the unconscious, its decoys and disguises. While Breton claims that automatic writing enables the "photography of thought," any such plenitude is thwarted by Freud's theory of repression, which entails that unconscious material can only surface in distorted form.[34] If Breton's unconscious is a reservoir of creativity, Freud's is a cesspool of mutinous desires, comparable to the "stinking fosse" of Dante's *Inferno*, "where the injured / live the ugly life of the rejected," in Auden's words.[35] Uglified *by* their rejection, these shades can never be brought forth into the light; their malignity can only be dissipated through the talking cure. And although surrealists welcomed Freud's investigations of the fauna of the night, these artists were more enthralled with the phantasmagoria of dreams than with the hidden meanings patiently unraveled in analysis.

In fact, Freud's approach to dreams has less in common with surrealism than with Proust, although there is no evidence that either writer was acquainted with the other's work. By opening *À la recherche du temps perdu* with the narrator's dreams, rather than his action in and on the world, Proust initiates a revolution in fiction comparable to that which Freud accomplished in psychology. Both turn their attention to the realm of sleep, exploring the unconscious nightlife of the mind, which was previously relegated to the margins of literary realism. Both also challenge the customary separation of mind and body by tracing the images of dreams to physical urges and sensations. As Proust's dreamer recalls, "Sometimes . . . as Eve was created from a rib of Adam, a woman would be born during my sleep from some misplacing of my thigh."[36] Similarly Freud argues that dreams are triggered by bodily needs, which, transformed into the pictographic script of dreams, provide a vehicle for the return of the repressed.

In addition to their mutual concern with dreams and sexuality, Freud and Proust share a fascination with the workings of early memory. In the famous episode of the madeleine in Proust's *Recherche*, the taste of a cake dipped in tea transports the narrator back to his Combray childhood, unleashing an ecstatic rush of involuntary memory.[37] Freud, more pessimistically, views childhood memory as a destructive force, an unhealed scar liable to induce a tormenting pattern of compulsive repetition. Only through the psychoanalytic process of remembering, repeating, and working-through can these haunting memories be laid to rest (*SE*, XII:145–56). Despite these differences, however, Freud and Proust both emphasize the inaccessibility of childhood memory, an emphasis identified by Lorna Martens as "historically new."[38] Leonard Woolf, likewise, stresses the difficulty of retrieving childhood memories in his review of Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, which was the first discussion of psychoanalysis in a British literary context:

> There are few persons who have not felt the fascination of speculating upon the mysteries of the memories of childhood, the curious way in which the door of forgetfulness seems to have closed for us upon so many important happenings, only to open momentarily in a vivid picture of some utterly trivial scene in those dim and earliest years.[39]

Although Freud and Proust are both committed to the search for lost time, they differ in their attitudes to the recovery of memory. Proust's faith in the spiritual renewal to be gained from anamnesis shows more affinity to the romantics than to Freud, whereas the more troubled content of psychoanalyzed memory will provide a major resource for literary modernism.

Few anglophone modernists, meanwhile, encountered Freud's writings directly, but popular versions of his ideas were "in the air." Ezra Pound, when he enlists the psychoanalytic term "complex" in his famous definition of an image as "an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time," cites Bernard Hart's Freudian primer *The Psychology of Insanity* (1912) rather than Freud himself.[40] Even Virginia Woolf, who helped to publish the Strachey translations of Freud at the Hogarth Press from 1924 onward,[41] claimed to have avoided reading these works until 1939. This is surprising, to say the least, given that her husband Leonard was an early champion of Freud; her brother Adrian and his wife were practicing psychoanalysts; while Lytton Strachey's brother James, accompanied by his wife Alix, traveled to Vienna to be analyzed by Freud and returned as his official English translators. It is evident from Woolf's diary that Freudian theory was frequently

discussed at home – Leonard even tried to analyze her dreams – but her own expressed reactions ranged from skepticism to "ferocity."[42]

Woolf's resistance to psychoanalysis probably derived from several sources. Her own history of mental illness caused her to distrust mind-doctors, satirized in the callous pomposity of Sir William Bradshaw in *Mrs. Dalloway*. In addition, she may have resented Freud's encroachment on her own fictional terrain, the hidden life of the unconscious. By December 9, 1939, however, Woolf by her own account was "gulping up Freud."[43] And in her posthumously published autobiographical essay, "A Sketch of the Past," she likens the cathartic effect of writing *To the Lighthouse* to a psychoanalytic treatment. When the novel was completed, she remembers:

> I ceased to be obsessed by my mother. I no longer hear her voice; I do not see her.
>   I suppose that I did for myself what psycho-analysts do for their patients. I expressed some very long felt and deeply felt emotion. And in expressing it I explained it and then laid it to rest.[44]

Indeed, *To the Lighthouse* lends itself almost too readily to psychoanalysis. The Freudian concepts of the primal scene, the Oedipus complex, castration phobia, deferred action, and mourning and melancholia, seem tailor-made to Woolf's diphasic narrative, with its exposure of the incestuous and homicidal undercurrents of the family, not to mention the looming phallic symbol of the lighthouse. So arresting are these Freudian motifs that other virtues of the novel are often overlooked, such as its wit and social satire, along with its keen attention to nonhuman objects and environments. The claims of psychoanalysis to universality can make it something of a clumsy instrument for literary critics, since it is difficult to reconcile these claims with the historical specifics of literary texts. In any case, *To the Lighthouse* proves that Woolf was "doing" Freud long before her belated immersion in his work.

The Woolfs' only meeting with Freud took place in Hampstead, where he resided for the last months of his life, having been obliged to emigrate from Nazi-occupied Vienna. On this memorable occasion, Freud – "an old fire now flickering" – presented Virginia Woolf with a narcissus.[45] More narcissistic than Woolf, however, was the poet H.D., who traveled to Vienna in 1933 to undergo analysis with Freud, thanks to the generosity of her put-upon lover Bryher. H.D.'s memoir of this treatment, *Tribute to Freud* (1942), offers little respite from its author's self-obsession, but contains a few amusing glimpses of Freud's couch-side manner, such as his preoccupation with his

dog Jofi, who snoozed through the sessions and frequently distracted "the professor" from his patient's outpourings.[46]

Barring such notable exceptions as the Woolfs and H.D., it was "wild" psychoanalysis that dominated literary and popular culture during the early decades of the twentieth century. For most of the British population, as Chris Baldick has observed, "Freudian wisdom amounted to three broad propositions."[47] First was the primacy of the sexual motive in human behavior. Second was the view that a repressive upbringing or a traumatic shock experienced in early childhood could give rise to neurotic illness or sexual abnormality – a view summed up in Philip Larkin's much-quoted line: "They fuck you up, your mum and dad."[48] In Stella Gibbons's comic novel *Cold Comfort Farm* (1932), the bedridden Aunt Ada Doom's repeated cry that she once saw "something nasty in the woodshed" parodies this simplistic notion of childhood trauma.[49] The third prevailing cliché about psychoanalysis was (and is) that sexual frustration makes you ill, both mentally and physically. The "carcinogenic power of sexual abstinence," as exemplified in Auden's Miss Gee, reappears in Arnold Bennett's novel *Riceyman Steps* (1923), with the uterine tumour suffered by the frustrated Violet Earlforward.[50] May Sinclair, an early champion of psychoanalysis, who combined this enthusiasm with a commitment to spiritualism, told a fellow novelist that when "a passionate desire for love ... is thwarted, a morbid physical condition is set up," typically manifested in disorders of the uterus.[51] In Sinclair's novella *The Life and Death of Harriett Frean* (1922), the eponymous heroine dies of cancer, brought on by her renunciation of her suitor to her closest friend, to whom he is already engaged. Despite the cancer cliché, however, Sinclair's novel shows a subtler grasp of psychoanalysis than fables of the order of "Miss Gee," by hinting that Harriett's tumour signifies an unconscious wish to give birth to her dead mother.[52]

While Bennett's and Sinclair's novels warn against the pathological effects of sexual repression, John Cowper Powys's longwinded pamphlet *Psychoanalysis and Morality* (1923) gushes about Freud's world-historic shattering of sex-taboos.[53] Yet D.H. Lawrence, in direct contrast to Powys, attacks Freud as "the psychiatric quack who vehemently demonstrated the serpent of sex coiled round the root of all our actions."[54] Although Lawrence shared Freud's belief in the centrality of sexuality – as Joyce quipped, Lawrence offered propaganda for what, in any country but England, needed no advertising[55] – Lawrence regarded the Freudian unconscious as a mentalist monstrosity: "the cellar in which the mind keeps its own bastard spawn."[56] Despite his hostility, however, Lawrence shows a profounder grasp of psychoanalysis

than many of its apostles, because he realizes that Freud understands human sexuality as a cultural artifact, cut off from those animal instincts that Lawrence himself never tires of extolling. Where Lawrence advocates the overthrow of civilized restraints, preaching a new religion of blood-consciousness and the "nucleolating of the fecund darkness," Freud investigates how sexuality is shaped by social and linguistic forces.[57] In Freudian psychoanalysis – contra Lawrence – going back to nature is not an option.

Although Freud's fame was firmly established before 1914, it was in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, when shell-shock, war trauma, and shattered "nerves" had become prominent public concerns, that psychoanalytic ideas spread rapidly through English intellectual life. In 1918, Rebecca West's novel *The Return of the Soldier* features a shell-shocked hero whose amnesia is cured through psychoanalysis; the author herself was later to undergo two Freudian analyses.[58] Fictional characters undergoing psychoanalysis also appear in Wyndham Lewis's *The Apes of God* (1930) and Christopher Isherwood's *The Memorial* (1932). Through multiple routes, the vogue for psychoanalysis made its mark on "high" modernism, but also infiltrated the popular genre of detective fiction, notably Gladys Mitchell's sixty-six detective novels starring the reptilian psychoanalyst-cum-sleuth Mrs. Bradley, a series that began with *Speedy Death* in 1929.

While academic literary criticism tends to cordon off detective fiction from high modernism, Gertrude Stein praised the detective story as "the only really modern novel form that has come into existence," for the reason that it "gets rid of human nature by having the man dead to begin with the hero is dead to begin with and so you have so to speak got rid of the event before the book begins."[59] Freud himself was an avid reader of the Sherlock Holmes stories, and his case histories have often been likened to whodunnits, in which the excitement lies in the gradual unveiling of secrets of the past. The same could be said of the foundational detective story of psychoanalysis, *Oedipus Rex*, with its ingenious twist that the detective turns out to be the murderer. The action of Sophocles' play, as Freud explains, "consists in nothing other than the process of revealing, with cunning delays and ever-mounting excitement – a process that can be likened to the work of a psychoanalysis" (*SE*, IV:261–62). In this play, as in Stein's definition of detective fiction, the hero (Laius) is dead and the event (parricide and incest) is over, so that the action consists of the retrospective reconstruction of the traces of the crime.

In the late nineteenth century, Henrik Ibsen had adopted this technique in several of his plays, including *A Doll's House* (1879), where the belated

revelation of Nora's secret forgery, like the exposure of Oedipus' crimes, precipitates the destruction of the family. Ibsen's Nora has often been compared to Freud's Dora, largely on the basis of their sensational walkouts from the bourgeois home and the consulting-room respectively, but their stories also conform to the pattern of the deferred narrative revelation. Both the play and the case history resemble the detective story insofar as the key event is over – Nora's crime or Dora's seduction – and must therefore be pieced together après-coup. In Dora's case, analyst and patient both assume the role of sleuths: Dora has already figured out her father's secret – his affair with Frau K. and their mutual connivance in Herr K.'s assault on Dora – thus fulfilling what Slavoj Žižek has identified as "the structural necessity of the false solution" in the detective story.[60] In fact, Dora's solution is not false but all too true. Nonetheless Freud is obliged to deconstruct it in order to discover Dora's own psychic investment in her sinister family scenario. In effect, Freud tries to implicate his patient in the crime she brings to light, thus transforming her into an Oedipal detective/culprit. Freud's narrative therefore abounds with the false leads and dubious conjectures typical of the detective genre: is Dora in love with her father, Herr K., or Freud himself? Only after the case is over does Freud arrive at the conclusion that all these candidates for Dora's love are decoys, concealing the truth that Dora's "homosexual (gynaecophilic) love for Frau K. was the strongest unconscious current in her mental life" (*SE*, VII:120 n.1).

This belated insight appears in a footnote added several years after the abrupt termination of the case. In the "finer structure of a neurosis," Freud explains, "everything that has to do with the clearing-up of a particular symptom emerges piecemeal, woven into various contexts, and distributed over widely separated periods of time" (*SE*, VII:12).[61] The same could be said of the "finer structure" of Freud's text, in which his earlier hunches are unsettled by the later speculations of the footnotes. This double-voiced structure, in which the later Freud reconsiders his earlier blind spots, invites comparison to Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958), where Krapp replays tapes of his own voice supposedly recorded at different moments of his life, deploring "that stupid bastard I took myself for thirty years ago."[62]

Dora's case history could also be compared to the "inconclusive" narrative of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), in which Marlowe recounts his journey into the "dark continent," a term that Freud applied to female sexuality (*SE*, XX:212). Freud's evident perplexity about Dora's sexuality – *her* heart of darkness – has prompted his readers to become detectives, enticing them into an "analysis interminable" (*SE*, XXIII:209–54), in which Freud himself is

arraigned as the prime suspect, his errors and reversals interpreted as telltale signs of his unconscious collusion in Dora's abuse. An unreliable narrator, prone to rash assertions and ignominious volte-faces, Freud also features as a character within this melodrama, receiving a brush-off comparable to the slap in the face that Dora administers to her persecutor Herr K. With its palimpsested and recursive structure, together with its suspect narrator and the irresolvable enigma at its core, Freud's *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* bears compelling "resemblances to a modern experimental novel," as Steven Marcus has observed.[63]

These resemblances suggest that Freud was a modernist himself, not just an influence on modernism. Certainly the narrative innovations of his case histories revolutionize the concept of life writing. A similar claim could be made of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which, in addition to its contributions to psychology, represents a breakthrough in the genre of autobiography. Not only is its content scandalous – Freud told his correspondent Wilhelm Fliess that he had "lost the feeling of shame required of an author" – but its revelations surface in adventitious fashion, leaping from association to association across prodigious gaps of space and time.[64] Furthermore, the dreambook emerged out of its author's dialogue with Fliess, who served as interlocutor for Freud's self-analysis. Its gestation therefore looks forward to the dialogic composition of *The Waste Land*; indeed, given its profusion of dreamers and narrators, Freud's masterpiece could even be compared to the polyphonic structure of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Freud's troubled friendship with Fliess, moreover, was responsible for many of the interruptions in the writing process to which the dreambook owes its "modernist" texture.[65] The open, collective, patchwork structure of this text, together with its deconstruction of the "old stable ego of character,"[66] confirms its affinity to literary modernism, whose characteristic modes of working in collaboration and community also compromise the autonomy of authors and their works.

If the polyphonic structure of *The Interpretation of Dreams* looks forward to Joyce's *Ulysses*, so does Freud's preoccupation with the fauna of the night, which crowd the stage of Joyce's "Circe" episode. But Freud did not read Joyce, and Joyce denied his indebtedness to Freud. "As for psychoanalysis, it's neither more nor less than blackmail," Joyce declared – an ambiguous disclaimer, to say the least.[67] In *Finnegans Wake*, on the other hand, Joyce speaks of being "yung and easily freudened," perhaps hinting at an early susceptibility to psychoanalysis.[68] Indeed, between 1911 and 1913, a young man named Paolo Cuzzi who took English lessons with Joyce in Trieste used to discuss Freud's theories with his tutor. Having read Freud's *Five Lectures on*

Psychoanalysis, Cuzzi talked about slips of the tongue and their unconscious implications, to which Joyce listened attentively but replied that Freud had been anticipated by Vico.[69] Outwardly dismissive of psychoanalysis, Joyce nonetheless sent his psychotic daughter Lucia for an abortive analysis with Jung, collected works by Freud, Jung, and Ernest Jones in his Trieste library, and made intensive use of Freud's case history of the Wolf Man in *Finnegans Wake* (1939), along with Jones's classic work of psychoanalytic literary criticism, *Hamlet and Oedipus*.[70]

Probably the first instance of Freudian forgetting in the anglophone canon occurs when Leopold Bloom forgets the name Penrose, the syllables of which evoke such loaded homonyms as pens, rising penises, and roses, the last of which is Bloom's term for menstruation, as well as a pun on his own flowery name. Bloom also utters one of the first Freudian slips in literature, when he substitutes "the wife's admirers" for "the wife's advisers" – an error which is also a "portal of discovery," in that it reveals Bloom's anxiety about his wife's adultery, as well as his unconscious admiration for his wife's admirers.[71] Meanwhile the hallucinations of the "Circe" episode exemplify the techniques of Freudian dreamwork: the disguised fulfillment of repressed wishes, the transformation of words into things, the resurgence of the day's residues and the fusion of these residues with childhood memories and disavowed desires, bringing forth composite, overdetermined images – all these techniques contribute to the "freudful couchmare" of "Circe."[72]

The use of stream-of-consciousness narration in *Ulysses* also suggests the influence of Freud, specifically the psychoanalytic practice of free association, which was embraced with such enthusiasm by the surrealists in Joyce's Paris. In fact it was the Freudian May Sinclair who first applied William James's concept of the stream of consciousness to literature, with reference to Dorothy Richardson's multivolume novel *Pilgrimage*.[73] In the stream-of-consciousness chapters of *Ulysses*, Bloom and Stephen wander through the streets and strands of Dublin while their minds meander through the pathways of association. For Bloom, an ad for Zionism conjures up a mental image of the Dead Sea, which in turn reminds him of an old woman's "grey sunken cunt."[74] From the reader's perspective, these associations hark back to Stephen's thoughts about the "snot-green sea," an image that summons up his memory of the green bile coughed up by his dying mother.[75] Based on fortuitous similarities rather than logical connections, these associative links reveal a shared subliminal anxiety about the dead mother that bridges the distance between the heroes. Their mutual preoccupation with the maternal sea – neatly encapsulated in the French homonym *mer/mère* – could be

understood in terms of Freud's conception of the manifest dream as the visible tip of an invisible network of associations, or in Freud's words as the "mushroom" that peeks out of its "mycelium" (*SE*, v:525). In *Ulysses*, the characters' associative riffs create a rhizomatic textual unconscious that exceeds the boundaries of personal identity.

In *Finnegans Wake* the stream of consciousness bursts its banks, unleashing a flood of associative possibilities. Composed of puns and Freudian slips, the idiolect of the *Wake* is designed to maximize the errancy of meaning, as well as to expose the guilty thoughts, especially those connected with the sexual and excretory functions of the body, which undermine the proper use of language. This guilt is collective rather than personal; it is impossible to pin down the textual unconscious to any of the novel's characters, as they metamorphose into hills and rivers, "ondts" and "gracehopers."[76] If Freud's case history of Dora is a detective story in which the hero is dead and the event is over, *Finnegans Wake* is one in which the crime is constantly repeated in the reconstructions of its prurient investigators: "(There extand by now one thousand and one stories, all told, of the same.)"[77]

There is no space here to do justice to the complexities of *Finnegans Wake*, or indeed to the other masterpieces of European modernism touched on in this chapter. Suffice to say that Freud's oeuvre, as T.S. Eliot claimed of Joyce's *Ulysses*, is "a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape."[78] The same holds true of literary modernism, which has proved as contagious as the Freudian disturbance. Like the pioneering works of modernism, Freud's works continue to fascinate, surprise, perplex, and irritate their readers, inciting both devotees and book-burners. Today Freud enjoys a wider following among literary scholars than among psychologists, who tend to regard his works as museum pieces, a fate that would have aggrieved the founder of psychoanalysis. But it was his technique of unsettlement, as Auden puts it, which appealed to Freud's modernist contemporaries. This technique continues to unsettle assumptions about language, gender, sexuality, selfhood, daily life, and nightly dreams, as well as the established meanings of literary texts. It is this power to unsettle that ensures the persistence of Freud's legacy.

Notes

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11 See Malcolm Bowie, *Freud, Proust and Lacan: Theory as Fiction* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 76.

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21 See Abigail Gillman, *Viennese Jewish Modernism: Freud, Hofmannsthal, Beer-Hofmann, and Schnitzler* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 6.

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Newer Freewomen and Modernism

RACHEL BLAU DUPLESSIS

Women writers initiated key formal innovations of modernism: Mina Loy invented the serial poem; Marianne Moore invented citation strategies and collage within poetry; Dorothy Richardson invented a mode for rendering mental processes and associations – May Sinclair named this "stream of consciousness"; Virginia Woolf and James Joyce extended its narrative possibilities. Gertrude Stein wrote a deconstructed language half out and half in semantic statement. H.D. rewrote ancient myths from a female and androgynous perspective. Insistent, committed women editors of aesthetically innovative and generally cutting-edge periodicals contributed to the distribution of modernist work. The sex-gender system helped provoke these cultural innovations through intricate intersections of equality feminism and difference feminism. Equality feminists argued that women were to be the civic and institutional equals of men, a goal that demanded legal, political, and economic reforms fully to achieve; difference feminists proposed that female / feminine otherness was acute, valuable, and even specially visionary, and therefore called for self-articulation by women speaking "otherhow" – a culturalist and spiritual position.

Feminist, female-oriented, and feminine intellectual and social positions claimed by early modernist "Newer Freewomen" appear in the political claims and aesthetic textures of literary works, in content, ideology, and structure. Male writers also attended to Woman as an entity with interest, annoyance, resistance, mockery, empathy – a cavalcade of attitudes and debates. Men are not my topic here, except to say that interrelations of all cultural figures, networking among and between groups, writers, journals, positions, plus dialogues and appropriations are central to gender-inflected stories of modernism.

Hardly all women writers are explicit feminists, but their struggles for liberation and their purposeful artistic activities often paralleled transformative political arousal. Many women were inspired by their gender politics to

write "the library that waits to be written," examining the agency and achievements of women. In Elizabeth Robins's *The Convert* (1907), the heroine is heckled by an anti-suffrage student who demands, "Where's [women's] Michael Angelo? They study music by the thousands: where's their Beethoven? Where's their Plato? Where's the woman Shakespeare?"[1] The question of female cultural power became one flash point for women's self-scrutiny about their potential, the question (as Virginia Woolf asked before her major deconstruction of that anxiety) whether a woman could write the works of Shakespeare. T.S. Eliot's couplet "In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michaelangelo" may well allude to such debates.

The ideologies and arrangements of nineteenth-century liberal hegemony excluded many from full citizenship. Modernity – however one defines it – is stalled and incomplete when women, sexual minorities, and others do not have equal civic rights, have limited economic possibilities, and meet with domestic and social harassment for their differences and ambitions. Given that this desire for political, economic, and educational equality is "feminist," then a key contribution to modernity and its literatures is feminism, variously defined and deployed.

Since the 1860s, feminist reformers and activists had organized political movements that put women's concerns (higher education, changes in marriage, and divorce laws along with economic rights in marriage, access to the professions, woman suffrage, and sexual rights, including birth control) on the national agendas in the United States and in England. If these nineteenth-century figures were "New Women," modernist women often thought they were "Newer" still – a "freewoman" formation. Their engagement with these emancipatory desires and professional and educational goals added enhanced claims of social independence, sexual freedom, and critical subjectivity, mingling personal and political consciousness in ways generative for aesthetic forms.

Modernism is also propelled by the radical sex-gender thinking of psychoanalysis, and Freud's place in this revisionist thinking is reflected in his primary position in this section of the *History*. Freud theorizes that gender is mobile until it is more or less fixed into one of the two available categories – with slippage, and Freud along with contemporaneous sexologists noted that sexualities, sexual desires, and practices are metamorphic and various, if also sometimes condemned. Thus "feminisms" – women's interests for public and private parity, as well as strategic debates within this position, critiques of repressive institutions, forthright thinking about sexuality and gender propelled by psychoanalysis, and artistic modernisms with attention

to subjectivity and reality – all intermingle in the literary and theoretical work of these "Newer Freewomen."

<div align="center">I</div>

The trajectory taken in her three journals by the influential writer-editor Dora Marsden (later with supporter-editor Harriet Shaw Weaver) offers an exemplary instance of feminisms in the plural. The pro-suffrage militancy and general radical fervor of the *Freewoman* (1911–12) on issues from safe boardinghouses for women to rights within marriage, along with provocative sex-radical and socialist articles, shifted to an aesthetic and self-empowering radicalism in the *New Freewoman: An Individualist Review* (1913). This "new" iteration of the journal interpreted suffrage struggles, but not individualist feminism, as unmodern, banal, and reductive, and pivoted to a libertarian or anarchist ethos, slowly leaching any interest from the political (rather than the personal) struggles of modern women. Yet even in the *Freewoman*'s very first issue, Marsden's position was clear: women are not complementary (to men); they are "separate spiritual entities" who have inexplicably ceded "the power to work and to think." Acting "servile" and "subordinate," they are treated as second-class. Retaking "freedom" means renouncing "the great soporifics – comfort and protection," a revolutionary change more in consciousness and personal choice than in society and laws.[2] This change would undo female socialization by individual female will. From its founding, the journal claimed the goal of existential freedom.

Living her ideas in fast-forward, Marsden herself had moved from fervent (and salaried) suffrage activism (in the Pankhursts' WSPU, 1905–11) to a rejection of its "petition"-oriented activities. Instead, she claimed a transcendent, unapologetic, female-empowering agency that she called "egoism" (individualism), a position objectively post-political and mystical-apocalyptic. As Mina Loy noted similarly, political feminism is not enough: "TODAY is the crisis in consciousness."[3] Marsden had begun to emphasize personal agency and lived changes of consciousness over and above political struggle and suffrage dogmatism with (in her opinion) its increasingly abstract polemics. Thus in coalition with such post-feminist male poets and writers as Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington, and Allen Upward, Marsden insisted (already in 1913) that group militancy for suffrage was a phase surpassed, that no "Cause" need be supported except self-actualization, and that encouraging creative "egos" as singular, uncontained, superior free agents should be the journal's focus. Hence the journal was renamed the *Egoist: An Individualist Review*

(1914–19); under this name it became a premiere journal of artistic modern-ism. In the *Egoist*, one might now identify various kinds of gender politics. Relevant themes were covered by the works published, but overt and explicit gender militancy was no longer a characteristic of the journal precisely (and perhaps paradoxically) *because* it now claimed a position beyond gender norms and behaviors and in favor of individual empowerment. Genuine selfhood involved ridding the individual of the repressions of category, gender being one central constraint.

Marsden resisted consideration of women as an abstract category, rejecting banal stereotypes of female character and analyses of women as an oppressed group. Individual mentally honest women "can be as 'free' now as they have the power to be" and do the work they are called to do without inhibition. This declaration by fiat claimed agency and power but also insisted that gender barriers were moot and that collective action and its political education were unnecessary for liberation.[4] Thus "individualists of both sexes," particularly artists invested in the new and in (Stirnerian) self-actualization, would be the pioneers – the activated avant-garde – of transformation. Max Stirner's 1844 book, *The Ego and its Own: The Case of the Individual Against Authority*, an anarchist classic of self-assertiveness, had appeared in English in 1907, and it fired up Marsden's claims. Power relations, traditional institutions, social limits, conflicts in consciousness, double motives (including hers) were all discounted as against the laser-beam agency of pure liberation, vitalist insistences, and hygienic semantic clarity. Marsden's optimism of the will is breathtaking; there was no pessim-ism of the intellect (in Antonio Gramsci's phrase) once she moved into this affirmative position.

The general sense of a "now-time" temporality in modernism was striking. Around 1913, in her unpublished "The Suffragette," H.D. depicts an Ameri-can abroad, skeptical of "window-breaking" tactics, who meets a militant cicerone ("Miss Marston") along with a working-class woman fired from employment for her gender, and, thus, in a conversion experience, decides to attend her first suffrage meeting. For H.D.'s protagonist, women's seeking social power is understood as necessary and transformative.[5] Yet the one-issue focus on the vote riled some women, not only for its extreme (if disciplined) militancy but also for its narrowing of social and cultural impli-cations. Indeed, the 1910 date at which Woolf proposed a shift in subjective experience merges the November *vernissage* of the influential post-impressionist show and Black Friday, a violent police riot against female suffrage demonstrators, joining the aesthetic and the political.

The issue of sexual liberation was one key to this shift. In 1914, the *Egoist* made a concerted attack on the social purity sentiments affiliated with some, though not all, of the suffrage movement, publishing a series of dismissive articles on virginity, chastity, and Christabel Pankhurst. Suffrage leader Pankhurst had asserted that once female suffrage was won, women's wages would rise, and thereby all prostitution and venereal disease would end: an absolutist, unsophisticated claim. Worse still were Pankhurst's *The Great Scourge* (a book on venereal diseases) and her Moral Crusade against free, or even most, sexuality. The *Egoist* made clear the disaffiliation of one generation of "Chastity for Men" feminists from another generation of "sex for women" feminists.[6] The journal embodies an advanced attitude toward sexual freedom with frank discussions of prostitution, masturbation, and divorce, but does so by stigmatizing suffrage politics as sexually repressed, passionless, asexual. "Newer Freewoman" issues about sexuality, sex-radicalism, and free love captivate the *Egoist*. Sexual liberation (as individual-ist choice) distinguished itself from any moralistic feminism that wanted to control sexuality.

For the *Egoist*, female emancipation involved rejecting the ideological repressions of passionlessness and the hypocrisy of the double standard, thus approving of birth control, free sexual unions, and active sexual expression for both genders. The journal therefore tended toward the emancipatory separation of sex from pregnancy, affirming female sexual autonomy and corporeal self-determination. The *Egoist* published a celebratory letter when the case was dismissed against Margaret Sanger, on trial (1914) in the United States for distributing birth control information.

A second issue for the *Egoist* involved agency. Marsden polemically (and tendentiously) insisted that the "cult of the Suffragist" emphasizes female passivity. For Marsden, political struggles are symptomatic of subordination, with women begging to be "set free"; instead, women need to manifest liberatory self-respect as autonomous "masters" and to renounce the power dynamic of petitioning others for freedom. Authentic females will then provoke human evolution, sparking a "higher race" in which liberty and responsibility are unquestioned human rights. The vote, she concedes inter-estingly, does play some role, but the real transformation is "spiritual" and existential, and also – sudden codicil – economic, so women may make enough money to support their children.[7] This last intransigent proposal, overpassing marriage and the family, but accepting that women are the "natural guardian[s]" of children, ends her essay austerely: such feminism is for neither the many nor the weak.

Marsden was not alone in her argument that women had dramatically to claim both agency and sexuality. In a Marsden-esque "Feminist Manifesto" (1914, symptomatically incomplete), Mina Loy is eager to transcend and eradicate (by powers of individual will) any evidence of female servility, effecting an *"Absolute Demolition"* of subordination.[8] Subordination is the behavior Marsden typified in the figure of the Bondswoman, opposing Freewoman autonomy and independence. For Loy, the gradualist reform of institutions demanded by feminists is *"Inadequate,"* just as, for Marsden, it was incomplete, pallid, and to be derided, as compared to spiritual-philosophic transformations of consciousness. This futurist and modernist motif of now-temporality in Newer Freewoman feminism promised the apocalyptic transformation of everything at once, by non-gradualist illumination and act.

These spiritual quests for "psychic evolution" reveal the degree to which prewar modernism was characterized by a conviction of breakthrough time, the affirmation of a "present evolutional status of man" (humanity), as if Darwinian processes themselves had sped up from the pressures of modernity.[9] This spiritual, erotic, and intellectual position implicates artists and writers, in both artistic products and illuminated consciousnesses, to incite uplifting transformations of modernity.

The *Egoist* declared feminism (but not sexual debates) moot upon the outbreak of the war, bringing "the wordy contest about Women's Rights to an abrupt finish." The imagined funeral for "the feminist corpse" – ignoring incipient wartime corpses – spoke to powerful mass beliefs about the war as both spiritual test and geopolitical necessity.[10] This urgent, all-too-credited assumption was soon followed by the hope that artists, thinkers, scientists, workers, and their ilk could spearhead opposition to "militarism" – a quest increasingly utopian given the European (and later US) cataclysm (8–9 million killed in combat). There emerge anti-war proposals from the feminist avant-garde concerning the need to "evolve and establish a new social symbolism, a new social rhythm," alternative, positive and "magnetic" ideals, ones powerful enough to replace "hypnotic war lust." In "Psycho-Democracy; A Movement to Focus Human Reason / on / The Conscious Direction of Evolution" (1918), Mina Loy wants artists to conceive of replacements for the "Militarism [that] forms the nucleus of national *Influential symbolism* [i.e., the flag, uniforms, parades] [and] Sustains the *belligerent masculine* social idea."[11]

Suffrage debates, arguments about new poetry, and struggles over modern subjectivities combine in May Sinclair's 1917 chronicle-novel, *The Tree of*

Heaven. Its narrative illustrates the ideological contradictions, heightened by the war, between individualist autonomy and group adhesion.[12] In Dorothea's participation in suffrage organizations and her imprisonment, Sinclair shows both political commitments and skeptical resistance, a shift analogous to Dora Marsden's. In Nick, Sinclair depicts an engineer and technocrat, the devil-may-care inventor of the tank (or Moving Fortress), key weaponry for the First World War. In Michael appear both the Irish anti-colonial struggles for Home Rule and the intensities of poetic vocation, thus demonstrating the conflict between group feeling and individual liberation among men, too. Michael's poems, in Sinclair's paraphrase, parallel H.D.'s; the individualist ecstasy of Dorothea in prison also concerns whiteness, clarity, and visionary perception. Michael, like Dorothea, ultimately resists the surges of group-think – a whirlwind swirl, "the gestures and the movements of the collective soul" – in favor of ethical control through individual judgment and asocial purity.[13] Sinclair interestingly borrows the term "vortex" to deride group militancy, criticizing the loss of individuality in both political ecstasy and artistic movements.

Yet collective national will and group upsurge occur precisely when war takes political precedence. Individual choice, bravery, noble service, visionary transcendence – Sinclair's insistently narrated pro-war, pro-ecstasy claims in the novel's ideology – are faced with the tsunami of annihilation depicted in the novel's structure. Characters Nick and Michael, a talented French poet, the fiancé of Dorothea, plus several ancillary male characters, are, one after another, killed in a devastating set of structurally implacable and relentless final chapters. Ultimately, individual soul, strength, and service in various causes (poetry, suffrage, Irish Home Rule) count for little, since nationalism and state conscription, militarizing the apparently idyllic family, trump social struggles and literary ambitions. "The little vortex of the Woman's Movement was swept without a sound into the immense vortex of the War."[14] Even though male characters feel ecstatic oneness with the universe or with a national ideal as they go over the top and into the void, even given her negative statements about such vortex thinking throughout the book, Sinclair has dramatized an unresolved contradiction between individuals and groups.

These culture-wide, gender-laden debates between individual and group were brilliantly focused by Virginia Woolf in her two book-length essays from 1929 and 1938. *A Room of One's Own* (1929) is Woolf's major study of gender, power, and oppression in anglo-culture: unequal access to resources, intellectual harassment, gender trouble in the recruitment and formation of artists, writing and sexual difference. Woolf is well aware that female

individualism exists in the context of social and political inequality. She offers original narratives and memorable images as summaries or condensations of her ideas about this tension: Shakespeare's doomed genius-sister; a room of one's own and an income; respectful female bonding between Chloe and Olivia; research on women (and sexism) in the British Museum; the financial poverty of women's colleges dramatized in two comparative menus; the fervent dialectics between group adhesion (inheritor of privilege) and individual vision (woman as critic).[15] Her poetics of fiction frames female formal, rhetorical, and structural difference: "The truth is that when we write of a woman, everything is out of place – culminations and perorations; the accent never falls where it does with a man," a claim leading Woolf to scintillating and distinctive experimentation.[16]

Woolf's essay and the independent female characters in her fiction (Mary Datchet to Miss La Trobe) ponder social adhesion versus individualist transcendence. The religiously militant, vaguely feminist tutor Miss Kilman in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) is hectoring and needy; Woolf satirizes the poignant figures whose insistence steps into manipulation without *caritas*. An alternative formal and critical complex is proposed in Woolf's later work: formally to pluralize and ideologically to decenter any hegemony; to make comic or pathetic all monolithic perceptions encumbered by desires for power. The structural equivalence of various characters in *The Waves* (1931), different yet bonded, exemplifies the anti-authoritarian poetics that animates her later books, with their group protagonists rupturing hero/heroine or couple focus, their political critique, their psychic boundlessness figured as the next necessary step of history.

The utopian ending of *The Years* (1937) – celebratory toasts at a party – supports feminist-inflected individualism: tolerance of difference, personal agency, non-hierarchic groups that do not homogenize or level individual characters' specificity. Woolf works to neutralize the extremism of Marsden's conflicting binaries, instead synthesizing political with cultural feminisms. Hopes for social change and group orientation join with tolerant individualism. To dramatize this utopian spirit of community – anti-coercive, yet powerfully charismatic – was her narrative goal.

This position, urging an evolutionary spiritual-political transformation in order to resist war and to make new social combinations, is reaffirmed by Woolf just before the Second World War in a culminating analytic essay on citizenship, patriarchy, fascism, and the position of women in England. *Three Guineas* (1938) stands as a subtly argued summation of the first feminist period. By citing biographies and autobiographies, Woolf insists on historical persons and their empirical specificity. Her epistolary structure makes the

essay an "I–you" encounter, frank and intimate. Woolf articulates the social and psychological origins of the female point of view she calls "daughters of educated men," middle-class, but not fully independent – pace Marsden's and Loy's revolutionary claims. Woolf examines these women's resistance to privilege and their social critique as a "Society of Outsiders," but underestimates the force of female disaffiliation from women as a group. She did not foresee anti-feminist token women, but only the ethical-political potential of her critical "Newer Freewomen."

In these interlocking epistles, Woolf accomplishes a faux-naïf "native" anthropology of patriarchal institutions, including the family, religion, the university, the professions, schooling, government, the military and its wars. This social critique occasions a penetrating psychological study of ideological practices of anger, misogyny, harassment, patronizing, and mockery that keep women under the control of (mainly) men. All in all, Woolf offers an exacting sociopolitical study of the ways contemporary practices of domination, hierarchy, patriotism, power, and repression of individuality in the English "liberal" world may slide to the fascism that her interlocutor claims to want to resist. This manifold analysis provides an economic and materialist understanding of the public and private conditions of female lives.

Her argument pays tribute to the nineteenth-century women who struggled against heavy odds for university and professional educations, for the right to divorce, for the right to keep their earnings in marriage, and for the vote. "Those queer dead women in their poke bonnets and shawls" were, in her cunning argument, premature anti-fascists, "fighting the tyranny of the patriarchal state."[17] Claiming the continuing existence of female difference, which is based on a powerful sense of outsider status and on the separate but unequal status women have in contemporary society (taxed, for instance, to pay for institutions that benefit middle-class men only), she proposes a new idealist perspective. This is based on Antigone's resistance to brutalist applications of absolute Law and on a new spiritual sense (even "a religion"). While resting on personal freedoms, this new ethos denies the force of isolated egoist individualism in favor of human solidarity, with exemplary goals of "Justice and Equality and Liberty." In her feminism, any purely "egoist" thinking is inadequate.

II

Women writers used but reconsidered the radical individualism typical of Marsden. They took literally their potential to overpass all gender-stereotyped binaries of behavior and action and all normative sexual systems.

In plot and structure, in poetic practices, and in their female-oriented critiques, these writers analyze, interrupt, and undermine assumptions about gender and sexuality, thereby reinventing forthright female subjects both in cultural analyses and in literary structures.

It is "difficult to realize what handicap 'the shrine of womanhood' once constituted," Marianne Moore remarks in an "Angel in the House" passage in her 1948 essay on M. Carey Thomas, president of Bryn Mawr College, whom she characterizes as "an impassioned emancipator" for women.[18] The "shrine of womanhood" prevents women's working at what they choose, then prevents their being heard or understood when they do. Moore praises Carey Thomas as disinvesting in conventional women in favor of Newer Freewomen – educated, independent, and determined to prevail. Women's colleges of that era deliberately constructed the social setting that supported this earnest individual striving.

In "Professions for Women" (1931), Woolf pensively analyzes ideological impediments internalized deep in female consciousness, depicting these in her repressive maternal image of the "Angel in the House." She frames female subservience, compliance, and self-abasement as the manipulative powers of the weak, but she also points to "charm" and to "chastity" as impediments. The first term encompasses flattery, deception, dishonesty, conciliation, and wiles, but it also involves a metaphorical prostitution of one's mind, failing to think independently in order to please others. The second term links women's conflicts in consciousness to mental chastity: impeded from writing directly about sexuality, the body, and passion, women conceal, even from themselves, what they know about these dimensions of experience.

Given such constraints, female literary frankness about sexuality and the body becomes an act of considerable bravery. This challenge to convention often takes highly colored and intense forms. Mina Loy's critical curiosity about what can emerge from a sexually exploratory female body and brain is not only a critique of the body–mind split that has bedeviled Western thinking. It is also a particularly dynamic consideration of female difference as autonomously providing vital and provocative knowledge.

In her serial poem "Songs to Joannes" (1917), Loy focuses on love, passion, and sexuality, depicting sexual intercourse, orgasmic failure, and abortion with an outspoken panache. Loy reads sexuality as a site in which various agents and sociocultural processes are exposed: redefinitions of morality, questions about the independence of women, the shattering of verbal taboo in literary works, the pains and triumphs of sexual desire, and unfulfilled

yearning. The tension between romantic thralldom and independence is particularly acute in this work, with many fervent critiques of sexuality and romance along with many wounded thoughts far less independent and militant. "The Effectual Marriage" (1915) satirically anatomizes female subservience and male self-aggrandizing in a heterosexual couple. "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose" (1923–25) offers a grim autobiographical montage of the repressive family and the struggling, curious girl, whose upbringing is rigid and problematic, exaggerating her Anglo-Jewish hybridity. These serial poems emerge from Loy's intellectual and biographical frankness. Seriality allows a writer to take up conflicting positions without coming to one conclusion, to write in lyric-analytic bursts of insight and image, to anatomize unresolvable personal and social conflicts, and to deploy the fragment to rupture both the lyric and the ideological illusionism of social or aesthetic wholeness.

Subjectivities, for instance, are depicted as multiple and critical, even split and conflicted, without being defeated and destroyed. Loy's "Parturition" (1914) is an answer to the freighted claim that women have no intellectual capacity because of reproduction. Loy uses the physiological shifts of labor as the structure of the poem; her poetic meditation tracks labor, anatomizes sensations, ideas, and outcomes, and thereby represents some of the most private and obscured materials ever in literature. By depicting a female figure who thinks and feels straight through childbirth, Loy dismisses the mind–body binary. Her "logopoeia" entails analytically intellectual word choices and impasto phrases alluding to discourses of biology, religion, philosophy, and medicine. Here and elsewhere the explosive nuggets of Loy's diction construct a metaphysical poetic texture that distills a fierce pride in female poetic and visionary agency. In this struggle with "cosmic initiation," the baby's birth is not the triumph, but rather the birth of the mother, linking ontological poles of being and nothingness: "absorbed / Into / The was–is–ever–shall–be."[19]

This transformation, emerging from female particularity and difference, parallels an H.D. essay from 1919, *Notes on Thought and Vision*.[20] Also written in the aftermath of pregnancy, birth, and her life-threatening postwar influenza, this work is a prose poem meditation on a new consciousness emerging from the sexual organs (of both women and men) and from their brains. Hardly systematic, thoroughly speculative, these notes claim that the "over-mind" and the "love-mind" from brain and sex respectively are like two lenses that, working together, give access to a mystical sensitivity. This in turn makes certain people (changing the metaphor) receptors and

transmitters of an electric visionary power. This visionary capacity is named the over-soul or the "jellyfish consciousness," which transforms seeing and understanding with its luminescent, organic lens. Like Loy, H.D. foresees some leap in human consciousness from chosen people with special powers. Theorizing beyond gender norms, H.D.'s visionaries – male and female – decode messages sent by great works of art; their "new spiritual birth" assists humanity in general.

H.D.'s poetic animation of Greek mythical figures and of Sappho assumes the notable task of pivoting millennia of narrative from the male center of well-known stories to the female. "Eurydice" (1917) is such a reassessment. Overpassing Orpheus, the figure whose name "means" poetry in Western tradition, H.D. animates the voice, opinions, and egoism of Eurydice, the dead wife, victim of Orpheus' botched rescue from Hades, and transforms her doubly dead status to a claim of intense power. The dark space of the underworld, illuminated by Eurydice's penetrating dark light, exemplifies difference feminism. The separation of two figures – Orpheus / Eurydice – formerly fused as a single cultural unit, and the use of a fully female perspective, indicate the leverage gained by the revisionary mythopoesis of critical feminism.

Another line of female-specific, critical thought about sex and gender emerges in Djuna Barnes. Beginning (1915) in poems with a Baudelairean mix of prostitutes, lesbians, female corpses, and decadent lusts, Barnes reaches an apogee for her erotically engaged satiric imagination in *Ladies Almanack* (1928), which she both wrote and illustrated. She deploys the monthly calendar, cunning drawings, and hybrid genre mixes – almanac, breviary, saint's lives, sex manual, imaginary voyage – to tell a roundelay set of seductions and assists to orgasm, propelled by one female dominatrix (Dame Musset, based on *salonière* Natalie Barney). This is an arch, witty, coterie work in a high euphuistic diction, a distinct encouragement to sexually active woman – within or, more emphatically, without heterosexuality.

This book, like Woolf's *Orlando* (also 1928, which has been called the *annus mirabilis* of lesbian literature), takes place in a counterfactual historical world, as if a female perspective might reveal alternative (and better) sex-gender universes. With erotic sprezzatura and intellectual panache, *Orlando* addresses the strange arbitrariness of the body as a social marker, criticizing fixed gender identities and limited sexual pleasures. This romp through British history is also a cross-dressed / comic dressing-down of limiting sex-gender arrangements. When Orlando "becomes" a woman in the later eighteenth century (during social upheavals of all kinds), she emerges into

a repressive, dank system of gender polarization and hierarchy, precisely the social system against which Woolf protested eloquently for her whole career. With the energies of a comic imagination fueled by erotic force, Woolf invents the perfect partner for this newly female-former-male; he is a feminized male character. Androgynously recalibrated but multidirectional (and based on Woolf's lover, Vita Sackville-West and her lover's husband, Harold Nicolson), these two characters are glyphs for male homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, and heterosexuality. In short, no categories apply. From this utopia of androgyny (Woolf's accommodating name for her salmagundi of sex-gender mixes) emerge concepts of profound possibility: giving one's attention to the equally bisexualized body/mind provides ideas and a source of knowledge that lead to interesting gender traits, novel genre mixes, and eroticized rhetorics, with many pleasurable, queer giggles along the way.

Androgyny indicates a significant change in the sex-gender system. In *A Room of One's Own*, a man and a woman taking a taxi together symbolizes a utopic (magical) amalgamation of male and female traits, a fusing of both gender "sides" into a new person-in-motion. Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), making the synthesizing stroke that inscribes an androgynous hiero-glyph and marks the completion of her long-postponed painting, is herself an androgynous amalgam, acknowledging both her powerful matri-sexual attachments and her power to face the patriarch with temperate affection. These proposals of "Newer Freewoman" subjectivities emerge from female-oriented critiques of gender hierarchy and its repressions.

The shadow text inside *A Room of One's Own* is Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), whose prosecutor in the trial for obscenity Woolf mocks knowingly, and whose lesbian vehemence she treats with tact -- all within the continuum of generalized female-to-female love. Hall's book concerns an upper-class lesbian as trapped soul (a man caught inside a woman's body), who finds her true femme love and then renounces her to heterosexuality. It is a melodramatic, if also informative novel, brave and pioneering, although retrograde and dour in its insistence on lesbian suffering and self-punishment. It emphatically constructs a critique of sexual norms and acknowledges heterodox and powerful figures in the lesbian community in its sketch of Parisian lesbian countersociety.

Plausibly answering Hall, a quite different picture of lesbian couplehood emerges in Gertrude Stein's *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) in the absence of any emphasis whatsoever except amused and positive happiness. The book is written in Stein's democratic-realist style: in pleasant,

undramatic, conversational flatness, akin in its inclusiveness to stream of consciousness, but without hints either of the unconscious or the self-conscious. Focusing on the years up to 1919 (also in Paris), never talking about their decision to live together, and speaking once, dismissively, about feminist issues, Stein writes Toklas's words in and as her own. This is both homage to her partner and appropriation of her, charming in mingled selves, intent on merging boundaries between singular individuals. Stein thereby tells her own literary and cultural story (as art collector, *salonière*, and writer), within their co-authored achievement of a poised and contented lesbian life. Stein with her professional identity, Toklas, who entertained the wives, supervised household help, sometimes cooked, did needlework, and both typed and (importantly) published her husband's manuscripts are as genially stereotyped in their gender complementarities as any male–female couple, except both are women. However, one is also a self-described "genius" – a beyond-gender subject position.

Third gender, or beyond-gender subject positions, also make female-oriented critiques of social norms for women. Marianne Moore's long-ish poem "Marriage" (1923) points "beyond" gender, rejecting the normal two as banal, stereotyped, and inadequate. With a droll lucidity, Moore investigates the potential of both men and women (Adam and Eve) for success in that basic title (entitled) institution and declares them both unfit – Adam for his need to be worshipped and Eve for her preening self-love. Indeed, both genders are similarly self-absorbed, narcissistic, and antisocial. The one figure most fit for marriage is the analytic, neither-female-nor-male third gender, the very speaker of this very poem, who views all this gender polarization with a debunking realism, sly diction, and political finesse.

Whenever Moore discusses her anti-epyllion "Marriage," instead of personal confession, romantic encounters, or self-revelation, she talks about her citation strategy (which she pioneered in 1915–16) and her rejection of the genre "poetry": the work is an essay-cento incorporating gleaned materials. With elaborate, tricky footnotes, startling tonal variety, and hermetic amusement throughout, the poet is a judge, a collector, an editor, a curator: professional identities involving the privilege of choice and the skills of sequencing. In this invention of an editor-collagist for her subject position as writer, Moore makes a feminist critique of the norms and paradigms of the practice called "poetry" – self-expression, lyric postures, transcendent engagements. Both in her overt statements and in her career gestures, Moore is as suspicious of finish, beauty, and perfection as she is careful to achieve them. Her textual strategies are thus both non-masculinist in being

anti-authoritarian, and non-feminine in calling fixed surfaces of beauty and closure into question. Moore situates her texts as forms of resistance to conventional stereotypes of gender binaries – a third way.

The gender problematic for female writers – the canard that assertion is coded as "male" but is necessary for creativity – is both illustrated and discussed in May Sinclair's 1910 novel *The Creators*. This work tracks a group of male and female writers as they struggle with personal relationships (sexual desire, family responsibilities, jealousy, mutual support) and their artistic afflatus. The characters believe in genius, endlessly discuss it, and live by its imperious demands. The central character is a successful, married woman writer. Her bourgeois life is occasionally a time-wasting irritant, between the toils of her own celebrity, her obligations to an extended family as well as to her husband and children, and her own inability (Sinclair's labored irony) to keep the household financial *books*, yet her rare talent for writing literary *books*.

Sinclair's characters are given contradictory (often "third gender") convictions. The narrator claims that female geniuses must be "virginal" or "virile" but never simply sexually fulfilled women writers.[21] A woman genius has "another sex inside [her], and a stronger one, to plague [her]." Sinclair proposes that a modern professional woman's gender exists in an unstable, painful but semi-functional mix: "Through it all, through all her dreadful virility, she had always been persistently and preposterously feminine." This "femininity" and the desire for the male muse allow a female writer to repress "the dangerous, disintegrating virile element," "the presence in her of two sexes contending for the mastery." Female "virility" has a lot to answer for – apparently any manifestation of desire, energy, and professional ruthlessness in women can be blamed on it. The novel's insistence on the "queerness" of the writers suggests that they both – male and female – are abnormal; they comprise a mentally unstable yet passionate "third gender," "third social class," or even degenerate "race" by virtue of their literary genius. This "oddity" does suggest contemporary anti-binarist uses of the term "queer." This presentation of both genders' genius-abnormality is not static; the artists seem to reject this concept within the novel, but the bourgeois world, as depicted with its faith in normative (judgmental) psychology and its medical diagnoses of genius, does not. The book powerfully encapsulates conflicting attitudes emerging from a female critique of gender norms.

Developing and enriching their female characters, authors of modern *Bildungsromane* or *Künstlerromane* incorporate major attention to sexuality

and gender, and track the achievement of a visionary sense of self. Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) takes the protagonist through a quest for self-actualization by testing her responses to oppressive or enriching sexual or marital relationships. Janie's achievement of independence is signaled by the resonant intelligence with which the character claims the right to tell stories and testify on her behalf, including at her own trial for (justifiable) manslaughter. The racially segregated and gender-separated communities in which this female character makes her way are also a test of her self-actualization amid limiting social, racial, and personal expectations. The work ends with an evocative sense of a female friendship and a transcendent spiritual growth through Janie's outspokenness.

III

A third way of examining Marsden's trajectory into a post-feminist phenomenology of consciousness would be through "difference" and the Newer Freewoman, where female particularity is translated into an idea of "the feminine" in language and structure. The "feminine" is an unstable term. Is it the sheer expression of any femaleness? Is it lace-y ideologies of femininity? Is it, as in some contemporary French feminist theory, a lyrical space outside of patriarchy? Whatever it could be, a third mode of modernist innovation by women depends on a claim of a differential consciousness or apprehension called "the feminine" – one with analogues to later theories of *écriture féminine*. This sense of a special sound or style for women involves a generalized erotics of the liberated spirit, a writing self-consciously (semantically) inhabiting the semiotic realm, blurring ego boundaries, attuned to babble and stutter, filled with self-conscious textual play against simplistic monodirectional argument, featuring repetition and self-reflexive consciousness, and offering interior meditations of a pulsing linguistic intensity. The writers most assiduously making this claim are Dorothy Richardson, Gertrude Stein, and H.D. in her prose; Woolf framed the feminine interestingly in her claims of female differences of emphasis in "[breaking] the sentence" and differences of narrative strategies in "[breaking] the sequence."[22]

H.D.'s novels, often representing intense biographical relations *à clef*, reflect the period of the First World War and just before, attending narratively to bisexuality, to febrile passions – whether sexual or intellectual or writerly – and to inward consciousness. Rife with feelings, multiple, contradictory reflections, wavering uncertainty, dream, and vision, with a

hallucinatory use of repetition, and so mystifyingly, loopingly narrated that they can seem plotless, these slow-motion narratives are as fascinatingly "in" stream of consciousness modes as are parallel works by Richardson and Woolf. Consciousness moves like a cinematic montage – film technique being vital to both H.D. and Richardson. Both were important early film critics, and the slow motion of early cinema parallels the sense of consciousness in their novels. As in both Woolf and Richardson, H.D.'s novels discuss passionate bisexual attractions in an electric atmosphere of decision-making and identification.

In H.D.'s autobiographical novels – *Asphodel* (w. 1921–22), *HERmione* (w. 1926), *Bid Me to Live* (w. 1939–50), as well as the semi-historical *Palimpsest* (w. 1923–24) – multiple erotic allegiances (often as manipulative as passionate), bisexual desires, adultery, and hints of abortion all mix in with the compelling literary ambitions of main characters and with the shock of drastically changed relationships in the wake of the First World War. The struggle of the female artist in all these cases seems to depend on declaring a sexual authenticity, being true to erotic urgency wherever this leads the character. Bisexual attractions are frankly rendered; however, the tilt (and lilt) of the "feminine" writing make H.D.'s novels always seem to vote for female–female attraction in the style, no matter how the plot is resolved. Eventually this gender-inflected quest makes H.D. link her own buried matrisexuality with mytho-historical analyses of the repression of the female in all Western culture in her late-career long poems *Trilogy* and *Helen in Egypt*.

The major *Bildungsroman* of a female mind living the historical moment of massive change (from the 1890s to just before suffrage) is Dorothy Richardson's thirteen-book *Pilgrimage* (w. 1913–54, pub. 1915–67). Often overwhelming, this sequence mingles third-person exterior realism (including slangy conversation), third-person omniscient narrator (rendering Miriam Henderson's thoughts), and, strikingly, that first-person pulsing of multiple, impressionistic vectors for which the work is best known. This amalgam, but particularly Miriam's freely associated and somewhat random thoughts, were named by May Sinclair "stream of consciousness," a term plausibly indebted to William James's phenomenology and a description that Richardson distrusted. Richardson thought she was using classical realism to get to a specific female reality through slowly unrolling interior monologue – a stylistic and narrative presentation of typical female experiences. In this work, Richardson invents many counternarratives to conventional marriage/death fictional endings, affirming female dyads, spiritual journeys, and illuminating

epiphanies mixed up with the quotidian. The awkward distinctiveness of Richardson's technique lies not so much in the impressions, unprioritized thoughts, and urgent, contradictory feelings of joy, despair, ambition, discontent, and gawky self-consciousness, but in the fact that these are completely unplotted. There is neither hierarchy of event nor of emotion, no clear beginning, middle, or end, and no identifiable meaning to the sequence, except a quite implicit and very slow spiritual quest, whose trajectory is hard to find without reading all thirteen books. Many of the scenes are so thoroughly inside Miriam's point of view that one may often read her reaction shots without any sense of what specific events provoked them. This saturation in multiple perceptions and diffuse meanings, this intense observation without overt purpose, and the random, errant, unfocused sense of time and place are what allow Richardson's writing to be called "feminine" in contemporary critical terms.

Beginning in the 1890s, Miriam, a nubile young woman, continues her education in the work world and resists any sexual or romantic entanglements that end in marriage, to find, at the very end of her pilgrimage, allegiance to a Quaker community with a female maternal figure at its center. At the beginning, as teacher, governess, and secretary in a dentist's office, Miriam occupies a third space between stereotyped genders, coping with workspace stresses and ambiguous relationships, but, in calling herself "a new woman," she claims this pilgrimage as a female space. The character is skeptical of various pieties and repeatedly testy about adult masquerades and hypocrisies, particularly concerning gender, and she fiercely condemns the superficiality of women and the powers of men both in the professions and in their insistent sexual insinuation.

There are many eloquent meditations about gender as the young Miriam struggles with others' attitudes to her hard-won and vulnerable independence. Across an array of social sites, Richardson gives Miriam striking, radical, analytic remarks about the power of men, where history and literature – "all the conceptual space" – is filled from and with men's point of view. She also depicts her character's loathing for the tricks of charm called "femininity." So Miriam rejects both genders, putting herself in a third place: "I am something between a man and a woman, looking both ways."[23] But she maintains an intense identification with the serene and nourishing powers of women – the spiritual goal of her quest.

The term "feminine" conforms to Richardson's own gendered sense of her project: reassessing plot, image, structure, event, thought, convention, sentence, and language from a woman's perspective. Richardson's project is

uncannily Steinian – it nullifies Artistotle on plot by beginning again and again, by making temporality a permanent "now" without linking before and after, and by "using everything" in an array without constructing conventional literary shapes through symbols, notable recurrences, allegories, or punctual markers. (The Stein poetics is from "Composition as Explanation."[24]) "Feminine" is a synonym here for female-oriented and involves a practice of telling more than that surface story by allowing the mind to run on in vectors and associations; this deeply interior "realism" is rendered without the formal and symbolic control that one sees in Woolf or Joyce. A "feminine" practice of writerly otherness simply means, for Richardson, "a feminine equivalent of the current masculine realism."[25]

Feminine writing emerges from women examining consciousness: liminality, "'shapeless' shapeliness," fragmentation, quick shifts of attention or diffuse views, unprioritized glissades, plethoras of feeling, both/and tolerance; all of this emerges, for Richardson, from feminist critiques of conventions of representation.[26] Of course, since male writers may also choose to use this mode, it can only be ascribed to gender by a doubling down on female affirmation, a critical pride that women can see what other people might have missed or not comprehended. Woolf makes this kind of argument insistently – for her there is always part of the world that conventional writing does not acknowledge. Women are said to feel an empathetic communication, a sense of illumination, a pluralist vision that ends, for Richardson's Miriam, in an illuminated community of other spiritual (and post-feminist) seekers. This "feminine" vision also comes from a positive feminist critique of materialist or realist style; a synthetic fusion of realist and experimental senses of consciousness observing the world; a critique of conventional plots, narrative arcs, mandated endings, expected emotions; and an ability for negative capability or holding divergent points of view without resolving them, similar to Woolf's "Modern Fiction" (1925). My argument avoids reductive or essentialist claims for this "feminine"; the "feminine" in style, manner, insight, form, sentence, plot, and concept would be chosen precisely as a counter-hegemonic or critical/situational strategy.

"Forensics" (c. 1928) shows Stein to be tempted both by the mastery and power of (non-feminine) discourse and by its critique. However, by the end of "Forensics," Stein has argued that the language practices of "She" occur in opposition to "forensics" – the language of law courts, managers, judges. "They" have a language practice of argument, power, judgment, definition, that comes out of a process of social replication, all in all, the script of a "taught paragraph," while "She" is different.[27] In "Forensics," Stein's critique

of masculinist values in writing and speaking both illustrates and proposes another mode, called "the other." This other "curves," gives pleasure, does not judge, is not backed by "union and organization." Stein seems to have distinguished the semiotic from the symbolic modes of language and linked the former to "feminine" writing through female particularity.

Tender Buttons (1914), along with much else of Stein, steps almost completely into a semiotic realm; here language is only semi-thetic or thesis bearing. This revolutionary work depicts a lesbian courtship and wedding or wetting (both words appear), and lesbian sensual, sexual domesticity.[28] All the objects, rooms, and foods are constructed with attention to their charm, their capacity to give and get pleasure, their sexual aura, their metamorphic qualities. *Tender Buttons* is a fond appropriation of the rhetorical cadences of women's fashion and advice magazines: materials (feathers, cotton), sewing, fashion and its colorful changes (dresses and accessories), furniture, cleaning, cooking, the pleasures of consuming, and adorning are all recurrent topics. Much of the "Objects" section could allude to accumulation of possessions, a party, the preparation of clothes (i.e., a trousseau), a honeymoon, encoded sexual discovery, the search for a "suitable establishment," and other allusions to nuptials.

So *Tender Buttons*, remarkably, makes a critique of marriage while being both engaged and "married," a case of having your wedding cake and eating it, too. It reconfigures domestic space under the rubric of lesbian sexuality with a homey ethos. It is thus domestic without being domesticated (in the sense of normalized), proposing the joys of marital intimacy so long as it is "gay." The work takes the appurtenances, decor, diction, and even embarrassments (rosy stains) of womanhood and makes them all gay – joyous, sexualized, inviting/enticing, and lesbian. Stein's *Lifting Belly* (w. 1915–17) is even more intensely erotic, a pulsing, comic paean to lesbian sexuality.

The poems' sexual suggestiveness (and frankness about other drives – oral and anal) gives a new aura to a variety of domestic objects named in the titles of the sections. Aside from the multi-suggestive, punning button, the work displays some rare recipes: roast beef, for example, slathered with butter – a combination absolutely not kosher – whose vulval implications seem clear. The interplay between the transparent, simple words (for simple objects) and their opaque combinations in syntax creates a volatile, unfixed suggestiveness.

Tender Buttons is a gay work, and "gay" is Stein's formulation of sexual/ and domestic independence under the Newer Freewoman rubric. Yet while *Tender Buttons* is certainly a "feminine" text, some of its effect depends on syntactic cues that mimic argument and rhythms of conviction as postulates

and definitions, arguably masculine in cultural stereotype. Thus this is also an androgynous as well as queer text, by virtue of the charming instability and incessant connections made between masculine and feminine stylistic modes.

All feminine writing both evokes and critiques a binary system of gender difference. It does so by formulating a third way – superior and utopian – a spiritual, even mystical, sense of language in bliss. Feminine writing may rupture a constitutive aspect of textuality by undoing gender binarism on the level of language choices; it may also reinstantiate clichés about "the poetic" and the unconstrained, and, perhaps like Marsden, underestimate what language alone can do to undermine patriarchy. Still, for all three modes discussed in this essay – feminist, female-oriented, and feminine – we have emphatically "[supposed] women were needed not only to tell what happened but also to have it said."[29] Thus this essay resists the "de-feminization of modernism."[30]

Notes

1 Elizabeth Robins, *Way Stations* (London and New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1913), 235, and *The Convert* (1907; Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1980), 265.

2 Dora Marsden, "Bondwomen," *Freewoman*, 1/1 (November 23, 1911), 1–2.

3 Mina Loy, "Aphorisms on Futurism" (1914), *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger L. Conover (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996), 151.

4 Dora Marsden, "Views and Comments," *New Freewoman*, 1/13 (December 15, 1913), 244.

5 H.D. (J. Beran), "The Suffragette" (7 pp.), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, YCAL 24, series II, Box 37, Folder 952.

6 Christabel Pankhurst, *The Great Scourge and How to End It* (London: E. Pankhurst, 1913), vii.

7 Dora Marsden, *Bondwomen* (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1912), 10, 5, 3, 7–8, 10, 11.

8 Mina Loy, "Feminist Manifesto," *Lost Lunar Baedeker*, 153.

9 Mina Loy, "International Psycho-Democracy," *The Last Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger L. Conover (Highlands, NC: Jargon Society, 1982), 277, 276.

10 Dora Marsden, "Women's 'Rights,'" *Egoist*, 1/19 (October 1, 1914), 361.

11 Loy, "International Psycho-Democracy," 282, 282, 276, 281.

12 May Sinclair, *The Tree of Heaven* (New York: Macmillan, 1917).

13 Ibid., 124.

14 Ibid., 299.

15 Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957), passim.
16 Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (1928; New York: Signet Classics, 1960), 205.
17 Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1938; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 102, 113, 143–44.
18 Marianne Moore, *The Complete Prose*, ed. Patricia C. Willis (New York: Viking, 1986), 417, 419.
19 Loy, *Lost Lunar Baedeker*, 7.
20 H.D., *Notes on Thought and Vision* (1919; San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 1982), 27, 50.
21 May Sinclair, *The Creators* (1910), ed. Lyn Pykett (University of Birmingham Press, 2004), 74, 319 (twice), xxvi, 292.
22 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, 85.
23 Dorothy Richardson, *The Tunnel* (1919), vol. II of *Pilgrimage* (New York: Popular Library, 1976), 220, 187.
24 Gertrude Stein, "Composition as Explanation" (1926), in *The Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein*, ed. Carl Van Vechten (1946; New York: Modern Library, 1962), 513–23.
25 Dorothy Richardson, "Foreword to *Pilgrimage*" (1938), in Bonnie Kime Scott (ed.), *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 430.
26 Dorothy Richardson, "Leadership in Marriage," *New Adelphi*, 2 (June–August 1929), 347.
27 Stein, "Forensics" [c. 1928], in *How to Write* (1931; New York: Dover, 1975), 386, 394, 393 (twice).
28 Stein, *Selected Writings*, 465, 466, 468.
29 Gertrude Stein, *A Novel of Thank You* (w. 1925–26, pub. 1958) (Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 1994), 144. The novels of Hurston and H.D. and the poetry of Loy were recovered for an enlarged audience mainly, if not exclusively, by feminist critics; Richardson, Sinclair, and Marsden remain underread; works of Stein, Barnes, Moore, and the poetry of H.D. were for many years said to be interesting to "coterie" readers only; the essays and novels of Woolf were routinely and lavishly disparaged throughout the literary era that ended around 1975.
30 Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 6.

29

Russian Modernism: Kandinsky, Stravinsky, and Mayakovsky

CATRIONA KELLY

"There are four of us," wrote Anna Akhmatova (1889–1966) in a 1961 poem with epigraphs taken from poems to her by Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938), Boris Pasternak (1890–1960), and Marina Tsvetaeva (1892–1941). The claim embodied Akhmatova's efforts, as a late survivor of modernism, to construct a history of the movement highlighting her own life and work, and those few contemporaries she considered to be of equal talent.[1] By contrast, Tolstoy's famous attack on the "great man" theory of history in the Epilogue to *War and Peace* (1869), itself written from a radically modernist stance, compared the genius as conventionally understood to the fat ram who leads the herd, but without understanding that he will himself be slaughtered for meat.[2]

The opposing views capture a crucial contradiction. Russian modernism was both a mass movement and an exclusive one. On the latter side, it was shaped by the aesthetic and organizational achievements and assertive self-portrayal of a fairly small number of writers and artists, most of whom had been born or brought up in, or lived in, Moscow and St. Petersburg. The photographs and biographies, as well as the artistic works (known directly or by reputation) of, say, Aleksandr Blok (1880–1921), Andrei Bely (1880–1934), Valentin Serov (1865–1911), or Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908), were familiar throughout the Russian Empire. A later generation of artists would achieve not just national, but international, fame, including the quartet of whom Akhmatova spoke, but also (among others) the film director Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948), the artists Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935) and Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953), the composers Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) and Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75), and, of course, the three figures on whom this article centers, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Vasily (or Wassily) Kandinsky, and Igor Stravinsky.

Such universal – one could even say, global – fame is what the cultural critics working alongside the artists would have termed a "cultural fact."[3] Akhmatova herself regularly mourned the human costs of notoriety: among

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the personae in her early poetry was a figure from the Gospels, "the woman taken in adultery." The "stones" of slander cast at her become an entrapping tower.[4] Never did the reputation of the arts stand so high in Russia as between 1905 and 1940, and at no other time did artists exercise such authority or enjoy such fame – or run such risks of persecution.

Yet the rise of the celebrity artist resulted from a complete transformation in the audience for the arts. The improvement in education, the development of printing (including the spread of photolithography as well as of cheap editions of literary texts), the emergence of new institutions such as independent theatres and museums, and the relaxation of censorship (most notably from 1905, when the preliminary vetting of books and journalism was suspended) fostered a literary and artistic culture unlike anything in Russia before. The methods of disseminating the arts had altered beyond recognition. While there was a long-established tradition of literary and political monthlies, the emergence of superbly illustrated magazines showcasing all the arts was something new.

The social background of artists had also changed radically. Before the 1880s, there were hardly any authors with plebeian roots (exceptions include the provincial cattle-dealer's son Aleksei Koltsov, 1809–42, and Ivan Nikitin, 1824–61, born into the family of a candle merchant). Now hundreds of peasant and worker writers emerged, contributing to projects such as Prince Vyacheslav Tenishev's ethnographical survey of village culture, writing fan letters to authors such as Gorky and Tolstoy, and composing their own literary works.[5] The situation in the visual arts was different, in that some major figures of the 1800s began as serfs (a famous example was the portraitist Vasily Tropinin, 1776–1857). But in painting and sculpture, as in music, major developments included much improved professional education, and the increasing participation in professional circles of artists and musicians from social strata which would formerly have taken genteel amateurism as an ideal.[6]

After the Bolshevik Revolution, the incursion of self-propelled new writers into print received sustained encouragement from Party activists, as expressed in pamphlets such as *How to Write a Speech* and *How to Write for the Newspaper*.[7] Diaries became a vehicle of self-transformation and of the "reforging of souls," a way to "become Soviet."[8] The *vydvizhenets*, or upwardly mobile Soviet official, was paralleled in the young man or woman (particularly the former) from a modest background who ended up a new-style author.[9]

It was not just individual self-transformation, but collective reshaping that mattered. The "new art" or "contemporary art" (*sovremennoe iskusstvo*) was

29.1 A new literary and artistic culture: front cover vignette from *The Golden Fleece* journal (Moscow, 1906).

primarily fostered by the work of groups such as the cubo-futurists, the "Donkey's Tail," and the "Ballets Russes"; by critical and theoretical work-shops, including the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (Opoyaz); and by institutions, such as the Institute for the History of Arts in Petrograd-Leningrad, where Boris Eikhenbaum and Yury Tynyanov trained scholars of poetry and prose such as Lidiya Ginzburg (also a remarkable diarist) and Boris Bukhshtab.

The preoccupation with individuals is thus partly the product of a retro-spective view, one shaped by the romantic understanding of the artist as a

tragically isolated figure. Selective understandings of the "new arts" in Russia are all the more characteristic in the West, where Russian and Soviet history is seen as "a passage through Armageddon," and those who experienced it as victims or perpetrators, monsters or martyrs.[10] While interpretation of pre-1917 culture has been less fixated on state violence, the emphasis on conflict prompts preoccupation with the "shock of the new." The avant-garde is far more familiar to most Westerners than, say, the cult of Versailles among St. Petersburg artists such as Alexandre Benois (Aleksandr Benua) or Konstantin Somov.[11]

In some respects, focusing on Mayakovsky, Stravinsky, and Kandinsky is to espouse convention at the expense of historical accuracy. The three artists – unlike, say, Mayakovsky and the theatre director Vsevolod Meyer-hold, or Mayakovsky and the photographer and artist Aleksandr Rodchenko – never worked together, and this at a time when some of the most important artistic ventures (for example the cubo-futurist poet Aleksei Kruchenykh and the composer Mikhail Matyushin's *Victory over the Sun*, or Stravinsky, Alexandre Benois, and Michel Fokine's *Petrushka*) were collaborations.[12] They were not even soul-mates of a distant kind. While Mayakovsky enthu-siastically recalled meeting Stravinsky in the Pleyel pianola factory, Stravins-ky's only recollection of the meeting was that Mayakovsky "drank more than he should have and ... was deplorably dirty." About his contacts with Kandinsky, Stravinsky was more flattering but vaguer: "an aristocrat, *un homme de choix*."[13] Kandinsky's writings pass over both the others in silence.

There was little overlap in terms of life path either. Certainly, all were scions of the new middle classes (they were, in Kandinsky's case, the son of a businessman, in Stravinsky's, of an opera singer, and in Mayakovsky's, of an official in the imperial forestry service). All achieved world renown in branches of the arts that had not been their original profession: Kandinsky, an academic lawyer of brilliant promise, began his artistic training only at the age of thirty; Stravinsky, who also studied law, carried out his initial studies in composition as a private pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov; Mayakovsky was a student of painting who published his first poem as a twenty-year-old. But Kandinsky, born in 1866, was closer in age to Chekhov (only six years his senior) than to Stravinsky (born in 1882). Mayakovsky's birth in 1893 made him more than a decade younger even than Stravinsky, but his suicide in 1930, at the age of only thirty-six, took him off in his prime, while both Kandinsky and Stravinsky survived into extreme old age, dying, respectively, in 1944 and 1971.

A Petersburger, Stravinsky was part of the musical life of the capital (though not part of its establishment), and from 1914, lived abroad;

Kandinsky, a native Muscovite, spent most of his later life (1895–1914, 1921–33) in Germany; Mayakovsky was born not in historic Russia, but in Georgia, one of the Empire's southeastern dependencies, but from his late teens, dwelled permanently in Moscow, leaving the city only for short periods of time. In political terms, too, they stood very differently. Mayakovsky, an active revolutionary before 1917, greeted the October Revolution with noisy enthusiasm, and became a leading, if controversial, figure in the new state's propaganda initiatives. Kandinsky briefly took a leading role in various Soviet institutions (for instance, the Higher Art Workshops, *Vkhutemas*, from 1920) before leaving for Berlin in 1921. Stravinsky, on the other hand, while welcoming the Soviet Union's victory over Germany in 1945, detested everything else about Soviet culture.[14]

To select a different triad of famous artists would bring a different narrative configuration. If Shostakovich, Sergei Eisenstein, and Mayakovsky were juxtaposed, the fractious and vulnerable situation of adventurous artists who were (at the outset anyway) committed to the Soviet cause, yet depended on the whim of Soviet policy-makers, would come to the fore. Stravinsky, Nabokov, and Naum Gabo would highlight the success of Russian artists who became naturalized Americans, and played a fundamental role in the emergence of postwar modernism in their adopted country. Focusing on the poet Marina Tsvetaeva, the painter Lyubov' Popova, and the film director Esfir' Shub would make clear the extraordinary contribution made by women to literary and artistic modernism. And so forth.

Yet the fact that *this* selection of three artists is unlikely also makes it illuminating, a reflection of the contradictory and fissured nature of Russian modernism. And certain important factors do link the work of all three. All were "Russian" in rather an elastic sense. Mayakovsky was born outside the country; Kandinsky's ancestors included members of non-Russian ethnic minorities (Tungus and Mansi); Stravinsky's family connections were Polish-Lithuanian. (This type of mixed background typified modernists: for instance, Akhmatova had Ukrainian connections, while Mandelstam and Pasternak were entirely of Jewish descent. It pointed to the increasingly multiethnic character of the Russian Empire's public culture, despite the Tsarist government's drive to Russify schools and convert minorities to Orthodoxy.[15]) Yet for all Mayakovsky's, Stravinsky's, and Kandinsky's shared preoccupation with questions of Russia's destiny, all were artistic internationalists.

Since the time it was first produced, work by major Russian modernists has been regarded by Westerners as highly specific: an exotic ("Eurasian")

expression of national consciousness.[16] The writers and journalists over-whelmed by the performances of the Ballets Russes both anticipated and shaped the responses of later generations.[17] To this day, Western interpret-ation often focuses on "Russianness." Recent work on Stravinsky has empha-sized the importance of "neonationalism" to the composer's writings, its rootedness both in the elite traditions of, say, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, and in the close study of Russian folk music, for example, the pioneering musical transcriptions of the ethnomusicologist Evgeniya Linyova.[18] A comparable perspective on Kandinsky sees him as a "shamanis-tic" artist, in whose work the drum and the horse, laden with ritual connota-tions, are repetitively present.[19]

Certainly, the expansion of ethnographical knowledge around 1900 was of the first importance to Kandinsky, who took part in folklore-collecting expeditions and published academic articles based on the results. His ambi-tion to trace pagan survivals in the "chaos of *contemporary* religious concepts" (his italics) typified the scholarship of the era.[20] Aleksandr Blok, more of a traditional "armchair ethnographer," wrote a famous article on spells and incantations, from which he himself took motifs and linguistic formulae, which in turn were imitated by the poets of the next generation, such as Marina Tsvetaeva.

But interests in local culture were very diverse. The interests of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Russia's "Eurasian" history jarred with the celebration of Northern Russia as spiritual homeland, not to mention frankly racist dread of the "yellow peril." As well as mining rural traditions for "national color," artists now looked elsewhere. Mayakovsky's *150 Million* (1920) worked like a proletarianized version of Blok's 1918 narrative poem *Scythians* (1918). A chorus of Russians characterized not by their "slanted eyes" or associations with "the East," but by their manner of speaking, converged on the hostile West:

> Make way for the capricious Caspian wave!
> We will not go back into the rut of Russia!
> Not in withered Baku
>   but in triumphant Nice
> with the Mediterranean wave we will dance on the beaches.[21]

This explicit *avoidance* of geographical specificity was characteristic. To a Western scholar, it seemed odd that Prokofiev regarded Stravinsky's neoclassical writing of the 1920s as "scratched-up Bach."[22] But what burst on contemporary Russian audiences was less the "neonationalist" character

of the "new arts" than their alien nature. The fact that motifs and compositional fragments in Stravinsky's early ballets, or Kandinsky's paintings, or Mayakovsky's poems echoed earlier artworks was less obvious than the dislocated and disorienting context in which they appeared. And indeed, all three exemplified modernism's credentials as the first global movement in Russian art. Kandinsky could perfectly well be called a "German" artist (a fellow of Erich Kirchner and Gabriele Münter) and Stravinsky (in his 1920s period) a "French" one, collaborating with Picasso, Cocteau, and Satie.[23] While Mayakovsky's contacts with the West were sparser, the influences of Italian futurism and of cubism were still fundamental.[24] And his sturdy Russian and Soviet patriotism (expressed in anti-German cartoons from the First World War as well as posters and agitational poems of the post-revolutionary era) should be set against a 1922 letter to Diaghilev where he passes greetings to "wonderful Picasso and Delaunay," and speculates on organizing in Moscow an exhibition of work by "my friends in Paris."[25] From one point of view a social revolutionary, Mayakovsky was from another a local version of the *poète maudit*, with affinities to Baudelaire and Rimbaud.[26]

All three artists (like most, if not all, of their contemporaries) wanted to invoke nationality, but not be defined by it. This was one part of an aversion to being categorized at any level. As Mayakovsky wrote in 1930, "What I'm being told to do is fine. But I don't want to be told what to do!"[27] In 1922, he argued that money was better spent on supporting writers who were still alive than on commemorating dead ones; a year later, that the collection of history was a crucial objective, and that Soviet posters should be carefully preserved.[28] While politically engaged, Mayakovsky was not a natural member of any collective. Like him, Kandinsky and Stravinsky had a commitment to an indefinability that they had inherited from the romantic movement ("There are many contradictions / But I don't wish to correct them," as Pushkin put it in *Evgeny Onegin*), but which the three modernists pursued further, since – unlike Pushkin – they were not dependent on the political establishment in order to survive.[29]

What a Russian turn of phrase calls "teasing the geese" was commonplace. But there were genuine differences of stance underneath the posturing. Kandinsky shared with Symbolists such as Blok the conviction that art should be a quasi-religious appearance, an escape from the mechanical everyday, a search for "inward" essences. Colors all had symbolic resonance, and of an expressly Symbolist kind: blue stood for the spiritual domain ("the heavens"); white for the promising vacancy of silence; yellow was associated indelibly with the ordinary world.[30] Stravinsky, on the other hand, pooh-poohed, in his

1936 autobiography, the idea of art as religion. He concluded his self-investigation with a flat declaration of his uninterest in such issues; for him, composition was simply an everyday "function." Mayakovsky's *How to Make Verses* stood somewhere between the two positions: it meted out advice on how to write in the manner of a self-help book (a genre that it both imitated and parodied), but also saw composition as something that could not be planned. "There'd be no point in thinking up rules for counting the stars while you were riding a bicycle full-tilt."[31]

Yet Mayakovsky was also convinced that the writer should be a class warrior who "adds his pen to the arsenal for arming the proletariat."[32] Conversely, Kandinsky's mysticism, and Stravinsky's conviction of the importance of liturgical tradition (from a formal point of view) for creating music, stand out not just against Mayakovsky's Soviet-era commitment to radical atheism, but against the earlier Mayakovsky's use of religious motifs in the service of self-affirmation (as in the Christ analogies of *A Cloud in Trousers*) or revolutionary utopianism (in *Mystery-Bouffe*).

All the same, some common ground can be charted. All three artists (despite their widely differing ages) came to prominence at the same, highly significant, point in the evolution of the Russian modernist movement: the early 1910s. This was the era of fiery manifestos (particularly those of the cubo-futurists, such as *A Trap for Judges*, 1910, *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste*, 1912 and *A Trap for Judges II*, 1913). The year 1913 also saw other equally remarkable artistic events: the founding of the Donkey's Tail avant-garde painting group, and the first performance of *The Rite of Spring*. The sound palette of *The Rite of Spring*, its chundering lower strings offset by the haunting wails of woodwind, brass, and violins, pitch rising to the point of pain, is now so familiar (even used sometimes for Muzak in shopping centers) that recent commentators have sometimes underlined its links with the past.[33] But this was not the effect on its earliest listeners. Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky's teacher and ally, described it, in a letter written on June 2, 1913, as "the most appalling rubbish," and declared, "I'm glad the thing has been a disaster."[34]

The year 1913 was equally important for Mayakovsky: one of his most important early poems came out in the second number of *A Trap for Judges*.

From the Streets

In pyramids, the threadbare faces' bloom where [is],
from the wounds of stalls oozed cranberry [juice],
and through me on a moon he-rring
galloped a painted letter.

I pound in hollowly the footsteps' beams,
cast on the drums of streets tattoo I.
Walking by tired trams
locked shining spears.

With a hand raising its one eye
the crooked square crept up close
into the sky looked white gas
with the eyeless face of cornflower.[35]

The "cranberry juice" was a mocking reference to Blok's yearning Symbolist play *The Little Puppet Booth* (1906), but the main impact of the poem was certainly not through buried literary references. The cheeky masculinization of the normally feminine word for "herring" (*sel'd'*, rendered here as herring), the spare punctuation that allowed multiple interpretations of grammatical links, and – above all – the surreal evocation of a world in motion, all brought a radically new eye and voice into Russian poetry.[36]

Kandinsky's transition was more deliberate. He had been painting in an increasingly schematic style from 1909, as in the *Improvisations* series. No. 3, for example, included the geometric massing of notional buildings, a highly reductive version of a horse, and a form resembling a child's dinosaur drawing outlined against yellow-brown walls.[37] "Untitled" (1910, usually known as "First Abstract Watercolour"), pushed further, with a range of unidentifiable forms scattered over a white field. The important "Painting with White Border" (1913), with its dynamic streak of white through a vortex of multicolored spirally oriented forms, marked a further step in the direction of nonrepresentational art.[38]

Yet the early 1910s did not mark a once-and-for-all aesthetic shift for these three artists. They continued to produce remarkably varied work over the course of their careers, something of which they were proud. For instance, when choosing work for a 1932 exhibition of his drawings, Kandinsky himself identified a wide range of representational techniques and levels in his art.[39] Nevertheless, biographies, critical discussions, and other canon-forming activities such as selection for museums, exhibitions, concert programs, and anthologies (not to speak of academic courses) often champion their own kinds of selectivity. For instance, among Russian commentators of the "first wave" emigration (those who left after the 1917 revolution), Mayakovsky's catastrophic decline under Soviet power was a sacred belief.[40] Roman Jakobson's famous essay "On a Generation that Squandered its Poets" contested this. At the same time, though, Jakobson adopted an integrated if paradoxical

view of Mayakovsky's work as both future-oriented and elegiac.[41] Mourning a lost friend, Jakobson ignored the political ambiguities of Mayakovsky's situation, as a writer praised by Trotsky who now hymned Stalin speeches:

> I want
> > them to level the pen
> > > with the bayonet,
> > let it be cast-iron
> > > with chasing of steel.
> > And on the work of verses,
> > > on behalf of the Politburo,
> > let speeches be made
> > > by Stalin. ("Home!" 1925)[42]

Jakobson's dilemma is easy to understand. Readers who do not reject some or all of Mayakovsky's later work are left with the problem of how to square officialese and Promethean autobiography, emphasis on the self and on service to the collective good. The rhetoric of Mayakovsky's official report on his history as an engaged writer, "Twenty Years' Work," and of his final poetic testament, "At the Top of My Voice," is very different, yet both emphasize the physicality of verbal production. The famous image of Mayakovsky "standing on the throat of his own song" in *At the Top of My Voice* is echoed by the conclusion of "Twenty Years' Work," which tersely observes, "My voice is giving out."[43]

Stravinsky and Kandinsky also employed highly varied styles within a single artwork as well as across their careers. As Peg Weiss argues, Kandinsky's attempts to synthesize the arts had a "cacophonous and often improvisatory character."[44] Equally, in Stravinsky's compositions from *Petrushka* onward, different musical fragments were combined in ways that unsettled conventional listeners. "Folk" music could signify the "improved" melodies of musical predecessors such as Glinka, but, then again, also the repetitive jingles of city streets, held by many to signal the "bestialisation of the people."[45] Straight imitation of folk material excited contempt – in Kandinsky's words, it was "die tote Scheinexistenz der stiliserten Formen" (the dead pseudo-existence of stylized forms).[46] The point was citation or reactivation: compare Mayakovsky's declaration, with reference to the word "bastard" (*svoloch*): "As long as the concept exists, it'll come up in my poetry."[47] An acceptance of the authenticity of (some) folk material did not dictate perpetual immersion in this: the quotation marks of art were widely spaced.

Accumulation of unreconciled diversity was the foundational characteristic of Russian modernism.[48] The most important theorist of its effects was a film

director, Sergei Eisenstein, but his writings on "montage" (creative editing) emphasized that the dislocatory intercutting he championed in the cinema had analogies in Mayakovsky's poetry.[49] The "looseness" that had infuriated Henry James in Tolstoy's novels was reconfigured as an assertive refusal to harmonize. This went alongside contempt for mimesis. In a sense, Russian realist literature's commitment to "intellectual engagement" (*ideinost'*) rather than what was disparagingly known as *bytopisanie* (depiction of mundanity) had always tended to make verisimilitude a secondary consideration. But for literary and artistic modernism, the partiality of the representation became a given. In step went the movement away from what Roman Jakobson termed "the metaphoric pole," and toward the opposite pole of "metonym" – the replacement of association by coincidence.[50] The term "formalism" lends a misleading impression of dry calculation to a process of dynamic engagement with textual material.

At times, modernist artists directly engaged referential texts created by their nineteenth-century predecessors. An entertaining example is Kandinsky's response to Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* – which itself emulated in musical form pictures of narrative and descriptive content. In "Bydlo," the traditional Ukrainian ox-cart's swaying, lumbering approach is conveyed by the swell of the melodic line. Kandinsky reduces the vignette to triangles, domes, and a curved segment placed against a square, decorated by toothed triangles and with triangles below. A linear representation has acquired multiple simultaneity.

Mayakovsky, too, dissolved description into texture by eschewing viewpoint and stripping objects of solidity. In "From the Streets," the phrase "into the sky looked white gas / with the eyeless face of cornflower" displaces the looking process onto what (in conventional terms) was the object of sight. Dziga Vertov's "camera eye" emancipated objects, as well as the instrument of viewing and representation.[51] Things – perpetually adjusted by processes of manufacture as well as by ways of showing and seeing – became less material than the text itself.[52] This created prohibitions: Stravinsky's distaste for Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* came partly from the fact that "the music plays a miserable role as illustrator, in a very embarrassing realistic style."[53] Late in life, he recalled that Konstantin Bal'mont's verse text *Starface* had appealed on grounds of its aural substance: "Words were what I needed, not meanings."[54] Obviously, such considerations would carry weight with any composer, but the insistence on the importance of sound became part of Stravinsky's artistic autobiography, too, where he recalled, as a key childhood experience, the tongue-clicking, armpit-squelching

performance of a local peasant during the family summers out in the country.[55] And it was the extraordinary rhythmic effects of his works, alongside the use of sequences cacophonous to the conventional ear, or frankly trashy in a melodic sense, that most of all provoked their shock effects.

So far as Mayakovsky was concerned, the process of primal importance to writing poetry was also aural. As he wrote in *How to Make Verses*: "At the moment (to mention only what comes to mind right away), what's drilling at my brain is an ace surname – Glycerov – that popped into my head during an interrupted chat about glycerine." Mayakovsky went on to list various offbeat rhymes: "(against a sky that's going) creamy / (rises the stern) Kremlin."[56] But just as important were the visual properties of words, as expressed in the surge of adventurous typographical layouts and illustrative materials, and in the eagerness of some writers to anticipate the orthographical reforms of the post-revolutionary period, while others refused to accept them.[57] Equally, while some poets nurtured literary echoes (providing material for generations of academic scholarly analysis), Mayakovsky strove for originality of expression above all.[58]

Rather than irrationality (the force championed by, say, Dostoevsky), it was extrarationality or "transrationality" (as expressed in the famous coinage *zaum'*, or "beyonsense") that was at stake. Naturally, this was an aggressive challenge to accepted values within the culture, and particularly the intelligentsia's traditional commitment to civilizing and educating the masses. Modernist artists insisted upon their right to communicate on a level well beyond the three Rs. Mayakovsky's polemical piece, "Who LEF is Biting," derided the "foundational slogan of comprehensibility to all."[59] Stravinsky also championed the art of difficulty: "Over-saturated with sounds, blasé even before combinations of the utmost variety, listeners fall into a kind of torpor which deprives them of all power of discrimination."[60] The point was to awaken audiences from this torpor. Crowd-pleasing was wrong. Not every artist was unworldly in the manner of Velimir (Vladimir) Khlebnikov (1885–1922), who carried his unpublished manuscripts in a bag and generally behaved as "one not of this world." Stravinsky's hard-nosed financial demands were to become legendary, and Mayakovsky, following a favorite saying of Lenin's, "When you live with the wolves you must howl with the wolves," displayed a meticulous command of print-runs, book sales, and royalties. But a principled stand against market values was essential to credibility.

An essential weapon in the struggle against mercantile values was irony. Mayakovsky's use of satire to poke fun at political enemies did not preclude

29.2 Visual properties of words: front cover of *Novyi Lef* (*New Left*) no. 2, 1927, edited by Mayakovsky.

a more open, playful use of laughter, for instance in a wartime poem that bestowed a "minesweeperess" (*minonositsa*) on the steely *minonosets*.[61] The use of wordplay here expressed sheer pleasure in verbal invention. On the other hand, comedy might also spill over into tragi-farce. The famous, public case of this is *The Bed-Bug*, where Prisypkin, the absurd (and in Meyerhold's staging, obese and pimpled) worker rounds, in the utopian future, on the condescending scientists who see him as a ridiculous survival. But another case of a portrait both risible and tragic is

"The Parisienne," which portrays an absurd and degrading encounter between the poet and a Parisian skivvy in a pissoir:

> While you
>   In the mirror
>   are admiring your pimple,
> she
>   forcing her tatty mouth
>   into a smile
> dusts you with powder
>   sprinkles you with perfume
> hands you some pipifax
>   and wipes up that puddle.[62]

The incongruity here is humorous (and mainly directed at the object of the spraying). But the attention then turns to the woman herself:

> either I've heard lies
>   about Parisiennes
> or you, lady,
>   ain't one of them gals,
> You look consumptive
>   and shagged out:
> Woolen stockings. . .
>   So why not silk?[63]

The poem concludes with a lame contrast between the way women can afford to live in Paris if they "sell themselves," but not, on the other hand, if they don't. Yet the disgust the woman inspires suggests an alternative interpretation, in which the lavatory attendant might be a prostituted muse of the kind beloved by Baudelaire or Blok. Certainly, the extremity of revulsion at the woman's "tatty mouth" would then be easier to understand.

With its deliberate vulgarity of theme as well as expression, Mayakovsky's "The Parisienne" points to another important development of the Russian modernist era. For earlier generations of Russian poets, there had been an inseparable link between literary production and the norms of polite culture. Pushkin might make fun of genteel prohibitions in *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, where the heroine was snatched from her marriage bed at the moment of consummation (a motif that offended prudish readers at the time). But his sexually explicit *The Gabrieliad* (in which the Virgin Mary bestows her favors on God and the devil as well as the eponymous angel) was definitely not meant for publication. In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, the heroine's first physical

relations with Vronsky were modestly veiled in dots (and followed by self-revulsion in both partners). The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, on the other hand, saw a radical shift in attitudes to sexuality. One landmark was the publication of Tolstoy's *The Kreutzer Sonata*, whose denunciation of carnal love provoked other writers and artists to champion a more positive attitude.[64] Another was the 1905 change in the censorship laws, which meant that material which would formerly have been considered "obscene" began to be published openly. The new way of representing corporeality was of primary relevance to Mayakovsky's *Cloud in Trousers*, where the hero begs for the "communion" of his beloved's body, and to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Even Kandinsky, for all his preoccupation with the spiritual world, sometimes painted nudes, and of a kind not motivated by the mythological associations that had traditionally excused nakedness in Russian realist art.

At the same time, none of the three artists produced work with the shock value (scenes of gang rape and sadism) characterizing some materials created by Soviet artists and writers in the first post-revolutionary decade, a time that has been summed up by one cultural historian, Eric Naiman, in the phrase "sex in public."[65] And in terms of their personal relations, too, they appear to have preferred (at least publicly) serial monogamy. Certainly, that was the pattern followed by Stravinsky, whose liaison with Vera de Bosset (Sudeikina) became a long-lasting marriage after the death of Stravinsky's first wife, Ekaterina. In Kandinsky's case, a fraught alliance with the painter Gabriele Münter precipitated the collapse of his marriage, but itself came to an end in 1916. (Kandinsky's second wife, Nina Andreevskaya, who was the best part of thirty years younger, remained his companion until his death.) The least conventional in this respect was Mayakovsky, whose sexual identity seems to have been highly ambivalent; the dread of finite relationships lashed him to frenzy.[66] While his relationship with Lili Brik was at the center of some of his greatest poems, *About That* was definitive both in focusing on separation, and in the excision of the word "love," replaced by the indefinite "that."

It was not just the abstraction of sounds and colors, but the specificity of "life creation" (*zhiznetvorchestvo*), or self-conscious representation of personal experience, that drove Russian modernism. The individual voice and the individual eye were crucial. Art was studiedly intellectual and yet fully embodied; the popularity of collaboration acted to spur self-assertion; texts marked their distance from reality but discovered new links with the material of which they were made. Stravinsky, Mayakovsky, and Kandinsky, while remaining inalienably and capriciously distinctive, at the same time expressed, in that very distinctiveness, the peculiarities of their age.

CATRIONA KELLY

Notes

1 See, e.g., Alexander Zholkovsky, "The Obverse of Stalinism: Akhmatova's Self-Serving Charisma of Selfishness," in Laura Engelstein and Stephanie Sandler (eds.), *Self and Story in Russian History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 46–68.

2 L.N. Tolstoi, Epilogue to *War and Peace*, chap. 2.

3 See, e.g., Osip Brik, "Za novatorstvo!", *Novyi Lef* (*New Left*), 1 (1927).

4 Anna Akhmatova, "Solitude" (Uedinenie), 1914.

5 See esp. Mark D. Steinberg, *Proletarian Imagination: Self, Modernity, and the Sacred in Russia, 1910–1925* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

6 On the early nineteenth century, see, e.g., Richard Stites, *Serfdom, Society and the Arts in Imperial Russia: The Pleasure and the Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); on the later period, see, e.g., Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, *Valentin Serov: Portraits of Russia's Silver Age* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001).

7 See, e.g., Michael Gorham, *Speaking in Soviet Tongues: Language Culture and the Politics of Voice in Revolutionary Russia* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003).

8 Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

9 See, e.g., Evgeny Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Writer: Social and Aesthetic Origins of Soviet Literary Culture* (Stanford University Press, 2001); on the general social background, see, e.g., Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).

10 *Passage through Armageddon* is the title of a well-known history by W. Bruce Lincoln (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986). For the "perpetrators versus martyrs" approach, see, e.g., Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers* (London: Allen Lane, 2007).

11 On revivalism, see, e.g., John E. Bowlt, *Russian Art of the Silver Age and the World of Art Group* (Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1979), and *Moscow and Petersburg in Russia's Silver Age: 1900–1920* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008); Boris Gasparov and Irina Paperno, *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism: From the Golden Age to the Silver Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

12 See, e.g., *Victory Over the Sun*, ed. Rosamund Bartlett and Sasha Dadswell (University of Exeter Press, 2012); Andrew Wachtel (ed.), *Petrushka: Sources and Contexts* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998).

13 Robert Craft and Igor Stravinsky, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (1959; London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 87–89.

14 Cf. his refusal to sign a telegram welcoming Shostakovich to the USA: "all my ethic and esthetic convictions oppose such gesture [*sic*]." *Selected*

Correspondence, ed. and trans. Robert Craft, 3 vols. (London: Faber and Faber, 1982–85), vol. I, 358. On Kandinsky's post-revolutionary work in Moscow, see, e.g., Valery Turchin, *Kandinskii v Rossii* (Moscow: Obshchestvo druzei Vasiliia Kandinskogo, 2005).

15 See Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

16 See, e.g., Oswald Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, 2 vols. (Munich: Beck, 1922–23).

17 See Darya Protopopova, "Virginia Woolf and the Russians: Readings of Russian Literature in British Modernism," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oxford (2009).

18 See Richard Taruskin's *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, 2 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1996) for a detailed account of these points.

19 Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky and Old Russia: The Artist as Ethnographer and Shaman* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); for the opposite point of view, see Igor' Aronov, *Kandinskii: Istoki, 1866–1907* (Jerusalem: Mosty kul'tury, 2010).

20 V.V. Kandinsky, "Iz materialov po etnografii sysol'skikh i vychegodskikh zyrian," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie*, 3 (1889), 102–10. For a comparable approach, see, e.g., D.K. Zelenin, *Ocherki russkoi mifologii* (Petrograd, 1916).

21 V. Mayakovsky, *150.000, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 13 tomakh* (henceforth *PSS*), 13 vols. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya literatura, 1955–61), vol. II, 119.

22 Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Tradition*, vol. II, 1607.

23 On Kandinsky, see, e.g., Armin Zweite (ed.), *Kandinsky und München: Begegnungen und Wandlungen, 1896–1914* (Munich: Prestel, 1982), catalogue of an exhibition at the Städtische Galerie im Lembachhaus, Munich, August 18 to October 17, 1982. On Schoenberg and Kandinsky, see Esther da Costa Meyer and Fred Wasserman (eds.), *Schoenberg, Kandinsky, and the Blue Rider* (London and New York: Scala, 2003). For Stravinsky's relations with Western artists and composers, see, e.g., his *Chroniques de ma vie*, 2 vols. (Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1935), the editions of his letters edited by Robert Craft, and the two-volume life by Stephen Walsh, *Igor Stravinsky*, vol. I: *A Creative Spring: Russia and France, 1882–1934*, vol. II: *The Second Exile: France and America, 1934–1971* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000–06).

24 There is an outline of these contacts in Vladimir Markov, *Russian Futurism: A History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

25 V. Mayakovsky, letter to S. Diaghilev, February 15, 1922, in Igor Stravinsky, *Perepiska s russkimi korrespondentami. Materialy k biografii*, 3 vols. (Moscow: Kompozitor, 1998–2003), vol. II, 533–34. The Western interests of Mayakovsky have still not been extensively explored. L.F. Katsis's *Vladimir Mayakovsky: Poet v intellektual'nom kontekste epokhi* (Moscow: Yazyki russkoi kul'tury, 2000) deals only with figures long ensconced in the Russian canon, such as Heine, Chopin, and Byron. For a brief discussion of one important relationship, see

Clare Cavanagh, "Whitman, Mayakovsky, and the Body Politic," in Stephanie Sandler (ed.), *Rereading Russian Poetry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 202–22.

26 Take the case of "The Parisienne," discussed below.

27 "Vystuplenie v Dome Komsomola Krasnoi Presni . . . 25 marta 1930 g.," *PSS*, vol. xii, 432.

28 Compare Mayakovsky's "V.V. Khlebnikov" (1922) and "Sobiraite istoriyu" (1922), *PSS*, vol. xii, 29, 36–37.

29 While the complex causes of Mayakovsky's suicide included psychosexual issues – see S.E. Strizhneva (ed.), *"V tom, chto umiraiu, ne vinite nikogo"–: sledstvennoe delo V.V. Maiakovskogo: dokumenty, vospominaniia sovremennikov* (Moscow: Ellis Lak, 2005) – a fear of the increasing regimentation of the arts was surely crucial.

30 As argued in *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (1911): see Wassily Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 180–82.

31 Mayakovsky, *Kak delat' stikhi*, *PSS*, vol. xii, 84.

32 Mayakovsky, "Vystuplenie v dome Komsomola Krasnoi Presni," *PSS*, vol. xii, 427.

33 See, e.g., Stephen Walsh, *A Creative Spring*, 208, 210. I owe the information about *The Rite of Spring* as Muzak to James Womack.

34 Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov to N.N. Rimskaya-Korsakova, June 2, 1913, in Stravinsky, *Perepiska*, vol. ii, 89.

35 Mayakovsky, "Ulichnoe," *Sadok sudei*, ii (1913), *PSS*, vol. i, 37.

36 See Tim Harte, *Fast Forward: The Aesthetics and Ideology of Speed in Russian Avant-Garde Culture, 1910–1930* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

37 Musée National d'Art Moderne.

38 "Painting with White Border" (Guggenheim Museum, New York) was the subject of a special exhibition in 2011, making it one of the best documented of Kandinsky's paintings. See the useful catalogue, edited by Elsa Smithgall, *Kandinsky and the Harmony of Silence* (Washington, DC: Phillips Collection, 2011). On Kandinsky as abstract painter, see also Helmut Friedel (ed.), *Kandinsky: Absolute Abstract* (Munich: Prestel, 2009).

39 See the letter to Ferdinand Möller, January 13, 1932, quoted in Vivian Endicott Barnett, "'This Universe of Pure Forms': The Discovery of Kandinsky's Drawings, 1931–1933," in Barnett, *Kandinsky's Drawings: Catalogue Raisonné*, 2 vols. (London: Philip Wilson, 2006), vol. i, ii.

40 The poet Vladislav Khodasevich saw Mayakovsky's career as an assault against civilized values that was closer to the pogrom than to revolution: see "The Decolleté Horse" ("Dekol'tirovannaya loshchad'"), 1927, rewritten with bile added as "O Mayakovskom," *Vozrozhdenie*, April 24, 1930, http://dugward.ru/library/mayakovskiy/hodasevich_o_mayakovskom.html, (accessed June 14, 2013).

41 Roman Jakobson, "O pokolenii, rastrativshem svoikh poetov," in R. Jakobson and D.S. Mirsky (eds.), *Smert' Vladimir Maiakovskogo* (Berlin, 1931), http://avantgarde.narod.ru/beitraege/ff/rja_o_pokolenii.htm. See also the English translation, "On a Generation that Squandered its Poets," trans. E.J. Brown, in V. Terras (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Russian Literary Criticism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975).

42 Mayakovsky, "Domoi!" *PSS*, vol. VII, 92. Jakobson directly quotes this poem, which he describes as "wonderful," in his essay "O pokolenii."

43 Mayakovsky, "Vo ves' golos," *PSS*, vol. X, 279; "Vystuplenie v dome Komsomola," 437.

44 Weiss, *Kandinsky and Old Russia*, 108.

45 Dmitri Konstantinovich Zelenin, *Novye veianiia v narodnoi poezii* (New Tendencies in Folk Poetry) (Moscow: Tipografiya I.N. Kushnerov, 1901), summarizes attacks on the *chastushka* (a four-line, often humorous, ditty sung to the barrel-organ).

46 Wassily Kandinsky, *Rückblick* (Baden-Baden: W. Klein, 1955), 21.

47 Mayakovsky, "Vystuplenie v dome Komsomola," 431.

48 See, e.g., Johannes Langner, "'Gegensätze und Widersprüche - das ist unsere Harmonie': Zu Kandinskys expressionistischer Abastraktion," in Zweite (ed.), *Kandinsky und München*, 107–32.

49 See esp. Sergei Eisenstein, *The Film Sense*, trans. Jay Leyda (London: Faber and Faber, 1986).

50 Jakobson's essay, "Two Types of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbance" (1956), repr. Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 69–96, argued that metaphor was "the line of least resistance" in poetry, and metonym in prose; but given the dominance of a highly sacralized manifestation of metaphor in Symbolism, it was natural that Russian post-Symbolist poets and artists should assert the "prosaic" technique of contiguity.

51 Dziga Vertov, *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929); see also his theoretical writings, excerpted in Ian Christie and Richard Taylor (eds.), *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents* (London: Routledge, 1994).

52 On processes of manufacture, see especially Christina Kiaer, *Imagine No Possessions: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

53 Letter to Ernest Ansermet, April 4, 1935, *Selected Correspondence*, vol. I, 224. By a remarkable historical irony, Stravinsky parallels Soviet critics here, including, of course, the infamous editorial in *Pravda*; but, as Mikhail Epstein, among others, has emphasized, socialist realism was also a modernist phenomenon.

54 Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (1959; London: Faber and Faber, 1981), 83.

55 Stravinsky, *Chroniques*, vol. 1, 10.

56 Mayakovsky, *Kak delat' stikhi*, *PSS*, vol. x, 89. Other examples included the untranslatable "Ufa/glukha" (the Urals town of Ufa and deaf): cf. "Rhum/dumb."

57 On the importance of fonts, see Gerard Janecek, *The Look of Russian Literature: Avant-Garde Visual Experiments, 1900–1930* (Princeton University Press, 1984). It was common practice among members of futurist groups to omit the hard sign (ъ), also omitted in telegrams; on the other hand, Marina Tsvetaeva was one of numerous émigré writers to continue using the pre-revolutionary orthography after the spelling reforms of 1917–18 (originally proposed in 1904).

58 In the category of "nurturing echoes" was, for example, Mandelstam's poetry, which has therefore especially appealed to intertext-hunters: see, e.g., the many studies of Kirill Taranovsky and Omry Ronen. For Mayakovsky's striving to turn the new language, the "clumsy argot of millions" and the "slang of the city outskirts," into poetry, see *Kak delat' stikhi*. This does not of course mean that Mayakovsky did not echo his predecessors and contemporaries, but such echoes are not embedded in his poetics in the way they are in Mandelstam's or Akhmatova's.

59 V. Mayakovsky, "Vo chto vgyzaetsia LEF," *LEF*, 1 (1923). Cited here from *PSS*, vol. 1, 45–46.

60 Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1936), chap. 10 (p. 51 in the Original Classic Edition reprint, Milton Keynes: Tebbo, 2012).

61 Mayakovsky's own wonderful reading of this poem has been preserved on the CD, *Golosa, zvuchavshie vnov'*.

62 Mayakovsky, "Parizhanka," *PSS*, vol. x, 64. "Pipifax" is a jocular term for lavatory paper that any educated Russian would have recognized as derived from the French nursery term "faire pipi."

63 Ibid., 64–65.

64 See Peter Ulf Møller, *Postlude to the Kreutzer Sonata: Tolstoj and the Debate on Sexual Morality in Russian Literature in the 1890s* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988); Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); Jane Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles (eds.), *Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture* (Stanford University Press, 1993); John Bowlt and Olga Matich (eds.), *Laboratory of Dreams: The Avant-Garde and Russian Social Experiment* (Stanford University Press, 1996).

65 Eric Naiman, *Sex in Public: The Incarnation of Early Soviet Ideology* (Princeton University Press, 1997).

66 For an interesting study of Mayakovsky's fluctuating gender identities, see Connor Doak, "Poetry in the Matador's Cape: Masculinity in the work of Vladimir Mayakovsky," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University (2013).

French Modernism: Gide, Proust, and Larbaud

JEAN-MICHEL RABATÉ

"Modernism" happens to be a loaded word when understood in a French context. Having the task of describing French literary modernism in a comprehensive collection of essays devoted to international modernism, Kimberley Healey began by asserting that French modernism did not exist.[1] This caveat was less paradoxical than it sounds, since one can entertain doubts about the universality of "modernism." Indeed, we know that the concept of modernism was invented for an Anglo-Saxon corpus, that its critical promotion dated from the 1950s in the United States, and that it was then retroactively applied to works from the 1920s. Most critics will agree that such a periodization is not fully valid either for the French cultural scene or for its Spanish counterpart. True, the concept has now been adopted by most French literary critics, but this was only recently and reluctantly. If an influential review in English-speaking countries is called *Modernism/Modernity*, its French equivalent is simply *Modernités*. The term that has been relevant since Baudelaire is that of "modernity," as *modernité* encompasses the French tradition of the new that takes Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Lautréamont, and Jarry as its beacons.

Nevertheless, I would want to argue that there is room for a specific French modernism. In *Ghosts of Modernity* and in *1913: The Cradle of Modernism*, I have tried to show that a modernist school in France had begun earlier, that it started with Paul Verlaine, who used the term in 1871 as the melodious double of Rimbaud;[2] French modernism found a new lyrical and ironical voice with the poems of Jules Laforgue, and then continued with Guillaume Apollinaire as a softer version of Alfred Jarry's proto-futurism; finally, it flowered with Valery Larbaud, a cosmopolitan author who had discovered countless contemporaries and lost precursors, and who discerned in Joyce's *Ulysses* the perfect realization of his own literary program. Hence, one can argue that French modernism has existed historically, at least insofar as several writers have exemplified the main characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon

regrouping. French modernism was exemplified both by authors who wrote in the wake of Symbolism, like Edouard Dujardin, Jules Laforgue, the younger André Gide, and Guillaume Apollinaire, and also by authors coming from different horizons like Jules Romains, Valery Larbaud, and the younger Marcel Proust.[3] In order to blend a historical perspective and a theoretical angle, I will frame French modernism between two critical discussions that condensed less Parisian disagreements than moments of blindness or incomprehension; the first will oppose Marcel Proust and Stéphane Mallarmé, the second will oppose Marcel Proust and André Gide.

In 1896, Proust published "Against Obscurity"[4] in the Symbolist *Revue blanche*, which contained a witty and scathing attack on the style of Symbolism itself. Investing the literary organ of the movement, Proust took to task the devotees of the new school for their habit of writing incomprehensibly. He dismissed the idea that obscurity was generated when a new mode of expression was invented. Hugo and Racine had been accused of being obscure in their times, which, he argued, had little to do with the kind of stylistic obfuscation and circumlocution that he found everywhere in Symbolist texts. Symbolist obscurity did not stem from the depth of thought, as with Heraclitus or Hegel: a poet who stuffs his works with philosophical reflections errs since he or she has chosen the wrong genre. This generic reminder was not really heeded by Proust two decades later when he composed his magnum opus as a medieval "Summa" doubled with a "philosophical novel." Debunking the wish of Symbolist poets to reach the Absolute in verse, Proust opposed to their convoluted prose or verse the unaffected simplicity of a prose writer like Anatole France.[5] France's elegant prose and linear plots kept alive a sense of fiction that Symbolist poets had forgotten: universal truths must first be embodied in the particularities of characters or situations.

Stung by a criticism that he took as an "aggression," Mallarmé replied that his contemporaries did not know how to read.[6] "Obscurity" was an insult, and made it too easy for readers who were told that they "didn't have to understand."[7] This debate marks the turn of the century, and it cannot be reduced to an opposition between poetry and the novel or to a clash between experimental writing and realistic fiction. It betrays more than a generational divide, as Proust was attacking less Mallarmé, whom he respected, than his younger epigones. The debate impacted prose fiction written in French in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century and remains crucial for our understanding of international modernism. Proust's question was how one could continue writing readable

novels after the radical breaks in language and the experiments with syntax and imagery one finds in poets like Rimbaud, Lautréamont, and Mallarmé.

There were several positive answers to this quandary, coming from disciples of Mallarmé: Édouard Dujardin, and André Gide. I have discussed elsewhere Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés*, a slender musical novel published in 1887, a novel whose author saw it as a musical experiment and a poetic stylistic exercise. George Moore, who had a keen eye for formal novelty, praised it as it was serialized in 1887.[8] Moore pointed it out to James Joyce, who bought it in 1903 during his first stay in France. This allowed Joyce to develop his own concept of the interior monologue. Dujardin was not the first to toy with the deep psychology involved in a character's inner thoughts and associations: Tolstoy and Dostoevsky engaged with the genre in a few prose texts, while Robert Browning used it as a poetic device in his dramatic monologues. However, Joyce was the first to use "stream-of-consciousness technique" to frame the narration of a whole story; in reading his novel, we never get out of the mind of its hero. He duly acknowledged his debt to Dujardin, perhaps to hide more important debts, yet Dujardin revealed both that this type of writing was possible and above all that one could refine it.[9] When *Ulysses*'s publication was prepared in 1921, Valery Larbaud was alerted by Joyce and his friends to the importance of Dujardin's Symbolist novel; Dujardin's works were displayed by Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier in their bookstores in rue de l'Odéon. The loop between Symbolism and high modernism was closed when Larbaud used the same technique in his most experimental text, the novella "Amants, heureux amants," begun in 1920 and published in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* in September 1921. It was dedicated "To James Joyce, my friend, and the only begetter of the form I have adopted in this piece of writing."[10]

Larbaud frequently alluded to Dujardin,[11] for whom he wrote an excellent preface when a revised edition of *The Bays are Sere* was published in 1925. He noted in it that the discovery of interior monologue was not fortuitous, and that, since "form and substance cannot be dissociated," "Dujardin wanted to express something that had not been expressed before him – this is what led him to the discovery, to the creation of this form."[12] We find one of the mottos of modernism, the belief in an indissoluble unity of form and content, which moreover aims at a vivid adequation of art and life as it is experienced in modern cities like Paris. It was already in those terms that Mallarmé had praised the novelty of Dujardin's specific "discovery" in a letter of 1888: "You have set down a rapid and dancing mode of notation whose sole aim . . . is to express, without misapplication of the sublime means involved, an everyday

life that is so crucial to grasp."[13] Mentioning "le quotidien si précieux à saisir," Mallarmé himself sketches the program for French modernism from the 1890s to 1922. The point was less to approximate psychological realism (as the Russian novelists wanted to capture it in all its nuances and contradictions) than to portray the huge web of anonymous lives crossing each other in big cities. This would be achieved by a polyphony of voices issuing from a variety of points of view. Readers would get immersed in a character's thoughts, so as to interpret what they hide and reveal. The bustle of the streets, the comments overheard from passersby, the musical refrains that stick in one's head for no reason, memories of friends' desultory comments, all enter the mind of Dujardin's hero and of Larbaud's frenzied speaker in his Joycean novella of 1921. The former worries whether he should leave his coy mistress in *The Bays are Sere*, the latter feels excluded from the couple formed by two women with whom he has slept, and is contemplating a tryst with a third one. He ruminates on the lovely moments of the past as he contemplates the intertwined naked bodies of the two female lovers in "Amants, heureux amants." In spite of the homage to Joyce, Larbaud's story looks exactly like a continuation of Dujardin's novel from 1887–88. Dujardin had staged the comedy of a young man's "noble" feelings for an actress who was ready to become his kept mistress and would not mind having sex if he kept on paying her rent. Larbaud portrays the regrets of an undecided lover, abandoned for another woman by the bisexual Inga. In both experimental prose texts of less than a hundred pages, the one-sided perspective of the classical novel has been exploded and turned into a privileged medium for an exploration of a welter of contradictory affects, while underpinned by an immediate and sensual apprehension of modern life.

Later on, after having been "revived" by Joyce and rediscovered by Larbaud, Dujardin realized that his invention had remained a poetic device. Here is how he defined interior monologue in 1931: "Interior monologue is, like poetry, unheard, unspoken speech, through which a character expresses his most intimate thoughts, closest to the unconscious, prior to all logical organization, that is to say as it comes into being, by means of sentences in direct speech reduced to their syntactic minimum, in order to give the impression of raw experience [*le tout venant*]."[14] French modernism crossed genre boundaries and transformed the psychological novel of the last decades of the nineteenth century (say, by Paul Bourget) into a polyphony of voices even when they inhabit one single consciousness. At this game, Proust, the author of perfect pastiches of the most diverse authors, was obviously the indisputable master.

The second moment of incomprehension I want to highlight in order to mark another rupture in French modernism was when André Gide and his friends at the *Nouvelle Revue Française* rejected for publication Marcel Proust's first version of *In Search of Lost Time*. The readers shared their incomprehension in the last month of 1912, and then sent a rejection letter. Proust published *Swann* with Grasset. Gide, who knew Proust personally, tended to treat him as a snob, a society man (*un mondain*), too eager to publish articles in the right-wing newspaper *Le Figaro*. Other readers wondered why one should be interested in the meditations of a young man who goes to sleep only to turn up in bed for thirty pages. After the publication of the first volume, Gide recognized his mistake and wrote a sincere letter of excuse to Proust; in this famous letter from January 11, 1914, Gide took all the blame, explaining that he was "responsible" for the "worst mistake ever made by the *Nouvelle Revue Française*."[15] He offered to publish the rest of the work with Gallimard, which finally happened in 1919.

Gide had misread Proust, and admitted that he had only dipped into an intractable manuscript. Behind his preference for simpler narrative methods, his misstep can be explained by a different reproach. This time, it was voiced explicitly later, when Proust had almost finished publishing his enormous novel, and was in fact dying. Gide, whose homosexuality was not a secret from his friends, opposed Proust's decision to hide his sexuality in *La recherche*. He disapproved of the transposition of his fascination for young men into the evocation of "young girls in bloom,"[16] which he saw as a hypocritical transmogrification. Here, we have moved from the modernist belief in the alliance of form and content to a more "classical" wish to let literature tell all the truth. Gide's objection is more ethical than formalist this time; the writer should aim at a truth that can be jarring but has to be expressed. This ethical split (Proust did not see the point and felt free to compose his plot at will) was the deeper root of the divergence between Gide and Proust.

Why could Gide not understand the rationale of Proust's new style in 1912–13? His blindness stems in part from the complexity of Proust's project, a project that ended up absorbing many other abortive schemes – a book on the literary criticism of Sainte-Beuve, an autobiographical essay on sleep, desire, and masturbation, many literary pastiches, an evocation of his mother and grandmother, a whole system of aesthetics, with detailed reflections on the music of Wagner and the painting of Chardin, and a whole essay on "inversion," in fact a defense and justification of homosexuality – into a monumental work capable of tying up all those strands. *La recherche* was born

at the crossroads of all those interests; it appears at once as a unanimist novel going back to Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, as a *Künstlerroman* documenting the birth of a literary vocation in a post-romantic tradition, as a philosophical novel about time, truth, and subjective cognition, and as a compendium of everything Proust had thought and written about in art, sexuality, politics, love, and life. It was the famous overture of *La recherche*, the stylistic tour-de-force that owes a lot to Symbolist predecessors, which Gide did not accept.

With Proust's extraordinary opening, we are plunged *in medias res mentales*, but here the *medias* are not just the whirling images and associations evoked by the narrator who goes to bed early enough soon to wake up, not knowing where he is, hence, who he is. Proust's *medias res* usher in the layered space of writing, a mental space in which all subjects are spinning: "A sleeping man holds in a circle around him the sequence of the hours, the order of the years and worlds."[17] These spinning wheels of time and space forcibly include the reader, and the narrator even becomes the subject matter of the books he was reading before falling asleep: "it seemed to me that I myself was what the book was talking about."[18] We identify with an unstable narrator who keeps dissolving and metamorphosing along with his landmarks. The confusion of self and book will become the main theme of the novel that we are reading and that, we must imagine, the narrator will have to begin writing at the end.

In Proust's masterpiece, architecture (the book is compared with a cathedral), music (Vinteuil's septet plays a structural role in Swann's love story), and art (a metonymic displacement in the reference to Vermeer's yellow wall allows for the resuscitation of the writer Bergotte, dead but metamorphosed into his own books), all converge in the first *Gesamtkunstwerk* of French modernism. The complex genealogy of Proust's novel has often been narrated: a critical essay on Sainte-Beuve turns into a compendium that includes everything he was reading, experiencing (during the changes brought to French society by the Dreyfus affair and then the First World War), or thinking. Truly, *In Search of Lost Time* can be seen as the novelistic equivalent of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as in both works we follow the trajectory of a consciousness that progresses in knowledge from ignorance to certainty, from recognition of self to recognition of others, and finally to truth or "absolute knowledge," which comes when the narrator realizes that the only true life is one to be lived in a book. We will have passed through the various hells of love with its attendant jealousy, and the maddening spirals of social snobbism, until the complete redistribution of values brought about by modernity (at the end, the vulgarity of the Verdurins is marked by social

triumph, and the Guermantes slowly vanish into their own past) points out why these circles are the signs of a delusion, if not a total waste of time. Proust regularly insisted that his ambition was to complete a "dogmatic" and "constructed" work, a treatise that could have been subtitled "In quest of truth," as in a letter to Jacques Rivière from February 6, 1914. Yet, the "absolute knowledge" about the abolition of time that he proffers at the end never completely contains proliferating narrative series such as the interminable "novel of Albertine" of the last sections along with the ever-renewed discussions of homosexuality in the *Sodom and Gomorrah* volumes. These sections are marked by narrative excess, a seemingly endless flow of words that could not be encompassed by the theoretical program – Heraclitus had won over Hegel – but here is precisely where Proust's radical modernity lies. Here, perhaps, French modernity harks back to Baudelaire's original concept and thus goes beyond modernism itself.

Walter Benjamin was the first to perceive the numerous links between Baudelaire and Proust when he focused on their joint allegorical qualities.[19] The logic of allegory, which undoes the work of symbolism as it detaches the representation of aspects from any integrating view, underpins Proust's epic of time: the multiplicity of desired bodies, glimpsed together as Young Girls in Bloom and seen sauntering along the beach, extends to the multiplicity of aspects displayed by the lying Albertine facing the narrator. "Throngs" of divergent selves face him, and his own identity is accordingly mobile and fluctuating as time passes. But these allegories have something to teach about suffering too. As Swann discovers, we become better when the person we love makes us suffer. If we truly suffer, we perceive that those who hurt us most are then related to divinities, to gods and goddesses who allow us to progress. Recurrent reference to the pantheon of Greek gods in *La recherche* gives a foundation to Proust's central concern, which is to preserve the unity of the work of art in the face of the radical multiplicity of sensations and affects, also ineluctably marked by ambivalence.

Thus the famous portrayal of Françoise, a fixture in the family at Combray, generates a meditation on the juxtaposition of goodness and sadism, of cruelty and compassion, which marks all the characters, including the narrator. In this portrayal, Françoise has an assistant, a younger kitchen maid who happens to be both sickly and pregnant, and whom Françoise tortures mercilessly, finally forcing her to leave. For one summer, the narrator's family is served asparagus prepared in all possible ways at all meals: Françoise knows that the kitchen maid is prone to asthma attacks when peeling them.[20] When the kitchen maid screams in pain after a difficult delivery,

Françoise fetches the book describing her ailment and does not come back to help the poor woman. She is discovered reading the book, full of general compassion for the girl's pain when written about in a medical treatise but not in real life.[21] After the maid has left the family, the narrator surprises Françoise in the kitchen; because she is deprived of her usual helper, she has to kill a recalcitrant chicken herself. To do so, she cries out several times "Vile Creature!" (*Sale bête!*) and kills it.[22] Shocked, the narrator slips away and wants to have her dismissed, until he thinks that without her, he would not get his delicious dinner, and pardons her.

Proust's sense of ethics did not correspond to Gide's wish to tell the whole truth by all means. Moreover, as Beckett noted, Proust never made any moral judgment. He deployed an ethics beyond morality without the help of Nietzsche. Proust meditated on affective ambivalence, on the proximity of ethical contraries, both connected by his allegories. The sickly kitchen maid is a Paduan Virtue because Swann, the aesthete, has noted her physical resemblance to Giotto's portrayal of Charity, depicted as a banal-looking woman in the Allegories of Virtues and Vices, visible in the Scrovegni Chapel of Padua's Arena. The narrator, who keeps a reproduction of the "Caritas" figure in his room (given to him by Swann), was first surprised by the way Giotto – a contemporary of Dante – presented his Virtues as earthy, stolid, mannish, almost vulgar women. He could not fathom why this "Charity without charity" or the allegory of Justice could be praised by Swann, a disciple of Ruskin in this matter. The latter allegory appeared as "a Justice whose grayish and meanly regular face was the very same which, in Combray, characterized certain pretty, pious, and unfeeling bourgeois ladies I saw at Mass, some of whom had long since been enrolled in the reserve militia of Injustice."[23] The narrator later understands how modern allegories are material fragments of a whole whose symbolic meaning can be grafted onto the material body. Thus the swollen belly of the kitchen maid evokes painful pregnancy and other visceral aspects of the body in which death is lurking.

Finally, the operation of involuntary memory supposes that in the end, all the particular places, names, or sensations will be knotted together by the book in a series of metaphors. Proust's Platonism finds its limits, however, as Martin Hägglund has argued convincingly in *Dying for Time*.[24] This may be due to the fact that Proust was the first French writer capable of understanding the paradigm of Freudian thought.[25] Like the Freudian unconscious, the writing of memory underpinned by involuntary memory shares features with the dream: the over-determination of all images is the rule; there is no principle of logical contradiction; time does not really exist for it since,

given a logic of reversibility, the present can impact the past. The point of the progressive discovery of Truth by the narrator is that the "artist" (as Joyce would say) learns to trust his unconscious; there is a reassurance that the work of art will be written in each of us. All readers can enjoy this process since it is generic. Here is the foundation of the universal truth revealed by Proust.

If Gide shared some of Proust's beliefs about the redeeming power of art, he did not understand the ethical universe deployed by Proust, and was lost in the convolutions of his idiosyncratic style. Proust was at the exact opposite of Gide's ideal of clear diction, neat ethical choices, and constructions made reflexive (above all in *The Counterfeiters*) so as to avoid metaphors. In order to understand this divergence better, we need to go back to Gide's beginnings.

Gide was first a disciple of Mallarmé, who embodied his ideal of poetic integrity. This admiration did not prevent Gide from writing a hilarious satire of the Symbolist Parisian milieu in *Paludes* (1895). This novel rejected his Symbolist past; at the time, Gide was composing his pagan catechism *The Fruits of the Earth* (1897). *Paludes*, the most "postmodern" of Gide's novels, could be signed by Donald Barthelme. It opens with an ironical preface that leaves readers free to make sense of this open text:

> Before explaining my book to others, I wait for others to explain it to me.
> To want to explain first of all means immediately restricting the meaning;
> for if we know what we have meant, we do not know that we meant only
> that. – One always says more than THAT. – And above all, what interests
> me is what I have put there without knowing it, – that part of unconscious
> that I would like to call God's part.[26]

This reflexive parody of a parody, technically a *"sotie"* (the term used by Gide to suggest "a satirical farce"), provides a caricature of French aesthetes at the turn of the century. Half a century later, for Nathalie Sarraute and for Roland Barthes, *Paludes* was felt to be the most productive and prophetic book in Gide's abundant corpus. Parody was not all: the lever that helped André Gide put a distance between the Parisian aesthetes and his own vitalism was a combined influence, the discovery of Nietzsche's philosophy and the reading of Dostoevsky's novels.

It was the same Nietzscheanism that led the young André Gide to launch the notion of "immoralism." Gide linked the influences of Oscar Wilde and of Nietzsche; Wilde had introduced him to Nietzsche among other decadent things. Together, Wilde and Nietzsche denounced the repressive structure of Christian morality. Yet for Gide, the impact of Nietzsche was deferred, which

explains why the same character, Menalchas, is a pre-Nietzschean in *The Fruits of the Earth* and a post-Nietzschean in *The Immoralist* of 1902. What Gide found in Nietzsche was a program of liberation that allowed him to understand how his own Protestantism, akin to Nietzsche's family background based on Protestant values, brought about its own negation, an undoing that might unleash a new and excessive freedom. There was a shift from post-Symbolist experimental writing to an ethical modernism in which daring experimentation with values dominated. Gide really became an "immoralist" twenty years later, after he had written the autobiography *If it die. . .* The hero of *The Immoralist*, Michel, discovers sensual health, whereas his religious and repressed wife dies; this forces him to "confess" to his friends a half-hearted Nietzscheanism. Michel hasn't yet shaken off the specters of religion and morality, and the Preface highlights a "neutrality" close to "indecision."[27]

The decision to write in a new mode, characterized by the simplicity of a neoclassical style with autobiographical content, was brought about by a personal tragedy – this time accomplished by Gide's wife. It was the crisis of 1918, when Madeleine Gide burned their entire correspondence after she saw her husband taking off for a trip to England with a young male friend, Marc Allégret, his lover. When he understood what she had done, Gide was inconsolable; he cried for a week, and felt as if he had lost a child. However painful it was, this experience led him to a more "modern" way of writing, not exactly in the two novels that are often adduced, *The Vatican Cellars* (1914) and *The Counterfeiters* (1925), but more obviously in the autobiography published in 1924 under the biblical title of *If it die. . .* (*Si le grain ne meurt*). This book alone suffices to establish Gide's credentials as a modernist writer. The memoir has two parts that are quite different. The first part resembles a traditional *Künstlerroman* before leading to a meditative pause. Gide reflects on the impossibility of saying the whole truth: "My intention has always been to say everything," he writes, but then adds: "I am a being of dialogue; everything in me fights and contradicts itself. Memoirs are never more than half sincere, however great one's wish to tell the truth: everything is half more complicated than one says. It may even be that one approaches truth best in a novel."[28] Such a narrative hinge was necessary before reaching the frank sexual confessions in the second part.

The second part centers around the slightly sinister figure of Oscar Wilde, whereas the first part was dominated by positive tutelary figures, Stéphane Mallarmé and de la Nux, a devoted piano teacher. In the second part, we meet the almost satanic figures of Wilde and Lord Douglas – yet it was to them that Gide owed the revelation of his sexuality. What had remained

hidden at the beginning comes to the fore violently, crudely, when bathed in a new light, the intense sunlight of Algeria, a colonial locale less repressive than metropolitan France. Little Arab boys knew what was expected of them. The sharp glare of Africa dispelled the shadows of a bourgeois and religious childhood. Like Nietzsche's blinding light of noon, the sun of a newly found health annihilates the ghosts of the religious past. Gide's true nature was revealed to him thanks to the young Mohammed, one of Lord Douglas's "mignons" lent to Gide by Wilde for a night of pleasure. Gide evokes an intense sexual joy that comes close to pure *jouissance*. The discovery of remorseless sexual ecstasy is a pleasure not tainted by any hint of love or guilt. The truth reached in a climax provides a foundation, an almost Cartesian *"gaudeo ergo sum."* It is on the strength of this one night master-minded by Wilde that Gide will assume fully his sexual orientation that he calls "pederasty." Thanks to this newly gained confidence, he can part ways with Proust, mentioned briefly, and Wilde, even though he is so present in those pages.

In telling the truth about his homosexuality overtly, Gide rejected the donning of a fake femininity; he did not believe in the myth of a "race of inverts" as Proust's *Sodom and Gomorrah* presented them; he wanted to be seen as a gay man who was both manly and healthy, feeling that he had been "reborn" after an illness (his bourgeois family, and the hangover of Protestant repression). The new frankness he discovers entails a direct mode of writing. His subjective "difference" experienced earlier as anxious episodes of *"Schau-dern"* (moments of utter panic about the death of loved ones) turns into normal features that mark a difference in each subject's sexuality. It is notable that *If it die...* ends with the death of Gide's beloved mother. What he experienced at the loss of a mother who was everything to him was tantamount to a liberation, or as he phrased it, "an abyss of love, despair, and freedom."[29] Here was the Nietzschean freedom for which the young man had been longing, and he finally found an adequate language to express it – a mixture of neoclassicism and styleless style.

Gide's true heir was Roland Barthes, who began his career as a critic by meditating on Gide's *Journal* in 1942. For Barthes, Gide would be relayed by Albert Camus, and then by the *Nouveau Roman*, all of which enabled him to define the notion of "writing degree zero." This is literature of nonliterature, a "blank" style that would reject the cumbersome architecture of metaphors elaborated by Proust in his superb but somewhat dated cathedral. Barthes can thus write in 1942: "Gide is ageless; he is always young, always mature; he is always sage, always fervent."[30] He can see in Gide a classicism that

reaches back to Montaigne's own meditative lyricism: "In Gide's *Journal* the reader will find his ethic – the genesis and the life of his books – his readings – the basis for a critique of his work – silences – exquisite instances of wit – trivial avowals which make him man par excellence, another Montaigne."[31]

This antithesis between Proust and Gide would have made sense for Valery Larbaud, who early on admired Gide while he never felt a great affinity for Proust. Larbaud wrote a first letter to Gide in 1905, in which he presented himself as a devoted reader and a translator of American literature. Larbaud, who was younger by twelve years, was twenty-four then. Seven years later, in 1912, Larbaud wrote a letter in English to Gide, in which he sums up the qualities that he liked in his elder, which were curiosity and invention: "What I like so much about all your books is that each of them is full of a new promise and, as it were, pregnant with another and better one."[32] It is interesting to read Larbaud's letters to Gide, if only to see the succession of places from which he sends them. There is an equal whirl of book titles (he would devour authors whom he discovered one after another, would buy these in exotic bookstores, and would often begin to translate them on the spot) and exotic locations in England, Spain, Italy, Germany, and so forth. At one point, in March 1919, Gide asks him why he is staying in Alicante. Larbaud answers that he had to go there to translate the fifth volume of Samuel Butler's collected works![33] The close friendships with famous poets and writers like Léon-Paul Fargue, Paul Claudel, and Alexis Leger, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, and Jacques Rivière (but he never met Marcel Proust) paled for a while when Larbaud chanced upon the work of James Joyce. He wrote, once more in English, in February 1921 to Sylvia Beach, who served as mediator in order to express his admiration for *Ulysses*: "I am raving mad over *Ulysses*. Since I read Whitman when I was 18 I have not been so enthusiastic about any book ... It is wonderful! As great as Rabelais; Mr. Bloom is an immortal like Falstaff: As grand."[34] Larbaud is France's quintessential modernist, not just because he was a gifted translator at ease in six or seven languages (his famous library kept intact in Vichy is a testament to the breadth of his culture – the many stacks are indeed classified by languages) but because he allied an untiring curiosity with an acute ear for literary novelty of the highest order.

It is true that next to Proust's and Gide's monuments, the works of Valery Larbaud look light, if not slight. The beauty and delicacy of his prose have been well rendered in English thanks to Catherine Wald.[35] This is the note for which Larbaud is best known, a bold exploration of the anxieties and infatuations of childhood. It has been argued that Larbaud, raised by an

oppressive mother, remained a child all his life: he would collect books, mistresses, miniature trains, and toy soldiers with the same aplomb all his life. For the French, Larbaud is mostly seen as a wonderful discoverer and introducer, a commentator and a translator (beyond translating expertly from six languages, he also wrote groundbreaking essays on the art of translation), more than an author in his own right.

A characteristic that he shared with Proust and Gide is that all three came from well-off families; like Proust, Larbaud slowly dilapidated his fortune. Like Proust, he made a virtue of his own immaturity. Larbaud's family had become rich thanks to the Saint-Yorre spring which yielded one of the best Vichy waters that were so popular in France between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of last century. However, richness was a condition tinged with difficulty from the beginning. Larbaud lost his father early and was of a sickly disposition. An avid reader, he was also extremely gifted for languages. He had the opportunity to travel widely at an early age. For his first literary endeavors, and for what remains as his most substantial work, he chose the mask of an English man, A.O. Barnabooth. Barnabooth was supposed to be both a millionaire and a poet; his first poems were written by Larbaud in 1902.

These poems imitated the style of Walt Whitman, discovered by Larbaud in 1899 when he was barely eighteen. He immediately started translating him and then invented this alter ego, halfway between translation and recreation. In 1908, Larbaud published anonymously a collection entitled *Poems by a Rich Amateur*. They were preceded by a biographical note, which, added to the poetic production, attributed to Barnabooth an ironical frame. The story depicted Barnabooth's infatuation with the daughter of a shirt-maker. In 1913, Larbaud rewrote his book and appeared as its author. Hence Larbaud's new edition of *A.O. Barnabooth, his Collected Works Consisting of his Tale, Poems and his Personal Diary*. The new text contained only half of the original poems, and the biographical note was replaced by a fictional journal, which had become a novel, some 220 pages written in the first person. At the end of the narrative, Barnabooth marries one of the waifs he had saved from prostitution in London, and returns with her to the place of his birth, Arequipa, a territory disputed by Chile, Bolivia, and Peru. Now a citizen of the world, he bids adieu to a Europe whose looming conflagration he imagines. Even though he is rarely associated with the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, Larbaud was nevertheless the first writer to create a poetic heteronym, that is an alter ego, with a biography and a set of works, all seemingly independent from the will of their creator.

The 1913 revisions of the poems and novel were extensive and felicitous. The original portrait veered uneasily between satire and phantasmatic projection. The fictional poet was both an idealized double and a negative alter ego. Barnabooth had features in common with Larbaud: both confessed to the pleasures provided by debased popular cultures of all nations, both loved novelty when discovering new horizons, both enjoyed the serendipity of local kitsch. Talking of literature, Barnabooth would say: "I only like second rate works."[36] However, his poems are full of allusions to Walt Whitman, obscure Spanish poets, and no less obscure French writers.

The roll-call of exotic names filling most of the poems would be tedious if it were not underpinned by an attention to the irrepressible needs of the body ("Stomach-rumbles! Stomach-rumbles! ... / Dull groans rise from stomach and tripe / Complaints of an always altered flesh / Voices, the irrepressible whisper of organs, / Voice, the only human voice that doesn't lie, / That persists even after physiological death ..."[37]). Traveling in luxury trains, yachts, or steamers throughout the world, he gives snapshots of Venice, the Lipari islands, Naples, the Cahors station, Abingdon, London, the Bosphorus, Odessa, Mers-el-Kébir, Scheveningen, Barcelona, Kharkov, Copenhagen, Rotterdam, Córdoba, Seville, Montenegro, Colombo, Nagasaki, Croatia, Stockholm, Berlin, San Francisco, Chicago. Yet in this tumbling whorl, Europe is the main object of love:

> I sing Europe, its railroads and theaters
> And its constellations of cities, and yet
> I bring in my verses the spoils of a new world ... [38]

He wishes to bring to Europe the raw colors of other continents, and his muse is a Creole woman. Larbaud tried to graft Whitman onto French culture but might not have had the poetic power needed for such a task.

The adoption of the persona of an idle millionaire was not without risks. Of course, one should not confuse Barnabooth and Larbaud, who, if he was rich indeed was not really a millionaire; besides, Barnabooth accuses a certain V.L. of making fun of him![39] In fact, Barnabooth is a fantasy: he embodies the dream of absolute freedom, and the diary's initial title was "Diary of a free man." His unlimited fortune allows him to pursue his wildest dreams; yet he fails each time, because he remains naïve and is often duped. During a stay in Florence, he falls in love with Florrie, a beautiful British woman.[40] Seized by the desire to marry a plebeian woman in order to make amends for his cumbersome fortune, he proposes to her. But his accountant reveals that she is a hired detective spying on him; she has been a prostitute portrayed in

pornographic photographs. Undaunted, he still wants to marry her; it is Florrie who rejects him: she prefers her freedom to a millionaire she finds boring. Finally, Barnabooth marries Conception, a young girl he has saved from the gutter; but, for his accountant, this is just another whim.[41] He flees the old world of Europe in which war is looming and returns to South America. At the end of the fictional journal, Barnabooth realizes that he is forgetting his French.[42] Thinking in Spanish will be a first step before getting rid of everything he has ever owned.

The end of the cosmopolitan dream marks Larbaud's renouncement of masks and heteronyms. The poetic epilogue enacts Larbaud's farewell to poetry; after this last poem, he only wrote prose (except for many translations, of course). Barnabooth's rejection of Europe does not preclude nostalgia for the England of his youth. This epilogue expresses fears and dark forebodings, as the terrible clash approaches. In this text as in history, only "death's bony hand"[43] could write the real epilogue. Three years earlier, Larbaud had silently converted to Catholicism and then married an Italian woman, all against his mother's wishes.

This farewell to all which marks the end of his best-known novel ominously announces the medical tragedy that befell him in 1935. A stroke paralyzed him for a while, and then Larbaud became aphasic. He was fifty-four, exactly Walt Whitman's age when the bard had his first stroke. The only words Larbaud would say for a year were: "Farewell, things of this world" ("Bonsoir les choses d'ici-bas"), an enigmatic utterance repeated in all circumstances. He remained partly paralyzed until his death in 1957. Because of his ill health, he soon lost his fortune, and was obliged to leave his 15,000 volumes to the city of Vichy, where one can admire them today, perfectly classified with different binding colors according to the languages in which they were written. Larbaud exemplifies a French modernism in his wish to be "modern" at any cost, yet he was always aware of a longer tradition that he kept translating and promoting. Like Walt Whitman, who never saw Paris but who was quoted by Larbaud as saying "I am a true Parisian,"[44] Larbaud, who always returned to Valois and Vichy, and felt like a man of the whole world, was also a "true Parisian."

Notes

1 Kimberly Healey, "French Literary Modernism," in Astradur Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska (eds.), *Modernism*, vol. ii (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 801.

2 See Jean-Michel Rabaté, *The Ghosts of Modernity* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1996), 188–93.

3 I describe their complex interrelations in the year 1913 in *1913: The Cradle of Modernism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 46–71.

4 Marcel Proust, "Contre l'obscurité," *Contre Sainte-Beuve, Pastiches et Mélanges, Essais et Articles* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 390–95.

5 Ibid., 393.

6 Stéphane Mallarmé, *Divagations*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 236.

7 Ibid., 235.

8 Dujardin quotes Moore's letter in *Interior Monologue*: Édouard Dujardin, *The Bays are Sere* and *Interior Monologue*, trans. Anthony Suter (London: Libris, 1991), 90.

9 See Vicki Mahaffey's "Streams Beyond Consciousness: Stylistic Immediacy in the Modernist Novel," in Jean-Michel Rabaté (ed.), *A Handbook of Modernism Studies* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 39–42.

10 Valery Larbaud, "Amants, heureux amants," *Œuvres*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), 615.

11 See Valery Larbaud, *Lettres à Adrienne Monnier et à Sylvia Beach, 1919–1933*, ed. Maurice Saillet (Paris: IMEC Éditions, 1991), 127, 140, 142, 173, 182, 186, 300.

12 Valery Larbaud, Preface to Édouard Dujardin, *Les lauriers sont coupés* (1924; repr. Paris: Bibliotheque 10/18, 1968), 12.

13 This letter is quoted by Dujardin in *Interior Monologue*: see Dujardin, *Bays are Sere*, 22.

14 Quoted in Dujardin, *Bays Are Sere*, 113.

15 The handwritten draft of this letter from André Gide to Marcel Proust on January 10 or 11, 1914, was sold by Sotheby's for a small fortune (145,000 euros) on November 26, 2013. In this letter, Gide confesses all the mistakes he made with respect to the work of Proust. See www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/2013/livres-manuscrits-pf1313.html.

16 Elisabeth Ladenson's insightful *Proust's Lesbianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999) has shown that Gide was the initiator of the "transposition" theory, even though he said that it came from Proust himself.

17 Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Viking, 2002), 5.

18 Ibid., 3.

19 See Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 382–84.

20 Proust, *Swann's Way*, 127.

21 Ibid., 125.

22 Ibid., 124.

23 Ibid., 83.

24 Martin Hägglund, *Dying for Time: Proust, Woolf, Nabokov* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 20–55.

25 See Jean-Yves Tadié, *Le lac inconnu: entre Proust et Freud* (Paris: Gallimard, 2012).

26 André Gide, *Paludes, in Romans et récits*, ed. Pierre Masson, Jean Claude, Alain Goulet, David H. Walker and Jean-Michel Wittmann (Paris: Gallimard, 2009), 259. My translation.

27 André Gide, *The Immoralist*, trans. David Watson (New York: Penguin, 2001), 7.

28 André Gide, *Si le grain ne meurt*, in *Souvenirs et voyages*, ed. Pierre Masson, Daniel Durosay, and Martine Sagaert (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 267. My translation.

29 Ibid., 326.

30 Roland Barthes, "On Gide and his Journal," *A Barthes Reader*, ed. Susan Sontag (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982), 7.

31 Ibid., 3.

32 Valery Larbaud, *Lettres à André Gide* (Paris: A.A.M. Stols, 1948), 55.

33 Ibid., 107.

34 Valery Larbaud, *Lettres à Adrienne Monnier et à Sylvia Beach, 1919–1933*, ed. Maurice Saillet (Paris: IMEC Éditions, 1991), 40.

35 Valery Larbaud, *Childish Things*, trans. Catherine Wald (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1994). Gide praised highly the novella *The Butcher's Knife* (27–62) that was dedicated to him.

36 Valery Larbaud, "Propos de table et anecdotes de M. Barnabooth," 1908 edition of *Poèmes par un riche amateur*, in *Œuvres*, ed. G. Jean-Aubry and Robert Mallet (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 1151.

37 Valery Larbaud, "Les borborygmes," *Œuvres*, 43.

38 Valery Larbaud, "Ma muse," *Œuvres*, 60.

39 Ibid., 117.

40 Ibid., 109, 119.

41 Ibid., 301.

42 Ibid., 303.

43 Ibid., 306.

44 "Je suis un vrai parisien – Walt Whitman" : Larbaud's epigraph to "Paris de France," *Œuvres*, 778.

Viennese Modernism: Musil, Rilke, Schoenberg

STANLEY CORNGOLD

Within a single decade, from 1874–1883, five great artists were born into the Habsburg Empire: Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874–1929), Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951), Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926), Robert Musil (1880–1942), and Franz Kafka (1883–1924). Kafka, the last to be born, was the first – and youngest – to die. Schoenberg, almost the first to be born, was the last – and oldest – to die. This mortality *à l'envers* underscores much of the elliptical, outré, modern, modernist character of their work.

Hofmannsthal and Schoenberg were born in Vienna; the others, at a distance of a morning train journey from Vienna: Musil in Klagenfurt, to the south, and Rilke and Kafka in Prague, to the east. Hofmannsthal lived the greater part of his life at the outskirts of Vienna in Rodaun; the others – with the exception of Kafka, who disliked Vienna – lived there for a time but for the rest were peripatetic, in scenes ranging from castles in Switzerland (Rilke) to editorial offices in Berlin (Musil) to a late exile in Los Angeles (Schoenberg). Formulae assigning the impetus to their work to their Habsburg milieu abound, viz., crumbling traditions, a failing liberal consensus, a politics of cultural despair, "a collective Oedipal revolt."[1] Their intellectual concerns are put under familiar rubrics. Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin write: "The problems of communication, authenticity, and symbolic expression had been faced in parallel [at the turn of the century] in all the major fields of thought and art – by Kraus and Schoenberg, Loos and Hofmannsthal, Rilke and Musil."[2] Following Robert Wistrich, "There are points of contact not only between Nietzsche's search for authenticity and that of Wittgenstein but also with the purist intellectual architecture of Adolf Loos, with Musil's experimental style of writing, Karl Kraus' passionate obsession with language and Schoenberg's musical theories."[3] But these elevated commonplaces of intellectual history do little work in capturing the distinctive products of the artists under review.

In a celebrated essay, Virginia Woolf declared that "On or about December 1910, human character changed," while granting that the date was "disputable."[4] Still, her surmise has given countless historians of modernism a *terminus post quem* with which to begin their survey. The date is pertinent to a study of the best work of the Habsburg artists named above, with 1910 as very nearly an axial year. We will be chiefly concerned with Rilke and Musil; hence, pride of place goes to Musil's fictional-essayistic reconstruction of pre-First World War Vienna, c. 1913, in *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (*The Man Without Qualities*, 1930–43) and Rilke's comparable, if much more compact, version of tormented subjectivity in pre-First World War Paris in his *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* (*The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*), c. 1910. Rilke and Musil had both been students at the Habsburg military academy in Mährisch-Weisskirchen, Moravia, where they were instructed sporadically and suffered enormously. Neither was to practice a profession. Although Musil subsequently took degrees in engineering and philosophy, both he and Rilke became fierce solitaries and autodidacts, bent on "a transcendental and orgiastic aggrandizement of matter and event in behalf of personal vitality."[5]

The following sections will focus on aspects of their work that are at once striking and pertinent to a view on a generalized Viennese modernist sensibility. This is the mood of *homelessness* in the new city, the spawn of industrial and medial innovation, in a dangerously shifting social order fostering violence, restlessness, and fatigue. We encounter similar features in the life depicted by *many* urban modernist writers, such as James Joyce, André Gide, and Hermann Broch, but these moods are felt with special intensity at the Viennese fin de siècle, a time acute with intimations of apocalypse: the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. The outcome is an individual alienation, the urge to a centrifugal wandering – a flight from home – and the sense of a world in fragments. This condition is possibly curable by poetic means, by the operation of new techniques of narration (Rilke: explosive immediacy; Musil: irony and parody in the representation of human relations *and* the mystic unity of twins), or, more directly, by poetic figures of combination (metaphor, symbol, allusion) used as a way of bringing order to chaos. All this distress and ambition is accompanied by a "higher" sensibility, which, in Vienna, is responsive to the great exemplars of poetic tradition – foremost Goethe and Nietzsche – as well as to the lure of irrational moods, of ecstasies, including especially music.

In this period, the musical sensibility informing lyric poetry – especially that of Rilke and the important German poet Stefan George (1868–1933) – inspires

the innovative genius of Schoenberg and the emergence of atonality. And indeed there is a further consanguinity of temperament in Schoenberg, Rilke, and Musil – how could there not be? – in the sense of the embeddedness of original poetic work in a rich German-language tradition of poetic achievement, in which, once more, Goethe and Nietzsche figure centrally. In their work, too, the theme of *homelessness* is present as if in anticipation of its acute manifestation in Habsburg culture at the fin de siècle. In this rich field of creative activity (in which we would include such figures as Sigmund Freud, his friend Arthur Schnitzler, and the deranged poet Georg Trakl), a selection of its features held to be essential to the modernist sensibility will depend on the bias of the critic. To connect, for example, aspects of poetics and mood to the *political* discourses of the age – an empire in the process of dissolution – the reader should turn to the works of such scholars as William Johnston, William J. McGrath, and Carl Schorske, author of *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*.[6]

Arnold Schoenberg and the Modernist Poets: Stefan George and Rainer Maria Rilke

A crucial factor in the development of a modernist Habsburg sensibility is the work of the composer Arnold Schoenberg, himself an autodidact, without university education. It was in 1908–09, by general consent, that Schoenberg inaugurated a revolution by writing his first atonal composition, op. 15, a setting of a lyric by Stefan George titled "Du lehnest wider eine silberweide" ("You lean against a silver-willow") from *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* (*The Book of the Hanging Gardens*).[7] Schoenberg describes finding his "own personal style of composition" only after abandoning the "harmonic, formal, orchestral, and emotional innovations of Richard Wagner." Inspired by George, he set about composing music to some of his poems. Schoenberg writes:

> surprisingly, without any expectation on my part, these songs showed a style quite different from everything I had written before . . . It was the first step towards a style that has since been called the style of "atonality." Among progressive musicians it aroused great enthusiasm. New sounds were produced, a new kind of melody appeared, a new approach to expression of moods and characters was discovered. In fact, it called into existence a change of such an extent that many people, instead of realizing its evolutionary element, called it a revolution.[8]

The relation between text and Schoenberg's new music is hardly incidental: the main lines of his early development run chiefly through the setting of

songs. In line with "the intense Viennese modernist engagement with the nature of language," writes Leon Botstein, "thinking about language generated musical innovation."[9] How, then? "Words ... were keys to the use of *time* through music and therefore musical *form*" (emphasis added).[10] This "time," it should be stressed, is itself the carrier or "stain" of expressed emotion. As Theodor Adorno noted eloquently: "In the very first publication on Schoenberg, Vassily Kandinsky called the composer's paintings 'acts of the mind.' The scars of this revolution of expression, however, are the blotches which have become fixed in his music ... as the heralds of the id against the compositional will."[11] Schoenberg would insist that he was not an atonal theorist but a creator in whom, in the words of Charles Rosen, "the emotion is so violent and so consistently tense that for a great many people he is a non-emotional composer."[12] And these intense emotions are mediated most revealingly through his settings of the poetry of his own time and place.

In 1914, Schoenberg set to music, in an atonal manner, Stefan George's translation of a poem by Ernest Dowson, as well as three poems by Rilke, two from *Das Stunden-Buch* (*The Book of Hours*) and one from *Das Buch der Bilder* (*The Book of Images*). Schoenberg's musical settings of poems by both George and Rilke suggest the swift and creative communication of sensibility between these artists at the fin de siècle. George had published a volume of poems titled *Pilgerfahrten* (*Pilgrimages*) in 1900, and Rilke dedicated an early poem to him, written in George's manner though quite possibly a sardonic pastiche.[13] The drive to *centrifugal wandering* in both poets will have resonated with the composer. Schoenberg himself accorded a special importance to his setting of the first of the Rilke poems, "Alle, welche dich suchen" ("All those who seek you"); the poem is taken from the second part of *The Book of Hours* titled, significantly, *Das Buch der Pilgerschaft* (*The Book of Pilgrimage*).[14] Schoenberg's contemporary, the composer Karol Szymanowski (1882–1937), was to celebrate Schoenberg's "internal reconstruction of the basic means of [musical] expression ... aiming *centrifugally* away from the ideal nucleus ... toward entirely new basic foundations" (emphasis in the original).[15] The goal is maximum expressiveness, linked to a certain self-decentering, an abandonment of ego-consciousness, as expressed in Schoenberg's celebrated letter to an admiring Vassily Kandinsky, in January 1911:

> there are such unknown relationships and common ground among the best artists who are striving today ... [such as] what you call the "unlogical" and I call the "elimination of the conscious will in art" ... art belongs to the *unconscious*! One must express *oneself*! Express oneself *directly*! Not one's

taste, or one's upbringing, or one's intelligence, knowledge or skill. Not all these *acquired* characteristics, but that which is *inborn, instinctive.*[16]

In a later poem, "To Music," Rilke, once Schoenberg's subject, addresses music as if it were Schoenberg's music through the same tropes of subliminal feeling, transformation, and the vectors of wandering.

> . . . You language where languages
> end. You time,
> standing vertically on the thrust of expiring hearts.
>
> Feelings for whom? O you transformation
> Of feelings into what? – : into audible landscape.
> You stranger: music. You heart-space
> Grown out of us. Our inmost intensity,
> Which, transcending us, presses its way out, –
> Sacred departure . . .[17]

Home and Homelessness: The Legacies of Goethe and Nietzsche

In the course of studying the "modernist" rhetoric of Gershom Scholem, the philologist and historian of Kabbalah, Robert Alter stresses two opposed movements of thought and imagination in modernist writing: the one is the absolute imperative, as Pound put it, to "Make it New"; the other is a residual hypnosis performed on the present by tradition, so that much of the new amounts in fact to a reconstellation, a collage of past fragments.[18] Viennese modernist poets and musicians, while subject to the dispersive forces of industrial modernity, know themselves to be embedded, at the same time, in a rich history of exemplars. Schoenberg, in his late maturity, put the matter directly. "Modernism, in its best meaning, comprises a development of thoughts and their expression. This can not be taught and ought not to be taught. But it might come in a natural way, by itself, to him who proceeds gradually by absorbing the cultural achievements of his predecessors."[19] Meanwhile, the less conciliatory thesis, put forward by Thomas Mann in 1945 in his novel *Doktor Faustus*, is that the modernist writer could do no more than produce works of art *parodying* the art of earlier epochs. His argument is confirmed, perhaps unwittingly, by the fact that the model for Mann's own artist-hero turns out, according to Schoenberg, to be an unflattering portrait of the composer himself at an earlier epoch. Schoenberg was incensed by the resemblance.

The inevitable absorption in works of the past by work deemed original will lead to opposing judgments by the artists themselves: feelings of happy assimilation or a sort of rage – or despair – at being captivated. In every case, it is a contest of the two impulses. We might pursue one track of such associations, to give a concrete picture of a reconstellation of the past.

There is no writer of this period in this empire – as we think of Rilke, of Musil, and of Kafka writing in Prague – whose artistic consciousness is not saturated with the work of Goethe and Nietzsche: the first standing mainly for exemplary Life; the second, mainly for exemplary Critique. In studying Goethe, we can appeal to Kafka, who speaks for many in asserting Goethe's difficult hold on the imagination of the writers of his generation:

> Goethe probably retards the development of the German language by the force of his writing. Even though prose style has often traveled away from him in the interim, still, in the end, as at present [in 1911], it returns to him with strengthened yearning and even adopts obsolete idioms found in Goethe but otherwise without any particular connection with him, in order to rejoice in the completeness of its unlimited dependence.[20]

The hero of Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* catches both the resistance and the dependency, remarking:

> Goethe later was relying on Kant when he defined the geniative with the words: "to have many objects present and easily relate the most remote ones to each other: this free of egotism and self-complacency." But that's a view that was very much designed for the achievements of reason, and it leads to the rather gymnastic conception of genius we have succumbed to.[21]

What is missing from Musil's (eccentric) view of Goethe's genius is the factor of feeling, mood, affect – in Musil's preferred word, defensively framed in inverted commas, "soul." The gymnastic form of genius would allow for the notorious apotheosis of a "racehorse of genius," something the hero has seen in Vienna newspapers c. 1913. The whole thrust of Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* is to establish in the social world and in every man, so to speak, a "Ministry of Precision *and* Soul." "It might be possible," thinks Ulrich, "to live with precision [*exakt leben*]": he has in mind something rigorous and granitic in the self-conscious subject that, in Geoffrey Hartman's phrase, "sets a bottom for inwardness, to limit an endless and corrosive self-concern."[22] The necessary correlative term "soul," while indispensable, is harder to define; it turns up in the narrator's reflections on the attempt of the Viennese cultural elite to produce a commemorative event to honor the seventieth jubilee of the Emperor Franz Joseph. (This national campaign is called, in

the novel, the "Parallel Campaign," because a similar celebration is being planned in Germany.) Of this "soul":

> The word has already turned up more than once, though not in the clearest contexts; as, for instance, something lost in our time, or incompatible with civilization; as something at odds with physical urges and connubial habits; something that is moved, and not only to repugnance, by a murderer; something that was to be liberated by the Parallel Campaign; as a subject for religious meditations and *contemplatio in caligine divina* . . .; as, with many people, a love of metaphor; and so on.[23]

The strong connection between "soul" and "metaphor" will recur in the writings of Musil and Rilke, as the soul craves the experience of connection, and metaphor is such a figure of combination.

We have cited the force of Goethe's writing – as we will cite Nietzsche's – in order to focus on the topic – or drive – which they bequeath to our modern poets: a mood of homelessness, of alienation, of vulnerability to an anxiety-provoking Outside in endless flux. Crucial is Goethe's Werther, who "stagger[s] about in fear," seeing "heaven and earth and their interweaving forces around me . . . [as] nothing but an eternally devouring, eternally regurgitating monster."[24] This terror survives Goethe's emotional rejection of his *Sufferings of Young Werther*: it is from the *Faust*-drama that there resounds the most plangent complaint of man the homeless, which did not go unheard in fin-de-siècle Austria. Faust cries out, "Bin ich der Flüchtling nicht? Der Unbehauste? / Der Unmensch ohne Zweck und Ruh" (Am I not fugitive without a home? / Inhuman; without aim or rest).[25] Goethe makes Faust's helter-skelter desperation the product of a finite crime: he has destroyed an innocent life, Gretchen's. It is this consciousness of a crime that drives the feverish tempo of Faust's fall: he rushes headlong to his doom like a raging cataract, even here with the energy that is his "quality."

Nietzsche absorbed Goethe deeply, considering him a sort of *Übermensch*, a "free spirit," a Dionysian; Nietzsche's Dionysian aesthetics penetrated with varying intensity the Viennese avant-garde, "Jung-Wien," especially from the 1890s on. Nietzsche's aesthetics spring from his work of moral vivisection, which issues into the view, as Heidegger puts it, that "the conception of the subject as ego, self, which is the 'egoistic' interpretation of the subject, is . . . not yet subjectivist enough."[26] The fourth movement of Mahler's Third Symphony (Schoenberg would respond rapturously to it) expands this view with its setting of Nietzsche's "Midnight Song" from *Also sprach Zarathustra*: "O Mensch! Gib acht!" ("O man! Take heed!").[27] Nietzsche is at the core of

Rilke's early vitalism; the angels of the later *Duino Elegies* are congeners of Nietzsche's race of *Übermenschen*.[28] In Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, Nietzsche, from the start, is presented as a genius; and one overarching idea proposed for celebrating the putative seventieth anniversary of the reign of Emperor Franz Joseph in 1918 is to call this year of the Parallel Campaign "The Nietzsche Year."[29]

In the light of our writers' absorption of Nietzsche, we will do well to consider a poem found in his papers and published shortly after his death in 1900. The poem of Nietzsche's homelessness, in six strophes, is titled "Vereinsamt" (Grown lonely). It begins: "The crows caw / And move in whirring flight to the city: / Soon it will snow, – Happy is he who still – has a home!" The homelessness of the subject appears to have been caused by a terrible loss; there is more to the lost home than a roof and four walls, for "Whoever has lost / What you have lost, will never stop anywhere." What now awaits the subject is a world – yes, but one defined as a gate (or a "fool," since the German word is the same for both things) "to a thousand wastelands mute and cold." The subject is cursed; he is trapped in a perpetual winter, "Like the smoke / That always seeks colder skies." He might sing, he might tell himself his woe, to relax his pain, but what music can he make? It is nothing better than the screech of the crows who accompanied his parting, although, unlike him, they once flew to take up home in the very city that has expelled this wanderer. His song is a memory of what he heard; he is, for a moment, this bird: "Fly, bird, rasp out / Your song to the tune of a wasteland bird!" At this point the poem reverts to its beginning, with a crucial variant in the last line:

> The crows caw
> And move in whirring flight to the city:
> Soon it will snow, –
> Woe to him who has no home!

The relationship to the *Faust* passage is direct. The speaker is the same: the accursed outcast without a home. The wintry waste suggests the icy heights, above the meadow, from which Faust falls. But point for point, there are significant modernizing contrasts within the same poetic idea, for consider: Faust's fall was situated against an Alpine background containing one simple hut – Gretchen's; Nietzsche's world contains the ambiguous lure of the populated city. Faust's desperation was understandable as the punishment for a crime. Nietzsche's wanderer's crime remains unknown; it is beyond psychological definition. His grief is more nearly the condition of his

existence, a fear without qualities, in Georg Lukács's phrase "transcendental homelessness." Dionysian outrage lowers in its frozen state.

The poem's tempo is circular. We saw how, at its end, the speaker literally returns to the images and figures of its beginning, with only the slightest change, the addition of words to signify a final negation, a curse. This is the eternal recurrence of the same as eternally recurrent negation.

We have come via a Nietzschean path to Rilke's representative poem of 1902, "Herbsttag" ("Autumn Day")

> Lord: it is time. The huge summer has gone by.
> Now overlap the sundials with your shadows,
> and on the meadows let the wind go free.
>
> Command the fruits to swell on tree and vine;
> grant them a few more warm transparent days,
> urge them on to fulfillment then, and press
> the final sweetness into the heavy wine.
>
> Whoever has no house now, will never have one.
> Whoever is alone will stay alone,
> will sit, read, write long letters through the evening,
> and wander along the boulevards, up and down,
> restlessly, while the dry leaves are blowing.[30]

The differences are significant. Like Nietzsche's wanderer, Rilke's invokes an autumnal tableau; unlike Nietzsche's, Rilke's scene still displays the Dionysian fruits of summer, though both announce its passing. Rilke's grief is temperate, his language less woeful, alive to command. At the poem's end, however, vis-à-vis his masters Goethe and Nietzsche, Rilke seems a Decadent. Looking back to its opening, its vitality now gestures at *Jugendstil*, with its mediated, aesthetic temperateness. The longed-for more southerly day (in Stephen Mitchell's eloquent reading) is "warm," not hot with the noonday sun; the eye wanders through "transparent" air to the play of shadows on sundials in the park. Here the poem aligns itself with the muted longings of Hofmannsthal's *Death and the Fool* (1900): the ending supports the claim that, "paradoxically, the precious and rarified aspect of *Jugendstil* overlapped with that of decadence."[31] Of course, in the wake of Rilke's shock experiences in Paris, the hero of *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910) will learn "to see otherwise" – more forcefully, with more devastating inner consequences – en route to the "heart work" of the *Duino Elegies*. But here, for all of Nietzsche's iciest forebodings, we have a season of mellow fruitfulness; for the wasteland, long avenues, suggesting the suburbs of Paris or Munich. This

poet is equipped with pen and paper; Nietzsche's tool is the hammer, which he sets against his own forehead. Nietzsche writes across the centuries in a poem he will save until he dies; Rilke's persona will write his friends, now.

Hofmannsthal's representative essay on the character of the Viennese poet at the fin de siècle offers a dark and witty view on the sense of homelessness:

> Thus the poet is found there where he does not seem to be, and is always at a place other than where he is supposed to be. He dwells in an odd way in the house of time, under the staircase, where everyone has to climb past him and no one notices him . . . this unknown dwelling in one's own house.[32]

The lost center could well be under his reader's stairwell; its name, Odradek, the hero of Kafka's story "The Worry of the Father of the Family," a being "extraordinarily mobile and impossible to catch" who has "no permanent residence."[33]

But put these differences aside: in each of these writers we have to do with a *poetry* of homelessness; their speakers do not crave a return to an ancestral home; they cannot imagine a present refuge. Authors become one with their "vice-existers," their speakers: the poem is all the home they have, for now; it is the container of their homelessness – there is no other. Their feelings are inscribed in the rhythms of the poem. Their isolation is inscribed in the solitude of the poem. The poem is the fact of their separation. Rilke's admired contemporary Kafka considered literature as quite literally founding a "homeland" – yes, but *on the moon*: "when we write something, we have not coughed up the moon [*den Mond ausgeworfen*], whose origins might then be investigated." That is, the work is not a transcendent, astral body whose source can be found in the poet's urge to give shape to his fear. "Rather," he continues in his audacious way, "we have moved to the moon with everything we have . . . The separation from the homeland has already taken place." The site of literature, its only homeland, is somewhere out of this domestic world: "for the sake of this homeland on the moon, we have lost ourselves."[34]

This juncture invokes Lukács's description, in his *Theory of the Novel* (1920), of the loss of an "integrated" world and the dubious gain of a "problematic" world. And indeed his argument runs just the way Kafka's does. Lukács defines philosophy as "the urge," in the absence of an earthly home, "to be at home *everywhere*" (emphasis added). "That is why philosophy," he continues,

> which determines the form and supplies the content of literary creation, is always a symptom of the rift between "inside" and "outside," a sign of the essential difference between the self and the world, the incongruence of soul

and deed. That is why the happy ages have no philosophy ... [for] there is not yet any interiority, for there is not yet any exterior, any "otherness" for the soul.[35]

This is the mode of being that produces the epic. Our age – Lukács will go on to say – after the loss of the epic, is the age of the novel ... and, we will add, for our modernist writers, in privileged instances, the aperçu and the lyric poem.

The Adventure of Metaphor as a Figure of Connection

The dominant urge of centrifugal wandering, the flight from home, and the sense of a world in fragments (see especially Hofmannsthal's "The Lord Chandos Letter" of 1902) are opposed by the effort to establish a correspond-ence between things. The very demonstrable interest of Rilke and Musil in "Gleichnisse" (metaphors, analogies) is not just an affair of literary compos-ition. Frank Kermode wrote early of Musil's "world": "Musil's is notoriously a world in political collapse, the end of a great empire; but more central to his poetic writing (at times he makes one think of a prose Rilke) is the sense of a world in metaphysical collapse, a universe of hideously heaped contingency, in which there are nonetheless transcendent human powers."[36] One of Musil's many ways of making this point is found in his famous eulogy, in 1927, on the death of Rilke. He speaks of a now general appreciation of such contingency, of the "gliding transitions, without firm limits, from moral law to criminal acts, from health to sickness, from admiration to contempt of one and the same thing." This awareness has been *brought about*, among other influences, he writes, by "the literature of the last decades."[37] But one such opposing power, possessed in abundance by Rilke (thus Musil), is the impulse to perceive likeness, to compose metaphors, as a way of arresting the swirl of things brought to a fever pitch in the modern city in the new century. Rilke's "lyrical affect is released and guided by ... the invisible interwovenness of things and ideas. In this lyrical emotion things become the metaphors of one another."[38]

This formulation registers the degree to which Nietzsche, where he can, will penetrate every line Musil writes. Nietzsche's description of such inspir-ation in *Also sprach Zarathustra* and *Ecce Homo* stresses the spontaneous fusion of things and their metaphorical expression:

> The involuntariness of image and metaphor is strangest of all; one no longer has any notion of what is an image or a metaphor: everything offers itself as

the nearest, most obvious, simplest expression. It actually seems, to allude to something Zarathustra says, as if the things themselves approached and offered themselves as metaphors. ("Here all things come caressingly to your discourse and flatter you; for they want to ride on your back. On every metaphor you ride to every truth ...").[39]

And so "in Rilke it is not that stone and trees turn into men," Musil adds, "but rather men turn into things" and this way acquire an enhanced human-ity! "In the sensibility of this great poet everything becomes 'Gleichnis' (metaphor, analogy) ... the separate spheres into which ordinary thought divides types of beings appear to unite in one single sphere ... 'Eigen-schaften' (the qualities of individuals) become 'Aller-schaften' (the qualities of everything)."[40] *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* and *The Man Without Qualities* deal explicitly with metaphor, by example, in reflection, and in the arcana of textual practice. From the start, Musil's novel is saturated with brilliantly inventive, worldly metaphors, but this tendency dissipates as the novel advances and the hypothesis of a viable community recedes. Rilke's 1910 novel focuses, in German prose with a tenderness and intensity unrivalled since Goethe's *Werther*, on the shattered, unbearable subjective consciousness of the hero craving totality, craving wholeness. But a closer inspection of the fate of metaphorical relationship in *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* will test the claim of its efficacy.

Against most readers' expectations, the *Notebooks* elaborates a series of *systems* of exchange. In one place, Rilke literally employs the model of *bookkeeping*, claiming that, unlike the few facts genuinely at our disposal, our "conjectures" and "insights" are only "subsequently" [*nachträglich*] added on to actual experience: they are "supplements," supplied only afterwards, as something "belated, as payment in arrears." Like entries in a ledger, they are registered *after* the factual experience of what they are about: they are there to settle accounts, "balance-sheets," nothing more. "Right afterward," Rilke continues, "a new page begins, with a completely different account, and no total carried forward" (meaning, presumably, that when the facts of the case – sensuous experience – are again encountered, they are encountered as if for the first time).[41] Facts and insights, conjectures, and interpretations do not tally; soul and deed are incongruent; supplementary thought yields no appreciable profit.

This figure of bookkeeping points to the project of the entire novel, which attempts to generate whole systems from the facts of experience. Various systems, which seem true until they are broken, are themselves entered into the "ledger" of this book, in the hope that the profit of each might balance

out the losses of each such (failed) order of exchange preceding it. The concept of bookkeeping, as the master-system, exceeds that of each particular pseudo-system or displayed instance of systematic rationality. In the *Notebooks* these pseudo-systems are types of rhetorical, theological, economic, and sexual exchange, to wit (1) a pseudo-system of chiastic exchanges of the qualities ("Eigenschaften") of things, culminating in a set-piece on Ibsen alluding to *The Wild Duck, Ghosts, and Brand*; (2) the theological structure of belief illustrated in the tapestries at Cluny by the relations of virgin, unicorn, and mirror; (3) the pseudo-system of time-banking, experimented with by Nicolai Kuzmitsch; and, finally, (4) the exemplary figure for *another* logic – the logic of sacrifice: the empty jewel case that follows the account of women who loved and were abandoned.

Constraints of length force us to concentrate on the fate of just one of these "systems": the chiastic exchange of properties at work in metaphorical language. A remarkable essay by Paul de Man, on Rilke's poem "At the Edge of Night" from *The Book of Images* (1902), brings to light its recondite argument. The lyric voice, ostensibly married to sonority, to *melos*, actually reveals its real attachment to images, which enables a chiastic play of complementary properties.[42] This farewell to sonority will make us think of Schoenberg's project, which also profiles chiastic musical structures consistent with his admiration for Bach – Bach who, like Rilke, too, was "unusually fascinated" by the "transposition of elements, inversion, and mirroring."[43]

The initial abundance of extravagant rhetorical figures in the *Notebooks* is captivating. Streets, we read, are redolent with "iodoform, the grease of pommes frites, *fear*" too.[44] Some "Things" in Malte's Notebooks are "drowsy, absent-minded" and others "listless and negligent."[45] Malte sees a house peculiarly blind from cataracts ("eigentümlich starblind").[46] This play with the humanization/reification/hybridization of predicates puts a torque on everything: "From the open windows, the air of the previous night crept out with a bad conscience" – this is "übernächtigte Luft," air that has been up too late the night before.[47] "Rooms abandoned [Malte]" (better, "left him in the lurch") "as soon as things went wrong."[48]

The novel has a literary source to legitimate the exchange of qualities across inner and outer worlds. It is a description of the work of "that obstinate man" Ibsen, who,

> because [he was] a revealer, a timelessly tragic poet ... had to transform this
> capillary action [of "life drawn back inside us"] all at once into the most

convincing gestures, into the most available forms. So [he] began that unprecedented act of violence in [his] work, which, more and more impatiently, desperately, sought equivalents in the visible world for what [he] had seen inside.

The equivalencing occurs in literary language, as the so-called concrete qualities of things are exchanged for the abstract qualities of inwardness – and the reverse.

This concrete-metaphorical way of seeing is one of the more stubborn strategies aiming at a totality that captivates Malte even when its failure has been forecast in the Ibsen piece. For Malte's description of Ibsen concludes:

> There was a rabbit there, an attic, a room where someone was pacing back and forth; there was a clatter of glass in a nearby bedroom, a fire outside the windows; there was the sun. There was a church, and a rock-strewn valley that was like a church. But this wasn't enough: finally towers had to come in and whole mountain-ranges; and the avalanches that bury landscapes spilled onto a stage overwhelmed with what is tangible, for the sake of what cannot be grasped. Then you [Ibsen] could do no more. The two ends, which you had bent together until they touched, sprang apart; your demented strength escaped from the flexible wand, and your work was as if it had never existed.[49]

This is a demonstration of systems posited and then discredited in the *Notebooks*. Each project of relating particulars with a view to their totalization fails, and education consists in acknowledging this defeat. The failure includes the logic of bookkeeping, which also relies on an equivalencing of seemingly opposite categories of things: credit and debit, profit and loss.

The latter discourse surfaces, as well, in modernist works found beyond the borders of the Empire, as in André Gide's *The Immoralist*, James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and Hermann Broch's *The Sleepwalkers*. This logic resembles and subsumes that of metaphorical relation, in which properties between two entities initially unlike (de Man: "properties that would normally be incompatible") are chiastically exchanged until arriving at equilibrium. Both logics belong to the constitution of a modernist style assailed by a "meta-world" of "decentered, multi-dimensionally, fluctuating energies ... involv[ing] leaps, jerks, gaps, irregularities and discontinuities," the whole "threatening to run out of control."[50] If modernist aesthetics begins with a perception of the fragment, the jump, the dissonance, the broken line, then the reappropriation of the logics of bookkeeping and metaphorical relation reads like a rearguard action to contain such items before they fly off into chaos. But here the arts of Schoenberg, Rilke, Musil,

and Kafka discredit such a hope, while turning toward another order of expression, having perceived that there are no sensuous equivalents, no effective calculations, for the lost center, the abandoned house, the irreparable "separation from the homeland."

Notes

1 Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Random House, 1981).

2 Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), 119.

3 Robert Wistrich, "Friedrich Nietzsche and the Austrian Fin-de-Siècle," in Jacob Golomb (ed.), *Nietzsche and the Austrian Culture* (Vienna: Facultas Verlags- und Buchhandels, 2004), 57.

4 Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (London: Hogarth Press, 1924), 4.

5 Irving Howe, "Introduction: The Idea of the Modern," in Irving Howe (ed.), *Literary Modernism* (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1967), 11–40 (at 14).

6 William Johnston, *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History, 1848–1938* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); William J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974); and Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*.

7 According to Leonard Stein, "The 'atonal revolution' must actually be dated from 1908 or 1909 when the *George-Lieder*, Opus 15 . . . were written." Endnote in Arnold Schoenberg, "How One Becomes Lonely," *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 515.

8 Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, 49–50.

9 Leon Botstein, "Music and the Critique of Culture: Arnold Schoenberg, Heinrich Schenker, and the Emergence of Modernism in *Fin-de-Siècle* Vienna," in Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (eds.), *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 3–22 (at 10).

10 Ibid., 9.

11 Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 39. Cited and discussed in Daniel Albright, "Schoenberg," *Representation and the Imagination: Beckett, Kafka, Nabokov, and Schoenberg* (University of Chicago Press, 1981), 16.

12 Charles Rosen, cited in Norman Lebrecht, "A Fusion of Piano and Cerebellum," *Standpoint*, March 2013, http://standpointmag.co.uk/node/4883/full.

13 For an astute discussion of this poem and its tendency, see James Rolleston, "The Poetry and Poetics of the Young Rilke, 1895–1902," in Erika A. Metzger

and Michael M. Metzger (eds.), *A Companion to the Works of Rainer Maria Rilke* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2001), 46–48.

14 It was not Rilke's idea to be set to music by Schoenberg. According to Siegfried Mandel, *Rainer Maria Rilke: The Poetic Instinct* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), xi, Ernst Krenek was "the only composer asked by Rilke to put several poems to music."

15 Karol Szymanowski, "On the Question of 'Contemporary Music,'" Appendix to Leon Botstein, "Schoenberg and the Audience: Modernism, Music, and Politics in the Twentieth Century," in Walter Frisch (ed.), *Schoenberg and His World* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 19–84 (at 48).

16 Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 89.

17 Rainer Maria Rilke, "An die Musik," my translation, in "Gedichte aus dem Nachlaß," *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Ruth Sieber-Rilke and Ernst Zinn, 7 vols. (Wiesbaden: Insel, 1956), vol. II, III.

18 Ibid., 168–69.

19 Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, 377.

20 *The Diaries of Franz Kafka, 1910–1913*, trans. Joseph Kresh (New York: Schocken, 1948), 197.

21 Robert Musil, "From the Posthumous Papers," trans. Burton Pike, in Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1995), vol. II, 1340–41.

22 Geoffrey Hartman, "Signs of the Times," *The Fate of Reading and Other Essays* (University of Chicago Press, 1975), 314.

23 Musil, *Man Without Qualities*, vol. I, 195–96.

24 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sufferings of Young Werther*, ed. and trans. Stanley Corngold (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013), 70.

25 J. W. Goethe, *Goethe's Faust*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1990), 319.

26 Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 2 vols. (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961), vol. II, 62, trans. in James Rolleston, *Narratives of Ecstasy: Romantic Temporality in Modern German Poetry* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 102.

27 Moved by Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Mahler at one point considered titling the entire work *La gaya scienza*. On the penetration into Austrian cultural life of Nietzsche's Dionysian aesthetics, see esp. McGrath, "Nietzsche as Educator," *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics*.

28 "Nietzsche and Rilke have given birth to symbolic creatures moving with perfect grace and ease in a sphere to which man can attain only in the utmost realization of his spiritual powers ... Nietzsche's Superman and Rilke's Angel." Erich Heller, "Rilke and Nietzsche," *The Disinherited Mind* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), 142.

29 Musil, *Man without Qualities*, vol. I, 154.

30 Rainer Maria Rilke, "Autumn Day," *Ahead of All Parting: The Selected Poetry and Prose of Rainer Maria Rilke*, ed. and trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1995), 15.

31 Ingo R. Stoehr, *German Literature of the Twentieth Century: From Aestheticism to Postmodernism* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2001), 25.

32 Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Der Dichter und diese Zeit" (1907) in *Der Brief des Lord Chandos: Schriften zur Literatur, Kunst und Geschichte*, ed. Mathias Mayer (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), 116.

33 Odradek is the mysterious stranger in Kafka's story "The Worry of the Father of the Family": "He stays alternately in the attic, on the staircase, in the corridors, in the hallway." *Kafka's Selected Stories*, ed. and trans. Stanley Corngold (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 72–73.

34 Franz Kafka, *Letters to Friends, Family, and Editors*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Schocken, 1977), 204, and *Briefe, 1902–1924*, ed. Max Brod (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1958), 240–41.

35 Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 29.

36 Frank Kermode, Preface to Robert Musil, *Five Women*, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (Jaffrey, NH: David Godine, 1986), 9.

37 Robert Musil, "Gedenkrede auf Rainer Maria Rilke, 1927" in Gerhard Hay (ed.), *Deutsche Abschiede* (Munich: Winkler, 1984), 268–80 (at 278). My translation.

38 Ibid., 275.

39 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Basic Writings*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 756–57; *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking, 1968), 295–96.

40 Musil, "Gedenkrede," 276.

41 Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1983), 176.

42 "The determining figure of Rilke's poetry is that of chiasmus, the crossing that reverses the attributes of words and things . . . [Objects] are conceived in such a way as to allow a reversal of their categorical properties, and this reversal enables the reader to conceive of properties that would normally be incompatible . . . as complementary." Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 38, 40.

43 Timothy Smith, "Intentionality and Meaningfulness in Bach's Cyclical Works," a paper read at the Third Conference of the Rocky Mountain Society for Music Theory in Tucson, Arizona, April 19–20, 1996, http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/tas3/intentional.html (accessed June 18, 2015).

44 Rilke, *Notebooks*, 4.

45 Ibid., 11, 183.

46 Ibid., 4. Stephen Mitchell, Rilke's best translator, evades the radicalness of Rilke's metaphor by translating this phrase as "a house that was peculiarly

blind, as if from a cataract," but there is no "as if" in the German: this house is afflicted with cataracts.

47 Ibid., 65.
48 Ibid., 165.
49 Ibid., 83.
50 Richard Sheppard, "The Problematics of European Modernism," in Steve Giles (ed.), *Theorizing Modernism: Essays in Critical Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 14, 18.

The Poetics of Community: Thomas Mann, Joseph Conrad, Franz Kafka

TOBIAS BOES

In July 1926, Samuel Fischer, Germany's foremost publisher of modernist literature, asked Thomas Mann to contribute a preface to one of the volumes in a forthcoming series of Joseph Conrad translations. Conrad was then a completely unknown quantity in Germany, and Fischer undoubtedly saw considerable commercial advantage in recruiting a well-known writer to help introduce the Polish-born Briton to the public. Mann fit the bill, as the success of his novel *The Magic Mountain* two years earlier had made him one of the most recognizable authors of the Weimar Republic.

His fame aside, however, Mann was far from an obvious choice to become Conrad's ambassador in Germany. With the benefit of historical distance, we now recognize the two writers as kindred spirits, fellow modernists whose works are characterized by an ironic temper, a lingering yet critical allegiance to the narrative conventions of the nineteenth century, and a penetrating insight into the darker recesses of men's souls (coupled with a corresponding and frequently exasperating uninterest in the inner life of women). To their contemporaries, however, the matter would have seemed far less clear. Mann wrote stories about the upper crust of the German bourgeoisie, and with the notable exception of a fateful excursion to Venice, his settings rarely strayed into foreign locales. Conrad wrote about sailors, pirates, and anarchist spies, and set his novels in places like Borneo, or the Pacific coast of South America. Mann, furthermore, had long been a vocal champion of Russian literature, and had often compared Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Turgenev favorably to novelists from the French and English traditions. Conrad, on the other hand, was the son of Polish nationalists who had been driven to an early death by the Russian occupiers of his country. He traced his artistic heritage back to Flaubert and Dickens (though he shared Mann's admiration for Turgenev) and wrote an excoriating satire of Dostoevsky with *Under Western Eyes* (1911).

Fischer was in luck, however, for Mann's curiosity about the unknown writer had been piqued when he heard John Galsworthy lecture on "Conrad and Tolstoy" four years earlier. He thus eagerly studied the manuscripts that Fischer sent him – among them *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* (1897), *Chance* (1913), and *The Shadow Line* (1917) – and eventually agreed to write a preface to *The Secret Agent* (1907).[1] Read in isolation, this preface represents just a minor footnote in the history of twentieth-century literature. But it is a useful starting point from which we might reconsider the frequently postulated but deeply problematic opposition between "high modernism" and the "avant-garde," according to which the latter was collective in spirit and utopian in ambition, whereas the former consisted of artists interested primarily in defending the aesthetic autonomy of their craft.[2] Mann was certainly an individualist, but he also was aware of his position in a network of writers stretching through space and time, a network whose members, furthermore, sought not only the rules for a new supreme fiction, but also took a keen interest in the political struggles that made the first half of the twentieth century the most violent and socially transformative period in human history. This network extended into strange reaches, and Franz Kafka was another unlikely figure who would eventually become entangled in its web.

Thomas Mann and Joseph Conrad

Mann attended Galsworthy's lecture on Joseph Conrad in the midst of a decisive process of political awakening. For much of the past decade, he had made a name for himself not as a writer of fiction, but rather as a conservative essayist and apologist for Germany's invasion of Belgium, which started the First World War. It was during this period, too, that Mann repeatedly declared that German culture – inwardly oriented and spiritual – had more in common with the Russian mind than with French and British civilization. But the events of 1921 and 1922, when right-wing terrorists murdered first Matthias Erzberger, the politician who had signed the armistice treaty that ended the war, and then Walther Rathenau, the Weimar Republic's dynamic foreign minister, left him badly shaken in his convictions. He responded with a dramatic about-face, announcing himself a supporter of Western liberal democracy in his lecture "On the German Republic" of October 13, 1922.

Mann's conversion necessitated a corresponding search for new poetic models, a fact that helps explain why so much of what is ostensibly a political lecture is instead devoted to literary matters. For instance, Mann opens "On the German Republic" with an encomium to Gerhart Hauptmann, the

1912 Nobel Prize laureate whose public reputation closely resembled Mann's own, comparing him to a king only to then slyly turn on him by claiming that "a republic could survive without a king longer than a king without a republic."[3] He devotes even more attention to Walt Whitman, a poet for whom he had expressed little admiration prior to the war.[4] Mann was fascinated by the unabashed manner in which the American poet couched his defense of democratic values in the language of a barely disguised homoeroticism. He hoped to find in the imitation of this strategy a cure not only for his own hopelessly repressed sexual longings but also for the current crises of the Weimar Republic, whose enemies – from the poets and intellectuals of the "Circle" founded by Stefan George to the SA storm troopers surrounding Ernst Röhm – were frequently bound to one another by thinly disguised homoerotic bonds as well.

Mann's sudden embrace of Whitman thus represented three different things at once: first, a highly personal gesture of sexual liberation; second, a public revision to the pantheon of writers by which the German author incessantly defined his own artistic genealogy; and, finally, a political state-ment that did not fail to have an immediate and incendiary effect on conservative circles. His engagement with Conrad was motivated by similar concerns; its personal element shines forth most strongly in a line praising the older writer's "masculine talent, his Englishness, his free brow, his steady, clear and humorous eye."[5] A reader intimately familiar with Mann's works will detect in this remark echoes of Tonio Kröger's admiration for Hans Hansen and his horse stories and of Hans Castorp's fraternal love for his cousin Joachim Ziemßen – two allusions, which in turn suggest that Mann was drawn to Conrad at least in part because he admired the latter's effortless manner of reconciling the gap between art and everyday life that had been opened up by fin-de-siècle aesthetics. Mann's special fondness for *Lord Jim* (1900), a work that he would much later declare "magnificent" and compare favorably to his own *The Magic Mountain* and *Doctor Faustus* (1947), suggests that he was further attracted to the way in which Conrad used male friendship not only as a theme, but also as a structuring device.[6] Indeed, Mann would imitate this technique in *Doctor Faustus*, in which Serenus Zeitblom plays a role not at all unlike that of Marlow in *Lord Jim*.

These several male friendships (Marlow and Jim, Kröger and Hansen, Castorp and Ziemßen, Zeitblom and Adrian Leverkühn) form examples of what Barry McCrea has evocatively called "modernism's queer family values." In other words, they illustrate the tendency of modernist writers to seek alternatives to the heteronormative dynamics (marriage, procreation,

inheritance) by which nineteenth-century texts enforced both narrative and social closure.[7] These alternatives need not necessarily be politically progressive; Marlow's involvement with Jim, for instance, can be read as an attempt to prop up imperialist ideology, and Mann would incorporate homoerotic elements into "Mario and the Magician" (1930), his allegory of fascist charismatic politics. But whatever form they take, they document the willingness of modernist writers to rethink the ways in which narrative forms are used to codify the relationship between individuals and their communities, and their engagement with the libidinal undercurrents of modern politics.

Admiration for Conrad's "masculine" style is hardly a sufficient reason to explain Mann's intense interest in the older writer, however. In reading Conrad, Mann also discovered an attitude regarding the status and calling of the artist that in many respects was the opposite of his own. Throughout his life, Mann strove to be recognized as the representative poet of the German nation. Conrad, on the other hand, famously turned his back on his native culture and wrote searching investigations of what it means to be English in a language that he didn't even master until his early twenties. During the years of his American exile, Mann would come to greatly respect the linguistic feats involved in this transition, but in the early 1920s he was primarily attracted to the political implications of Conrad's artistic approach, studying them as he redefined what it meant to be a "representative" writer.

In a book that rightly devotes its first case study to Joseph Conrad, Rebecca Walkowitz has argued for the centrality of modernist literary devices to a variety of intellectual projects concerned with what she calls "thinking beyond the nation" as well as with "informal [and] transient modes of community."[8] This description is well suited to many of the best-known writers of the interwar period, but it ignores the fact that during the decades leading up to the First World War, a critical cosmopolitanism as we find it in almost all of Joseph Conrad's novels was very much the exception rather than the norm. Modernism was born in an age in which both poetics and politics emphasized external forces over individual volition: in literature, naturalism and Symbolism explored the influence of hereditary factors and geographic environments on personal choices, while in the European parliaments conservative nationalists, social democrats, and Christian socialists eroded the foundations of traditional liberalism. Like many other modernist works written during the first decade of the twentieth century, Mann's early stories, especially *Buddenbrooks* (1900) and *Death in Venice* (1912), betray the influence of these factors, and Mann's fondness for Russian literature in general, and for Dostoevsky in particular, has a great deal to do with

Dostoevsky's insistence on a specifically Russian "soul." All this helps explain why Conrad's novels, despite their unusual subject matter, left such an immediate impression on the German author when he began his process of political reorientation. For Conrad never wavered in his fundamental allegiance to a liberal model of individual responsibility and achievement, even as he crafted new poetic expressions of this model in order to adapt it to the moral crises of the age of imperialism.

The overarching political metaphor in much of Conrad's fiction is the late nineteenth-century sailing ship, its international crew united by neither language nor ethnicity, but only by the common struggle against the inhospitable and ultimately unfathomable sea. In *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* for instance, the narrator speaks of the "last vestige of a shattered creation . . . bearing an anguished remnant of sinful mankind through the distress, tumult, and pain of an avenging terror."[9] Similar statements pervade not only Conrad's stories, but also his essays and letters. Yet the opening sentence of another of Conrad's famous sea stories, "Youth" (1898), declares equally unambiguously that "This could have occurred nowhere but in England, where men and sea interpenetrate, so to speak – the sea entering into the life of most men, and the men knowing something or everything about the sea, in the way of amusement, of travel, or of bread-winning."[10] The contradiction between those two conceptions – the first expressing an understanding of the modern political community as a proto-existentialist entity, the second as a nationally grounded one – furnished Conrad with one of his great themes, and also stands at the heart of many of the political crises of the "age of imperialism" into which both he and Mann were born.

Simply put, Conrad displayed a lifelong interest in the foundational myths by which human beings seek to disguise the essentially arbitrary underpinnings of the social contracts that guide their lives. This theme was especially relevant to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The "scramble for Africa" had turned all the European powers into imperial states, and so revealed as dubious the national myths on which the post-Westphalian order had been built. Toward the end of his life, as heavy guns were roaring on the Western Front less than 100 miles away from Conrad's home in Kent, he dedicated one of his last novels, *The Shadow-Line* (1917), to his enlisted son: "To Borys and all others who like himself have crossed in early youth the shadow-line of their generation."[11] This cohort, however, included soldiers from India and Australia, Jamaica and South Africa, and these troops increasingly wondered for whom, exactly, they might be crossing the "shadow-line" in the trenches of Delville Wood or Gallipoli. Conrad had already anticipated

such questions twenty years earlier, and mercilessly analyzed the way in which the standard rhetoric of the day fell short of a compelling answer. *Lord Jim*, for instance, gives us Marlow's anguished attempts to trace Jim's mysterious inner workings back to the rural parsonage straight out of story-book England in which he was raised; there are also Brierly's appeals to the White Man's burden and the French lieutenant's invocation of masculine honor. But Brierly ultimately commits suicide, the lieutenant is no better than an automaton, and Marlow himself can only repeat over and over that "he was one of us."[12] Human communities, in Conrad's worldview, are marriages of convenience, formed because mutual cooperation is the best way to shield us from the destructive element in which we all find ourselves submerged. Race, nationality, and similar grand narratives are just stories that we tell to make our lives easier, which of course is why Marlow lies to the Intended at the end of *Heart of Darkness*.

The notion that our lives are made bearable only by the fictions that we tell ourselves about them stands at the heart of Mann's early work as well, from "Little Herr Friedemann" (1897) to *Death in Venice*. And while his treatment of this theme is ostensibly apolitical, recent scholarship has rightly drawn attention to the fact that the latter story, which was written shortly after the end of the so-called "Second Moroccan Crisis," can productively be read as a critique of the imperial worldview: Aschenbach's death symbolizes a defeat also of a supposedly superior European culture at the hands of Asiatic forces.[13] Hans Castorp's famous "snow epiphany" in *The Magic Mountain*, meanwhile, in which he awakens from nightmarish dreams with the resolution that *"man shall grant death no dominion over his thoughts,"* bears an unmistakable resemblance to the end of *Heart of Darkness*.[14] Like Marlow, Castorp is granted a glimpse into the void that stands at the heart not only of the modern spiritual condition, but also of modern politics, and much like Marlow, Castorp resolves to turn away from what he has seen so that life may go forward. The difference between these stories says as much about their authors as the similarities, however. The only way in which Marlow can affirm life is by lying to the Intended: a clear testament to Conrad's fundamentally skeptical worldview. Mann's skepticism is not nearly as corrosive, since Castorp resolves to remember death so as to love life even more dearly.

Of course, Castorp almost immediately forgets his own resolution, leaving the task of remembering death while celebrating life to the reader, whose attention is helpfully drawn to the passage quoted above by Mann's italics (letter-spacing in the German original). But this is yet another similarity to *Heart of Darkness*, where Marlow's last utterance is not the lie to the

Intended, but rather his narration to the small group of friends aboard the *Nellie*, a community that seemingly subsumes the reader and to whom Marlow *does* reveal Kurtz's actual last words. Both *Heart of Darkness* and *The Magic Mountain* can thus be categorized as narratives that not only tell the story of their protagonists' journey from innocence to experience, but also seek to precipitate a similar journey in their readership. They stand, in other words, as direct descendants of the great nineteenth-century tradition of the *Bildungsroman*, which the romantic critic Karl Morgenstern once defined as a type of novel that "represents the development of the hero in its beginning and progress to a certain stage of completion [and also] promotes the development of the reader to a greater extent than any other kind of novel."[15]

Needless to say, both Conrad and Mann subjected the narrative conventions of the traditional *Bildungsroman* to a number of changes as they adapted them for use in the twentieth century. Invoking Stephen Kern's definition of the modernist period as the "culture of time and space," the most appropriate way to describe these changes would indeed be to say that both authors "spatialized" what had once been a purely temporal form.[16] *Heart of Darkness*, for instance, projects the story of Marlow's intellectual and spiritual development onto a journey up the Congo River, and in *The Shadow-Line*, a line on a map becomes a potent symbol of the boundary between youth and adult existence. The point here is not that these stories align certain experiences with specific locations in the way that early modern quest narratives had done, nor even that physical displacement functions as an allegory of spiritual development. The point is, rather, that spatial movement becomes equivalent to personal growth: The "central" and "inner" stations of *Heart of Darkness*, for instance, do double duty as geographic markers of imperialism and as metapsychological signposts, and the dark heart that Marlow discovers in innermost Africa also beats within his own chest. Put slightly differently, these stories reveal to us that modernity reconfigures not just the globe but the psychic topography of the human mind, so that a journey into the depths of the imperial world system can simultaneously become a journey into the mindset that makes this system possible. Similarly, in *The Shadow-Line*, the equally heroic and absurd attempt to cross an arbitrary line on a map in the face of external forces that render all movement impossible can be read both as a timely analysis of trench warfare and as a prescient insight into the post-traumatic stress disorders to which it gave rise.

Thomas Mann's tuberculosis sanatorium spatializes temporal experience in a very similar manner. Not only minutes and hours, but also days, weeks,

and even years cease to matter on the Magic Mountain. Their place as a structuring device in Mann's novel is taken instead by Hans Castorp's movement from one dining room, lounge chair, and mentor figure to the next: not coincidentally, his seven years on the Mountain coincide with a full circuit around the sanatorium's seven dining tables. Taken together, Castorp's successive conversations with Settembrini, Naphta, and Mynheer Peeperkorn, not to mention the many other characters like Clawdia Chauchat, Joachim Ziemßen, or Hofrat Behrens, form a narrative of intellectual apprenticeship, but they also provide a kaleidoscopic overview of prewar European society. Over the course of the novel, we thus emerge not only with a fully realized picture of Hans Castorp but also with one of his world.

Since Mann hadn't actually read any Conrad by the time that he finished his best-known novel, however, connections of this kind are useful only in explaining *why* Mann took such a sudden interest in what he recognized as a kindred spirit, not in illuminating *how* the discovery of such affinities helped change the course of modern fiction. In order to study this influence, it is useful to take a brief look at the novel that Mann wrote during the first half of the 1940s, the time of his life at which he was most intensely engaged with Conrad's art, reading and rereading the older man's stories every night before going to bed. This novel was his late masterpiece *Doctor Faustus: The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn as Told by a Friend*.

The subtitle of *Doctor Faustus* already reveals a vital clue to the influence that Conrad exerted over the novel, for unlike virtually all of Mann's other compositions, *Doctor Faustus* employs first-person narration and a frame narrative rather than the third-person limited voice. As a young man, Mann had occasionally made use of the first-person voice, for instance in the early short story "The Clown" (1897). But he quickly abandoned this approach, because it interfered with what would become his signature narrative device, employed to great effect in *Death in Venice* as well as in *The Magic Mountain*. In both of those works, the narrator affects what might best be called a "benevolently ironic" tone, entering freely into the mind of the protagonist while simultaneously maintaining some distance from his motives. This benevolent irony became an important part of Mann's social critique: in both stories, the narrator lays bare the protagonist's central character flaws and then insinuates that these are connected to larger cultural problems. But in both cases, the narrator does not condemn outright, choosing instead to adopt a more sympathetic perspective.

Joseph Conrad, on the other hand, is known for his use of the first-person voice and of frame narratives, techniques most famously employed in the

so-called "Marlow tales" ("Youth," *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, and *Chance*). The "oral" character of these works is so strong that more than one critic has turned to Walter Benjamin's famous essay on "The Storyteller" in order to elucidate them.[17] While Benjamin's storytellers are unambiguous bearers of "counsel" and among the last remaining examples of "the righteous," however, the ontological status of Conrad's narrators is much harder to describe. Figures such as Marlow are not "unreliable" as such, for the reader has no overt reason to mistrust them. But the dark truths that they uncover about human nature gnaw away at their authority, and not for nothing do they usually tell their stories at nightfall. If "irony" can be defined as an ambiguity in the relationship between signifier and signified, then Conrad's use of such irony is clearly much more subversive than the one we customarily associate with Thomas Mann.

This subversion of narrative authority reaches an extreme in *Under Western Eyes*, the 1911 novel that fascinated Mann more than any other as he was writing *Doctor Faustus*. The narrator of this story is an English language teacher living in Switzerland, through whose titular eyes the story of the young Russian nationalist Razumov is focalized. The teacher confesses his limitations from the very outset, admitting, "I have no comprehension of the Russian character. The illogicality of their attitude, the arbitrariness of their conclusions, the frequency of the exceptional, should present no difficulty to a student of many grammars; but there must be something else in the way."[18] As the novel progresses, these limitations become increasingly important, as we recognize that the teacher is, in a sense, Razumov's antipode, mirroring the Russian's character deficiencies with equally strong yet opposite shortcomings. Razumov, the quintessential "Russian soul," is impulsive, irrational, and idealistic. The teacher, however, the representative of "Western civilization," isn't merely deliberate, rational, and realistic, but rather overly cautious, pedantic, and unimaginative. As a result, *Under Western Eyes* reads as a critique not only of the Russian national character, but also of the Western enlightened liberalism with which it was frequently contrasted at the time.

Mann was drawn to precisely this aspect of Conrad's craft when he wrote *Doctor Faustus*. His narrator, Serenus Zeitblom, resembles the teacher of languages not only in several autobiographical details, but also in many essential character traits.[19] However, as if to illustrate his contention that "there are not two Germanys, a good one and a bad one, but only one, whose best turned into evil through devilish cunning," Mann turns Conrad's opposition between the Russian and Western cultural spheres in upon itself, making his narrator, Zeitblom, and his protagonist, Leverkühn,

complementary representatives of modern Germany.[20] The culture that gave birth to Zeitblom's humanism, in other words, is the same culture responsible for Leverkühn's anti-humanism. In many ways, *Doctor Faustus* thus presents a radicalized version of the message already inscribed in *The Magic Mountain*, and Mann's ability to push himself to this extreme owes a heavy debt to his study of Conrad's novelistic method.

Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka

The formal links between Mann's works and those of his slightly younger contemporary Franz Kafka were never as strong as those between Mann and Joseph Conrad. Indeed, Mann and Kafka are often depicted as polar opposites of one another: the former an author of long novels with epic ambitions, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, and the de facto face of German literary culture for much of the first half of the twentieth century; the other an author of fragments and experimental compositions, virtually unknown during his life and the paradigmatic example of what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have so influentially called a "minor literature."[21]

The truth is more complex. Kafka took early note of Thomas Mann, and in 1904 sent a glowing endorsement of the recently published novella *Tonio Kröger* (1903) to his friend Max Brod, noting specifically that "what is new about *Tonio Kröger* . . . is the peculiar and beneficial love of the antithetical."[22] While Kafka does not elaborate, it seems obvious that the antithesis in question refers to the novella's central conflict between artistic and bourgeois modes of existence. Indeed, several of Kafka's stories (most notably, "The Metamorphosis" of 1915) can productively be read in terms of the simultaneous fascination with and repulsion by "ordinary life," which we more commonly associate with Mann's literary oeuvre. Nor were the appeals of Mann's representative existence entirely lost on Kafka, whose surviving graphic doodles include an attempt to forge the older writer's signature, presumably immediately after encountering it in the guest book of a no less emotionally resonant place than Goethe's house in Weimar. From a much later letter to Max Brod, we also know that Kafka read Mann's 1917 essay "Palestrina," calling it a "wonderful stew which, however, one would rather admire than eat, on account of the many hairs that float in it."[23] Again, Kafka does not go into particulars, but since "Palestrina" belongs to the series of wartime texts in which Mann was trying to defend his increasingly untenable conservative nationalism, we can nevertheless venture a good guess as to the exact nature of these "hairs."

Mann first encountered his younger contemporary in August 1921, when the well-known reciting artist Ludwig Hardt, a friend of Kafka's, read him several excerpts from the 1918 collection *A Country Doctor*. Mann was initially not impressed, noting in his diary, "fairly strange. Otherwise boring."[24] As we have already seen, however, the early 1920s were a period of intellectual upheaval for him, and when a small publishing house in Berlin posthumously printed Kafka's novel *The Trial* in 1925, he took it upon himself to warmly promote it in several newspapers. Without access to Mann's diaries of this period, it is impossible to know for certain what triggered this reversal, but we can venture a guess by looking at an introductory essay that Mann wrote for the second American edition of Kafka's *The Castle*, which Alfred A. Knopf published in 1941. Much as he had done an invaluable service to Joseph Conrad's reputation in Germany fifteen years earlier, by lending his name to the title page of Fischer's *The Secret Agent*, Mann now helped launch Kafka's career in English. For it was this new edition that started a veritable craze for the deceased author in America.

Ironically, Mann himself would become one of the victims of this craze, as Kafka rapidly began to eclipse him in literary reputation over the course of the next decade. In 1941, however, he was still secure enough in his own standing that he could introduce Kafka with an epithet drawn from one of his own stories, writing about the younger man that "he was a dreamer; but in his dreaming he did not yearn after a 'blue flower' blossoming somewhere in a mystical sphere; he yearned after the 'blisses of the commonplace.'"[25] As Mann acknowledges in the next sentence, the phrase "blisses of the commonplace" is borrowed from *Tonio Kröger*, the very same novella that Kafka so admired. It would thus be possible to dismiss this remark as a rather arrogant example of pop psychology: informed of Kafka's love of the story by their mutual acquaintance Max Brod, Mann defined the younger writer through his putative identification with the fictional Tonio Kröger. However, the simultaneous presence of a reference to the poet Novalis, one of the key figures in the otherworldly, conservative, and nationalist German romantic movement, lends a deeper meaning to the passage. Twenty years earlier, in his lecture "On the German Republic," Mann had already invoked Novalis as an antipode to Walt Whitman, arguing that Germany's future would hinge on its ability to reinterpret its romantic legacy in the light of Whitman's egalitarian poetics. By similarly contrasting Kafka's supposed "love of the ordinary" to the search for transcendent meaning in a "mystical sphere," Mann thus recruits the younger writer into the struggle for liberal democracy.

What Mann admired in Kafka, however, is in many ways the exact opposite of what he admired in Conrad. In Conrad, Mann discovered a comrade-in-arms, a writer whose method was steeped in the nineteenth century and who nevertheless carried realist techniques and time-honored genres such as the *Bildungsroman* forward into the twentieth. In Kafka, on the other hand, he found access to contemporary literary movements that he feared might leave his own earlier works in the dust. Mann's greatest debt to Conrad, furthermore, was analytical in nature and derived from his careful study of Conrad's unreliable narrators and experiments with points of view. His debt to Kafka, on the other hand, can best be described as metaphysical; it relates to a revolution within the literary subgenre with which Mann's name is most intimately connected, namely the "novel of ideas."

To illustrate this point, it is useful to compare *The Castle* to Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. Both feature protagonists who are, fundamentally, truth-seekers, and both search for the truth amid an isolated and somewhat eccentric community. Both novels, furthermore, employ a vertically striated symbolic hierarchy: in Mann, a strenuous ascent leads from the "flat country" to the Berghof sanatorium, and the meadow where Hans Castorp has his epiphany is higher up still, while Kafka's eponymous castle towers over the village below on a *Schlossberg*, or "castle mount."[26] But "truth," in Mann, has a very different meaning than it does in Kafka. For one thing, Hans Castorp does eventually arrive at some comprehension of it, even if he forgets his lesson almost immediately. Kafka's protagonist "K.," on the other hand, never makes it into the castle; in fact, it is only because of some unspecified technicality that he is even allowed to live out his life in its vicinity. Even more importantly, Mann's truth, though phrased in abstract terms, arises from a specific historic and intellectual context, which the novel dramatizes in loving detail: the imperative to grant death no dominion over the thoughts of man speaks directly to the situation of interwar Europe. Truth in Kafka, by contrast, lacks such a concrete frame of reference, a fact that makes his novel both frustratingly opaque and tantalizingly ambiguous. Is the castle, for instance, a symbol of divine authority, as Mann himself apparently believes? Or, by contrast, is it a proto-existentialist cypher for the meaninglessness of modern existence? Is it perhaps a sly parody of the byzantine bureaucracy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire? Or rather a portent of totalitarian dictatorship?

Mann's preface makes clear that he perfectly understood this fundamental difference between his art and that of Kafka. Mann's other writings from the 1940s similarly document his growing conviction that the younger writer's

embrace of metaphysical ambiguity, not his own culturally overdetermined realism, would come to define modernist literature. Indeed, the late 1940s and early 1950s were the period in which modernism ceased being merely an aesthetic practice and instead became a concept: the era of Clement Greenberg and Theodor W. Adorno, of Harry Levin and of Hugh Kenner. "Abstraction" and "autonomy" were the watchwords of the day, and they undeniably fit Kafka's oeuvre better than they did Mann's. As early as 1949, Harry Levin changed the title of his popular Harvard lecture course "Proust, Joyce, and Mann" to "Proust, Joyce, and Kafka," and shortly thereafter, Mann wryly observed that he was now regarded as a "major, but not that major" writer in America.[27]

Mann tried to adapt to this development, and indeed had begun to make decisive changes to his craft as early as 1929, when he won the Nobel Prize for Literature. His earlier stories had all had roots in personal experience. Mann would begin with characters and events that he knew well, then build them out into something far more comprehensive. Thus, a brief and rather inconsequential visit to his wife, Katja, in a Davos lung sanatorium could blossom into *The Magic Mountain*. The works that he wrote during the 1930s and 1940s, however, were composed in a different fashion. The four novels of the *Joseph* tetralogy (1933–43), the comical novel *Lotte in Weimar* (1939), the novellas *The Transposed Heads* (1940) and *The Tables of the Law* (1944), as well as his mighty *Doctor Faustus*, all adapt pre-existing stories – or, to be more precise, they adopt pre-existing *myths*, frequently of a religious kind (the most obvious exception is *Lotte in Weimar*, which adapts a secular national myth, not a religious one).

However, Mann never went quite as far as Kafka, much less to such radical extremes as Joyce did in *Finnegans Wake* (1939). *Doctor Faustus*, to name only the most obvious example, utilizes mythical materials not in order to tell archetypal or polysemic stories, as some of the major modernists such as Joyce (and Kafka) did, but rather to deliver a historically specific message: it is as undeniably a novel about Germany during the years leading up to the Second World War as *The Magic Mountain* was a novel about Europe during the years leading up to the First.[28] Mann, in other words, reached for a mythical method without delivering what midcentury critics regarded as the great value of such a modernist technique: a flexible narrative capable of giving an existential meaning to an age that increasingly conceived of itself as "absurd" rather than historically determined. As a result, Mann discovered that even his most intelligent readers frequently encountered his late novels with incomprehension. The fourteen-year-old Susan Sontag, for instance,

who revered *The Magic Mountain* with an almost troubling intensity, couldn't make heads or tails of the allegorical structure of *Doctor Faustus*. At the other end of the spectrum, Harry Levin, who had boosted Mann's career over the course of the previous decade, now abandoned him as insufficiently advanced in style.

Over the course of the last thirty years, however, the critical consensus on Kafka, and with him on modernism in general, has shifted. Access to the author's notebooks and diaries, as well as new contextualizing studies of the personal, linguistic, and religious communities in which he moved, have led to the realization that the seemingly "universal" materials out of which novels like *The Castle* appear to be constructed, in reality have referents that are as historically particular and as culturally determined as anything that we find in Mann's fiction.[29] The notion, first propounded by T.S. Eliot, that the mythic elements of modernism have a kind of totalizing function, and that they provide us with the kinds of grand narrative that our increasingly fragmented personal experiences are no longer capable of delivering, seems increasingly less tenable. Instead, we have come to realize that mythos and everyday experience are dialectically intertwined rather than oppositional to one another; Joyce's *Ulysses*, for example, can just as productively be read as a lovingly detailed depiction of everyday life in a colonial society as it can be seen as a modern retelling of Homeric mythology. In the same way, the fragmentary nature of Kafka's stories, as well as the incongruous behavior of his characters, now seem to us perfectly logical expressions of the multiple "masks" that Kafka was forced to wear as a Prague-German Jew.

Mann's introduction to *The Castle*, like the one that he penned for *The Secret Agent* fifteen years earlier, is thus a literary artifact that looks exceedingly improbable on first sight, but yields a deeper relevance under close scrutiny. We tend to think of Joseph Conrad, Thomas Mann, and Franz Kafka as isolated intellectual giants, laboring in their separate solitudes to give us their unique and unmistakable visions of the modern world. But as the case of the especially long-lived and well-connected Thomas Mann demonstrates with special clarity, their unique styles can instead be viewed as common and mutually informed responses to the question of how human beings might make a home for themselves amid a period of violent social and political upheaval. Like all artistic movements, modernism was an art of community in both grammatical senses of that term: at once an art taking human communities as its point of reference, and an art born from the community of its practitioners.

Notes

1 An English translation of this preface was published as Thomas Mann, "Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*," *Past Masters and Other Papers*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter (London: Seeker, 1933). On the details of Mann's Conrad reception, see Anthony Fothergill, *Secret Sharers: Joseph Conrad's Cultural Reception in Germany* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 67–98.

2 The classic formulation of this binary can be found in Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

3 Thomas Mann, "On the German Republic," trans. Lawrence Rainey, *Modernism/Modernity*, 14/1 (January 2007), 109–32 (at 110).

4 Mann changed his mind about Whitman after reading him in a new translation by Hans Reisiger during the spring of 1922. Prior to this formative encounter, he had mentioned the American poet only twice in his letters, both times with negative associations. See Robert K. Martin, "Walt Whitman and Thomas Mann," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, 4 (Summer 1986), 1–6.

5 Mann, "Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*," 246.

6 *The Letters of Thomas Mann*, selected and trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), 628–29.

7 I borrow the phrase "modernism's queer family values" from the title of the dissertation that eventually became Barry McCrea, *In the Company of Strangers: Family and Narrative in Dickens, Conan Doyle, Joyce and Proust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

8 Rebecca L. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 2.

9 Joseph Conrad, *The Nigger of the "Narcissus" and Typhoon & Other Stories* (London: J.M. Dent, 1923), 54.

10 "Youth," *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Joseph Conrad: Youth, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether*, ed. Owen Knowles (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 11.

11 Joseph Conrad, *The Shadow-Line* (London: J.M. Dent, 1923), v.

12 *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Joseph Conrad: Lord Jim*, ed. J.H. Stape and Ernest W. Sullivan II (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 20.

13 See, for instance, Todd Kontje, *The Cambridge Introduction to Thomas Mann* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 52.

14 Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*, trans. John E. Woods (New York: Knopf, 1995), 487, emphasis in original.

15 Karl Morgenstern, "On the Nature of the *Bildungsroman*," trans. Tobias Boes, *PMLA*, 124 (2009), 647–59 (at 654).

16 Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

17 Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 108–09.

18 Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (London: J.M. Dent, 1923), 4.

19 For a discussion of these details, see Julian B. Kaye, "Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* and Mann's *Doctor Faustus*," *Comparative Literature*, 9/1 (Winter 1957), 60–65.

20 Thomas Mann, "Germany and the Germans," *Thomas Mann's Addresses Delivered at the Library of Congress, 1942–1949* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1963), 64.

21 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). The critic who bears greater responsibility than any other for establishing this dichotomy is Lukács. See, e.g., Georg Lukács, "Franz Kafka or Thomas Mann?", *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John Mander and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), 47–92.

22 Franz Kafka, *Letters to Friends, Family, and Editors*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Schocken, 1977), 19 (translation modified).

23 Kafka, *Letters to Friends, Family, and Editors*, 155. All three of these references to Mann are discussed at greater length in Bernd Hamacher, "'Wieviel Brüderlichkeit bedeutet Zeitgenossenschaft ohne weiteres!' Franz Kafka und Thomas Mann – Versuch eines 'Kulturtransfers,'" in Claudia Liebrand and Franziska Schößler (eds.), *Textverkehr: Kafka und die Tradition* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2004), 361–84 (at 362).

24 Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1918–1921*, ed. Peter de Mendelssohn (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1979), 542.

25 Thomas Mann, "Homage," introduction to Franz Kafka, *The Castle*, trans. Edwin Muir and Willa Muir (New York: Knopf, 1941), vii.

26 See, in this context, Margaret Church, "The Isolated Community: Kafka's Village and Thomas Mann's Davos," *University of Dayton Review*, 13/3 (Spring 1979), 105–12.

27 Anthony Heilbut, *Thomas Mann: Eros and Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 483–84.

28 Many critics have nevertheless radically underestimated the complex nature of Mann's national allegory, which was informed, as I already discussed above, by Joseph Conrad's attempts to "think beyond the nation" without letting go of the concept of nationalism altogether. For a recent exposition of this problem, along with a thorough critique of previous readings of *Doctor Faustus*, see Eckhard Goebel, *Esmeralda: Deutsch-französische Verhältnisse in Thomas Manns Doktor Faustus* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015).

29 For two important examples of such studies, see Mark Anderson, *Kafka's Clothes: Ornament and Aestheticism in the Habsburg Fin de Siècle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), and Scott Spector, *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Pablo Picasso, Gertrude Stein, and Guillaume Apollinaire

WILLARD BOHN

As Antoine Compagnon notes, a fundamental disagreement exists as to the meaning of "modern," "modernity," and "modernism" in the English, German, and French languages.[1] How one chooses to define them, and the experience they describe, vary to some extent from one country to the next. Similarly, there is a lack of consensus about the period these terms delimit. Does it begin with the publication of Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal* (1857), as some critics believe, or with the creation of Picasso's "Les demoiselles D'Avignon" (1907)? Is there such a thing as a postmodern condition, as Jean-François Lyotard and others insist, and if so, when does the modernist period end? While the answers to these questions differ from critic to critic, the term "modernism" has come to be widely accepted. Compagnon identifies five characteristics in particular: "The superstition of the new, the religion of the future, the mania for theory, the appeal to mass culture, and the passion for repudiation."[2] Although the individuals examined in this chapter were influenced by popular culture, they were neither futurists nor repudiationists. And while Apollinaire and Stein engaged in a certain amount of theorizing, Picasso steadfastly refused to discuss his art. What united the three of them was their passion for experimentation and their devotion to cubist principles. Because Apollinaire succumbed to the Spanish flu two days before the First World War ended, the following discussion focuses on the period 1900–18. Since all three individuals were destined to cast a long shadow over the twentieth century, it is tempting, as Christopher Butler does, to identify this period as "early modernism."[3]

Cubism itself was not a movement so much as a simultaneous search for a new way of expressing reality. The cubists were not an organized group with a single leader but rather a loose federation of artists pursuing a common goal. Reacting against the realistic aesthetics of the previous century, they decomposed objects, people, and scenes into their different parts to produce a fragmented, two-dimensional picture that, they argued, was truer to reality.

Despite the absence of a central directorate, cubism exerted a disproportionate influence on modern art and literature. Indeed, John Golding observes, it "was perhaps the most important and certainly the most complete and radical artistic revolution since the Renaissance."[4] While Apollinaire was never fond of the name, which was originally coined by hostile critics, he accepted it on behalf of the cubist painters in 1911.[5]

Although Picasso, Stein, and Apollinaire were involved in radically different projects, so seriously did they adhere to cubist principles that one is tempted to view them as informal collaborators. Not only were they familiar with each other's work, moreover, they also frequently socialized with each other. Interestingly, the fact that they were all foreigners lends credence to Paris's reputation as a crucible of the arts. Picasso was born in Málaga and raised in Barcelona, Stein came from Pennsylvania and grew up in California, and Apollinaire was born in Rome but raised on the Côte d'Azur. Apollinaire first discovered Picasso's art at Berthe Weill's gallery on the rue Victor Massé, during a group show that ran from October 24 to November 20, 1904.[6] The fact that he noted the Spanish painter's address on a copy of the catalogue is intriguing to say the least. Although the two men may even have met then, according to several firsthand accounts, the meeting probably took place in February 1905. Apollinaire seems to have immediately recognized Picasso's genius, for he published two articles on his art in April and May.[7] In addition, a strong bond was forged between them that endured as long as they both were living.

Arriving in Paris in 1903, Gertrude Stein established a salon at 27 rue de Fleurus, which Picasso and Apollinaire both frequented. Evoking the period 1903–07 in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, she recalls that her brother Leo Stein first encountered a picture by Picasso in Clovis Sagot's gallery on the rue Laffitte.[8] Intrigued by the artist, he not only purchased a painting but also visited his studio in the Bateau-Lavoir. Since Gertrude Stein and Picasso "immediately understood each other," she confides, the artist agreed to paint her picture. Because he was still painting from models, this required, incredibly, "some eighty or ninety sittings." Picasso introduced Apollinaire to his American patron, who invited him to frequent her weekly salon. Impressed by his "extraordinarily brilliant" conversation, Stein found the poet "very attractive and very interesting." In May 1907, aided by Picasso, Apollinaire managed to meet a young artist named Marie Laurencin, who soon became his lover.[9] The first time she accompanied him to the rue de Fleurus, Stein thought her very interesting too. Together, she recalled, the two of them made "an extraordinary pair."

Unfortunately, except for a letter or two, few concrete traces are left of the fascinating exchanges that took place between Picasso, Stein, and Apollinaire (see Figure 33.1). Most of what remains is unavoidably anecdotal. Nevertheless, the legendary banquet in honor of the Douanier Rousseau illustrates the conviviality and high spirits that characterized their relationship.[10] Held in Picasso's studio in November 1908, and preceded by numerous aperitifs in a nearby café, the banquet was a boisterous affair from the very beginning. Between various songs and frequent toasts, Apollinaire recited several poems celebrating Rousseau, the latter played his fiddle, and Marie Laurencin began dancing wildly. The evening's highlight was provided by André Salmon and Maurice Cremnitz, who simulated delirium tremens by chewing soap and foaming at the mouth. Dressed in evening clothes for the occasion, Gertrude Stein, her brother, and Alice B. Toklas took Rousseau home in a cab.

Pablo Picasso

Writing in 1938, Stein attributed the emergence of cubist painting to three different causes.[11] In her opinion, the bold new style reflected changes in contemporary reality. Because the way of living had changed, she explained,

33.1 Legendary friendships: painting by Marie Laurencin, "Apollinaire et ses amis."

each thing had become as important as any other thing. In addition, people were adopting a skeptical attitude toward physical reality, which was increasingly seen as superficial. Since art was invading life in general, finally, framing a single slice was no longer felt to be appropriate: "Pictures commenced to want to leave their frames."[12] Apollinaire made essentially the same comment twenty-five years earlier when he noted that modern paintings tended to incorporate their frames into the picture. Francis Picabia writes his titles on his paintings, he explained in 1913, because they "act as an interior frame, functioning in the same way as real objects and precisely copied lettering in works by Picasso."[13] Art was no longer the same, therefore, because the world was no longer the same. Turning their backs on the previous century, Picasso and his colleagues strove to develop a style that was more modern and thus more real.

Although Apollinaire's book was concerned with the cubist painters, its title was seriously misleading. Hoping to profit from the publicity surrounding cubism, the publisher printed the subtitle in large black letters: *Les peintres cubistes*, and the title in a much smaller font: *Méditations esthétiques*. Thus the volume was intended to be a poetic celebration of cubism rather than a critical analysis. Stein begins her book on Picasso with a humorous observation: whereas previous artists insisted on painting with a model before them, she states, their successors refuse even to look at a model. While this does not describe Picasso's Blue and Rose paintings (or her own portrait), she is obviously thinking of the cubists. "The difference between Cubism and earlier painting," Apollinaire explains, "is that it is not an imitative art, but a conceptual art, which reaches up to the heights of creation."[14] The scene the artist depicts has no corollary in nature; it exists solely in his or her mind. Not surprisingly, Picasso receives considerable attention in *Aesthetic Meditations*. Since it incorporates several articles published previously, much of the discussion is devoted to his Blue and Rose periods. Not until the second half does Apollinaire pay homage to his cubist muse, and even then most of his comments center on the invention of collage. That he understood the extent of Picasso's stupendous achievement, nevertheless, is immediately evident. "Then severely, he questioned the universe," Apollinaire remarks, alluding to the metaphysical dimension of cubism.[15] The next paragraph evokes the dionysiac aspect of Picasso's inspiration: "Surprise laughs wildly in the purity of light."

As many critics have remarked, "Les demoiselles d'Avignon" (The Maidens from Avignon) marks an important turning point in Picasso's career. Ironically, the "maidens" were actually prostitutes who inhabited a brothel

on the Carrer d'Avinyó in Barcelona. Although the work initiates the artist's cubist period, it is not a cubist painting itself. Its story is similar to that of his portrait of Gertrude Stein, which he left unfinished at the end of 1906.[16] Annoyed that the head was giving him so much trouble, Picasso painted it out. Returning from Spain early the following year, he painted a new head from memory. While he was absent, however, he made a series of exploratory drawings for "The Maidens from Avignon," which he actually painted in 1907. Although Stein's portrait is not as striking as the latter picture, both are clearly transitional works. Unlike the group picture, which retains the pinkish flesh tones characteristic of the Rose Period, the portrait is bathed in a murky brown gravy. Stein is reduced to a massive silhouette and her face to a mask with pronounced eyelids – like the two central women in "The Maidens from Avignon."

Their unusual appearance reflects Picasso's recent interest in exotic sculpture, which exposed him to new ways of looking at art. Modeled on two ancient Iberian statuettes, all five women originally resembled the two in the center.[17] Seduced by "Negro" sculpture during Spring 1907, Picasso painted one woman's face brown and modeled two others on African masks.[18] His revolutionary treatment of form and volume was equally startling. In contrast to Stein's portrait, which was basically realistic, he reduced the three "African" women to geometrical caricatures. Tilted at a bizarre angle, the triangular table in the foreground appears to defy the law of gravity. Suspended at the upper left, a disembodied hand seems to belong to no one in particular.

With "The Maidens from Avignon," Picasso ventured into uncharted territory. Like a number of the artist's friends, Georges Braque was horrified when he first saw the painting. To be sure, it was far from finished, but the ideas it embodied were strangely exciting. Art would obviously never be the same. In particular, Peter Gay remarks, the painting constitutes "a momentous modernist statement about the autonomy of art."[19] Picasso did not immediately capitalize on his revolutionary creation, however. For the next year or so, he experimented with ideas associated with African sculpture and the art of Paul Cézanne. Equally captivated by Cézanne, Braque abandoned fauvism and adopted a style that partially resembled Picasso's. Before long, the two men became close companions, meeting daily to talk about art and to examine each other's paintings. Returning from a summer spent in L'Estaque, a small fishing village near Marseilles, Braque exhibited a series of landscapes and still lifes that would earn cubism its name. In works such as "Houses at L'Estaque" (1908), the buildings are drastically simplified. No windows or doors or chimneys are visible. Nothing remains but a series of

polyhedrons painted a uniform golden brown and jumbled together like a pile of boulders. The scene's arid austerity is only slightly relieved by several trees, which have been rapidly brushed in. Despite the painting's title, it is not a study of a village but rather of geometrical forms.

In essence, Braque had succeeded in discovering a new language, a new way of representing reality. He systematized Picasso's awkward attempts at geometrization in "The Maidens from Avignon" and introduced a certain discipline. All this was not lost on Picasso, who produced several similar paintings the following year. "Houses on a Hill" (1909), for example, portrays a similar jumble of polyhedral buildings painted a golden brown. Not only are the houses crowded together in both pictures, but they are also crowded into the frame, a feeling that emphasizes the constructed, artificial quality of the composition. Little space is left for them to breathe. These works mark the beginning of cubism's analytical phase, when the artists reduced objects (and people) to their constituent parts, which they displayed on overlapping planes and invited viewers to reassemble again. As Apollinaire famously remarked, "Picasso studies an object like a surgeon dissecting a cadaver."[20] Working together, Picasso and Braque progressed at a rapid pace. Before long, their styles were virtually indistinguishable from each other's. As they managed to refine their geometrical language, their works became increasingly two-dimensional, fragmented, and harder to read. Vanishing perspective was replaced by multiple perspective, and color was banished altogether. By the summer of 1910, some of the paintings were nearly completely abstract. As the objects they supposedly depicted became progressively obscured, the viewer's attention shifted from the paintings' subjects to the works themselves. Inviting spectators to admire the ways in which they were constructed, the paintings eventually became their own subjects.

To counteract this tendency, Picasso and Braque began to leave a few visual clues, which reasserted the realistic origins of the painting. Since they were adding features instead of removing them, this development marks the beginning of synthetic cubism. A pipe, a bottle, and part of a glass signal that the scene is situated in a café. The presence of a circle and six parallel lines indicates that the object is a guitar. "It can be argued," Butler remarks, "that once modernist painting abandons the recording of perceptions, it becomes a language of signs."[21] This is certainly true of synthetic cubism and cubist collage. In 1911, the artists began to incorporate letters and words into their paintings. The following year they added everyday objects, including postage stamps, bits of newspaper, and pieces of wallpaper. While art historians distinguish between *papiers collés* ("pasted papers") and *collage* ("pasting"),

the principles that animate them, like the terms themselves, are virtually identical. The purpose of the pasted papers, Picasso confided,

> was to give the idea that different textures can enter into a composition to become the reality of the painting that competes with the reality in nature. We tried to get rid of "trompe l'oeil" ["visual deception"] to find a "trompe l'esprit" ["intellectual deception"] ... If a piece of newspaper can become a bottle, that gives us something to think about in connection with both newspapers and bottles, too. This displaced object has entered a universe for which it was not made and where it retains, in a measure, its strangeness. And this strangeness was what we wanted to make people think about because we were quite aware that our world was becoming very strange and not exactly reassuring.[22]

As this excerpt illustrates, Picasso enjoyed playing with viewers' expectations, combining different media and confounding visual and verbal frames of reference, as in *Still Life with Chair Caning* (1912), which, enclosed by an oval frame made of rope, depicts a typical café scene (Figure 33.2). Within the oval, which represents a pedestal table, the first three letters of *journal*

33.2 Framing expectations: composition by Picasso, "Still Life with Chair Caning." © 2016 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

("newspaper") are juxtaposed with slices of lemon, a knife, a pipe, a wine glass, and a realistic chair seat. The fact that the seat is visible suggests the table has a glass top. Although Picasso could have employed actual chair caning, he has applied a piece of oilcloth decorated to look like a chair seat. Originally painted by somebody else, the image has been hijacked and made to serve another purpose. It deceives the spectator not only visually, therefore, but intellectually as well. Rather than a picture, the image is a picture of a picture. What looks like a realistic gesture is subverted on two different levels.

Gertrude Stein

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the individuals examined in this chapter were widely thought to be incomprehensible. Today Picasso and Apollinaire have joined the pantheon of artistic greats and are "understood" in relation to major developments in cultural history, but Gertrude Stein remains elusive. Her texts "reject any kind of edifying reading," Claude Grimal insists; "there is no way out and no end to them."[23] As much as anything, this is a testimony to Stein's determination not to compromise, not to waver from the difficult task she set herself. Fascinated by words, their subtle properties, and their ability to combine in unsuspected ways, she engaged in an endless series of poetic experiments. Not surprisingly, given her close association with Picasso, her works have frequently been compared to cubist painting. Some critics claim they closely approximate what the artist was doing at the same time. Others refuse to see the faintest similarity between the two and deny that her compositions are examples of any design, let alone literary cubism. Indeed, they refuse to believe there is such a thing as literary cubism at all. Admittedly, since literature and art employ two different media, it is impossible for them to duplicate each other's achievements exactly. Nevertheless, a number of poets – including Stein and Apollinaire – attempted to imitate Picasso and his colleagues. The most successful ones managed to create meaningful parallels and analogies with cubist painting.[24]

In 1930, Stein published a bilingual collection of ten poetic portraits that caused a stir among the Parisian avant-garde.[25] Thanking her for sending him a copy of *Dix portraits*, Max Jacob, who was a cubist poet and one of Picasso's closest companions, wrote: "Your astounding book is really new ... Sublime experiments! The words arise from far away and are even more sublime and revealing! ... How photographic it all is. That's what true literary cubism

looks like."[26] One of the poems in the collection was entitled "Guillaume Apollinaire." Although some of the others were considerably longer, it consisted of just four enigmatic lines:

> Give known or pin ware,
> Fancy teeth, gas strips.
> Elbow elect, sour stout pore, pore caesar, pour state at.
> Leave eye lessons I. Leave I. Lessons. I. Leave I lessons, I.

Singling out this portrait in particular, Jacob added: "It is all truer than true, far from any caricature and so cubistically poetic." While that may or may not be true, Stein's poetry strikes many readers as completely abstract. "Guillaume Apollinaire" is filled with floating signifiers that not only have no anchors but also seem to be unrelated. The poem's significance resides not so much in its images, one discovers, but in the sounds, rhythms, and concepts it embodies. Fortunately, like the works Picasso was painting around 1910, it contains occasional clues that help the reader to fill in the portrait. The fact that "fancy teeth" approximates the French word *fantaisie*, as Claude Grimal points out, is crucial.[27] Exploiting numerous puns and frequent wordplay, the poem evokes Apollinaire's love of fantasy as well as his melancholy nature ("pore Caesar").

The triple refrain at the end of the poem is more difficult to decipher. On the one hand, it may be a question of the sons ("les sons") of Levi ("leave eye") in the Old Testament, who aided the priests in the temple. According to this interpretation, Apollinaire would be portrayed as a priest devoted to the service of Apollo. On the other hand, celebrating his poetic gifts, the phrase could also mean something like "je laisse des leçons [en poésie]" ("I leave [poetic] lessons"). Alternatively, assuming that Stein is speaking rather than Apollinaire, she could be describing her own poetic mission. Unfortunately, Georges Hugnet and Virgil Thomson, who provided the French translation, failed to grasp the mechanism that generated the first line. On closer examination, one perceives that the vowels and consonants echo the poet's name. Alternating between French and English pronunciations, the line "Give known or pin ware" follows the phonetic progression: Gui (ll) aume A p(oll)in aire. Adding and/or suppressing letters as necessary, Stein sought to create a playful linguistic identity for the poet, whose real name was Wilhelm de Kostrowitzky. What better place to begin than with his sonorous *nom de plume*? Adopted at the beginning of his career, it summarized his aspirations, his personal image, and even his aesthetics. And as with him, it is easy to understand the fascination Stein exerted on

her entire generation. It is also easy to understand why she is sometimes listed among the precursors of the Dada movement. Most readers find her poetry exceptionally difficult. Hermetic and assertive at the same time, it conceals a keen intelligence hidden behind a calculated incoherence.

Stein experimented with a number of different styles over the years. In contrast to the short lines and staccato cadence of "Guillaume Apollinaire," she cultivated a long, rolling rhythm and very long sentences. This is the style she is best known for. Above all, Stein explained, she wished to "work in the excitedness of pure being ... To get back that intensity into language."[28] To accomplish this goal, she adopted what was basically a phenomenological approach, stripping words of their baggage and subjecting them to intense scrutiny. As William Carlos Williams notes, she went "systematically to work smashing every connotation that words have ever had, in order to get them back clean."[29] Published in Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Work* in August 1912, her portrait of Picasso illustrates her method perfectly, as in her first two paragraphs:

> One whom some were certainly following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were certainly following was one who was charming. One whom some were following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were following was one who was certainly completely charming.
>
> Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one working and was one bringing out of himself then something. Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one bringing out of himself then something that was coming to be a heavy thing, a solid thing and a complete thing.[30]

The reader is impressed not by the portrait of Picasso so much as by the incantatory quality of the words, rhythmically echoing themselves and combining in myriad ways.

One of the first things Stein ever wrote, as she relates in "Composition as Explanation," was a short story about an African American girl entitled *Melanctha* (1909): "I knew nothing of a continuous present," she explains, "but it came naturally to me to make one, it was simple it was clear to me and nobody knew why it was done like that, I did not myself although naturally to me it was natural."[31] Immersing herself (and her character) in the present moment, Stein focused on the moment itself to the exclusion of all else. Having perfected her continuous technique, she went on to write *The Making of Americans* in the same style for about a thousand pages. This, then, is one of the devices that drives the portrait of Picasso. Ironically, although

the entire portrait is written in the past tense, she succeeds in creating a continuous narrative present. According to L.C. Breunig, this is one of the hallmarks of cubist poetry. The widespread use of the present tense, he explains, is analogous to the elimination of the third dimension in cubist painting.[32] As Stein points out in "Composition as Explanation," much of the portrait's effect is created by a second device: repetition. The words possess a hypnotic quality that transcends time and space – especially when they are read aloud. Proceeding sentence by sentence, she repeats the initial statement over and over but with a slight modification each time. For this reason, progress tends to be fairly leisurely.

As Wendy Steiner observes of "Composition as Explanation," the text is composed largely of declarative sentences.[33] The portrait begins with four assertions of the artist's charm, Ulla E. Dydo adds, each of which begins with "one" and ends with "charming."[34] This creates a kind of informal refrain. Stein varies the position of certain words – or omits them – from one sentence to the next. "Certainly" occupies the fifth place in the first sentence, the fifth place in the second, is absent from the third, and occupies the tenth space in the fourth. "Completely" fills the eleventh space in the first sentence, is missing in the second sentence, and fills the tenth place in each of the last two sentences. The iambic rhythm of the first sentence is interrupted by the second sentence (which ends with a dactyl and a trochee), is re-established by the third, and then interrupted again by the fourth. The same thing happens in the second paragraph, which consists of two sentences. "Completely" disappears altogether, but "certainly" appears in each sentence reinforced by the word "certain." "Following" appears twice in each sentence, and so forth. The paragraph concludes with images of Picasso giving birth to cubism. Stein continues weaving complex verbal patterns throughout the rest of the portrait. Although they retain their meaning, certain words function essentially as linguistic counters. They can be placed wherever they are needed in the text. This feature repeats the cubist emphasis on the constructed, artificial quality of the art object.

According to the French critic Marcel Brion, Stein's compositions possess "a symmetry which has a close analogy to the symmetry of the musical fugue of Bach."[35] Writing in 1923, Stein herself claimed to be "doing what the cinema was doing, I was making a continuous succession of the statement of what that person was until I had not many things but one thing."[36] While these explanations are tempting, the similarity of Stein's composition to Picasso's paintings is inescapable.[37] Once again, the works he was painting around 1910 come to mind. Like those paintings, Stein's portrait of Picasso is

primarily concerned with creating an intricate structure. Like many cubist works, it is fascinated by its own architecture, which is not only visible in this instance but audible as well. Although the reader encounters a few facts about Picasso himself, these are fairly rudimentary. We learn that he is charming, that he has followers, that he works a lot, and that he has a fertile imagination. Masquerading as a portrait of the artist, the composition tells us much more about Stein the artist than it does about Picasso the person, the subject.

In 1914, Stein published a little book entitled *Tender Buttons*, which utilized another style altogether. Recalling this experience fourteen years later, she confided that it was her "first conscious struggle with the problem of correlating sight, sound, and sense, and eliminating rhythm."[38] Unexpectedly, she discovered a whole series of objects that attracted her attention. "I called them by their names with passion," she explained, "and that made poetry." As Marjorie Perloff remarks, the book's title resembles a Dada joke.[39] Buttons are never soft because they would be of no use to anyone. And since they are not intended to be eaten, there is no reason for them to be tender in the first place. They are not fruits or vegetables but devices used to fasten clothes together. It has been suggested that they are French buttons or *boutons*, which also means "buds" and "nipples." There is no doubt, in any case, that the title is deliberately provocative. Thus it prefigures the equally provocative texts contained within, which, as Perloff notes, emphasize metamorphosis. In retrospect, "tender" appears to function primarily as a term of endearment. Stein seems to have developed tender feelings for the objects whose names she calls with such passion. In 1946, she described her phenomenological investigation as follows: "I used to take objects on a table, like a tumbler or any kind of object and try to get the picture of it clear and separate in my mind and create a word relationship between the word and the things seen."[40]

The volume itself is divided into three unequal sections devoted to objects, food, and rooms, respectively. Although all three sections contain a number of short poems, those in the third section are combined to form a single continuous text. As Perloff states, "elaborate attempts have been made to decipher the individual still lifes of *Tender Buttons*, but the text has remained peculiarly resistant to interpretation."[41] Most critics tend to search for hidden metaphors, Butler remarks, especially erotic metaphors that will provide a key to the poem in question.[42] However, the fundamental question still remains. How is one to interpret a poem like "Salad," which consists of the following five words: "It is a winning cake"? Or a poem like "Dining,"

which is even shorter: "Dining is west"? Many of the texts are very funny, although whether Stein intended them to be amusing is hard to say. Nevertheless, their playful aspect is one of the things that allies them to Picasso's paintings. Delighted to encounter the second poem, Jean Cocteau suggested their purpose was to stimulate the reader's imagination.[43] Neil Schmitz argues that they represent the arbitrariness of discourse.[44] David Lodge believes they succeed in revitalizing language that had grown stale.[45]

The answer to the interpretive problems associated with *Tender Buttons* may actually be to concentrate on Stein's original goal – that of correlating sight, sound, and sense while eliminating rhythm. How she proposed to carry out the last operation is difficult to say. Perhaps she simply meant that she was planning to avoid regular meter. In general, the shorter compositions pose fewer problems than the longer ones. Since she contemplated each object first, before trying to find the right words to express it, the pictorial element is obviously very important. In a text like "Potatoes," for instance, the visual clearly predominates: "Real potatoes cut in between." The reader's task is to reconstitute this image mentally, to really *see* it – not as Stein originally saw it, but according to his or her own experience with potatoes.

However, sometimes sound predominates, as in one of the four texts entitled "Chicken":

> Stick stick call then, stick stick sticking, sticking with a
> chicken. Sticking in a extra succession, sticking in.

This is a portrait of a hen that has just laid an egg. Proud of her recent accomplishment, she clucks enthusiastically and lets out an occasional squawk. The rhythm of her clucking is absolutely perfect. Not only are the last two consonants in "stick" the same as those in "cluck," moreover, but "sticking" echoes the word "chicken." To be sure, sight and sound collaborate with each other in most of the texts, which also tend to be longer. Like Picasso, Stein produces pictures of objects that are fragmented and refracted through a cubist lens. Nevertheless, what sense are readers supposed to make of these tender buttons? Considered from a visual point of view, the sense of an object is the object itself. Objects have no intrinsic meaning, they just are. Considered from a verbal perspective, objects have the meaning we give them – whence the importance of naming. Like language itself, however, the names we give them are largely arbitrary, and Stein's writing emphasizes the cubist principles of self-conscious artifice as an establishing value in its construction.

Guillaume Apollinaire

Although Apollinaire was only thirty-eight when he died, he is known today as the father of modern French poetry. The revolutionary principles he introduced during his brief lifetime were destined to have long-lasting repercussions. Less well known, but arguably just as important, was his activity as an art critic. In his capacity as a journalist, which is primarily how he earned his living, Apollinaire published hundreds of articles devoted to individual artists, gallery shows, group exhibitions, the annual artistic salons, and contemporary artistic movements in general. Not only was he the head of the French avant-garde, but he also served as the principal spokesman for the cubist painters. Writing in October 1912, he described the movement as follows: "Cubism is the art of painting new configurations with elements borrowed not from visual but from conceptual reality."[46] Among other things, this definition looks forward to his own experiments with cubism. As numerous critics have noted, Apollinaire was essentially a collage poet. Long before cubism was invented, he had developed a patchwork method of constructing poetry. Bits and pieces of other poems, rough drafts of earlier projects, notes scribbled down in haste – everything was grist for his poetic mill. When he encountered cubism, his method simply accelerated.

Apollinaire's attempt to imitate what the cubists were doing was much different from Stein's attempt. Whereas her portrait of Picasso utilizes permutation and combination, his cubist poetry exploits fragmentation and juxtaposition. Although "Lul de Faltenin" (1907) probably represents Apollinaire's response to "The Maidens from Avignon," Apollinaire's cubist period does not really begin until September 1912, when "The Voyager" appeared in *Les soirées de Paris*. Published in the December issue, "Zone" is often cited as an archetypal cubist poem. Spanning the period from one morning to the next, it juxtaposes Apollinaire's thoughts and memories with various sounds and sights as he walks across Paris. The second stanza refers to the infamous theft of the Iberian statuettes from the Louvre by one of Apollinaire's acquaintances, who then sold them to Picasso in March 1907; when Apollinaire tried to return them four years later, he was arrested and spent a week in jail. Alternating between the present and the past, the following lines are typical.

> In Amsterdam with a girl you find pretty but who is ugly
> And engaged to a student from Leyden
> One can rent rooms there in Latin Cubicula locanda
> I remember three days there and three at Gouda

> You are in Paris arraigned before the judge
> Arrested like a criminal
>
> You went on sad and merry journeys
> Before growing aware of lies and old age
> Love made you unhappy at twenty again at thirty
> I have lived like a fool and wasted my youth
> You no longer dare examine your hands and at any moment
>   I could weep
> Over you over her whom I love over all that has frightened you.[47]

Just as the cubist painters sought to create an impression of simultaneity by superimposing multiple perspectives and overlapping planes, Apollinaire switches back and forth from one personal pronoun to another and juxtaposes disparate experiences in different locales. Just as Picasso and his colleagues abolished any trace of depth in their paintings, he employs the present tense almost exclusively, eliminating connectives and all traces of punctuation. In addition, Breunig adds, the meaningful blanks between the units of verse are equivalent to the cubist concept of solid space.[48] The fact that Picasso and Apollinaire utilize different media, however, has serious repercussions. Despite Apollinaire's attempt to create a verbal collage, "Zone" remains a sequential rather than a simultaneous composition. It cannot be apprehended at a single glance like a work of visual art. Only after it has been deciphered can the various elements be reassembled to form a mental collage.

Captivated by Robert Delaunay's prismatic views of airplanes and Parisian landmarks, Apollinaire accompanied the painter to Berlin in January 1913, where a number of his works were being exhibited at the Sturm Gallery. On this occasion, acting on the challenge he had encountered in "Zone," he composed a *poème simultané* (simultaneous poem) for the exhibition's catalogue that also appeared in *Poème et drame* the same month. Entitled "Windows," like a number of Delaunay's paintings, it resembled a shopping list more than a conventional poem, as may be seen in its first half:

> From red to green all the yellow dies
> When macaws sing in their native forests
> Giblets of pihis
> There's a poem to be done on the bird with only one wing
> We'll send it by telephone
> Giant traumatism
> It makes your eyes run
> Do you see that pretty girl among the young women from Turin

The poor young man blew his nose with his white tie
You'll raise the curtain
And now see the window opening
Spiders when hands wove the light
Beauty paleness fathomless violets
Vainly we'll try to take some rest
We'll begin at midnight
When you have time you have liberty
Winkles Codfish multiple Suns and the Sea Urchin of sunset
An old pair of yellow boots in front of the window.[49]

While the poem contains a number of references to Delaunay's art, Anne Hyde Greet points out, it is largely concerned with Apollinaire's reaction to that art.[50] Evoking the artist's fascination with prismatic effects, the first line reminds Apollinaire of colorful parrots flitting about a tropical forest. In turn, these remind him of the mythical Chinese pihi birds, who fly in couples because each one has only a single wing. What a great poem that would make, he thinks to himself, written in a telephonic rather than a telegraphic style. A modern poem deserves to be transmitted by a modern device. Regrettably, nothing is known about the girls from Turin or the unfortunate young man. Like the "traumatism," however, which refers to a purple bruise, the next four lines evoke Delaunay's paintings – as does the next to last line. The three declarative sentences may either represent speech or Apollinaire's thoughts. In either case, *Le Temps* (Time) and *La Liberté* (Liberty) were Parisian newspapers. The final line evokes one of Delaunay's boots, which Apollinaire noticed while he was composing the poem in the latter's studio. And like Delaunay, who was preoccupied with nineteenth-century color theories, Apollinaire sought to create "simultaneous contrasts" (the term was the artist's) by juxtaposing these disparate thoughts, memories, and observations.

Apollinaire invented another intriguing genre eleven months later. Published in *Les soirées de Paris* like the previous work, "Monday Christine Street"(1913) pushed simultaneous poetry to the absolute limit. Conceived as a *poème-conversation* (conversation poem), it consisted largely of spoken phrases but included a few personal observations as well. Overheard by Apollinaire in a café on Christine Street, these are juxtaposed to form a dense collage of overlapping statements like the overlapping planes in a cubist painting. With a little work, as the last two stanzas demonstrate, some of the original conversations can be partially reconstructed:

He says to me sir would you care to see what I can do in etchings
    and pictures
All I have is a little maid

After lunch at the Café du Luxembourg
When we get there he introduces me to a big fellow
Who says to me
Look that's charming
In Smyrna in Naples in Tunisia
But in God's name where is it
The last time I was in China
That was eight or nine years ago
Honor often depends on the time of day
The winning hand[51]

The first sentence seems to be uttered by an artist or an art dealer, who is seeking to interest a potential buyer. The second is spoken by a woman who, despite her relative prosperity, regrets that her lifestyle is not more lavish. The last stanza is much more fragmentary. Place names are jumbled together with geographical references, random interjections, questions, reminiscences, and enigmatic pronouncements. Judging from the final phrase, several of the café's clients are engaged in a card game. As Breunig states, Apollinaire exploits the cubist principle of fragmentation to the maximum. "The blocks of words become shorter," he observes, "the images and statements more heterogeneous. Notations replace complete sentences."[52] The self-conscious dominance of the compositional quality of cubist art – literature as well as painting – is manifest at every turn in this poem.

During the period 1912–14, a fierce debate erupted in Paris concerning which artist or writer had been the first to utilize simultaneity in his or her works. Referring to "Monday Christine Street," "The Musician of Saint-Merry," and "Rotsoge" (later retitled "Across Europe"), Apollinaire cited his conversation poems at one point, "where the poet at the center of life records the ambient lyricism around him."[53] In theory, at least, the poet is supposed to become a passive instrument. The active role is given to the reader, who struggles to interpret the snatches of conversation the poet has collected. In actuality, one senses Apollinaire's presence throughout "Monday Christine Street" – both as an observer and as an aesthetician. Elsewhere in the same document, he noted that, as early as 1907, simultaneity had preoccupied Picasso and Braque, "who strove to depict figures and objects from several different angles at the same time."[54] More importantly,

he indicated how he intended his own experiments with simultaneity to be considered. Whereas his initial attempts had "tried to accustom the *mind* to conceive a poem simultaneously like a scene from life," his recent visual poems – which he would later name "calligrams" – sought to "accustom the *eye* to read a whole poem at a single glance, as an orchestra conductor reads the different rows of notes in a score simultaneously, as one perceives the plastic and printed elements of a poster all at once" (my italics).[55] The obvious parallel in the second instance is with Picasso and Braque, who introduced letters, words, painted papers, and other objects into their paintings in an attempt to incorporate bits of everyday reality. By combining verbal and visual elements in his works, Apollinaire, like them, was basically painting with words.

Notes

1 Antoine Compagnon, *The Five Paradoxes of Modernity*, trans. Franklin Philip (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), x.

2 Ibid., xvii.

3 Christopher Butler, *Early Modernism: Literature, Music, and Painting in Europe 1900–1916* (Oxford University Press, 1994).

4 John Golding, *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907–1914*, rev. edn. (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 15.

5 Guillaume Apollinaire, "The 8th Salon of the Independents at Brussels," *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews 1902–1918*, ed. LeRoy C. Breunig, trans. Susan Suleiman (New York: Viking, 1972), 172–73.

6 Peter Read, *Picasso and Apollinaire: The Persistence of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 7–8.

7 *Apollinaire on Art*, 13–16.

8 *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, in *The Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein*, ed. Carl van Vechten (New York: Modern Library, 1962), 39–43.

9 Laurence Campa, *Guillaume Apollinaire* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013), 217.

10 Stein describes the banquet in *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, 97–101. See also Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France 1885 to World War I* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), 68–71.

11 Gertrude Stein, *Picasso* (1938; Mineola, NY: Dover, 1984), 12.

12 Ibid., 12.

13 Guillaume Apollinaire, *The Cubist Painters*, trans. Peter Read (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 25.

14 Ibid., 27.

15 Ibid., 37–38.

16 Stein, *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, 49, 53.

17 Golding, *Cubism*, 53–54.
18 According to Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art*, rev. edn. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 147, they are based on at least two African styles: Ivory Coast masks – especially Dan masks – and guardian figures belonging to the Bakota tribe in Gabon.
19 Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy from Baudelaire to Beckett* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 155.
20 Apollinaire, *The Cubist Painters*, 15.
21 Butler, *Early Modernism*, 72.
22 Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake, *Life with Picasso* (London: Nelson, 1965), 70.
23 Claude Grimal, "Stein cubiste intégrale," *Europe*, 60/638–39 (June–July 1982), 162–71 (at 169). The English translation is mine.
24 See, for example, L.C. Breunig (ed.), *The Cubist Poets in Paris: An Anthology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
25 Gertrude Stein, *Dix portraits*, trans. Georges Hugnet and Virgil Thomson (Paris: Montaigne, 1930).
26 Quoted by Grimal, "Stein cubiste intégrale," 163. My translation.
27 Ibid., 171.
28 Quoted by Jerome Rothenberg in *Revolution of the Word: A New Gathering of American Avant Garde Poetry 1914–1945* (New York: Seabury, 1974), 89.
29 William Carlos Williams, *Imaginations* (New York: New Directions, 1970), 347.
30 Stein, *Selected Writings*, 333–35.
31 Gertrude Stein, "Composition as Explanation," *A Stein Reader*, ed. Ulla E. Dydo (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 498.
32 Breunig, *Cubist Poets*, xxiv.
33 Wendy Steiner, *Exact Resemblance to Exact Resemblance: The Literary Portraiture of Gertrude Stein* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978), 75.
34 Dydo (ed.), *Stein Reader*, 138.
35 Quoted by Stein, *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, 47.
36 Stein, *Selected Writings*, 328.
37 Steiner explores the limits of the Stein–cubism analogy in *Exact Resemblance*, 131–60.
38 Quoted in Rothenberg, *Revolution of the Word*, 89–90.
39 Marjorie Perloff, *The Poetics of Indeterminacy: Rimbaud to Cage* (Princeton University Press, 1981), 99.
40 Gertrude Stein, "A Transatlantic Interview," in Robert Bartlett Haas (ed.), *A Primer for the Gradual Understanding of Gertrude Stein* (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1976), 25.
41 Perloff, *Poetics of Indeterminacy*, 100.
42 Butler, *Early Modernism*, 71.
43 Grimal, "Stein cubiste intégrale," 164.

44 Neil Schmitz, "Gertrude Stein as Post-Modernist: The Rhetoric of *Tender Buttons*," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 5 (July 1974), 1203–18 (at 1206–07).

45 David Lodge, *Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Literature* (London: Arnold, 1977), 154. Quotations in the subsequent paragraph are taken from *Tender Buttons* in *Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein*, 490–95.

46 Guillaume Apollinaire, "Cubisme," *L'intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux*, October 10, 1912, repr. in *Apollinaire on Art*, 256.

47 Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools*, trans. Anne Hyde Greet (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 9–11.

48 Breunig, *Cubist Poets*, xxiv.

49 Guillaume Apollinaire, *Calligrammes*, trans. Anne Hyde Greet (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 27.

50 Ibid., 350.

51 Ibid., 55, 57.

52 Breunig, *Cubist Poets*, 76.

53 Guillaume Apollinaire, "Simultanisme-librettisme," *Les soirées de Paris*, June 15, 1914, repr. in Apollinaire, *Œuvres en prose complètes*, vol. ii, ed. Pierre Caizergues and Michel Décaudin (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 976. My translation.

54 Ibid., 977.

55 Ibid., 976.

Darkening Freedom: Yeats, Joyce, Beckett

VICKI MAHAFFEY

William Butler Yeats, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett represent three successive generations of Irish writers whose combined works span the twentieth century. Although two were Protestant and one Catholic, and although each is most celebrated for a different genre (poetry, fiction, and drama, respectively), their common root is Ireland. One way to imagine the force of that shared legacy is to picture a tangled skein, in which politics, nationalism, sex, and love are closely intertwined. Irish modernism is distinct from the American and English versions in the intensity with which it grapples with questions of freedom: what is freedom (political, national, sexual, religious), and is it even possible? Can the possibility of freedom be separated from the systems of constraint that hobble or even paralyze it? After eight hundred years of English rule, after the near-extermination of the Irish language, after the disastrous famines of the nineteenth century, after a long tradition of brave but failed rebellions, after centuries of discrimination against Catholics and a situation in which much of the indigenous population had to rent land from Anglo-Irish landowners, perpetuating hunger and poverty, what would allow the Irish to exercise a degree of freedom and autonomy? And what means of resistance could they use besides firearms? Writers typically chose the pen, flexing their exceptional literacy in the language of the colonizer. When we look at the writings of Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett as a century-long arc, it becomes apparent that they saw freedom as increasingly relative and private. What freedom is possible results less from heroic resistance to oppression than from engagement with the truth of human limitation, especially the limits of individual knowledge and power, figured as darkness.

Darkness represents what cannot be successfully fought through resistance alone – death, evil, ignorance, and impotence. It is at once a limit and a frontier, bordering upon unrealized possibilities, a galaxy of the unknown. If heroism signified the individual's capacity to accomplish glorious feats with

determination and daring, darkness marks both the limits of human capability and conscious intention and the vastness of the reality that lies beyond human knowledge. Through a disciplined apprehension of darkness, these writers stress the complexity of the challenges that everyone faces in confronting the horizons of freedom – individually and collectively.

Yeats initially endeavored to counter English denigration of the Irish by exhuming the heroism of ancient Ireland. The folk belief that the old gods and goddesses (the Tuatha Dé Danann) were still present as natural phenomena – inside the hills or in a whirl of wind – suggested that nature and heroism were entwined. In his early years, Yeats longed to escape from urban fractiousness ruled by self-interest to an anthropomorphic natural world in which Ireland's heroic past could still be felt in inspirational ways. Irish nationalism was compatible with this vision as long as the violence it entailed remained virtual and poetic rather than actual; when chaos erupted in the mid to late teens and early twenties of the century, Yeats revised his earlier heroic dreams and retracted his enthusiasm for unrestricted freedom: "We had fed the heart on fantasies, / The heart's grown brutal from the fare; / More substance in our enmities / Than in our love."[1] In place of revolution, the older Yeats endorsed courtesy, custom, and ceremony ("A Prayer for my Daughter"), aligning himself with an aristocratic elite, many of whom had fascist leanings. But as Yeats came to see freedom as increasingly bound to its opposite – constraint – he left his youthful heroes behind in favor of two new ones, Dionysus and Jesus, who fought a different enemy, thereby bringing in a "fabulous, formless darkness" ("Two Songs from a Play").

Joyce, immersed in the doctrines and heresies of Catholicism, expressed serious doubts about whether political freedom would accomplish much of anything for a population who had been so thoroughly indoctrinated with religious orthodoxy. Like Yeats, he valued imaginative freedom, but he was also invested in the importance of analytical and interpretive freedom. This investment was so strong that it informed the structure of his work, which used the enigma as a device for eliciting active interpretive participation from his readers. Joyce was as impatient with those who want to see themselves as heroic as he was with the propensity to denigrate others as inferior or foreign.

Beckett, intellectually weaned on the work of Joyce and Proust, took a darkly comic, minimalist view of freedom as inconvenience; concomitantly, there is no heroism in his literary universe. Instead, constraint, ignorance, ignominy, and immobility are the comic and poignant constants. The faint glimmerings of hope, impulses toward love, and short spurts of laughter

emerge from the fact that somehow, a degree of vitality remains in a world that is primarily "corpsed."

Yeats

Yeats's view of Irish freedom was bound up in his love of the beautiful revolutionary, writer, and actress Maud Gonne, whom he cast as an heroic personification of Ireland. Maud was behind the supernatural power and ancient heroism of the *sidhe* that Yeats poetically brought back to life, and as early as 1895, he told her of a castle in Lough Key that they could make a "Castle of Heroes."[2] That heroic elitism turned political in later years, when Gonne's affinity for fascism found an echo in Yeats's admiration for Mussolini, although Yeats never shared her anti-Semitism.[3]

Maud's personal "freedom" (a disregard for propriety shocking for her time and class[4]), combined with her agenda to free Ireland, made her, for Yeats, a perfect representation of the beauty and danger of armed resistance. With a name that suggested a weapon (gun), she seems to have become for him an image of the allure and volatility of unchecked individual power, the kind – igniting both love and war – that characterized Helen of Troy. In his magnificent sonnet, "No Second Troy" (*cw*, 91), he compares Maud's beauty to that of another weapon, "a tightened bow," with all of the sexual and deadly overtones called up by such a simile. Yeats's ambivalence toward Maud ("she would of late / Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways") also reflects a split in his attitude toward Irish nationalism: he was invested in the ideal of freedom but repulsed by the marks of violence on actual flesh. This ambivalence is apparent in his tempered tribute to the martyrs of the Easter Rising in "Easter, 1916."

Yeats's depictions of Cuchulain – the most violent hero in all of Irish literature – also reflect his reservations about actual physical violence. In the *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, Cuchulain is a seventeen-year-old beardless boy susceptible to an uncontrollable rage that endangers friends and enemies alike. Yeats, however, remakes Cuchulain into a fool (in his 1903 play *On Baile's Strand*),[5] and a laughing, fearless, fair-minded hero (in his 1910 play *The Green Helmet*: *An Heroic Farce*).

Yeats's poetic powers reached their peak in the late teens and early twenties, when – in the wake of the depredations by the Black and Tans and the Irish Civil War – violence was general all over Ireland. These poems capture moments of horror: "Last night they trundled down the road / That dead young soldier in his blood" (*cw*, 205). The "brazen hawks" of war have

displaced the beautiful, fantastic images of "cloud-pale unicorns," and "days are dragon-ridden, the nightmare / Rides upon sleep"(*cw*, 206–07). Yeats stresses the "Violence upon the roads" as "evil gathers head" (*cw*, 210), his only protection a half-ruined tower, an aging body, and "The half-imagined, the half-written page" (*cw*, 209).

It is at this point that Yeats disowns his earlier yearning to escape the complexities of social, political, and even literary responsibilities through a return to nature and the heroic past. He begins *The Tower* (1928) with an expression of his longing to escape *from* nature, with its "dying generations" (*cw*, 193). Yeats's final enemy was death, which he struggled to accept even as it sweetened his "swan" song. No longer identifying with heroes such as Fergus and Cuchulain in their prime, Yeats becomes the dying Cuchulain or a mad old woman (Crazy Jane), mourning the death of her lover and defying the Bishop's call to repent.

The fact that Yeats turned away from the heroes of his youth does not mean that he abandoned the language of heroism altogether. This is where we need to think about heroism in relation to darkness; beginning with the poems of *The Tower*, Yeats turned from Ulster to Greece and Palestine in his effort to find a different kind of hero – one who fought and could beat death itself, such as Dionysus or Jesus. This may help to explain Yeats's late interest in a dying Cuchulain: as Ciaran Carson points out, Cuchulain parallels Christ in several ways. In the middle of the *Táin*, Cuchulain receives what seems to be a mortal wound, sleeps for three days, and then rises again. In "The Death of Cuchulain," a story that fascinated Yeats, Cuchulain dies at age thirty-three.[6] Yeats turns from the violent, angry savior of the Red Branch tales to the peaceful, Middle Eastern one, whose pity for "man's darkening thought" prompted him to issue "thence / In Galilean turbulence . . . The Babylonian starlight brought / A fabulous, formless darkness in" (*cw*, 213).

In "Two Songs from a Play" as in his late play *The Resurrection*, Yeats evokes darkness as a primordial chaos out of which life begins and into which it must dissolve. This darkness is "fabulous" because it is both fabled and alive, comprised of the formless shadows of the heroic dead and the unborn. Heroes for Yeats seem to have been people in whom powerful older spirits come to life once more; they are part divine.[7] Dionysus and Jesus are such heroes, part spirit (what the living call divine or dead) and part mortal flesh. In *The Resurrection*, the resurrected Jesus appears while Dionysian worshipers revel in the streets. The dancing worshipers of Dionysus are crying "God has arisen!" as they turn their painted eyes toward the house where the Apostles wait. The Greek insists that Jesus' body is a mere phantom until he touches it

and feels a beating heart. This is the play's climax, through which Yeats hoped to evoke "the terror of the supernatural," "the sense of spiritual reality [that] comes from some violent shock" (*CP*, 726).

By the 1930s, Yeats seems to have all but abandoned freedom as a political and national ideal. Instead, he contemplates again and again how the supernatural, when it appears, can cause an empire such as the Roman Empire to "drop the reins of peace and war." Heroism, in the end, is virtually the same as incarnate divinity: both the hero and the human god mark the place where opposite extremes meet and erupt in an orgasmic and violent union and division. Supernatural darkness marks the place where life and death, spirit and flesh, male and female meet and commingle. It is the consummation Yeats longed for as early as 1899, in "He mourns for the Change that has Come Upon Him and His Beloved, and Longs for the End of the World"; it is the supernatural darkness of "All Souls' Night," that place "where the damned have howled away their hearts, / And where the blessed dance" (*CW*, 230). In the end, Yeats speaks not to his countrymen, but to his soul, for "Who can distinguish darkness from the soul?" ("A Dialogue of Self and Soul," *CW*, 234). Only shadows may know "All the folly of a fight / With a common wrong or right" (*CW*, 233).

Where Yeats ended, then, wasn't so different from the place he started. The "quarrel with himself" that fueled his poetry was always a quarrel between spirit and flesh, love and death, darkness and light. The only thing that really progressed is that the Celtic Twilight eventually gave way, as all evenings do, to "fabulous, formless darkness," at which point the whole play begins again.

Joyce

Joyce understood what Yeats had accomplished: he had transformed Ireland's perception of itself from that of a backward, indentured country to one with a rich imaginative and literary tradition. The fact that Yeats identified Ireland with Gonne allowed him to transform the political into the personal, with its rich orchestra of feeling. Joyce built on Yeats's achievement by taking it in a more analytical direction, which was aimed at freeing the mind and conscience of a people whose sense of individual responsibility had, in his view, been dulled not only by colonization but also by piety. Freedom, for Joyce, was primarily freedom of thought, and his contribution to the emancipation of Ireland was to write in such a way that readers had to think more "freely" in order to understand his fiction. Specifically, and most simply, readers have

to confront the extent to which their assumptions and expectations about a story or book govern its possible meanings.

Perhaps the most widely read of Joyce's works is the short story "Araby" from his collection *Dubliners* (1914). "Araby" is narrated by a boy who has been programmed with notions of love derived from the odd coupling of nationalist songs with religious ritual. At the end, after the boy discovers that the bazaar he had idealized is in fact very different from what he had imagined, or what it purported to be, he is assaulted by a humiliating new self-image. The boy has presumably learned something about himself and the presuppositions that drove him that is far more important than what he discovered about the bazaar. In this respect, the story is a model for what Joyce's fiction is designed to do for its readers: to disillusion them so as to free them from the ideologically produced yearnings that cause "paralysis," which is the condition the stories equally depict and resist, and to demonstrate the vanity of engaging in heroic fantasy.

In "Araby," the young narrator has romanticized the image of Mangan's sister (Mangan is a friend whose name recalls the romantic nationalist poet), who sends him on a romantic quest to Araby. The boy's feeling for his idol is simultaneously sensual and spiritual; he carries his love for her like a "chalice" through a "throng of foes" (the people shopping in the evening). That chalice is for him a holy grail and he a young knight, but when he gets to the bazaar, what he finds is a marketplace run by people with English accents. His grail has shrunk to flowered teacups, which he examines while hearing the clink of men counting coins. It is then that he looks into the darkness and sees himself as having been blind.

In "Araby," the boy not only models for the reader the steps that can lead to sudden self-awareness, but also serves to embody Ireland itself, subject as it was to the seductions of romance. The boy's identification with Ireland is apparent in his thought that his "body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires."[8] A harp is, of course, the national emblem of Ireland, and he is here being "played" by a girl whose name is that of a romantic nationalist poet. By extension, Ireland is also "driven and derided" by the vanity of romantic ideals, ideals amplified by religion (as in the medieval quest). Joyce elaborates upon the image of Ireland as a harp in a later story, "Two Gallants," in which a street busker is playing one of Moore's Irish Melodies on a harp for money. The harp (this time female) is described as "heedless that her coverings had fallen about her knees . . . weary alike of the eyes of strangers and of her master's hands" (*D*, 48). Together, these two harps construct a view of Ireland as deeply

romantic and religious, on the one hand, and played upon and exploited, on the other. Joyce implies that Irish romanticism is part of what makes the country vulnerable to its exploitation; romantic ideals help to keep Ireland enslaved. The boy understands his own complicity in this idealized captivity at the end of the story, with its soundtrack of clinking coins and English accents. He understands that instead of an exotic Eastern bazaar, Araby was only a marketing ploy for English merchants, and when the light is turned out in the upper part of the hall, he gazes into the darkness, seeing himself as "a creature driven and derided by vanity," and his "eyes burned with anguish and anger" (*D*, 28). Significantly, it is darkness, not illumination, that discloses the lie of his heroic posturing, because what he needs to "see" is his own blindness.

Religion in "Araby" is portrayed as intertwined with romanticism because of the idealism common to both; religion primes the boy for his semi-religious adoration of Mangan's sister. The former tenant of the boy's house was a priest, and one of the books he left behind is a romantic novel by Sir Walter Scott, underscoring the tie between religion and romance. The boy's attitude toward the girl is portrayed as that of a celebrant during the mass; when he carries her image like a "chalice," "strange prayers and praises" spring to his lips (*D*, 23). When he finally reaches the bazaar as it is closing, he hears its silence as "that which pervades a church after a service" (*D*, 26). His worship of Mangan's sister is implicitly mapped onto the sacrament of communion: desire to consume the (idealized) body of another. In the end, both religion and romance are unmasked. He cannot, finally, insulate himself – or his holy adoration – from the laws of the marketplace, so "hostile to romance" (*D*, 22). The boy's spiritual quest is unveiled as a commercial venture; what he has discovered is money-changers in his "temple," simony – the buying and selling of church offices – authorized by an idealized image.

The epiphany at the story's end is one of the relatively rare moments in *Dubliners* in which a character has a genuine revelation. What the boy "sees" is not just a new vision of the social as a performance put on for economic gain, he sees *himself* differently. He describes his former self as a "creature," which designates an animal, but also "a fictional or imaginary being." Not only was his idealistic view of the world a fiction, he actively complied with it by romanticizing himself: elevating his importance, airbrushing and spiritualizing his desires.

It is sometimes said that one of the major themes of "Araby" is loss of innocence. The problem with that view is that innocence, like religion, is a nostalgic ideal, one that Joyce actively combatted, writing to his brother

Stanislaus that he was nauseated by writers' "lying drivel about pure men and pure women and spiritual love and love for ever: blatant lying in the face of the truth."[9] To see "Araby" as a story about lost innocence evokes sympathy for the *loss*, rather than an appreciation of what the boy has gained: a new understanding of himself as having wanted to be a heroic fiction rather than a living, imperfect, but dynamic person, whose capacity for change illustrates the central thematic value of freedom for Joyce.

One of the things reading Joyce shows is how powerful and widespread the desire to fictionalize oneself actually is. The characters in *Dubliners* are so real because they cannot bear their own fallibility, and they compensate by unconsciously identifying themselves with different kinds of heroes. What they usually cannot see is that their unrealistically heroic desires trap them, like flies in amber. That's why Joyce called *Dubliners* a "nicely polished looking-glass"[10] – it gives readers the opportunity to see themselves as they actually are, not as they would like to be, and to gain freedom and strength from that more accurate view. The boy's desire to be a crusading knight is reflected back to him as that of a vain, fictional creature. What people call the boy's lost "innocence" is something that he himself recognizes as a divorce from reality, something that compromised his ability to choose his own course (he was "driven").

The paralysis that afflicts almost all of the characters in *Dubliners* results less from political disenfranchisement than from an unearned desire to imagine themselves as heroes, a desire promoted not only by religion but also by most literature (the French word for novel, *roman*, derives from *romance*). In *Ulysses* (1922), Joyce gives the reader a new kind of "hero," one who is not idealized: Leopold Bloom. Furthermore, Joyce suggests that the shame of Ireland's colonized status can even be seen comically, as a counter-force to the self-idealizing impulse. Bloom is multiply disenfranchised: he is not only Irish, but he is also part Jewish and an impotent or "keyless" cuckold. Throughout the novel, Joyce connects Bloom's lack of control of his home (and wife) with Ireland's lack of Home Rule,[11] thereby prompting sympathetic readers to wonder whether disenfranchisement is all bad. What the novel celebrates is not impotence but self-awareness; acceptance of individual limits. It is Bloom's awareness of the limits of his control over others (a helplessness that slides into masochism) that allows him to be ethical and caring.

Bloom's awareness of his limits is also something that Joyce challenges his readers to recognize about themselves. Joyce's method for producing such self-knowledge is rhetorical, in that he plays against his readers' expectations

about fiction in order to show that agency, like empathy, depends upon accurate self-awareness. We might describe the "Circe" episode as the "Araby" of *Ulysses*, in that it dramatizes the moment when Bloom "sees" the distortions of his own prior perspective, apprehending how he has contributed to Molly's feelings of isolation and abandonment. We see – through Bloom's mental distortions and Joyce's technical virtuosity – how Bloom becomes both emperor and miscreant to be burned at the stake; a woman who is by turns virgin, whore, and mother; a godlike reformer who has also been a "perfect pig" to his wife.

At the same time, "Circe" is constructed not only to show readers how Bloom comes to see himself more honestly through the fun-house distortions of fantasy and memory, but also to test its readers' own memory and interpretive ability. "Circe" is full of references to details presented earlier in *Ulysses* that readers may have glossed over, forgotten, or not understood as relevant. The reprise of such moments – their reappearance in nightmarish or idealized forms – gives readers the opportunity to see that they don't really *read*, if reading is understood as an engaged, ongoing commitment to perceive and entertain new sensations and thoughts. Many – perhaps most – interpretations are predictable, which means that they are, in a sense, robotic: produced by conventions or shared cultural assumptions and sustained through habit. Readers, regardless of whether they are colonizers or colonized, are not free. The relation between two kinds of reading – one the product of socialization and the other proceeding through openness to unexpected sensations and ideas which must then be reconfigured to produce a meaning that works for the here and now – corresponds to the difference between religion and spirituality. Religion works through indoctrination, whereas spirituality may be likened to traveling without a known destination. Joyce tries to help readers remember how to read "spiritually," which is also to read more sensually, without remaking themselves as heroes.

Joyce's growing commitment to providing his readers with opportunities to exercise their sensory and intellectual faculties with greater autonomy peaked in the seventeen years during which he composed *Finnegans Wake* (1939). *Finnegans Wake* explodes both narrative and orthographical conventions, putting Joyce's readers in the position of having to construct meaning from what at first glance looks like nonsense. Readers can slowly produce provisional meaning only by discovering connections that are *demonstrable* (rather than assumed). The process of discovery requires collaboration among readers in order to mate Joyce's refigured words with related ones from many other languages, or to connect phrases and episodes with other

versions of them that appear in different sections of the book. Over time, readers may discover new contexts to make the significance of individual sections more apparent. The freedom of the reader is far from absolute: instead of being prescripted by the past, it is constrained (or framed) by the parameters of things yet-to-be-uncovered.

Beckett

Samuel Beckett became a writer in response to meeting Joyce and reading his work in Paris, when he was twenty-two. He proposed writing a dissertation on Joyce and Proust at the École Normale (it wasn't approved).[12] One of his first published essays was "Dante. . . Bruno. Vico.. Joyce," the inaugural piece in the first collection of critical essays on what would become *Finnegans Wake*.[13] Joyce and Beckett had much in common: both were Irish but had francophone sensibilities; both loved to read Dante in Italian; both were intrigued with the relation between language and gesture; both were interested in language(s) and especially etymology.

Despite the importance of Joyce – especially late Joyce – for Beckett, the relation between Joyce and Beckett is often misunderstood. The usual critical narrative goes something like this: Joyce was a virtuoso with language whose corpus developed by accretion, so that Beckett in reaction – after an initial (failed) effort at imitation – adopted silence and impotence, moving toward leaner and sparer texts as his counterstrategy. To some extent Beckett himself was the source of this view, calling Joyce's achievement "epic, heroic," and stressing, "I couldn't go down that same road." Although Beckett initially "aped" Joyce – copying his "way of dressing and some of his habits and mannerisms," such as consuming white wine and wearing too-narrow shoes (Joyce had smaller feet), playing with words, and quoting in many languages – Knowlson argues that Beckett later adopted a radically different method.[14] As Beckett disingenuously said in a 1956 interview with Israel Shenker, Joyce was "tending towards omniscience and omnipotence as an artist. I'm working with impotence, ignorance."[15] This account is only partly true; what it ignores is the fact that *both* writers were suspicious of heroic mastery. Beckett continued to develop Joyce's deromanticizing project by taking human shortcomings out of the moral register, depicting them not as sins but as mere facts of limited physical and mental capacity.

The relation between Joyce and Beckett looks different to those who appreciate Joyce's defrocking of heroic idealism, a perspective that Yeats approached only at the end of his life. Beckett further demythologizes his

protagonists, who are never even "darkly" heroic (like Stephen and Bloom). For Beckett, the limits of individual freedom are both pathetic and funny; what, for Joyce, is guilt over moral failings is, for Beckett, simply inadequacy. Whether from fallibility or ineptitude, the power of human ambition has limits. Both writers illustrate those limits by stressing the way that darkness encompasses light, as a review of the structural and thematic role of these contrasting images in their work may reveal.

Joyce's work assumes unconventional shapes in order to register and integrate the experience of periodic darkness into the collective imagination. *Ulysses* begins at 8 a.m. but takes its characters and readers inexorably toward and through the night. Stephen Dedalus, whose theories orchestrate the book's metaconsciousness, stresses the importance of reflecting the "obscure soul of the world, a darkness shining in brightness which brightness could not comprehend."[16] He remembers in "Proteus" the darkness that is always "there behind this light" (*U*, 3.409). *Finnegans Wake* takes place entirely in darkness, during sleep, to mimic the movement of the unconscious mind in its outrageous capaciousness (as Stephen reflects in *Ulysses*, "You find my words dark. Darkness is in our souls, do you not think?" *U*, 3.420–21). As an innkeeper representing humanity, the main character, HCE, resembles a glass of Guinness – thick, mostly dark, with a bright head slowly rising to the top at the break of day (and with the resumption of consciousness). As in all of Joyce's books, the reader's attention is directed toward what the characters don't consciously know – what they reject as dark and dirty – as the site of a relative and contingent emancipation.

For Beckett, acknowledgement of darkness serves as an ethical counter to the intrusiveness of light. His character Murphy is described as a *voyant*, the opposite of a *voyeur*. A *voyeur*'s vision "depends upon light, object, viewpoint, etc." whereas the vision of the *voyant* is "embarrassed" by all those things. Murphy tells Celia that he can only obtain a clear view of her advantages in the dark – "his own dark"; his mind feels "no need for its light to devour its dark."[17] Didi and Gogo in *Waiting for Godot* spend every day the same way: waiting for Godot to come (to "save" them) or for night to fall. In *Endgame*, Clov spends his time alone watching his "light dying on the wall,"[18] telling Hamm when he looks out the window that the light is sunk (*DW*, 106). He reminds Hamm how Mother Pegg "died of darkness" when Hamm still had oil in his lamp and could have helped her (*DW*, 112, 129). Hamm, after being told there are no more coffins, proclaims, "Then let it end! … With a bang! … Of darkness" (*DW*, 130). And in his final soliloquy, Clov reveals that when he opens his eyes all he sees between his legs is "a little trail of black

dust." He laments, "the earth is extinguished, though I never saw it lit" (DW, 132). Beckett's characters look not for the clarifying and delimiting presence of darkness "behind this light"; instead they bewail the paucity of light.

Structurally, the situation of an individual who is both surrounded by darkness and dark within is dramatized with great economy in *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958). The play is set in the future, although Krapp's birthday activity is to re-engage with his past, especially the year he summarized and recorded thirty years earlier. The stage directions indicate that the central table "and immediately adjacent area" are "in strong white light. Rest of stage in darkness" (DW, 215). According to the tape Krapp made when he was thirty-nine, "With all this darkness round me I feel less alone" (DW, 217). Darkness is not only around but within him, as suggested not only by his scatological name but by his many references to his unfortunate addiction to constipating, phallic bananas and his longing for "unattainable laxation." The blackness of feces with which he is presumably filled resembles the hard black rubber ball he was holding in his hand when the "blinds" went down to signify the death of his mother after her long "viduity," a word denoting widowhood named after a black bird ("the vidua or weaver-bird"), as Krapp learns by consulting his enormous dictionary. Even the hymn he sings while drinking backstage is about the relation between night and death: "Now the day is over, / Night is drawing nigh-igh, / Shadows – " (the hymn continues "of the evening / steal across the sky," DW, 219).

In *Krapp*, the meaning of darkness ranges from death and shit to the comfort and eroticism of shadow, such as when the eyes of the woman in the boat open in response to the shade cast by Krapp's youthful body as he leans over her. Darkness is central to the revelation, the "miracle," the "fire" that set Krapp's memory alight: his realization that "the dark [he has] always struggled to keep under is in reality [his] most [*Krapp curses, switches off*]," (DW, 220). Is it the same darkness that Mother Pegg died of in *Endgame*? The young Krapp probably said that darkness was his great theme – so is it the same as ignorance, incapacity, and mortality?

If we rewind twenty-nine years, we can find some unexpected possible answers in Beckett's first publication on *Finnegans Wake* (then known as "Work in Progress"). In his essay for *Our Exagmination*, Beckett describes conventional uses of language, in which meaning has become divorced from the sensuality and feeling of the words, as "dark." He repurposes a line from Dante's *Convivio* to describe how Joyce's formal innovations will give a new kind of light, a new sun to those who are in darkness and deep night, but significantly, instead of describing the benighted as being "in tenebre e in

oscurità" (in darkness and obscurity), he characterizes them as "bored to extinction" (*OE*, 20). Beckett reverses the typical association of light with life and darkness with death by asserting that "clear" or understandable language is in actuality dark and dead, and people who demand conventional usages of the language, those that have left its sensual, figurative poetry behind, are actually "bored." Beckett notes that to Vico, "Poetry . . . was born of curiosity, daughter of ignorance" (*OE*, 9); it "is all passion and feeling and animates the inanimate" (*OE*, 10). Following Vico, Beckett says that early humans, like children, were "incapable of abstraction" and therefore spoke "poetry." Their language was alive and closely connected both to bodily gestures (the first "dumb form" of language, *OE*, 10) and their experience of the world around them. "Dark" or obscure language is more poetic, less abstract.

At this point Beckett allows himself to excoriate the critics of *Finnegans Wake*, who fail to understand that Joyce's language is alive and closely connected to the things it designates:

> And if you don't understand it, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is because you are too decadent to receive it. You are not satisfied unless form is so strictly divorced from content that you can comprehend the one almost without bothering to read the other. This rapid skimming and absorption of the scant cream of sense is made possible by what I may call a continuous process of copious intellectual salivation. (*OE*, 13)

In this understanding of conventional language practices, "form" has been reduced to "an arbitrary and independent phenomenon" that can do no more than stimulate "a conditioned reflex of dribbling comprehension." In *Finnegans Wake*, in contrast, "When the sense is sleep, the words go to sleep . . . When the sense is dancing, the words dance" (*OE*, 14). And so Beckett cites an example in which the language is drunk because the speaker has been drinking champagne. In this way, Joyce's language cannot be apprehended through mere intellection; "its adequate apprehension depends as much on its visibility as on its audibility" (*OE*, 15). "**Mr. Joyce has desophisticated language**. And it is worth while remarking that no language is so sophisticated as English. It is abstracted to death" (*OE*, 15).

The pinnacle of Beckett's praise is worth quoting:

> This writing that you find so obscure is a quintessential extraction of language and painting and gesture, with all the inevitable *clarity* of the old inarticulation. Here is the savage economy of hieroglyphics. Here words are not the polite contortions of 20th century printer's ink. They are alive. They elbow their way on to the page, and glow and blaze and disappear . . . This

inner elemental vitality and corruption of expression imparts a furious
restlessness to the form.   (*OE*, 15–16)

Beckett concludes that Joyce gives us "a statement of the particular" that is
closely linked to the myth and animism characteristic of more primitive
peoples.

We can see Beckett experiment with different ways of using these insights
about language that he associates with reading Joyce. But Beckett's great
insight evolved over time, as he realized that what he could do best was to
redirect Joyce's method. Instead of providing a living alternative to denatured
language that the whole world would revile, he resolved to dramatize the
boredom of our denatured sensibilities in a way that is both comic and shot
through with pathos. Beckett did go back to gesture, but not through the
reinvention of language; he turned to drama instead. His late dark plays
come alive through their *admission* of the overwhelming deadness of modern
life, an admission that we can finally experience with relief. Beckett ended up
taking the opposite road from Joyce, but as we know from Bruno and
Lynch's cap (in *Ulysses*), "Extremes meet." To quote Beckett, Bruno says
there is "no difference between the smallest possible chord and the smallest
possible arc, no difference between the infinite circle and the straight line.
The maxima and the minima of particular contraries are one and indifferent.
Minimal heat equals minimal cold ... The principle (minimum) of one
contrary takes its movement from the principle (maximum) of another"
(*OE*, 6). By this logic, late Joyce and late Beckett are identical, animated by
a shared comic affirmation of a life that in most texts and people is already
dying or has yet to be born.

These three generations of Irish writers present freedom as increasingly
circumscribed as human pretensions become more comic. Yeats began his
poetic career in a nationalist ecstasy, intertwining his hope for Ireland's
freedom with his own desire to escape to nature, to achieve a mystic union
with a woman who was simultaneously an embodiment of Ireland and of the
supernatural, Maud Gonne. He began his last and greatest phase (beginning
with *The Tower*) with a determination to do the opposite: to escape *from*
nature ("Sailing to Byzantium"), to deplore the product of Ireland's (partial)
freedom – civil war – and to steel himself to be able to face loss and death
(both his own and of those he loved) as if they were simply nightfall, seeing
"wreck of body" and the "death of friends" as "but the clouds of the sky /
When the horizon fades; / Or a bird's sleepy cry / Among the deepening
shades" (*CW*, 200).[19]

Joyce used *himself* to exemplify Ireland's lack of freedom, autobiographically accenting his own very real limitations (made more poignant by genius) to spur his readers to see and feel more comprehensively. Like Shem the Penman in *Finnegans Wake*, he sacrificed himself for his readers, "excruciated, in honour bound to the cross of [his] own cruelfiction."[20] Alternatively, he is a "squid-self" (*FW*, 186. 6–7), a squirter of ink made from his own feces that he applies to his own skin, so that his body becomes his text. He uses the metaphor of Balzac's *The Wild Ass's Skin* to show how each thing he wrote diminished him, just as the *peau de chagrin* shrank every time its owner wished on it. Joyce's "wish" was for greater freedom of heart and mind for others, his aim to reflect "from his own individual person life unlivable, transaccidentated through the slow fires of consciousness into a dividual chaos, perilous, potent, common to allflesh, human only, mortal" (*FW*, 186.3–6). Having replaced the self as hero with an imperfect Other, a cuckolded Jew with a capacity to face his own inadvertent contributions to his dilemma, Joyce died as history was reversing his efforts on a massive scale, with Nazis gathering up all the "Others," especially Jews, for incarceration and even extermination.

Beckett, writing after Irish independence and global catastrophe, presented individual freedom as the most constrained of all; as Molloy asks, "Can it be we are not free?"[21] The limits of human agency are made vividly apparent through the bodies of Beckett's characters, who are on crutches (Molloy); buried in a mound of earth (Winnie in *Happy Days*); relegated to ashbins after having lost their shanks (Nagg and Nell in *Endgame*); confined to a wheelchair or unable to sit (Hamm and Clov in *Endgame*); put on a leash and whipped like a pack animal (Lucky, *Waiting for Godot*); confined in urns as if they were half dead (*Play*). Most surprisingly, we see through the progression of these three writers that although the human subject may need to be emancipated from shame, it is paradoxically true that honesty about the extent to which every individual is hobbled is oddly liberating, in its comically compromised way. Perhaps that is because to be "without desire of enlightenment" results in "unsuspected delights" (*Molloy*, 50, 140), because "when of the innumerable attitudes adopted unthinkingly by the normal man all are precluded but two or three, then these are enhanced . . . Such are the advantages of a local and painless paralysis" (140). What Yeats called "a fabulous, formless darkness" (*CW*, 213), what Joyce's Gabriel saw as "that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead" (*D*, 224), emerges in Beckett as a darkness denuded of spirits and unthinking attitudes, a dark producing fewer but freer ideas.

Notes

1 *The Collected Works of W.B. Yeats*, vol. i: *The Poems*, ed. Richard J. Finneran rev. edn. (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 205. Hereafter cited as cw.

2 A. Norman Jeffares, Introduction to *The Gonne–Yeats Letters: 1893–1938*, ed. Anna MacBride and A. Norman Jeffares (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 24.

3 See R.F. Foster, "Fascism," in David Holdeman and Ben Levitas (eds.), *W.B. Yeats in Context* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 213–23.

4 For the birth of Gonne's two illegitimate children and her "disgust for physical love," see Jeffares, Introduction to *Gonne–Yeats Letters*.

5 See Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880–1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 169–78, for a cogent overview of recent readings of the play.

6 Ciaran Carson, Introduction to *The Táin*, trans. Carson (New York: Penguin, 2007), xviii–xix.

7 *The Resurrection*, in *The Collected Works of W.B. Yeats*, vol. ii: *The Plays*, ed. David R. Clark and Rosalind E. Clark (New York: Scribner's, 2001), 482. Hereafter cited as cp.

8 James Joyce, *Dubliners*, (1914; New York: Penguin, 1993), 23. Hereafter cited as d.

9 James Joyce, *Selected Letters*, ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 129.

10 Ibid., 90.

11 Bloom, who has left the key to his house in his other pair of trousers, spends part of his day trying to secure an ad from a man with the suggestive name of "Keyes." Bloom's idea for the ad is to head it with an illustration of two crossed keys, not only to play on Keyes's name but also to suggest the ideal of Home Rule, since crossed keys signify the Home Rule enjoyed on the Isle of Man. Here, Bloom does strategically what the boy saw himself doing unconsciously in "Araby": he uses an ideal (Home Rule) for commercial purposes, playing upon the reader's desire for Home Rule to inspire him or her to buy Keyes's tea.

12 James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 107.

13 Samuel Beckett, "Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joyce," in Beckett et al., *Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (1929; New York: New Directions, 1962), 3–22. Hereafter cited as oe.

14 Knowlson, 111–12.

15 Israel Shenker, "Moody Man of Letters," *New York Times*, May 6, 1956.

16 James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior (New York: Random House, 1986), 2.159–60. Hereafter cited as u.

17 Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* (New York: Grove Press, 1957), 90–91, 108.

18 Samuel Beckett, *The Complete Dramatic Works* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 98. Hereafter cited as DW.

19 See Beckett's short play on this passage, *but the clouds. . . .*

20 James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (New York: Viking, 1939), cited by page and line number: 192.18–19. Hereafter cited as FW.

21 *Three Novels by Samuel Beckett: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 36.

F.T. Marinetti, Wyndham Lewis, and Tristan Tzara

LAWRENCE RAINEY

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "avant-garde" as "the pioneers or innovators in any art in a particular period." While conforming to popular usage, this is so lacking in specificity that it proves useless when attempting to characterize the historical avant-garde, those movements that reshaped the arts and their relationship to society between roughly 1910 and, roughly, 1970. Instead, it might be better to say that the avant-garde was a new type of intellectual formation: a small collectivity, buttressed by publicity and spectacle, that constructed cultural artifacts spanning the spectrum of the arts. It was shaped in accordance with a coherent body of theoretical precepts that were grounded not in arbitrary aesthetic preferences, but in a systematic reading of contemporary society. The use of publicity and spectacle, however, also courted the risk of descending into the merely fashionable. Nowhere can one see these features in play as we do in the activities of three figures: F.T. Marinetti, Wyndham Lewis, and Tristan Tzara.

Consider the circumstances of a signal event in this history. The Théâtre de l'Œuvre, located at 55 rue de Clichy, in Paris, was a small, intimate space containing 370 seats and bearing a venerable tradition. Opened in 1893, it had first presented Alfred Jarry's nihilistic farce, *Ubu Roi*, in 1896, a work revered by F.T. Marinetti. Its director then, as now in 1921, had been Lugné-Poe (the stage name of Aurélien Lugné), a man he knew well. Though Lugné-Poe had closed the Théâtre de l'Œuvre from 1899 to 1912, his interest in theatrical departures from realism had led him, in 1909, to sponsor Marinetti's play *Le roi bombance* (*King Hoot*) at the Théâtre Marigny, where it premiered on April 3 – exactly six weeks after Marinetti had published "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" on the front page of the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro*, sparking immense debate.[1] Now, twelve years later, Marinetti was returning to the international scene for the first time since the start of the First World War, when futurism had become another victim of the uninterest that greeted anything unconnected to the war. But much had also changed since then.

Back in 1909, Marinetti had been only thirty-two years old and had conceived of futurism in largely literary terms owing much to the Decadent and late Symbolist era in which he had grown up. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1876, he had been educated by a French governess and attended a local French *collège*, a Jesuit institution. In 1894, he had taken up studies in the faculty of law at the University of Pavia, in Italy, and though he received his degree in 1899, it was already clear that his interests lay elsewhere. By early 1909, owing to the success of his poems and essays,[2] Marinetti had become a minor celebrity, a figure of note in the drawing rooms of Milanese high society and among the city's aspiring writers. But because his major works were all written in French, his status within the Italian literary world was inevitably less grand. The publication of "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" definitively changed that.

It was a hybrid document with a narrative preamble that was followed by a list of demands. The narrative vignette was crucial: it recounted a minor traffic accident, a car that overturns when it swerves to avoid two bicyclists. But this event becomes a powerful allegory of death and reincarnation under the aegis of modernity: a conversion narrative in which trauma gives way to revelation, accident to significance. Horror makes way for elation, but elation so extreme that it suggests horror – a text of vertiginous circularity.

At first, Marinetti did little to consolidate futurism. Much of 1909 he spent working on his novel, *Mafarka the Futurist*. But the years 1910–11 would witness futurism's rapid growth, a consequence of three developments: the extension of futurism into the visual arts, music, and photography; the development of the futurist *serata*, or evening performance; and a prodigious acceleration in the production of manifestos. Each filliped the others, so that the whole became vastly greater than the sum of its parts.

The first, futurism's extension into the visual arts, was pure serendipity. In early January 1910, Marinetti was approached by three painters eager to join the movement: Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916), Carlo Carrà (1881–1966), and Luigi Russolo (1885–1947). The three met with Marinetti and swiftly agreed on general principles. Marinetti urged them to write a manifesto, which he would revise with them the next afternoon. The poet Aldo Palazzeschi happened to be visiting Marinetti when the painters knocked at the door and were admitted to an adjacent room, where Marinetti joined them.

The immediate consequences were the "Manifesto of Futurist Painters" and "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto." But the long-range consequence was to open numerous possibilities: after all, if there was futurist painting, why not futurist music? Or architecture? Or photography and film?

Or even clothing? Over the next few years, all these would take shape. Futurism was changing. At first it had proposed general principles chiefly of interest to literature; slowly, it was turning into a revolution in the fabric of everyday life.

The second development was the futurist *serata*, a word translated as "soirée" or "evening performance." The first five *serate* took place in 1910 between January 12, in Trieste, and August 1, in Venice. The last was typical. Marinetti came with the futurist painters, whose works were exhibited onstage, part of an ever-changing show of contemporary art. He declaimed "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," followed by Boccioni reading the "Manifesto of Futurist Painters." Then Marinetti returned onstage to denounce the Venetians, "seedy custodians of the greatest brothel in history." Long ago, they had been "audacious navigators"; but "now," he told them, "you have become hotel waiters, tour guides, pimps, antiquarians, forgers, fakers of old pictures, plagiarists and copyists." The speech, he recalled, "provoked a terrible battle ... The *passéists* were beaten up. The Futurist painters Boccioni, Russolo, and Carrà punctuated the speech with resounding slaps. The fists of Armando Mazza, a Futurist poet who is also an athlete, left an unforgettable impression."[3] The *serata*, in short, was a spectacle of provocation: the allure of violence was choreographed to the cadences of culture.

The third development was a growing body of lectures and manifestos on an ever-widening range of topics. In 1911, Marinetti assembled seventeen of them into a book, in French, *Le futurisme*. It became a calling card that Marinetti sent to journalists and editors, hostile or friendly. The poet Aldo Palazzeschi learned about Marinetti's approach at first hand when his book *L'incendiario* (*Arsonist*) was first published by the publishing house Marinetti had founded. Palazzeschi met with him to discuss the complimentary copies typically sent to reviewers and a few of the author's friends:

> At this point Marinetti handed me a fat notebook. I began leafing through it with a growing sense of fear and dismay. It contained some seven hundred names, together with their addresses and a model of the sort of dedication that each was to receive. The few remaining copies of my book, he informed me, would be sent out to some booksellers in the larger cities, though without any hurry, and as if the matter were much less important than the announcement that the book was already sold out, which he had also prepared in advance.

Palazzeschi pointed out that many people on the list were "notorious for their implacable hostility to Futurism, people who would surely throw the book away with a curse":

> But it was exactly those who didn't want it, according to Marinetti, who had
> to receive it ... I was resolutely opposed to a project of this sort ... I also
> announced firmly that I was not prepared to write hundreds of dedications
> to people whom I didn't know ... "Don't worry," replied Marinetti, "I'll
> dictate the inscriptions myself, and you can copy them down."[4]

The publicity generated by these developments – the extension of futurism
into other arts, the *serate*, the leaflets and manifestos – attracted more
recruits. In December 1910, the composer Francesco Balilla Pratella joined
the movement and promptly produced two manifestos, while in early 1911 he
was joined by Anton Giulio Bragaglia, a photographer. Marinetti, together
with the critic Félix Fénéon, who was also the artistic director of the Galérie
Bernheim-Jeune, began arranging for a large exhibition of futurist paintings
that would first be launched in Paris, then travel to London, Berlin, and
Brussels. It opened on February 5, 1912, prompting an avalanche of media
coverage. Even before they had left Paris, the futurist paintings were being
reproduced in London newspapers with extensive commentary. "Futurism–
The Latest Art Sensation," shouted the *Illustrated London News*.

The exhibition was flanked by manifestos – the two the futurist painters
had issued back in 1910, and a third penned for the occasion. It consisted of
thirty-six paintings that, at one end of the spectrum, represented work the
artists had done back in 1910, while at the other end, showed the discernible
effects of their journey to Paris sometime in the late summer of 1911, when
they had plainly seen works by Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso, the two
pioneers of cubism just then developing what art historians call "high analytic
cubism." The quality of the futurist paintings varied: some were extremely
distinguished, such as Boccioni's *Three States of Mind II*, while others tried to
restage theoretical insights with pedestrian literalism, such as the same
painter's *The Street Enters the House*.[5]

The exhibition opened in London on March 6, when it was also announced
that Marinetti would be giving a lecture on March 19, at Bechstein Hall, seating
capacity 550. The press promptly noted Marinetti's provocative style. After the
lecture, the next morning's edition of the *Daily Chronicle* carried the headline,
"'Futurist' Leader in London," accompanied by the subtitle, "Makes an Attack
on the English Nation." A day later a second article on him appeared in the
Morning Leader, while a third was published in the *Times* as a lead editorial.
Marinetti, far from flattering his audience, had berated it, castigating England
as "a nation of sycophants and snobs, enslaved by old worm-eaten traditions,
social conventions, and romanticism." And though the *Times* reported that
"some of his audience had begged for mercy," the *Daily Chronicle* noted that

others "rewarded him with their laughter and applause."[6] Yet another observer recalled auditors who "wildly applauded his outspoken derision of all their cherished national characteristics."[7]

Marinetti's lecture achieved instant notoriety. After only six weeks in England, he reported in mid-April, the futurists had prompted 350 articles in newspapers and reviews and earned more than 11,000 francs in sales of paintings ($2,200 or £440).[8] More important, Marinetti had achieved his success by speaking in a public forum to a wide audience. More important still, Marinetti's audience had become not just those who attended his performance, but the millions who read about it in the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Morning Leader*, and the *Times*. It was a concerted polemical onslaught, the formation of a collective identity buttressed by theatricality, spectacle, and publicity.

In the ensuing months, Marinetti turned his attention to subjects other than painting – to literature and public spectacle. In May, he published the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," in August his "Response to Objections" raised against it.[9] In May 1913, he published an important extension of his poetics, the "Destruction of Syntax–Radio Imagination–Words-in-Freedom," and in September his first ruminations on popular entertainment, "The Variety Theater."[10] Meanwhile, back in London, the journal *Poetry and Drama* devoted an entire issue to examining futurism and praising Marinetti.[11] There, in mid-November, Marinetti himself reappeared for six days in which he gave daily lectures and readings to substantial audiences:

16 November	Cabaret Theatre Club, "The Art of Noise"
17 November	Poets' Club, "Futurism in Poetry"
18 November	Florence Restaurant, "Bombardment"
19 November	Not known
20 November	Doré Gallery, "Futurism and the Plastic Arts"

It was now that he became acquainted with Wyndham Lewis.

How they met is not known, but both were acquaintances of Christopher Nevinson (1889–1946), a painter who had first exhibited together with Wyndham Lewis at the Grafton Group show (held at the Alpine Club Gallery in Mill Street, in March 1913). Together with Lewis, on November 16, Christopher accompanied Marinetti to the Cabaret Theatre Club, to its principal room, known as the Cave of the Golden Calf. The Club had been opened by Frida Strindberg, ex-wife of the Swedish playwright, August Strindberg. Her locale was a cellar at 9 Heddon Street, and in her "Preliminary Prospectus"

(April 1912) she had specified that the cabaret would present "free development to the youngest and best of our contemporaries and – 'Futurists.'" Spencer Gore, charged with the cabaret's interior decorations, had selected a remarkable team: his own works were displayed alongside those of the sculptor Jacob Epstein, Lewis, and Eric Gill. Lewis's contributions included the drop curtain and his large painting *Kermesse*, hung at the Club's entrance.[12] It had opened on June 26, 1912, and instantly become a center for artists and literati.

Marinetti was to talk about "The Art of Noise," offering a précis of his "Destruction of Syntax" together with an example of this new type of writing, a selection from his work in progress, *Zang Tumb Tuuum*, one describing the bombardment of Adrianopole. Many years later, after his experiences in the First World War, Lewis recalled Marinetti's delivery:

> He wanted to imitate the noise of bombardment. It was a poetic declamation, which must be packed to the muzzle with what he called "la rage balkanique" ... But it was a matter for astonishment what Marinetti could do with his unaided voice. He certainly made an extraordinary amount of noise. A day of attack upon the Western Front, with all the "heavies" hammering together, right back to the horizon, was nothing to it.[13]

After his declamation, Marinetti rejoined Lewis and Nevinson. The next day, Lewis wrote to a friend who hadn't been able to attend: "I was sorry you did not come to the Cabaret Club last night, as Marinetti declaimed some peculiarly blood-thirsty concoctions with great dramatic force."[14]

Lewis heard the same performance two days later on November 18 at the Florence Restaurant, at a dinner held in Marinetti's honor, organized by him and Nevinson. But Marinetti's more substantive remarks came on the day between these declamations, on November 17, when he spoke at the Poets' Club. Now he pressed his attack against elite bourgeois culture to new limits, assaulting the very principles that had once grounded his own thinking – and that still grounded Lewis's. Two years earlier, back in 1911, he had charged that critics feared him precisely because of his defence of art as an absolute: "Perhaps they saw, shining from our eyes, the glorious passion that we nurture for Art. [The capital *A* is Marinetti's own.] To art, in fact, which merits and which demands the sacrifice of the best, we give a love that is absolute." But as early as the "Technical Manifesto" of May 1912 he had begun to sound a different note: "Courageously let us set about making the 'ugly' in literature, and let us kill solemnity everywhere. Go away! don't listen to me with the air of great priests! Every day it is necessary to spit on

the *Altar of Art!*"[15] Now Marinetti pursued his conclusions to their ultimate consequences. "Art is not a religion," he said at the Poets' Club, "nor something to be worshipped with joined hands." Instead, "it should express all the intensity of life – its beauty . . . its sordidness," and "the very complex of our life to-day."[16] Four days later, his manifesto "The Variety Theatre" or "Le Music-Hall" was published by the *Daily Mail*, the world's largest newspaper. Music hall, Marinetti wrote, "is of course anti-academical, primitive, and ingenuous, and therefore all the more significant by means of the unforeseen nature of all its fumbling efforts and the coarse simplicity of its resources . . . [It] destroys all that is solemn, sacred, earnest, and pure in Art – with a capital *A*."[17] Was Lewis aware of this shift in Marinetti's thought? We cannot be certain. We can, however, be certain that Lewis did not mind being styled a futurist by contemporaries. Take his contribution to the so-called Picture Ball, which took place on December 3, 1913, at the Royal Albert Hall. Ostensibly to raise money for charity, members of London "society" were to come dressed as living pictures that presented a history of world art from ancient Egyptian to modern. Lewis and Nevinson were asked to design costumes evoking futurist pictures, and did so gladly. On December 2, the day before the ball, the *Daily Mirror* reproduced two drawings by Lewis, one called "The Birth of Futurism," the other "The Culmination of Futurism." The day after, the ball was treated in extensive reportage that included, in the *Daily Mirror*, a back-page photograph of the futurist costume Lewis had designed for Edward Marsh, private secretary to Winston Churchill.[18]

The crucial exchanges between Marinetti and Lewis occurred during Marinetti's fourth and last visit to England, in May and June 1914. By that time, Lewis had opened the Rebel Art Centre, which occupied the first floor at 38 Great Ormond Street. On May 6, Marinetti went there to give a lecture and reading; Kate Lechmere later recalled "his poems which he acted making noises like a train and lots of hissing and whistling."[19] The event, with admission at five shillings, went off well, and relations with Lewis remained cordial.

Then came the catastrophe. On June 7, Marinetti and Nevinson published a manifesto titled "Futurism and English Art" in the Sunday newspaper, the *Observer*, which had a circulation of some two hundred thousand. Though bland, the manifesto was signed by Marinetti, "Italian Futurist Movement (Milan)," and Nevinson, "Art Rebel Centre (London)." Only a few weeks earlier, Lewis had opened the Rebel Art Centre, with himself as its head. Now, suddenly, he found himself reduced to a minor player in what he had thought was his own movement. Worse still, its last line invoked the name of every man

FUTURISM AT THE PICTURE BALL: PROBLEM FOR THE COSTUMER.

Futurism will appear in to-morrow's Picture Ball at the Albert Hall. (1) Mr. Wyndham Lewis's portrayal of the birth of futurism, to be represented by Sir Ernest Hatch and the Hon. John Manners, among others; but how the culmination of futurism (4) will take shape is a mystery. (2) Lady Phillipps as Mrs. Siddons. (3) Mrs. Levett in "The Earthly Paradise."

35.1 Born in costume: drawing by Wyndham Lewis, "The Birth of Futurism," in the *Daily Mirror* on December 3, 1913.

associated with the Rebel Art Centre – including Lewis! Yet Nevinson had consulted with nobody about the use of his name. Lewis was furious.

Nevinson was scheduled to appear with Marinetti five days later, on June 12 at the Doré Gallery, in New Bond Street. As Lewis later recalled:

> I assembled in Greek Street a determined band of miscellaneous anti-futurists. Mr. Epstein was there; Gaudier Brzeska, T.E. Hulme, Edward Wadsworth and a cousin of his called Wallace, who was very muscular and forcible, according to my eminent colleague, and he rolled up very silent and grim. There were about ten of us. After a hearty meal we shuffled bellicosely round to the Doré Gallery.

There they heckled Marinetti and, when Nevinson read his manifesto, set off a firecracker, while "the remainder of our party maintained a confused uproar." The outcome, Lewis held, was a decisive victory: "The Italian intruder was worsted."[20]

Two weeks later, Lewis's new journal, *Blast*, had still not appeared; the earliest sighting of it was on July 1. Now Lewis attacked Marinetti quite directly – for being Italian. At times he adopted more decorous terms: "So we insist that what is actual and vital for the South, is ineffectual and unactual in the North."[21] But often he lapsed into chauvinist boasting:
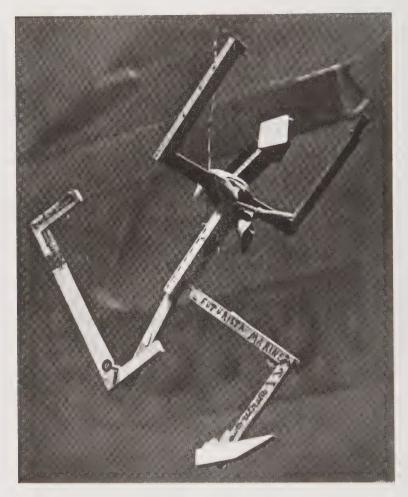
> The Modern World is due almost entirely to Anglo-Saxon genius – its appearance and its spirit.
>
> Machinery, trains, steam-ships, all that distinguishes externally our time, came far more from here than anywhere else.[22]

Modern consciousness, he continued, is "more the legitimate property of Englishmen than of any other people in Europe." Instead "the Latins" are, "in their 'discovery' of sport, their Futuristic gush over machines, aeroplanes, etc., the most romantic and sentimental 'moderns' to be found."[23] Even Lewis could anticipate the charge such rhetoric invited, and he tried to forestall it: "We have made it quite clear that there is nothing Chauvinistic or picturesquely patriotic about our contentions."[24] But his denial was not very convincing. His comments about Latins (read: Italians) were condescending, and his claims about the superiority of Englishmen evoked imperial complacency, if not racism.

In a separate essay, "The Melodrama of Modernity," Lewis offered more detailed analysis of the term "futurist." In its broad sense, it designated at this time any "painter, either a little, or very much, occupying himself with questions of a renovation of art," and Lewis could only "hope before long to find a new word" to match that definition. But "in its narrow sense," the term designated "a picturesque, superficial, and romantic rebellion of young Milanese painters against the Academism which surrounded them." He preferred Severini over the other futurists, though acknowledging that Balla could "produce significant patterns." He especially damned Boccioni's "The City Rises" for being "sentimental."

"The Italian intruder was worsted," according to Wyndham Lewis. But not by *Blast*, which appeared more than a week after Marinetti had left the country, nor by Lewis and his colleagues when they interrupted the talk given by Marinetti and Nevinson. Marinetti was indeed "worsted," but by forces much bigger than Wyndham Lewis. The event occurred on Monday, June 15, the first day of a weeklong run at the Coliseum, scheduled to last until Saturday, June 21, with two shows per day. Marinetti was to present a concert by Luigi Russolo and his notorious noise-tuners, or *intonarumori* – an orchestra of devices that could produce "whistles," "rumbles," "murmurs," and "crackles."[25]

35.2 Mechanical subjects: Marinetti's self-portrait, cover of the *Sketch*.

The event was much anticipated. By now Marinetti had acquired an extraordinary stature in the life of the commercial press. Mass circulation weeklies such as the *Sketch* and the *Graphic* assiduously reported his doings and sayings. His mocking self-portrait, an assemblage of discarded pieces of wood attached to a wire brush, its bristles representing his hair, was featured on the front cover of the *Sketch*.[26] His views on futurist clothes made headlines; his every lecture was reported with warm humour or respectful earnestness. Major newspapers were even competing for advance news

stories about the "Futurist Music," and three days before the premiere, the *Pall Mall Gazette* featured a front-page story labeled a "'P.M.G.' Special" about the rehearsals.[27] Marinetti, along with Russolo's noise-tuners, was entering a realm of cultural practice in which "traditional art" had seldom been seen.

And deliberately so. For the Coliseum was not a music hall in the traditional sense. Its construction and organization had epitomized new developments transforming the world of Edwardian entertainment. Its site on St. Martin's Lane had been selected by Oswald Stoll, the most successful of Edwardian theatrical entrepreneurs, precisely because it was directly visible from the exit of Charing Cross station, so addressing the respectable, prosperous suburbanites who poured into the metropolis on a day's shopping excursion. Such people, Stoll had reasoned, might be glad for an afternoon's or evening's entertainment. They were "middle-class people for whom a visit to a serious play might seem too ambitious and a visit to a music-hall far too racy."[28] To please them, Stoll presented a sanitized version of music hall – a "Palace of Variety," in the words of its program, that offered "the social advantages of the refined and elegant surroundings of a Club."[29] Marie Lloyd, the most popular music hall star of the day, was never invited to perform at the Coliseum: her racy lyrics and double-entendres were too vulgar. Stoll's theatre was part of a wider trend, changing music hall from entertainment rooted in the culture of the working and lower middle classes, adapting it to the tastes of a middle class increasingly defined by consumerism. His Coliseum, which opened in 1904, was the biggest and most lavish music hall in London. Its seating capacity was nearly twenty-five hundred, its stage and proscenium were the largest ever built, and its architecture was impossible to ignore: the centerpiece was a massive tower that soared into the air, topped by eight cupids holding a rotating globe with the name COLISEUM in electric lights. Here was something "to catch the attention of those prosperous shoppers."[30] And here was where Marinetti would complete his last performance in England.

It was not successful: contemporary observers immediately discerned the reasons. Reviewing the premiere performance, the *Times* wrote: "Signor Marinetti rather mistook his audience yesterday afternoon, when he tried to deliver an academic exposition of Futurist principles at the Coliseum, and he had, in consequence, to put up with a rude reception from a gallery which seemed fully qualified to give him a lesson in his own 'Art of Noises.'"[31] Marinetti indeed "mistook his audience." He had misunderstood the changing nature of music hall represented by the Coliseum. His sense of

music hall, instead, derived from his experience in Italy, where it was still a vital, turbulent genre of urban popular culture, a hybrid form addressing a public still transitioning from a largely agrarian to a wholly urban way of life. It was a genre that specifically addressed the hybridized experience of people who had recently migrated to the metropolis, mingling motifs of the village carnival with more modern forms to treat the dislocations of urban experience. But in England, where the wrenching process of urbanization had been more fully assimilated, music hall was already a corpse: it was enjoying a brief but spurious afterlife through its incorporation into the "Palace of Variety," the institution of an advancing consumer economy. What the *Times* reviewer termed "an academic exposition of Futurist principles" was precisely the kind of serious and self-reflective discourse that the Coliseum sought to exclude. And so it did. After fifteen minutes of Marinetti's first lecture, the curtain was unceremoniously lowered – there was a danger, the stage manager claimed, that "people would start throwing things." And for subsequent performances, Stoll obliged Marinetti to include a gramophone playing records by Edward Elgar, a reassuring composer, allegedly "to bring a little melody into the act."[32] Though Marinetti finished his run of one week, the Coliseum acted swiftly to compensate for the fiasco: its next headliner was George Robey, a performer almost as popular as Marie Lloyd.

Marinetti's problems with the Coliseum ended with his final performance of June 21. Wyndham Lewis's problems were only beginning. Within days of *Blast*'s appearance, on July 1, reviews began to appear. And contrary to what later critics have urged, reviewers were neither shocked nor outraged by it. Instead, they were bored – and not because *Blast* entailed incomprehensible novelty, but because it was all too familiar:

> Almost all the pictures reproduced are (like the typesetting of the first pages) Futurist in origin, and nothing else. And as for the production of the literary Vortices, these are not even so fresh as that ... All it really is is a feeble attempt at being clever. *Blast* is a flat affair. We haven't a movement here, not even a mistaken one.[33]

Damningly, they singled out Lewis's attacks on Marinetti:

> One can forgive a new movement for anything except being tedious: *Blast* is as tedious as an imitation of George Robey by a curate without a sense of humour ... to make up of the pages of *Blast* a winding-sheet in which to wrap up Futurism for burial is to do an indignity to a genuine and living artistic movement. But, after all, what is Vorticism-but Futurism in an English disguise – Futurism, we might call it, bottled in England, and bottled

badly? ... the two groups differ from each other not in their aims, but in their degrees of competence.[34]

Ironically, the poor reviews enveloped the publication, and its editor, in an aura of fashionable controversy:

> Everybody by way of being fashionably interested in art ... wanted to look at this new oddity, thrown up by that amusing spook, the Zeitgeist. So the luncheon and dinner-tables of Mayfair were turned into show-booths. For a few months I was on constant exhibition ... Coronetted envelopes showered into my letter-box ... In the snobbish social sunset of 1914 I did my stuff, I flatter myself, to admiration.[35]

Alas, doing his "stuff" did not alleviate Lewis's real concern: "As a result of these sociable activities I did not sell a single picture, it is perhaps superfluous to say." Not only was he in debt for *Blast*, but on July 26, Kate Lechmere informed him that she would not pay the next quarter's rent for 38 Great Ormond Street. The Rebel Art Centre closed immediately.

Marinetti and Lewis never met again. But even the outbreak of the Great War could not halt Marinetti. He promptly threw himself into the ranks of "interventionists" who urged that Italy intervene on the side of France and England. On September 15, 1914, Marinetti attended an opera at the Teatro del Verme. As the first act drew to a close, he unfurled a giant Italian flag from the balcony, screaming "Down with Austria!" at the top of his lungs. Elsewhere, Boccioni unfurled an Austrian flag, which he set aflame, its remnants falling on spectators below. The next day, the two joined interventionist students inside the Galleria of Vittorio Emanuele, a glass-roofed shopping arcade in Milan; again they demonstrated, burned Austrian flags, and prompted a scuffle that led to their arrest and several days in jail. On September 20, Marinetti launched another manifesto titled "Futurist Synthesis of War," while in December the futurists joined more demonstrations at the University of Rome.

Marinetti, despite his activities in support of the war that Italy entered in May 1915, did not reduce his engagement with the arts. His attention was turning to drama. He set out to write theatrical "syntheses," short and plotless works lasting as little as a minute, capturing a moment's revelation. After writing several, he added a manifesto, "Futurist Synthetic Theatre," calling for a drama that emphasized brevity and visual spectacle while downgrading narrative, exposition, and development.[36] The first syntheses premiered in Ancona on February 1, 1915, and comprised six works by Marinetti and four by other authors. He also worked on a futurist film,

Futurist Life; known today only through stills and a sketch of its episodes, it premiered at the Teatro Niccolini in Florence on January 28, 1917, inevitably preceded by a manifesto on film.[37]

But Marinetti's experiences in the interventionist cause had whetted his appetite for politics. Anticipating the war's end, he published "The Manifesto of the Italian Futurist Party" in February 1918. On March 23, 1919, he attended a meeting held in a building on the piazza San Sepolcro, called by Benito Mussolini and chaired by Ferruccio Vecchi. One of 130 participants, Marinetti joined this gathering of various veterans' groups, to be called the *Fasci di combattimento*, or Associations of Combat. He was even elected to the group's Central Committee and a press and propaganda committee. In October, they held their first convention in Milan, agreeing on a list of nineteen candidates for parliamentary elections in November. Marinetti was one of these, though he spoke at only two rallies on November 10 and 12. When the ballots were counted on November 16, the fascists had only 4,657 votes out of 270,000. A second convention was held in May 1920. Marinetti attended, as he had the first, but his views were not warmly received. He was a staunch republican, urging abolition of the monarchy, and his anti-clericalism was equally unwavering: the Vatican, he thought, should be obliged to leave Italy. Such views would hardly attract voters, and were rejected. Though he was elected to the Central Committee a second time, he resigned four days later. His participation in politics was over.

In late July and early August 1920, strikes broke out among steelworkers in the cities of northern Italy, followed by factory occupations that swept across the peninsula. "Red banners were snapping over factories seized by workers," as Marinetti noted in the manifesto he was then writing, "Tactilism." Addressing "the minority of artists and thinkers," rather than "the cruder and simpler sorts of men," he advanced his thesis: human beings could "achieve true sincerity" if only they would submit their "sense of touch to intensive therapy." The therapy entailed using tactile tables, one of which Marinetti had created, *Paris–Sudain*. It was eighteen inches high, nine inches wide, and subdivided into three zones. The topmost contained coarse materials such as sandpaper and wiry bristles; the middle was slippery and metallic, made up of different grades of emery paper; while the bottommost contained "soft" and "caressable" materials, including silk, velvet, and feathers. Stroking such tactile tables would enhance one's sense of touch, achieving "tactile harmonies" and contributing indirectly "toward the perfection of spiritual communications between human beings, through the epidermis."[38] It was an anemic proposition, devoid of the urgency evoked by his

earlier manifestos, plainly an outcome of Marinetti's disenchantment with political action. Marinetti had also decided to relaunch futurism on the international stage, where it had not been seen since 1914. He selected Paris, where his poem had won a prize in 1898, and futurism had been launched in 1909. He chose the Théâtre de l'Œuvre and prepared for the upcoming event. It would be his first and only experience with Tristan Tzara, the head of Parisian Dada.

Dada had first begun in Zurich, Switzerland, in February 1916.[39] At first it consisted of improvised performances and sound poems staged at the Cabaret Voltaire, under the aegis of Hugo Ball (1886–1927), a German author and poet. Two other participants were Marcel Janco (1895–1984) and Tristan Tzara (1896–1963), both born in Romania; a third was Richard Huelsenbeck (1892–1974), a German writer who had fled the war. But already in 1917, Dada was sailing into troubled waters. In February, Huelsenbeck left to return to Germany; while in June, Hugo Ball withdrew from Zurich to Magadino, in the canton of Ticino. From July 1917 to July 1918, Dada was at a standstill. But in August, Tzara received an offer of collaboration from Francis Picabia (1879–1953), one that led to a partnership lasting from 1918 to 1921. The two met in Zurich in early 1919, and an intense correspondence ensued.

In January 1919, Tzara also received a letter from André Breton, praising his "Dada Manifesto 1918," the first piece to appear in *Dada 3*, a journal published in December 1918 in Zurich. "Dada Manifesto 1918," despite its title, was an anti-manifesto. It began:

> To launch a manifesto you have to want: A. B. & C., and fulminate against 1, 2, & 3, work yourself up and sharpen your wings to conquer and circulate lower and upper case As, Bs & Cs, sign, shout, swear, organize prose into a form that is absolutely and irrefutably obvious, prove its ne plus ultra ...

It was plainly a send-up of futurist manifestos; their typical oscillation between elation and horror was effaced by blasé indifference to the idea that you might "work yourself up." Still, even an anti-manifesto could score points: "We don't accept any theories. We've had enough of the cubist and futurist academies; laboratories of formal ideas."[40] But to distinguish Dada from cubism by their attitudes toward theory was self-serving and ahistorical. When the futurists had gone to Paris, the artist Gino Severini had introduced them to Picasso; but when Boccioni began talking about dynamism and divisionism, the air grew cold: "Picasso detested these discussions. 'What's the point of all that talk? One paints, and that's all. Painting is painting, and doesn't need all those explanations.'"[41] Picasso, and the cubism

of Picasso and Braque, were as indifferent to theory as Tzara; or more indifferent, for they never devised a theory against theories.

More letters between Breton and Tzara followed, and soon Breton was urging Tzara to come to Paris. Finally, on January 17, 1920, Tzara made his way from Zurich; he turned up at the door of Germaine Everling, Picabia's mistress, and moved in for the next year. His arrival was greeted rapturously by Breton and his friends Louis Aragon and Philippe Soupault. Now Tzara had followers. Only eleven months later, on December 9, some five weeks before Marinetti's talk, an event transpired that underlined the radical difference between Dada in Zurich and Dada in Paris.

The event, an exhibition of fifty-four paintings and drawings by Picabia and a reading of the latest Dada manifesto by Tristan Tzara, took place at the Galerie Povolozky in the rue Napoleon Bonaparte. The guest list was imposing: among the titled were Princess Murat, Baroness Deslandes, the Cuban ambassador, Count Beaumont; from the world of letters, Max Jacob, Léon-Paul Fargue, Guy Arnoux, André Germain, Valentine and Jean Hugo, and Stephen Vincent Benét; from the arts, Pablo Picasso, Erik Satie, Marie Laurencin, and André Dunoyer de Segonzac; and from the stage, Pierre Bertin, Marthe Chenal, and Jasmine and Maud Loty. A jazz band provided entertainment, led by Jean Cocteau, who wore a stovepipe hat and played the drums. The group included Georges Auric and Francis Poulenc at the piano. Tzara's "Dada Manifesto on Feeble Love and Bitter Love" was divided into sixteen cantos, each ending with variation on the line "I consider myself very likable," at which point the jazz band broke into a musical interlude. It was "Dada-in-a-dinner-jacket for the carriage trade," to quote a later observer.[42] The manifesto ended with the word "howl" repeated two hundred times; it was enough to make even Breton, Aragon, and Soupault howl "Pitiful!" and "Idiotic" before storming out. Allowing for the cycles of provocation and riposte in the avant-garde, the seeds of Dada's demise in Paris were already being sown.

Three days before Marinetti's address, the Dadaists (led by Picabia and Tzara) had prepared a two-page manifesto, "Dada soulève tout" ("Dada Arouses Everything"). It began by listing all the topical questions that Dada had avoided: "Dada has never spoken about: Italy, accordions, women's trousers, the fatherland, sardines, Fiume, Art (you exaggerate, dear friend), sweetness, D'Annunzio (what a horror!), heroism, moustaches, lust . . . ideals (they're polite), Massachusetts . . . the eight-hour day, Parma violets." But a bit further down it announced: "The Futurist is dead. From what? From DADA."

The stage was now set. On January 15, 1921, Marinetti arrived at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre to give his talk on "Tactilism," armed with the tactile table, *Paris–Sudain*, which he gave to the audience to examine more closely. But he had just begun to speak when he was interrupted by shouting from Louis Aragon, André Breton, and Tristan Tzara. Members of the audience joined in. Marinetti, a veteran at dealing with hostile audiences, calmly lit a cigarette and waited for quiet to be restored. Lugné-Poe and his wife, Lara, appeared onstage to request the audience be silent and were soon heeded. Marinetti resumed, and was sufficiently spellbinding that even the Dadaists forgot to interrupt him, though they remembered to distribute copies of their leaflet, "Dada soulève tout."

"Marinetti had the misfortune of confiding his ideas about Dada to the press, both in Italy and on his arrival in Paris; it had, he thought (and with good reason), numerous analogies with his own movement." So Michel Sanouillet, the foremost historian of *Dada à Paris*, explains the Dadaists' motivation for heckling Marinetti, adding that Marinetti had compared recent Dadaist actions with his own "interventionist" activities of 1914–15, offending the anti-militarist outlook of Dada.[43] But he doesn't cite any newspaper articles in support of his claims. In truth, we don't know what prompted this contretemps.

We do, however, know that Marinetti's "Tactilism" was not a success, and that futurism would never again occupy a central place on the European cultural stage. Instead, it retreated to Italy, where, after Mussolini came to power in October 1922, it competed for state patronage and voiced its support for fascism until Marinetti's death in 1944.

Dada, at least in Paris, did not fare much better. Breton, Aragon, and Soupault split with Tzara in 1923, ending Dada once and for all. A year later, Breton would write the first manifesto of surrealism, so creating a movement with even more staying power than futurism.

Notes

1 "Founding and First Manifesto of Futurism," in Lawrence Rainey (ed.), *Futurism: An Anthology* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 49–53. Hereafter cited as FAA.

2 *La conquête des étoiles* (Paris: Éditions de La Plume, 1902); *Destruction: poèmes lyriques* (Paris: L. Vanier, 1904); *La ville charnelle* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1908); *La roi bombance: Tragédie satirique en quatre acts, en prose* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1905); *Poupées électriques* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1909). The two poems "Death at the Steering Wheel" and "To My Pegasus" are in FAA, 425–27.

3 *FAA*, 67–70.

4 Aldo Palazzeschi, *FAA*, 11–12, quoting his "Prefazione" to F.T. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1968), xxii–xxiii.

5 See *FAA*, figs. 41–44.

6 "'Futurist' Leader in London," *Daily Chronicle* (London), March 20, 1912, 1, col. 3; "Futurism in London," *Morning Leader* (London), March 21, 1912; "Futurism in Literature and Art," *Times* (London), March 21, 1912, 2, col. 6.

7 Harold Monro, "Varia," *Poetry and Drama*, 1/3 (September 1913), 263.

8 Letter from F.T. Marinetti to F.B. Pratella, April 12, 1912, in Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori (eds.), *Archivi del futurismo*, 2 vols. (Rome: De Luca, 1959–62), vol. 1, 237–38.

9 *FAA*, 119–29.

10 *FAA*, 143–51, 159–64.

11 *Poetry and Drama*, 1/3 (September 1913).

12 On the Cabaret Theatre Club, see chap. 2, "The Cave of the Golden Calf," in Richard Cork, *Art Beyond the Gallery in Early 20th Century England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 61–115.

13 Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (London: John Calder; New York: Riverrun Press, 1982), 33.

14 *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis*, ed. W. K. Rose (London: Methuen, 1963), 53–54.

15 F.T. Marinetti, "La Divina Commedia è un verminaio di glossatori," *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, 267; and "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," *FAA*, 124.

16 *Times*, November 18, 1913, 5, cols. 5–6.

17 F.T. Marinetti, "The Meaning of the Music Hall. By the Only Intelligible Futurist," *Daily Mail* (London), November 21, 1913, 6, col. 4.

18 On Lewis's designs for "The Picture Ball" on December 3, see Paul O'Keeffe, *Some Sort of Genius: A Life of Wyndham Lewis* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000), 140–42.

19 Jeffrey Meyers, "Kate Lechmere's 'Wyndham Lewis from 1912,'" *Journal of Modern Literature*, 10/1 (March 1983), 158–66 (at 165).

20 Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, 33.

21 *Blast*, 1 (1914), repr in *Blast*, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1981), vol. 1, 34.

22 Ibid., 39.

23 Ibid., 41.

24 Ibid., 34.

25 Luigi Russolo, "The Art of Noises," *FAA*, 137.

26 See *FAA*, fig. 77.

27 "Futurist Music: 'Noisy Tuners' at a Rehearsal; Cracklers and Roarers," *Pall Mall Gazette*, June 12, 1914, 1, col. 5.

28 Felix Barker, *The House that Stoll Built: The Story of the Coliseum Theatre* (London: Frederick Muller, 1957), 11.

29 Quoted in Victor Glasstone, *Victorian and Edwardian Theatres* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 116.

30 Victor Glasstone, *The London Coliseum* (Cambridge: Chadwyck Healy, 1980), 17.

31 *Times*, June 16, 1914, 5, col. 4, "Art and Practice of Noise: Hostile Reception of Signor Marinetti."

32 Stage manager quoted in Barker, *House that Stoll Built*, 186. See also Christopher R.W. Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938), 83. I have synthesized his account with Barker's, 183–86, though they differ in details.

33 Solomon Eagle [John Collings Squire], "Current Literature: Books in General," *New Statesman*, 3/65 (July 4, 1914), 406.

34 Anonymous, "The Futurists," *New Statesman*, 3/66 (July 11, 1914), 426.

35 Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, 46.

36 Marinetti, "Futurist Synthetic Theater," FAA, 204–09; for six "syntheses," see FAA, 487–95.

37 F.T. Marinetti, "The Futurist Cinema," FAA, 229–33.

38 "Tactilism," FAA, 264–69; see also FAA, fig. 84.

39 Throughout the following account, I am indebted to Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris* (Paris: Flammarion, 1993).

40 Tristan Tzara, *Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries*, trans. Barbara Wright (London: Calder; New York: Riverrun, 1992), 3, 5.

41 Gino Severini, *The Life of a Painter*, trans. Jennifer Franchina (Princeton University Press, 1995), 93.

42 Francis Steegmuller, *Cocteau: A Biography* (New York: David Godine, 1986), 260.

43 Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris* (Paris: J.J. Pauvert, 1965), 247. The translation is my own.

Pound, Eliot, Hemingway

RONALD BUSH

Introduction

By the spring of 1923, the work of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot had so clearly come to be perceived as parts of the same project that, when Eliot saw that the first line of the Malatesta Cantos typescript echoed the recently published *Waste Land*, he begged Pound to cut it.[1] "People," he wrote back, are already "inclined to think that we write our verses in collaboration as it is, or else that you write mine & I write yours."[2] Being tarred with the same brush is of course not unknown to other famous collaborators (Picasso and Braque come to mind), but even at the time of its greatest plausibility, the myth of Pound and Eliot's interchangeability looked distinctly odd, not least because of the already existing distrust of followers of one toward the other. So William Carlos Williams, attempting to alert his college friend Pound to Eliot's "subtle conformis[m]," warned in the 1918 Preface to *Kora in Hell* that Eliot should henceforth be avoided as an "archbishop of procurers to a lecherous antiquity."[3] On the other side, Bertrand Russell, the socially and academically well-placed British philosopher, in 1915 wrote to Eliot's mother that she might be more favorably inclined toward Eliot's English bride Vivienne Haigh-Wood once she knew that Vivienne had successfully deflected Eliot's interest in the radical bohemians "who call themselves 'vorticists.'"[4]

The differences between the two expatriate Americans, however, extended beyond background and milieu into literary principle. Some of these differences can be traced in the ebb and flow of their literary inter-actions.[5] Here I wish to address them in another way, by triangulating the two poets at the moment of their closest convergence with their celebrated contemporary Ernest Hemingway, who at the beginning of his career conceived a visceral dislike to Eliot at the very moment he modeled his first successful fiction after Pound. Hemingway's passionately divided response

both restores our sense of the popular appeal of Pound's early work and throws a contemporary light on Pound's and Eliot's allied but far from identical assumptions about language and literature in an age of cultural crisis.

Hemingway and Pound

Soon after he entered the expatriate circles of the Paris of February 1922, Hemingway introduced himself to Pound and welcomed the older poet (Pound was thirty-six and Hemingway twenty-two) as one more in a series of surrogate fathers that Hemingway's unease with his own father's social and financial insecurities had already generated.[6] The nature of the two writers' interaction is vividly captured by Hemingway's first wife, Hadley, who remembered teas in the Pounds' big, cold studio on the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs where "Ernest listened at E.P.'s feet, as to an oracle, and I believe some of the ideas lasted all through his life."[7]

Nor was Pound, an irrepressible proselytizer (or as Gertrude Stein derisively put it, "village explainer"[8]), reluctant to prolong the role of mentor, editor, and impresario he had previously honed in London. Pound had no sooner arrived in Britain in 1908 to sit at the feet of W.B. Yeats than he began blue-pencilling Yeats's poems and lecturing him about being insufficiently modern.[9] Subsequently he attempted to groom and refashion a number of younger writers (Iris Barry prominent among them), culminating in what he famously called his "obstetric effort" in regard to *The Waste Land*. In fact, as the manuscript record of Eliot's previous volume (*Ara Vos Prec*) shows, Pound had become Eliot's editor well before that. Three years Pound's junior, Eliot encouraged Pound's tutorial attentions during the seven years of waning self-confidence that followed the composition of "Prufrock."[10]

Pound paid farewell to London and moved on to Paris in April 1921, and it was just weeks after Eliot called on him on his way back from Lausanne in mid-January 1922 to consult about the final revisions of *The Waste Land* that Hemingway began his regular visits. By February 27, Hemingway could write Lewis Galantiere that "Me and Ezra Pound are getting to be great pals,"[11] and, for his part, by March 9, Pound had developed enough enthusiasm to promote six of Hemingway's poems and one of his short stories for publication in the *Dial* and the *Little Review*. As it turned out, Scofield Thayer rejected the poems for the *Dial*, which caused Hemingway to bear a grudge against him and the magazine, but this only deepened his loyalty to Pound. In fact, Hemingway never quarreled with Pound, as he did famously for example with his other principal Parisian mentor, Gertrude Stein, and the

depth of his attachment is attested by his unsolicited gift of a check for $1,000 made out to a still-imprisoned Pound in 1956, "on the old Chinese principle ... that no one possesses anything until they have given it to another." Pound never cashed the check but rather had it "sunk in plexiglass as a token of yr magnanimous glory."[12]

In the midst of their 1922 interactions, Hemingway wrote Sherwood Anderson that he had started "teaching Pound to box wit[h] little success. He habitually leads wit[h] his chin and has the general grace of the crayfish or crawfish." Still he conceded, "it's pretty sporting of him to risk his dignity and his critical reputation at something that he don't know nothing about. He's really a good guy, Pound, wit[h] a fine bitter tongue onto him."[13]

The result of all this, as Michael Reynolds has written, was that "within six months of having met Pound and with nothing in print, Hemingway was recognized on the Left Bank as a promising young writer."[14] By 1925, Pound had sponsored Hemingway's first big break, shaped his sudden development as a writer, and ensured his critical success. The first step came in late 1922, when Pound arranged with Bill Bird, who ran part of the European Consolidated Press operation from the rue d'Antin[15] and had just launched his Three Mountains Press, to include their mutual friend Hemingway as one of the authors in a flagship series of "strictly modern" work, whose purpose was to conduct "an inquest into the state of contemporary English prose."[16]

Such was Pound's confidence in his new protégé that although Hemingway was away and Pound had no idea what he might submit, in October 1922 he included Hemingway's name on Bird's announcement of the series with the title of the contribution left unspecified. For Hemingway, living up to this grand gesture of good faith jump-started his career. Not only did it represent an extraordinary opportunity, but it provoked in him (a truth that is often repeated but not always understood) a fierce resolve to live up to Pound's modernist ideals. On November 8, 1922, Hemingway wrote Pound that he understood that the gesture was made "out of friendship" alone – friendship that he was afraid might backfire once Pound discovered that he had yet "nothing worth printing."[17] Yet in the same letter he affirmed the motivational effect of Pound's confidence by vowing to leave behind his previous work, even though Lincoln Steffens had that night admired it ("they are what he has always been shooting at"). All at once, Hemingway said, he recognized the weaknesses in his collected "journalese, which I recognize *is* journalese." On the spot, he resolved to quit "the sheet" (his day-job at the *Toronto Star*, which in fact he did not give up until a year later) because,

"I know what I'm after in prose, now anyway ... and hope to give you a couple of samples of it at the end of six months."[18]

The letter constitutes an oath to remake himself in Pound's image, an effort that in fact had already begun. In a notebook headed *Paris 1922*, Hemingway, in June of that year, had composed and scrupulously revised six distilled narrative sentences based on moments of expatriate Parisian life – efforts now generally accepted as the immediate predecessors of his first mature work.[19] As a recent critic has put it, they constitute "embryonic version[s] of 'unwritten stories'" built around "vivid images" which succeed in condensing a relationship in a few words.[20]

It was the same attempt to build a larger narrative on the suggestive power of a few charged images that soon afterward drove the composition of the sketches or vignettes that Hemingway fashioned for Bird's volume, eventually published in 1924 (complete with avant-garde cover) as (note the use of lower case) *in our time*. Hemingway had submitted the first six of these sketches to the *Little Review* in early 1923, and, unlike the *Paris 1922* sentences, they married modernist compression with the contemporary history Hemingway had witnessed as a participant in the Great War and a journalist observer of ensuing brushfires. The *Little Review* specimens, for example, depict British action at Mons during the war, Spanish bull-fighting, a recent political execution, and a bloody civilian evacuation during the Greco-Turkish war. To quote Milton Cohen, the author of the book-length study, *Hemingway's Laboratory: The Paris in our time*, "The thread running through the [*Little Review*] pieces is contemporary violence." Together they constitute "unexpected and unpredictable moments within the organized violence of war, responses to anticipated violence and recollections of past violence, and rituals of violence well performed or botched."[21]

The same subjects also drove the sketches Hemingway wrote during 1923, to which he at first affixed titles but then presented simply as numbered "chapters" of the book in progress.[22] In them he expanded the number both of wartime episodes and of bull-fight scenes while continuing to stress unspoken or implied responses to violence and fear.[23] Narratively, as Cohen points out, the "chapters" incorporate "snatches of monologue, spoken by several distinct voices, each recalling an experience or describing an event," while remaining "anonymous or sparsely identified" and devoid of character development.[24] The vignettes thus succeed in implying "a fuller story," very much in the manner of the Chinese translations Pound published in his 1915 volume *Cathay*.[25] Cohen points especially to the note that Pound appended to the little poem "The Jewel Stairs' Grievance":

The jewelled steps are already quite white with dew,
It is so late that the dew soaks my gauze stockings,
And I let down the crystal curtain
And watch the moon through the clear autumn.   *By Rihaku*

Note. – Jewel stairs, therefore a palace. Grievance, therefore there is some-
thing to complain of. Gauze stockings, therefore a court lady, not a servant
who complains. Clear autumn, therefore he has no excuse on account of
weather. Also she has come early, for the dew has not merely whitened the
stairs, but has soaked her stockings. The poem is especially prized because
she utters no direct reproach.[26]

One measure of the importance of this note for Hemingway can be found in
Pound's attachment to it as a way to explain the aims of modern writing: he
reprinted it separately in his critical prose after its first publication. Further-
more, the poem conveys an emotional power that the note only coyly
suggests, and this too seems to have contributed to Hemingway's education
in the art of suggestiveness.

Originally extracted from a longer commentary in Pound's unpublished
source,[27] the explanatory note to the poem offers an elliptical and mysterious
account of the vignette on which the poem is ostensibly based. This note forms
the centerpiece of Pound's 1918 essay "Chinese Poetry,"[28] where he invites the
reader to "play Conan Doyle if you like," summarizing the fascination of "The
Jewel Stairs' Grievance" by explaining that "the Chinese like poetry that they
have to think about, and even poetry that they have to puzzle over." Like the
note itself, the essay implies that what counts in the poem is a narrative of
manners of the kind one might find in Henry James or in one of Browning's
dramatic monologues.[29]

The Browningesque or "Conan Doyle" aspect of "The Jewel Stairs'
Grievance," however, only begins to account for the poem's emotional
charge. More than a puzzle that forces the reader to infer the imperial
circumstances of an unidentified speaker, "The Jewel Stairs' Grievance"
stages cinematically the universal drama of a woman's slow but inevitable
realization of human vulnerability to the forces of mutability and loss.

The poem begins with a close-up that presents a precious but resistant
artifact of human culture – "jewelled steps" exposed to the corrosiveness of
dew and so to the world of change and decay. And although we are not at
first permitted to see it, this image is itself an unmediated object of dramatic
consciousness. Substituting delicate gauze for precious stone, the second line
overlays stockings on steps and suggests that the apparent impermeability of

the former is an illusion. Also, as we overhear the lady speak in the second line of "*my* gauze stockings," the two lines evidently portray her growing alarm at the forces she confronts, which have now penetrated her clothes and reached her flesh. The two lines present a montage that renders from the inside the lady's growing awareness of her own vulnerability. Meanwhile, the poem's last line attunes the lady's situation to the inconstant moon and the advance of autumn, the season of ever-increasing loss. And, as the poem concludes without a trace of explicit resentment, we sense the force of her conviction (a component of her enveloping isolation) that grief would lose its dignity were she to attempt to put it into speech.

The resonance of "The Jewel Stairs' Grievance" does not end with the poem's conclusion. Its speaker's evocation of man's inarticulate heart echoes through the volume and is absorbed into the musical organization of *Cathay*. Emphasizing this theme, *Cathay* begins with a poem about the loneliness of troops on the frontier, who ask whether anyone will ever "know" of their "grief," and pivots around a centerpiece ("Exile's Letter") that arrives at the question "What is the use of talking . . . ?"[30] The suite in the version Pound collected in later volumes then proceeds to end as birds lament that however they "long to speak," even the most sympathetic man "can not know" of their "sorrow." Together, these utterances collectively embody a version of what Pound called "the English national chemical . . . a race conviction that words scarcely become a man."[31] Or, as Ford Madox Ford (Hemingway's senior editor on the *Transatlantic Review*) had put it in a contemporary review of *Cathay*, "Man is to mankind a wolf . . . largely because the means of communication between man and man are very limited."[32]

Starting in the summer of 1923, Hemingway either in person or by post submitted the vignettes of *in our time* to Pound's editorial care, exactly as Eliot had earlier done with drafts of *The Waste Land*. These interchanges, reinforcing what he had already learned from Pound's work, amounted to a running tutorial on the uses of modernist form. In Michael Reynolds's account:

> Looking over the vignettes, Ezra questioned their arrangement: was there any controlling logic to the experiences? Nothing indicates that Hemingway wrote with a larger plan in mind, but now he was forced to arrange a sequence. Ezra also felt there needed to be more frozen moments for the book to feel right . . . Ernest told him about the hanging of an Italian gangster in Chicago. He remembered it from the papers and Pound recommended that it be included.[33]

And not only did Hemingway agree with Pound's suggestions – "I will do the hanging. Have redone the death of [the toreador] Maera altogether different and fixed the others" – he marveled at the difference they made: "The new death is good ... When [the chapters] are read altogether they all hook up. It seems funny but they do."[34]

In short, Pound nudged Hemingway toward a theme and variation structure on the subject of the way men meet their death. So two banal reports in an English voice suggest by their colloquialism an insensitivity to the horrors the speaker's fellow soldiers were committing; a group of Greek cabinet ministers are shown standing helplessly as they are shot against a wall; two Austrian soldiers lie dead in the mud as Nick Adams faces severe injury with adolescent insouciance; another alter ego of Hemingway's fears death at Fossalta and cries to Jesus, only to hide it later; New York police shoot Hungarian looters without a pinch of conscience; a toreador dies with a bull's horn through his belly; a horse dies horribly in the bull ring; a more courageous toreador kills his bull with great dignity; a distinguished old toreador (Maera) dies stoically as a bull's horn goes through him and into the sand; and an American gangster (Sam Cardinella) loses control of his sphincter muscle just before he is hanged.

And so, in the published volume, each fragmentary chapter conveys an epiphany's lyric intensity but also forms a part of a larger musical organization. The ironies associated with the organization's counterpoint stem ultimately from Flaubert. On one hand, the technique of multiplying the work's central image of human weakness throws the insensitivities of each individual speaker into relief. (Hemingway's English soldier, for example, speaks of "potting" Germans as they come over a wall, and his New York cop dismisses dead Hungarians with the rejoinder that "I can tell wops a mile off.")[35] On the other hand, the mirroring of episodes intensifies the reader's insight into the common misfortune shared by all. This kind of structural irony grounds itself in a play of human perspective and stands apart from other kinds of modernist irony that involve, for instance, questioning the claims of transcendental truths.

Trained in these procedures, Hemingway, in the next stage of his apprenticeship, handled with growing assurance the lessons of his mentor. After Bird published the vignettes at the beginning of 1924, Hemingway obtained a contract from the mainstream house of Boni & Liveright to bring out an enlarged version of the text in New York. Then, in a few heady months, he composed some of his most powerful short stories (including "Indian Camp," "The Battler," "Out of Season," and "Big Two-Hearted River") and

proceeded to interweave them with a slightly altered sequence of his earlier "chapters" (now become interchapters), bringing the enhanced volume out under the title (note the new caps) *In Our Time* in October 1925. And although Pound did not have the opportunity to edit these new stories as he had Hemingway's vignettes, his influence on them and on the structure of the revised book remained pervasive. As Hemingway wrote in March 1924, "I am writing some damn good stories. I wish you were here to tell me so, so I would believe it or else what is the matter with them. You are the only guy that knows a god damn thing about writing."[36]

The great stories of *In Our Time* insistently sound the distance between what men feel and what they say. So, in "Cross-Country Snow," when Nick Adams remarks to his friend George "There's nothing really can touch skiing, is there? ... The way it feels when you first drop off on a long run," George agrees, and adds: "It's too swell to talk about."[37] The culmination of the volume – and perhaps the best thing Hemingway ever wrote – is its two-part finale, "Big Two-Hearted River," which, as Jackson Benson points out, succeeds because of rather than in spite of the fact that "all explicit mention of Nick's previous experiences in war, including his wounding, is left out."[38] Echoing the implied violence and reduced humanity glimpsed in the other stories, it tells of a psychologically scarred Nick Adams returning to a town (now burnt to the ground) where he fished as a young man. And although Nick "felt he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him,"[39] the story voices the insistence of unconscious anxiety, in part through his identification with "big trout" at "the bottom of the pool" at a particularly swirling section of the river, all "keeping themselves steady in the current with wavering fins. As he watched them, they changed their positions by quick angles, only to hold steady in the fast water again." These trout, as we come to see, are images of the effort by which Nick controls his own balance among the violent repressions that buffet his inner life. Little wonder that "Nick's heart tightened as the trout moved. He felt all the old feeling."[40]

Meanwhile, the composition of each new story reinforced Hemingway's theoretical grasp on Pound's practice. The principle that less is more shapes Hemingway's core pronouncements on fiction through several decades. In 1923, he gives one of the 1923 *Little Review* "chapters" of *in our time* the provisional title "Unwritten Stories are Better,"[41] anticipating his later, memorable pronouncement in a *Paris Review* Interview of 1958 that "I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it underwater for every part that shows. Anything you know you can eliminate and it

only strengthens your iceberg. It is the part that doesn't show." But "If a writer omits something because he does not know it then there is a hole in the story."[42]

This last formulation, however, like Pound's deceptive remark about the attractiveness of "poetry that [the Chinese] . . . have to puzzle over," omits a critical addition that Hemingway had noted in 1923 and remembered in *A Moveable Feast* (1964). In the latter, speaking of the story "Out of Season," Hemingway confessed: "I had omitted the real end of it which was that the old man hanged himself. This was omitted on my new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood."[43]

To "make people *feel* something more than they understood," as Thomas Strychacz argues, involves more than puzzles or unblinking realism. For the omissions of which Hemingway speaks are not aimed at "pursuing 'what really happened in action' in a direct hard-boiled style so that writing reproduces the action or event in all its completeness." The narrative discontinuity emphasizes "not the clarity but the terror of events that rupture the boundary of what is rational and comfortably known."[44]

In common with Pound's *Cathay*, then, Hemingway's modernist omissions in *In Our Time* have less to do with difficulty for its own sake than with restoring the edge on the ordinary reader's apprehension of the human condition. Hence the sincerity of the assurances about the commercial viability of his work that Hemingway communicated in March 1925 to Horace Liveright, the publisher of the not yet released *In Our Time*. Unlike e.e. cummings's book *The Enormous Room*, he wrote Liveright, which was "written in a style that no one who had not read a good deal of 'modern' writing could read," there is "no writing" in *In Our Time* "that anybody with a high-school education cannot read." For that reason, "looking at it quite dispassionately . . . it has a good gambling chance to sell."[45]

Hemingway and Eliot

The beginning of Hemingway's unwavering and extraordinarily hostile view of a T.S. Eliot he never met can be traced back to a letter he wrote to Pound after reading the published version of *The Waste Land* in the November 1922 issue of the *Dial*. Pound had shared with him the story of Eliot's unhappy marriage to an illness-prone Englishwoman, his dislike of his day job as a banker, and his treatment for emotional breakdown. Hemingway,

however, who professed pride in a man's duty to stand by his marriage and earn his bread and who silently resented Pound's efforts to remedy Eliot's rather than his own pressing financial problems, responded with ridicule rather than sympathy to what he clearly felt was Eliot's unbecoming distress. In his letter, he depicts Eliot as Germanic, rigid, and inflexible, paralyzed by prissiness, and preoccupied with (a word that is meant to convey Eliot's deficient masculinity) "impeccability."[46] Beginning a tradition of deliberately misspelling Eliot's name, Hemingway declares: "I am glad to read Herr Elliot's adventure away from impeccability. If Herr Elliot would strangle his sick wife, buggar the brain specialist and rob the bank he might write an even better poem."[47]

In the summer of 1924, Hemingway made a similar outburst public. Since February Ford Madox Ford's unpaid assistant editor at the *Transatlantic Review*, Hemingway published a eulogy on the death of his beloved Joseph Conrad and reluctantly had to acknowledge that Conrad's reputation had been eclipsed by Eliot's. Hemingway then raged:

> If I knew that by grinding Mr. Eliot into a fine dry powder and sprinkling that powder over Mr. Conrad's grave Mr. Conrad would shortly appear, looking very annoyed at the forced return and commence writing I would leave for London tomorrow morning with a sausage grinder. One should not be funny over the death of a great man, but you cannot couple T.S. Eliot and Joseph Conrad in a sentence seriously ... and not laugh.[48]

A few months later, revising an acrid story entitled "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" for the October 1924 *Little Review* and for *In Our Time*, Hemingway altered his title to "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot."[49] This story relates the real unhappy marriage of Chard Powers Smith, a spoiled Harvard-trained lawyer pursuing a poet's life on the left bank, and reassigning its title to the "Elliots" did not simply involve the intention to protect a grieving Powers Smith from hurt (Smith's wife, Olive, had in the interim died in childbirth). Rather, as Kenneth Lynn suggests, Hemingway relished the opportunity to "injure two poets with a single stone." Changing the title, however, may have been more than bloody-minded. As Lynn adds, Hemingway's instinct as a novelist told him that "Eliot, like Chard Powers Smith, was absolutely panicked by the challenge of adult sexuality" and that Eliot's marriage therefore presented a real subject for fiction.[50]

The motives behind Hemingway's hostility to Eliot were as various as they were conflicted, however, and were evidently compatible with a good deal of respect. We know that Hemingway read virtually everything that

Eliot wrote and on a number of occasions deliberately inserted allusions in his fiction to Eliot's work.[51] In an early draft of the story "Cat in the Rain," for example, he adapts his phrase "Sweeney gets on Mrs. Porter" from *The Waste Land*,[52] and in other texts he alludes to "The Hollow Men" and "Portrait of a Lady.[53]

The kindest explanation of Hemingway's dislike of Eliot has been advanced by Lynn, who makes it a point of literary politics. He reminds us that Eliot "had used his authority to influence the policies of the *Transatlantic Review* by taking exception in the first issue to Ford's statement that he wanted the *Review* to be a vehicle for young writers" and by objecting to Ford's intention to spotlight American writing. These were views, Lynn contends, that "Hemingway did not approve of, and he punished him for this in every way he could think of."[54] The problem is that the essay Lynn refers to was published in 1924, and the evidence of Hemingway's vitriol predated it by almost two years.

Hemingway's overweening dislike of Eliot certainly formed part of his "competitive relationship with all post-war writers, the men of his generation, the ones he wanted to out-distance," but in this case his competitiveness was augmented by a sibling rivalry with Eliot for Pound's approval.[55] This contest, which engaged Hemingway's family ambivalence about money and masculinity, took an interestingly and distinctively Midwestern turn. In 1922, Pound supplemented his constant praise of Eliot by organizing a patronage scheme called Bel Esprit to allow Eliot to quit the bank. Pound asked Hemingway for help, and Hemingway acceded, grudgingly.[56] Eliot after all stemmed from a Midwestern (St. Louis) family far wealthier than his own, something that Hemingway knew because his wife Hadley had grown up in St. Louis and had attended the Mary Institute, a private school for girls founded by Eliot's grandfather. (William Greenleaf Eliot, a Unitarian minister and contemporary of Emerson, became one of St. Louis's most prominent citizens and co-founded Washington University.[57]) Little wonder that when, in November 1923, Pound asked Hemingway to bring some wealthy St. Louis visitors around, seeking their financial support, Hemingway was not overjoyed.[58] Eventually Eliot aborted Bel Esprit because it would not aid his wife in the event of his death. To Hemingway, though, Eliot's high-minded renunciation only conveyed over-fastidiousness and ingratitude.

Hemingway's animus boiled over again in 1925 in an essay ("Homage to Ezra") he wrote for the first issue of *This Quarter*, organized by its editor Ernest Walsh as a tribute to Pound.[59] Hemingway's praise, however, took the form of a mean-spirited comparison of Pound to Eliot in which he

implies the latter might be one of the "friends" who end by "knifing" Pound in the back "at the first opportunity."[60] Nevertheless, beneath the malice Hemingway's account is not without critical insight. As in his 1922 letter to Pound, he focuses on Eliot's perfectionism, but now he argues that it has condemned Eliot to the status of a "minor poet." ("Some of Pound's later manner is done better by T.S. Eliot. But Eliot is, after all, a minor poet . . . All of Eliot's poems are perfect and there are very few of them. He has a fine talent and he is very careful with it and it is doing very well thank you."[61]) Hemingway then links Eliot's achievement to A.E. Housman's, both rooted more in the reiteration of a "trick" than on a pressing need to say anything in particular. "Minor poets," he asserts, "do not fail because they do not attempt the major thing. They have nothing of major importance to say. They do a minor thing with perfection."[62]

These remarks represent a real if not complimentary attempt to place Eliot's writing. Clarifying Hemingway's earlier disdain for Eliot's "impeccability," they appropriate and explore the nuances of that word as Pound had used it in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, where "Brennbaum 'The Impeccable'" is presented as a Jew whose dandified English correctness has cut him off from his deepest roots ("The heavy memories of Horeb, Sinai and the forty years"). Pound's model for Brennbaum had been Max Beerbohm, about whom he afterward wrote that "the impeccable Beerbohm" helped record "the 'aesthetic' era during which people 'wrought'" rather than wrote.[63] And although Pound would later welcome Beerbohm as a respected neighbor in Rapallo, in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) Brennbaum features as a specimen of nineties Decadence, whose "stiffness from spats to collar / Never relaxing into grace" suggests a jewelled aestheticism associated with formal rigidity, superficiality, and a lack of energy that blurs first into narcissistic effeteness and then into (for Pound) questionable sexuality.

Hemingway's references in the mid-twenties to the recently published *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* suggest that he had adopted the poem as a kind of talisman and was especially fascinated by what its portrait of Beerbohm intimated about an inclination toward aestheticism that he shared and yet also feared and abhorred. While he was covering a nearby conference in April 1922, he seized on the opportunity to make a pilgrimage with his colleague Max Eastman to Beerbohm's home in Rapallo, where they drank Marsala and histrionically lamented the degrading effect of the popular press.[64] Hemingway then used a recall of the visit in the story "Out of Season," where a character's preference for the "marsala" that "Max Beerbohm drinks"[65] indicates both Decadent affectation and an anxious need to please at any cost.

All of this figures in "Homage to Ezra," where Hemingway's caricature of Eliot as an aesthete more concerned with the form of his writing than with literature's power to "make people feel something more than they understood" recalls *Mauberley*'s complex resistance to literary aestheticism, in which Decadent writing's lack of interest in the world outside of art is seen to correspond to alienation, careerism, and sexual deficiency. Hemingway's essay envisions the impeccable Eliot cut off not only from his (American) roots, but also from much, much more. Hemingway suggests that, although the effete formalism of Eliot's Beerbohm-like impeccability allows him to do "a minor thing with perfection and the perfection is admirable,"[66] it also causes him to lavish his attention on the formal aspects of writing and to forgo the great subject of the human heart. Thus by 1925, Hemingway had already anticipated Hugh Kenner's contention that Eliot's thoroughgoing skepticism about the capacity of writing to refer to anything outside itself betrays deep loyalties to a French Symbolist tradition in which the poet and his world have "withdrawn in favor of the language."[67]

The same perception drives Hemingway to jeer that in Eliot's hands modernist procedures constitute a kind of "trick." Although he could not deny that *The Waste Land* artfully deploys the compassionately ironic vision of human limitations that Flaubert bequeathed to Pound, he saw that Eliot's most profound concerns pointed in another direction. Consider Eliot's dramatization of the voice of the "hyacinth girl" in "The Burial of the Dead," which is followed by the reflections of the lover who has left her behind:

> "You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
> They called me the hyacinth girl."
> – Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
> Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
> Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
> Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
> Looking into the heart of light, the silence.

Resonating with the sorrow of the relationships in "A Game of Chess" and "The Fire Sermon," the scene no less than "The Jewel Stairs' Grievance" suggests both a lover's dawning realization of what he has lost and an inability to express the depth of his sorrow. Unlike Pound's poem and Hemingway's short stories, however, which emphasize the heart's limited ability to articulate what Pound's *Cathay* identifies as the "grief" of loneliness and Hemingway's stories a "feeling" too profound "to talk about," Eliot's tableau rapidly shifts from a drama of loneliness into the realm of epistemological and religious

inquiry. The passage offers an ambiguous vision of metaphysical fullness ("the heart of light") or vacuity ("the silence") that provides the recurrent focus of the rest of the poem.[68] Eliot's lover anguishes about his failure to "speak" or "know," and thereby sounds Eliot's own apprehension of a metaphysical void which he cannot evade.

In "Homage to Ezra," Hemingway's sense that Eliot has relegated Pound's deepest concerns to secondary status propels his argument that *The Waste Land*'s technique has been perverted into a "trick." In Pound's hands and then in Hemingway's, the justification of modernist form lies in its ability (through a technique which provokes the reader to supply what Hemingway called the missing seven-eighths of an iceberg) to suggest realms of human longing that straightforward narrative cannot reach. In contrast, Hemingway implies, Eliot's hermeticism (which, as we now know, in his later writing will leave behind dramatic conventions almost entirely) fixes itself on religious and philosophical issues arising from that longing rather than on the longing itself. Whereas the linguistic contortions of Pound's modernism evoke an inner life that lies too deep to be otherwise addressed, Eliot focuses self-consciously and philosophically on an inadequacy within language that cannot be repaired, but which can trigger our journey toward a Word in which quotidian words are redeemed.

How much weight to allow Hemingway's unsympathetic evaluation of Eliot's work is left to the reader to decide. At the very least, it should be acknowledged that, in the heat of the modernist moment, he pointed to real and significant differences between two similar but divergent strains in modernist poetry and between two sensibilities that questioned the adequacy of literary language for different ends. Amid all Hemingway's invective, there remain judgments worth our consideration, not least as guides to the deepest values of his own fiction.

Notes

1 The Canto (then numbered IX and later to be numbered VIII) began with the words "These fragments you have shelved (shored)," and, following Eliot's objections, appeared in the *Criterion*, I/4 (July 1923), 363–84, minus its first five lines ("Malatesta Cantos: Cantos IX to XII of a Long Poem").

2 *The Letters of T.S. Eliot*, vol. II, ed. Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 141.

3 William Carlos Williams, *Selected Essays* (1954; repr. New York: New Directions, 1969), 21.

4 *Letters of T.S. Eliot*, vol. 1, ed. Valerie Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), 130.

5 See Lawrence Rainey, "Pound or Eliot: Whose Era?" in Alex Davis and Lee M. Jenkins (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modernist Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87–113.

6 See Michael Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 6–7.

7 Ibid., 22.

8 See Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1933), 246.

9 See Roy Foster, *W.B. Yeats, A Life*, vol. 1: *The Apprentice Mage, 1865–1914* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 475–76.

10 For Pound's phrase "obstetric effort" (applied at first to the satiric poem he wrote to celebrate Eliot's success), see *Letters of T.S. Eliot*, vol. 1, 630. The record of Pound's editorial work on Eliot's pre-*Waste Land* compositions is now conveniently accessible in Appendix C of Ricks's edition of Eliot's March Hare Notebook: T.S. Eliot, *Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909–1917*, ed. Christopher Ricks (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996).

11 *The Letters of Ernest Hemingway*, vol. 1, ed. Sandra Spanier and Robert W. Trogdon (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 330. Henceforth cited as EHL.

12 See Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (New York: Scribner's, 1969), 534, 549; and more recently, H.R. Stoneback: "'I would ... be hanged with you': Ernest Hemingway and Ezra Pound," in John Gery and William Pratt (eds.), *Ezra Pound, Ends and Beginnings* (New York: AMS Press, 2011), 165–77.

13 EHL, vol. 1, 331.

14 Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 28.

15 Baker, *Life Story*, 88.

16 Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 67, 80. Bird's handpress would a few years later bring out in a de luxe edition Pound's own first volume of Cantos, *A Draft of XVI Cantos*, in 1925.

17 EHL, vol. 1, 364.

18 Ibid., 363–64.

19 These are summarized and in part reproduced in Baker, *Life Story*, 90–91, and in Milton Cohen, *Hemingway's Laboratory: The Paris in our time* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 22–26.

20 Cohen, *Hemingway's Laboratory*, 24.

21 Ibid., 38.

22 Ibid., 40–45.

23 Ibid., 77. For Cohen's extended assessment of the coherence of the "chapters" of *in our time*, see 47–48, 75–76, 91, 113–19, 130ff. Other interpretations can be found in Michael S. Reynolds, *Critical Essays on Hemingway's In Our Time* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1983), 29, 31, 107.

24 Cohen, *Hemingway's Laboratory*, 37.

25 Ibid., 24.

26 *Personae: The Collected Shorter Poems of Ezra Pound* (1926; New York: New Directions, 1949), 132.

27 The notebooks of Ernest Fenollosa, now part of the American Literature collection in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Collection at Yale. For the standard account of Fenollosa's life and his widow's decision to bequeath Pound the notebook materials on Chinese classic poetry and Noh drama in October 1913, see Lawerence W. Chisolm, *Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963). A more recent account can be found in Helen Carr, *The Verse Revolutionaries: Ezra Pound, H.D. and the Imagists* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2009), 606ff.

28 Part I of "Chinese Poetry" was published in *To-day*, 3/14 (April 1918), 54–57, and Part II in 3/15 (May 1918), 93–95.

29 Cf. "Chinese Poetry" Part II, 94, where Pound observes that "The River-Merchant's Wife (A Letter)" – a longer cousin of "The Jewel Stair's Grievance" – "might have been slipped into" that "most interesting form of modern poetry" found in "Browning's 'Men and Women' ... without causing any surprise save its simplicity."

30 See Ronald Bush, "Pound and Li Po: What Becomes a Man," in George Bornstein (ed.), *Pound Among the Poets* (University of Chicago Press, 1985), 35–62.

31 Ezra Pound, "Patria Mia," a text revised in 1913 from the serial publication of "Patria Mia" and "America: Chances and Remedies" in the *New Age* in 1912 and 1913 and reprinted in Pound's *Selected Prose* (New York: New Directions, 1973), 99–141 (quotation at 123).

32 Ford Madox Ford, "From China to Peru," *Outlook*, 35 (June 19, 1915), 800–01. I quote from a reprinting in Brita Lindbert-Seyersted (ed.), *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship* (New York: New Directions, 1982), 25.

33 Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 140.

34 *EHL*, vol. II, ed. Spanier, Trogdon, and Albert J. DeFazio III (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 41.

35 *in our time: The 1924 text*, ed. James Gifford (web: UVIC.CA/~MVP1922/2015), 8, 13.

36 Letter of March 17, 1924, ibid., 103.

37 Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time* (1925; New York: Collier, 1986), 109.

38 Reynolds, *Critical Essays*, 109.

39 Hemingway drafted an early version of the second half of "Big Two-Hearted River" that consists of Nick Adams's writerly reflections on what he had experienced, but decided to omit it in favor of the present conclusion. One draft of this provisional ending (with thanks to Emily Wallace) is printed as

"On Writing" in *The Nick Adams Stories by Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 233–41.

40 Hemingway, *In Our Time*, 134, 133, 134.

41 See Cohen, *Hemingway's Laboratory*, 37.

42 George Plimpton, *Writers at Work: The 'Paris Review' Interviews*, second series (New York: Viking, 1963), 215–39 (at 235).

43 Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* (New York: Scribner's, 1964), 75. The statement was retrieved and emphasized by Baker, *Life Story*, 109. However, Hemingway's contention that in reality the model for his old man hanged himself is questioned by Paul Smith in "1924: Hemingway's Luggage and the Miraculous Year," in Scott Donaldson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 36–54 (at 43–44).

44 Thomas Strychacz, "In Our Time, Out of Season," in Donaldson (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Hemingway*, 55–86 (at 59–60).

45 Letter of March 31, 1925, EHL, vol. II, 295.

46 It is worth remembering here the way in which "accusations of sterility, impotence, and homosexuality were the weapons the embattled Hemingway most frequently resorted to in his public and private wars on literary figures whom he felt were a threat to him in some way" – Kenneth S. Lynn, *Hemingway* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 242.

47 Then, fearing he had gone too far, Hemingway adds: "The above is facetious." Letter of November 8, 1922, EHL, vol. I, 364.

48 *Transatlantic Review*, 2/3 (September 1924), 341–42, cited in Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 226.

49 See Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 192–93, 292–93.

50 Lynn, *Hemingway*, 246–47.

51 The fullest account can be found in Michael Reynolds, "'A Farewell to Arms': Doctors in the House of Love," in Donaldson (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Hemingway*, 109–27 (at 112).

52 Cohen, *Hemingway's Laboratory*, 21–22. See also Smith, "Hemingway's Luggage," 44, who points out further affiliations between *The Waste Land* and the stories "Cat in the Rain" and "Out of Season."

53 See Reynolds, "Doctors in the House of Love," 112.

54 Lynn, *Hemingway*, 246, 232, 246.

55 Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 273.

56 A tongue-in-cheek account of his part in this can be found in *A Moveable Feast*, 110–13.

57 Lynn, *Hemingway*, 124. Hemingway had first met Hadley through the auspices of another Mary Institute pupil, Katy Smith, after he moved to Chicago in 1920.

58 Reynolds, *Paris Years*, 81–82.

59 Ibid., 272. The essay was published in *This Quarter*, 1/1 (Spring 1925), 221–25, repr. in Peter Russell (ed.), *Ezra Pound: A Collection of Essays* (1950; repr. New York: Haskell House, 1968), 73–76. Citations are to the reprinting.

60 Hemingway, "Homage to Ezra," 74.

61 Ibid., 73.

62 Ibid., 74.

63 *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968), 340; and see comment in John Espey, *Ezra Pound's Mauberley: A Study in Composition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 96. Pound's *Mauberley* is cited from Espey's edition of the poem: see Espey, 124.

64 Baker, *Life Story*, 89.

65 Hemingway, *In Our Time*, 98.

66 Hemingway, "Homage to Ezra," 74.

67 Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 136.

68 For a more extended analysis of this episode, see Ronald Bush, *T.S. Eliot: A Study in Character and Style* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 64–66. For the lines from *The Waste Land*, see T.S. Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays 1919–1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1952), 38.

Non-Metropolitan Modernism: E.M. Forster, D.H. Lawrence, and William Faulkner

HOWARD J. BOOTH

This chapter addresses the response to modernization of three writers – E.M. Forster, D.H. Lawrence, and William Faulkner – whose main subject was not the city. All were highly aware of the impact of new economic and social conditions; they saw different, irreconcilable elements coexisting in modern places. I examine modernist writing in relation to the shift in economic structures that began in the later nineteenth century, rather than through definitions that specify certain shared formal or linguistic characteristics. A claim for such artistic innovation by these three writers can certainly be made by considering the technical experimentation in Forster's *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*, Lawrence's *Women in Love* and *The Captain's Doll* (among other texts), and, perhaps most strongly of all, Faulkner's fiction published in the late 1920s and first half of the 1930s. But the experience of historical and cultural change informs much of their writing. War, sexuality, and nature – three key ways of exploring the impact of modernization – provide the focus for what follows here. The depiction of colonialism and race in the work of these writers captures the unevenness of modern change particularly strongly, as can be seen in perhaps the most radical and controversial effort to counter modernity to be found in modernist writing, D.H. Lawrence's Mexican novel *The Plumed Serpent*, the focus for the closing section of this chapter.

The groundwork for the effort to look beyond the hierarchical relationship between the city and elsewhere in modernist studies existed long ago. Eric Hobsbawm argued in 1989 that the "age of empire" saw the economies of the imperial powers competing globally rather than addressing modern development through a focus on major cities. And Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City* (1973) noted the complex and shifting interrelationship between the urban and the rural, with the posthumously published *The Politics of*

Modernism (1989) maintaining that, for all the significance of works "shaped within metropolitan perceptions," it was crucial to challenge "the metropolitan interpretation of its own processes as universals."[1] Though the center–margins relationship between nations has long been addressed by comparative literary studies, postcolonial studies, and then work on global modernisms,[2] it took longer for rural modernisms to emerge and start to address a further set of hierarchies *within* nations.

The art of non-metropolitan locations in the modern period is not necessarily nostalgic and locked into an outmoded romanticism. An acute sense of the problems of modernization operates in order to articulate a "modernity against itself" – though one that, in Forster and Lawrence certainly, aims to take the individual beyond the bounds of that modernity while recognizing how hard this is to achieve. That is not to deny that there was much writing in the modernist period that did mourn older forms of rural life, constructing as a result a powerful and persistent version of Englishness.[3] There was, though, more than one response to the countryside; Sylvia Townsend Warner, for example, often foregrounded poverty and deprivation.[4] Complex and ambivalent responses to modernization need to be explored, and that does not happen if modernism is seen teleologically in terms of progress toward texts – Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* can stand as examples – that represent the large modern city. Change in non-metropolitan locations was of course addressed on other continents than Europe and the Americas. Rabindranath Tagore, for example, explored the consequences of economic modernization in rural Bengal. For Tagore, the tensions between city and country in the West had led to its reliance on oppositional thinking, a false split between humankind and nature, and a need to dominate in relationships of power; he believed that Eastern thought offers an alternative.[5]

William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County is a particularly strong and sustained exploration of how a non-metropolitan community responds to the modern. Recent work in Faulkner studies in particular questions embedded assumptions about modernism as the art form of the city. In a pioneering article, Jolene Hubbs addresses the rural modernism of *As I Lay Dying*, focusing on the "ostensibly un- or even anti-modern textual elements" discernible in the construction of Yoknapatawpha. The Bundrens' journey with the mother's coffin in *As I Lay Dying* shows the "perennial obsolescence" of the white poor of the South, while the depiction of the "sweat economy" operating there reveals the work that went unrewarded in terms of money or prestige.[6] There is a tension here between the static character of the social

landscape and the forward movement of the journey, caught in a self-conscious, modernist experience of (stalled) time that reveals modernization's discontinuities.

Forster and Lawrence focused on the many who found life in the modern city a struggle rather than those who saw it in terms of opportunities for intense experiences. Forster's *Howards End* shows the precariousness of lower middle-class life through the clerk Leonard Bast, and in a number of early poems Lawrence wrote about London's destitute men and women on the Embankment and the streetwalkers in Piccadilly.[7] In the late poem "City-Life," he addresses the condition of workers trapped in the "factory world,"

> When I see the great cities –
>
> When I am in a great city, I know that I despair.
> I know there is no hope for us, death waits, it is useless to care.
>
> For oh the poor people, that are flesh of my flesh,
> I, that am flesh of their flesh,
> when I see the iron hooked into their faces
> their poor, their fearful faces
> I scream in my soul, for I know I cannot
> take the iron hook out of their faces, that makes them so drawn,
> nor cut the invisible wires of steel that pull them
> back and forth, to work,
> back and forth, to work,
> like fearful and corpse-like fishes hooked and being played
> by some malignant fisherman on an unseen shore
> where he does not choose to land them yet, hooked fishes of the factory
>   world.[8]

"City-Life" gains its disturbing effect through the tensions between the free verse lyric form and the shockingly violent imagery of imprisonment, where humans are pulled to and from work with giant fish hooks in their faces, and controlled like sentient puppets. A modernist use of free verse highlights the controlling impact of metropolitan modernity on the ordinary worker, providing a powerful example of a modernism that is against modernity. The "I"-voice is unable to stand by and remain detached, with his emotional engagement increasing through the poem as he thinks about urban conditions and his inability to bring about change. People are not only "poor" in the financial sense, but because their lives have been degraded by the "malignant fisherman." Ascribing the suffering to a "fisherman" suggests a single cause: they are held in place by a controlling economic system that

reaches into their heads and does them violence. The choice of fishing imagery puts the poem in sharp contrast with Jesus' injunction to his disciples, in the New Testament of the Christian Bible, to bring new adherents by being "fishers of men."[9] The reworking of the language of the Bible suggests that, for Lawrence, Christianity does far more harm than good. However, writers living at a distance from large cities and closer to older communities found it harder to reject such cultural traditions and religious norms outright; a complete rejection of older literary forms and styles was also unlikely. Non-metropolitan modernists often adopted the more oblique if less alienating strategies of free verse, free indirect discourse, and symbolism.[10]

Mainly associated with writing at a distance from the metropolis, each of these three writers did spend periods in cities. Faulkner's second novel, *Mosquitoes*, was written during an extended period on the Vieux Carré in New Orleans in the 1920s. (There is also evidence that it was at this time that Faulkner engaged with Lawrence's work as that of an older, established writer.[11]) In the view of Claus Daufenbach, though, Faulkner's response to the city at this time results in an updated form of Decadence; his urban art was different to that produced in Chicago and New York, cities then in the vanguard of modernization.[12] Though it was not his main home, Forster kept a small flat in London for many years. *Howards End* explores at length the relationships within the city – between the urban center and the suburbs – and the countryside near and far. With his Cambridge University formation and place in the Bloomsbury group – friendships with (among others) Roger Fry, Lytton Strachey, and Virginia Woolf – Forster can be linked to London's modernist circles. However, he preserved a distance from Bloomsbury, and, in his writing, London often sunders the individual from more intuitive forms of connection.[13] A similar sensibility can be seen in Lawrence, whose initial "discovery" by the founding editor of the *English Review*, Ford Madox Hueffer (later Ford), occurred in 1909 during his time as a teacher in Croydon near London; Lawrence soon met Wells, Pound, and Yeats.[14] The critique of London in Lawrence's later work, as "City-Life" suggests, was sharp and thoroughgoing, including the city's Bohemia in *Women in Love*, and the Mecklenburgh Square set (which included H.D. and Richard Aldington) in *Aaron's Rod*. Lawrence saw the culture of the city as symptomatic of what was wrong with modern life. The city had developed a mechanical, nonhuman energy of its own; he said of London in a late essay, "Now it only rolls massively and overwhelmingly, going nowhere, only dully and enormously *going*."[15]

The Non-Metropolitan and Three Modernist
Motifs: War, Sexuality, Nature

Spending the First World War as noncombatants away from Western cities seems only to have sharpened these three writers' analyses of the conflict. The only one to serve in the military, Faulkner joined the Royal Air Force in Canada after his attempt to join the US Army was rejected on physical grounds. There is no conclusive evidence that he actually flew while in service; he certainly did not reach Europe or any theatre of the war before the conflict's end. However, when he returned home, he was wearing a uniform with officer's wings and a limp supposedly gained in battle. This has been variously understood as youthful high-jinx or a psychological problem – he had expected to fight and could not face returning home and telling the truth.

In his writing, Faulkner was to explore the consequences of the First World War in a number of works including *Soldiers' Pay* and *Sartoris* (to get it published, Faulkner had to submit to extensive cuts made by his agent; the full text was published as *Flags in the Dust* in 1973). *Sartoris* played a pivotal role in Faulkner's development; it was there that he introduced Yoknapatawpha County, for example. For Jean-Paul Sartre, Faulkner's compulsion to tell stories in *Sartoris*, along with the use of gaps and absences, created a core of silence and reserve.[16] The war's impact can be seen on the level of form, showing the connection between historical experience and the narrative absences often found in modernist fiction. Donald M. Kartiganer sees the missing and absent character in *Sartoris/Flags in the Dust* as generating Faulkner's whole narrative technique. The sense of linear time comes into question in many Faulkner texts, along with notions of progress; plot development is not a straightforward journey toward understanding.[17]

In her 2013 study, Pearl James brings form and theme together to address how the war brought a "new death" to the United States. She examines the silences and absences in *Sartoris/Flags in the Dust*. In the South, the First World War overlaid an earlier modern conflict, the American Civil War. Two forms of melancholia – James is drawing on Freud for what happens when the process of mourning is not completed – can be discerned. The consequences of the Civil War are still unresolved, but well-established ways exist to perform the loss. The later conflict is described with striking gaps and silences as its newness cannot be processed. For James, these absences create, indeed necessitate, Faulkner's modernist style of ellipsis and fragmentation. Bayard Sartoris's inability to articulate the events around his brother John's

death reflects a broader failure to come to terms with the mass death that had occurred across the Atlantic Ocean. One marked response to unsettlement is the attempt to shore up the self by restating and reasserting racial otherness and difference.[18]

Forster spent most of the First World War away from Britain in Alexandria, working for the Red Cross during the Sinai and Palestine campaign. Stalled as a writer, it was not until 1924 that his last novel, *A Passage to India*, appeared. While still reaching toward connection in personal relationships, especially between the British and Indians, the strain placed on Forster's earlier hopes seem to have helped make it his most formally modernist novel. The short story "Dr. Woolacott," one of the homosexual fantasy stories that he felt unable to publish in his lifetime, addresses the consequences of the medical advances produced by the war, and whether they really constitute progress. Forms of existence that followed treatment were not, the story maintains, really "life" in the full sense of the word. The young man who seduces the rich invalid may be the ghost of a soldier who had been made Dr. Woolacott's customary offer, "Let me patch you up," or a projection of the invalid's own unconscious realization that death would be preferable to his circumscribed existence.[19] Here is a modernity bared of the ideology, or indeed the mythology, of progress – a questioning position Forster shared with Lawrence and Faulkner.

Lawrence, exempted from military service because of his health, opposed the First World War from the start. *The Rainbow* was suppressed in late 1915 – its sexual content coming up against the conservative wartime publishing environment – and Lawrence experienced real financial hardship. He and Frieda, his German-born wife, were expelled from Cornwall on suspicion of communicating with enemy submarines. The war left him wanting to leave Britain and Europe, but its legacies played a major role in his subsequent writing. Lawrence's fullest analysis of how modern war was changing society and subjectivity came in *Women in Love*, which he had nearly finished by 1917. (It was three years before he could get it published.)

Though set before the war,[20] *Women in Love* explores how supposedly civilized nations could be fighting, nearly a hundred years after the last Europe-wide conflict. The novel suggests that war was the outcome of modernization. Industrial development in the modern nation state may appear to be efficient and civilized, but corruption and violence lie just beneath the surface. Gerald Crich is a captain of industry, one of the "coming men" the country was often said to need at the time,[21] but his relationship with Gudrun reveals the emptiness and violence behind the appearance of

health, strength, and efficiency. Rather than attempting to fully understand and critique prevailing conditions, much modernist art, as exemplified by Loerke and Gudrun, is seen as participating in, and indeed accelerating, modernity. Lawrence believed that the impact of the war continued to be felt through the 1920s. In his last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Connie Chatterley reflects that "the bruise was deep, deep, deep ... the bruise of the false inhuman war."[22] People had tried to carry on without facing up fully to its consequences, embracing instead a life of stock emotional responses.

Where a non-metropolitan position seems to have provided distance and perspective on the war, the pressures on individuals with non-normative sexual identities were felt keenly away from major cities. Faulkner's earlier reviewers noted that he disturbed mores around race, class, and gender; Catherine Gunther Kodat has argued that his depiction of sexuality was similarly unsettling.[23] A sense of pressure and constraint is also captured. In one of Faulkner's most discussed short stories, "A Rose for Emily," it is said of Emily's lover, Homer Barron, that "he liked men." One possible explanation available to the reader when, on Emily's death, Barron's decomposed body is found in her bed, is that he was killed because of his sexuality.[24] However, the text resists full explanation, just as the relationship between the different forces reshaping the town is never made fully clear. Faulkner often observes how the prevailing order sustains itself by excluding otherness, which is not to say that he moved wholly beyond such attitudes himself. Michael P. Bibler, in his exploration of the relationship between homosexuality and race in southern writing, argues that Faulkner's depiction of Quentin in *Absalom, Absalom!* is caught between mourning the intense male–male bonds among plantation-owning white men in the pre-Civil War era and the fear of undermining the privilege that pushes black people, poor whites, and women to the margins.[25]

Lawrence's response to the new sexual identities was both extensive and fraught. Biographically minded critics have wondered – as did a number of his contemporaries – whether Lawrence was "really" homosexual.[26] There is certainly much interest in male beauty and male–male relationships in the writing, as E.M. Forster noted of the "A Poem of Friendship" chapter in Lawrence's first novel, *The White Peacock*.[27] Lawrence saw sex as key to fulfillment in a life,[28] where it had to take the "correct" form – heterosexual and within serious relationships. At times there is a tension between holding to these imperatives and same-sex attraction. In the "Shame" chapter of *The Rainbow*, for example, Ursula falls in love with Winifred Inger; Ursula's sexual awakening and identification with her teacher is powerfully depicted.

Midway through the chapter, though, the relationship starts to be seen negatively; Ursula wants "natural surroundings" instead. Winifred, after her marriage to Ursula's Uncle Tom, the colliery manager in the supremely ugly pit town of Wiggiston, is described negatively as "clayey, inert, unquickened flesh."[29] By the end of the chapter, industrialization, homosexuality, and women's progressive views are fused together and condemned; the writing is in full flight from Winifred's initial attractiveness.

Forster identified as homosexual, as did many of his Cambridge and Bloomsbury friends. A knowing, witty take on sexuality can be seen in the short story "The Life to Come," another posthumously published piece. A local chief takes a missionary's account of Jesus' love as an expression of erotic interest and the two sleep together, something the missionary regards as a temporary aberration. Religion brings with it Western forms of "development," which the story shows degrading the social fabric and the environment, with the chief losing his power and wealth. At the end he is dying from a disease, tuberculosis, brought by the colonizers who came in the wake of conversion. In a final misunderstanding, assurances from the missionary that they will again be close in the next life lead the still-besotted chief to stab him through the heart so that their reunion will not be delayed. The story both queers the Christian narrative and attacks an ideology of progress that sought to fuse colonialism and capitalist modernization.[30] However, Forster's handling of sexuality was rarely so confident and assured. He did not acknowledge his sexuality publicly; partial decriminalization only came in 1967 in England and Wales, not long before Forster's death. Forster retreated from writing novels in large measure because he was unable to address in published work the form of love that most concerned him. He regarded a happy ending for *Maurice*, the novel first drafted before the First World War and published posthumously, as essential. However, the difficulty of bringing about closure is felt in the text; the novel questions whether Maurice and Alec can ever find a place within English society. Compulsory heterosexuality is one factor in play in Forster's, at times, negative representation of women, an issue persuasively examined by Jane Goldman in a 2007 chapter.[31]

All three writers responded to the way that industrialization was changing the environment and humankind's relationship to nature. Roger Ebbatson examines the "Nature tradition," "developed with increasing weight and urgency as a counterpoint to the encroachment of industrialization," operating during the modernist period.[32] Liminal spaces are created in Forster's Edwardian fiction, where older forms of relationship to the land come up against new attitudes to ownership and possession.[33] *Howards End* famously

attempts to establish connections between different elements of English society. The closure of the novel sees the artistic, cosmopolitan Schlegels linked through marriage to the mercantile Wilcoxes, while Helen Schlegel's son with the lower middle-class clerk Leonard Bast stands to inherit the house in the country, Howards End. However, the novel is aware that it is impossible to think only in terms of reconciliation between individuals and groups; society is rapidly changing, and this includes spatial relations and subjectivity. Not only is Howards End threatened by London's spread – as Helen observes, "London's creeping"[34] – but spatial awareness is itself changing. The novel's interest in the motor car – one could imagine a similar approach to the role of automobiles and aircraft in Faulkner's *Sartoris/Flags in the Dust* – has been explored by Andrew Thacker, who shows how changed relationships to space mean that it was no longer a matter of reconciling the values associated with specific locations. While Thacker recognizes "the occluded space of the countryside," his reading persists in seeing Forster's emphasis on place and nature as rendering *Howards End* transitional; the novel is not wholly at one with modernization, as a truly modernist text would (supposedly) be.[35] Richard Sennett, alternatively, sees radical potential in the disparate elements, old and new, the novel registers: *Howards End* "reflects on a possible modern meaning of place. His sense of place is not that of a sanctuary; instead, it is a scene in which people come alive, where they expose, acknowledge, and address the discordant parts of themselves and one another."[36]

By the 1920s, Lawrence had come to feel that industrialized economies were transforming landscapes everywhere. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Sir Clifford Chatterley's wood where Mellors is the gamekeeper "was a remnant from the great forest where Robin Hood hunted." However, the continued existence of this survival of an old England is in doubt. Trees were cut down during the war for "trench-props," showing the impact of the conflict at a distance from the front and centers of power.[37] There is also the example of Squire Winter, who, like Gerald's father, Thomas Crich, in *Women in Love*, represents the older generation of paternalistic mine owners, living near his mines and his workers but increasingly at odds with how capitalism and society are changing. His death sees his heirs sell his estate, and the country house knocked down, before the land is used for a housing development. The narrator observes that "one England blots out another."[38] Lawrence critiques the consequences of these powerful economic forces, and the growing sense in modern culture that humankind is somehow separate from nature. He advocates thinking in terms of "true relatedness" to the

"circumambient universe,"[39] but sustained attention to urban modernity is not found to the same extent as in Forster's *Howards End*.

The construction of Yoknapatawpha County in much of Faulkner's writing shows a modernist writer mapping the non-metropolitan with the sophistication elsewhere accorded to the city. He too locates his characters in a nature being transformed by social and economic forces. Leading ecocritic Lawrence Buell explores Faulkner's complex, shifting, partial, and at times even contradictory allegiances in his writing about the natural world. Buell notes Faulkner's depiction of the timber industry in *Light in August* at the very point, the 1930s, when Mississippi's first forest no longer offered large tracts of timber. The history of Mississippi lumbering forms the social context and the novel's characters, though Faulkner also drew on the literary representation of nature, and especially English pastoral and American male wilderness narratives. Faulkner's sense of context is shown by his representation of how nature, in a subtropical climate, fights back when the timber industry moves on. In *The Wild Palms/If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem* and in *Go Down, Moses*, however, he did not fully work through how man-made interventions on the Mississippi and its tributaries contributed to the severity of the flooding. Faulkner's turn back to the world of the young Ike McCaslin serves to romanticize pre-industrial days, though it does offer a point of comparison with the present to suggest how the natural world has been degraded. Buell links Faulkner's writing about hunting to the discourses that, despite the killing of animals, laid the groundwork for American environmental writing.[40] It is a response to nature that is of its time, then, but Faulkner is clear – as are Forster and Lawrence – that humankind is very much part of the natural world and cannot somehow stand apart.

Toward a Different Future? Lawrence's
The Plumed Serpent

Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent* explores an alternative to Western modernization in a non-metropolitan location. Written and set in Mexico, the novel represents a displacement of Western religion and culture in favor of a return to revitalized pre-Columbian deities. Not only does it decenter a modern focus on the city at the level of content, but it also reaches toward a concomitant form and style for its subject matter. It differs from high modernist texts that have, as Leo Bersani notes, "little patience for structurally unassimilated material or false starts," making different demands of the reader.[41] This difference can be set out in a reading that sees the challenges

and contradictions Lawrence captures in the text not as disabling flaws and weaknesses, but rather as a response to a discontinuous experience of the modern in a non-metropolitan location.

The Plumed Serpent has often been attacked; most famously, Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics* saw it as sexist, racist, and fascistic.[42] The novel has long had its champions, though. In a moving talk given on the BBC the month after Lawrence died in March 1930, Forster saw *The Plumed Serpent* as Lawrence's "finest novel," praising its construction and the way it made readers feel that "we have assisted at a great mystical ceremony."[43] As others have noted, it is important that European or North American readers do not simply read the novel through their own modern history. Though the novel is informed by Lawrence's own social background and political investments, he was also engaging with the psychical and cultural catastrophe that the Conquest and imperialism had effected in Mexico.[44]

It initially appears that *The Plumed Serpent* will offer up non-metropolitan locations as a straightforward alternative to the city. The novel begins in Mexico City with the depiction of a bull-fight; the main character, Kate Leslie, is shocked by the violence and has to leave. She sees what happens in the stadium and in the city as the product of Spanish colonialism and, more recently, Americanization. The redistribution of resources would not be a solution. Kate views the revolutionary murals by "Ribera" as merely an angry and crude response to conditions.[45] A fundamental shift at the level of consciousness is needed, brought about by a change of religion. (As we have seen in "City-Life" and Forster's "The Life to Come," Christianity was often seen as underpinning modernization and colonialism.) Though Kate meets two leading Mexicans in the city – Ramón and Cipriano, the first of mainly Spanish, the latter of mostly indigenous descent – it is only after her move away from Mexico City, to the Lake of Sayula (based on Lake Chapala), that she learns more of their movement and the Quetzalcoatl religion. The plot does not take us back to the city; that said, the narrative voice reports on the movement's rise, and Ramón and Cipriano, who establishes a relationship with Kate, spend much time away. Mexico City, viewed negatively by Ramón,[46] is the last part of the country to fall to the new religion.

A recasting of Western conceptions of time and space is attempted. Clock time and the church bells give way to a more open experience of time, with drums marking the journey of the sun across the sky; in the narrative the passage of the seasons is used to describe the passing of time rather than months and years.[47] Beyond the human level, religion sees historical periods end and the exchange of exhausted for refreshed gods. Space is carefully

delineated and used to explore the contestation between old and new. In Sayula, where Kate rents a home, the church building and market square become a center for the rituals of the Quetzalcoatl religion. There is also a stress on micro-geographies. Kate's closest engagement with Mexicans occurs in her house, in which she lives with Juana, her servant, and Juana's extended family. Outside the town, Kate spends time at Jamiltepec, Ramón's hacienda, which is divided initially between Ramón and his wife, Carlotta, who remains loyal to Roman Catholicism. In the "Attack on Jamiltepec" chapter, two disloyal members of his household let in a number of agents of the Knights of Cortes, a pro-Catholic group. Ramón is left to defend the house from the roof, while a visiting Kate helps kill one of the intruders. Ramón is injured in the attack, with the chapter both developing the bond between Ramón and Kate and revealing the fragility of the movement at its very center.

There are limits to the novel's attempt to displace modernity. *The Plumed Serpent* often constructs a new or renewed Mexico after older Western, and indeed specifically Lawrence's, needs and wishes. Jamiltepec is depicted as the economic model for a renewed Mexico, but its stratified social structure looks more like a return to the country's immediate past than a radical departure. The religious ceremonies may not be about Mexico at all, but an effort to take back for religion and the communal the heady states experienced by individual readers of the texts of European aestheticism and Decadence. (Parts of the first version of the novel were heavily indebted to theosophy.[48]) Cipriano's approach to military planning – he is an army general whose tactics eschew industrialized warfare and trenches – and the forms of subjectivity the novel reaches toward are not wholly new either. Long-existing gender hierarchies and stereotypes are recirculated.

However, the discontinuities resulting from the coexistence of difference in a non-metropolitan location are shown to enable the open, multiple, and suggestive. Graham Hough noted in 1956 that the novel has "two plots"[49]: it is both the story of the movement and that of the Irish visitor, Kate Leslie, who is aligned with the reader to provide a skeptical perspective. However, at the end of the novel – where it only took this form late in the final version – it seems likely that she is going to stay in Mexico as Cipriano's wife, living as the goddess Malintzi. The "two plots" collapse together, and the charge can be made that Lawrence is eliding difference and coercing his readers into thereby accepting the movement. In a more recent postcolonial reading, though, Neil Roberts notes the difficulties in imagining an alternative to colonialism from within Western discourse, and the gains that flow

from the text's openness (at least until the end): "I do not think that unresolved conflict [between the "two plots"] is necessarily an aesthetic weakness, especially when the conflict is so revealing about the white subject's experience of cultural difference. The weakness is, rather, Lawrence's forced attempt at resolution."[50] The "conflict" serves to aid the exploration of intense bonds across racial and cultural boundaries.

Michael Bell's influential 1992 study of Lawrence, for all its powerful critique of *The Plumed Serpent*, suggests ways of registering the novel's openness and complexity. His general frame is that *The Plumed Serpent* goes against what Lawrence achieved in his best fiction, namely a language and form that tested and interrogated the text's ideas. Lawrence's Mexican novel "traduces the Lawrencean metaphysic" by failing to question the new religious movement sufficiently.[51] Lawrence, then, breaks one of his own injunctions on the novel in the essay "Morality and the Novel": he "puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection."[52] However, Bell acknowledges that while the novel may attempt to "recover a holistic narrative vision by rhetorical force," the novel form is rendered as open as it had been since the eighteenth century, and is thus able to capture diverse elements.[53] He also notes the novel's "utopian yearning," which is seen, for example, in the depictions of religious ritual and use of repetition.[54] Moving beyond the supposed univocal quality of the text as a result of collapsing differences, I see *The Plumed Serpent* as a response to the modern that finds a distinctive modernist form and style that captures and represents coexisting diverse elements – with, as Richard Sennett finds in *Howards End*, resultant possibilities for transformation and the emergence of the new. These further elements seem to proliferate as the novel approaches its close, and include the attraction Kate feels for Ramón, the tensions in the close bond between Ramón and Cipriano, and the friendship Kate establishes with Ramón's second wife, Teresa.

A concluding question is whether non-metropolitan writing established a legacy. Though its influence was significant for individuals and in certain contexts, it is hard to point to an international rural modernist movement; the impact of modernization in cities seems to have transferred to other metropolitan locations much more easily. That may have led to missed opportunities. David Rogers has lamented the way post-Second World War English writers, negotiating the end of empire from diverse locations, did not learn from Faulkner's recasting of the tropes of the American South and its decline, and adopt similarly "rhetorical" forms of realism.[55] What has been seen here to characterize these three writers is a keen attentiveness to

the uneven development occurring within and between nations and regions.[56] Indeed, Forster, Lawrence, and Faulkner found forms and styles not only to register the elements – new, old, diverse, at times contradictory – present in modern, non-metropolitan locations but also to explore what might emerge from such simultaneity.

Notes

1 Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875–1914* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987); Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973), and *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, ed. Tony Pinkney (London: Verso, 1989), 47.

2 On global modernism, see Mark Wollaeger and Matt Eatough (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

3 See Robert Colls, *Identity of England* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 289–304.

4 See Mary Jacobs, "Sylvia Townsend Warner and the Politics of the English Pastoral, 1925–1934," in Gill Davies, David Malcolm and John Simmons (eds.), *Critical Essays on Sylvia Townsend Warner, English Novelist, 1893–1978* (Lewiston, ME: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 61–82 (at 63).

5 Rabindranath Tagore, "The Relation of the Individual to the Universe," *Sādhanā: The Realisation of Life* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 3–22.

6 Jolene Hubbs, "William Faulkner's Rural Modernism," *Mississippi Quarterly*, 61/3 (Summer 2008), 461–75 (at 473, 462–68, 468–73).

7 See D.H. Lawrence, "Embankment at Night, Before the War / Charity," "Embankment at Night, Before the War / Outcasts" and "Piccadilly Circus at Night / Street-walkers," *The Poems*, ed. Christopher Pollnitz, 2 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 2013), vol. I, 104–07, 38.

8 "City-Life" from *The Complete Poems of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. F. Warren Roberts and Vivian de Sola Pinto is reproduced by permission of Pollinger Ltd (www.pollingerltd.com) on behalf of the estate of Frieda Lawrence Ravagli. In *Complete Poems* (London: Penguin, 1977), 632.

9 Matthew, 4.19.

10 The early study that famously saw modernism as an ongoing Symbolist movement is of course Edmund Wilson's *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870–1930* (New York: Scribner's, 1931). Donald M. Kartiganer examines Faulkner's indebtedness to Symbolism in "'So I, who had never had a war...': William Faulkner, War, and the Modern Imagination," *Modern Fiction Studies*, 44/3 (1998), 619–45 (at 620–22).

11 Faulkner would have heard about Lawrence from Sherwood Anderson, and there is evidence from book-buying records that Faulkner followed

Lawrence's career. See Ilse Dusoir Lind, "Faulkner and D.H. Lawrence: A New Legatee," in Waldemar Zacharasiewicz (ed.), *Faulkner, his Contemporaries, and his Posterity* (Tübingen: Francke, 1993), 56–63.

12 Claus Daufenbach, "A Portrait of the Modernist as a Young Aesthete: Faulkner's *Mosquitoes*," *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, 42/4 (1997), 547–58 (at 548–49).

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25 Michael P. Bibler, "Intraracial Homoeroticism and the Loopholes of Taboo in William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*," *Cotton's Queer Relations: Same-Sex Intimacy and the Literature of the Southern Plantation, 1936–1968* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 63–95.

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28 Michel Foucault uses Lawrence as his example of a stress on the significance of sex to a life in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *The Will to Know*, trans. Robert Hurley (1978; London: Penguin, 1990), 157–58.

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33 See William Greenslade, "Guardianship and Fellowship: Radicalism and the Ecological Imagination, 1880–1940," in John Rignall, H. Gustav Klaus and Valentine Cunningham (eds.), *Ecology and the Literature of the British Left: The Red and the Green* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 151–63 (at 162–63).

34 E.M. Forster, *Howards End*, ed. Oliver Stallybrass (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), 337.

35 Andrew Thacker, *Moving Through Modernity: Space and Geography in Modernism* (Manchester University Press, 2003), 6, 46–79. He argues that "Forster's novel keeps brushing up against a modernity it can, at times, represent, but which it cannot truly – because it does not desire to – understand or embrace" (71).

36 Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), 354.

37 Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, 41, 11.

38 Ibid., 158.

39 D.H. Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel," *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge University Press, 1985), 171–76 (at 172).

40 Lawrence Buell, "Faulkner and the Claims of the Natural World," in Donald M. Kartiganer and Ann J. Abadie, *Faulkner and the Natural World* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 1–18.

41 Bersani's examples are Joyce and Proust, though he notes that this form of modernism often includes "the seeds of its own undoing." Leo Bersani, *The Culture of Redemption* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 113.

42 Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (1969; London: Virago, 1977), 237–93 (esp. 283–85).

43 In R.P. Draper (ed.), *D.H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 343–47 (at 344, 347). Forster later said that *Sons and Lovers* was the Lawrence novel he most admired: C.H. Rolph (ed.), *The Trial of Lady*

Chatterley: Regina v. Penguin Books Ltd. (1961; London: Penguin, 1990), 112. David Ellis has wondered whether Forster saw the novel as getting further than his *A Passage to India* with the issue of "what it meant to be religious but not Christian" – Ellis, *D.H. Lawrence, Dying Game: 1922–1930* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 219. Lawrence admired Forster's novel, which he read between writing the two drafts of his Mexican novel, but he also saw *A Passage to India* as revealing the limitations of Forster's project to "understand" other peoples – D.H. Lawrence to John Middleton Murry, October 3, 1924, in *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey, vol. v (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 142–43.

44 Michael Bell, *D.H. Lawrence: Language and Being* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 186.

45 D.H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, ed. L.D. Clark (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 52–53, and 453, note to 52:10. For Lawrence's response to Diego Rivera ("Ribera") and José Clemente Orozco, whose murals at the National Preparatory School of the University in Mexico City Lawrence seems to be describing, see Ellis, *Dying Game*, 214–16, and Desmond Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros* (London: Laurence King, 1993), 36–51.

46 Lawrence, *Plumed Serpent*, 404–05.

47 See Susan Reid, "Decolonizing Time: The Mexican Temporalities of D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and Carlos Fuentes," *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 50/6 (2014), 717–29.

48 D.H. Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, ed. N.H. Reeve (Cambridge University Press, 2011), xxxv–xxxvi, 355–56, note to 282:1.

49 Graham Hough, *The Dark Sun: A Study of D.H. Lawrence* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1956), 145.

50 Neil Roberts, *D.H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 159. In fact, the ending of *The Plumed Serpent* remains ambiguous down to its final sentence.

51 Bell, *Language and Being*, 188.

52 Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel," 172.

53 Bell, *Language and Being*, 166.

54 Ibid., 170.

55 Rogers does, though, note the influence of *As I Lay Dying* on Graham Swift's *Last Orders*. David Rogers, "Postscript: Englishness in Transition: Swift, Faulkner and an Outsider's Staunch Belief," in David Rogers and John McLeod (eds.), *The Revision of Englishness* (Manchester University Press, 2004), 169–84 (at 177, 182).

56 Seeing different forms of modernist writing in terms of theories of "combined and uneven development" can be related to the work that is recasting and reanimating postcolonial studies. See especially WReC Warwick Research Collective, *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature* (Liverpool University Press, 2015).

Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Rebecca West

LAURA MARCUS

Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, and Rebecca West were born within a decade of each other, in the 1880s and 1890s, converging in London as young women and aspiring writers in the years immediately before the First World War. All three were in the early stages of establishing their literary careers when war was declared. The relationship, personal and literary, between Woolf and Mansfield was established in the immediate postwar years, and though contact had lessened by the time of Mansfield's death in 1923, the impact of her work on Woolf's writing would long continue. Woolf was acquainted with Rebecca West, but the connection was a more limited one: West knew, and for the most part admired, Mansfield's writing, but their "circles" overlapped only slightly. The links between the three writers in the first two decades of the twentieth century were, primarily, those of literary and cultural connections and publishing networks, which, in addition to feminist activism and sympathies, were in differing degrees and kinds, central to their literary careers. Into the 1920s and 1930s, and after Mansfield's death ("our missing contemporary," as Elizabeth Bowen described her in 1957[1]), the work of Woolf and West, though they were very different kinds of writer, showed some significant convergences. Of the three, it was West alone whose life and work would continue into the postwar years: she lived for another four decades after Woolf, who committed suicide in 1941. The work of all three writers, brief and long, contributed to the shaping of modernism in the most powerful ways, in terms both political (particularly in relation to feminist thought) and literary. Their experiments with prose forms took the essay, the short story, and the novel in new directions, and were intimately bound up with their imaginings of new possibilities for women's lives and identities.

Woolf, born as Virginia Stephen in London in 1882 into an upper middle-class intellectual family (her father, Leslie Stephen, was a critic, philosopher, biographer, and the editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*), grew up

with some of the most renowned Victorian writers as family friends. Her first publications, beginning in 1904 (the year in which Leslie Stephen died, and Virginia Stephen set up home with her brothers and sister in Bloomsbury), were anonymous reviews for the *Times Literary Supplement*. Her emergence on the London literary scene was more gradual than that of Mansfield and less explosive than that of West. Through the 1900s and 1910s, she continued to be a regular reviewer and essayist for the *TLS* and the *Guardian*. Her reviews and essays did not appear at this time in the modernist and avant-garde "little magazines" of the period, and only rarely in these fora in subsequent years. Woolf also began her first novel, *The Voyage Out*, in 1908: it was finally published in 1915. Her second novel, *Night and Day*, appeared in 1919.

Katherine Mansfield had few family precedents, and no great family encouragement, for her formation as a writer, though a first cousin was the novelist Elizabeth von Arnim. Mansfield crossed from her native New Zealand to London in 1903 to attend the private girls' school Queen's College in Harley Street: her German teacher, Walter Rippmann, introduced his pupils to works by (amongst other writers of the 1890s) Wilde, Ibsen, and Verlaine, literatures of Decadence and Symbolism that would have a central influence on Mansfield's early literary development and worldview. The following years were spent between New Zealand and Europe: she left New Zealand for the last time in 1908, and in 1910 London became as permanent a home as she would ever have: up until her death from tuberculosis in 1923, her poor health required her to spend substantial periods of time in the south of France and Italy. Her first book of short stories, *In a German Pension*, was published in 1911 (by Stephen Swift's short-lived publishing house), by which time she was writing regularly for Orage's *New Age* and, from 1912, contributing to the new little magazine *Rhythm* (1911–13), founded by John Middleton Murry, who became her partner and then husband.

Middleton Murry became editor of the *Athenaeum* in 1919: Mansfield was book reviewer for the journal, writing over a hundred reviews of modern fiction between April 1919 and December 1920. The journal also published a number of her short stories, including "Sun and Moon," "Miss Brill," and "The Lady's Maid." The *Athenaeum*'s other contributors under Middleton Murry's editorship included writers who would become identified as, or with, "the Bloomsbury Group." In 1916, Murry and Mansfield became part of the circle of guests at Ottoline Morrell's country house, Garsington, which included Clive Bell, Aldous Huxley, Bertrand Russell, Lytton Strachey, and Leonard and Virginia Woolf; it was at this time that Virginia Woolf and Mansfield met.

Rebecca West (she took the name of Ibsen's heroine in *Rosmersholm* in her late teens) grew up in genteel poverty in London and Edinburgh, to a musician mother and a brilliant but erratic journalist father, who left the family in 1901. Active in suffrage politics during her school days, West joined the Fabian Women's Group and started to make her mark as a journalist and writer when she moved back to London with her mother and sisters in 1910. Among her first publications were reviews for the *Freewoman* (1911–12), founded by the suffragette Dora Marsden. West wrote of the journal that

> by its candour [it] did an immense service to the world by shattering, as nothing else would ... The romantic conception of women ... It had to be admitted that women were vexed human beings who suffered intensely from male-adaptation to life, and that they were tortured and dangerous if they were not allowed to adapt themselves to life. That admission is the keystone of the modern Feminist movement.[2]

In 1913, the journal was recreated as the *New Freewoman*, with West as its assistant editor: she appointed Ezra Pound as literary editor. She held this editorial post for only a few months, while continuing as a regular contributor of political articles to the socialist paper the *Clarion* between 1912 and 1913. Here she wrote extensively on topics including suffragism, feminism, women and work, Ireland, the Labour Party, and the Liberal government under Lord Asquith. In an article on the death of the suffragist Emily Davison, who threw herself under the king's horse in 1913, she wrote, with reference to the prison regimes of solitary confinement and forcible feeding endured by Davison, of the "vile" and "perverted" government that sanctioned such treatment of women.[3]

West's 1912 notice of a pseudonymous work by Ford Madox Hueffer (Ford) had brought her to the attention of Hueffer and his partner, Violet Hunt, who was an active suffragist at this time. West became a regular visitor to their literary "At Homes" in South Lodge, Campden Hill Road, where guests included D.H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, May Sinclair, and Wyndham Lewis. West's fiercely critical essay for the *Freewoman*, "The Gospel According to Mrs Humphry Ward" (1912), whose subject was a prominent Victorian novelist, philanthropist, and anti-suffragist, garnered significant attention, as did her review of H.G. Wells's *Marriage* that same year, in which she described the author as "the old maid among novelists."[4] The review brought West into contact with Wells, who would be bound up with her life for many years, not least as the father of her son (Anthony West, born on August 4, 1914, the day on which war was declared on Germany), though Wells remained committed to his wife and family.

West had also started to make her mark as a writer of fiction. An early venture, "Indissoluble Matrimony," was published in the first issue of Wyndham Lewis's *Blast* (early July, 1914), alongside vorticist manifestos and engravings, poems by Ezra Pound, and Wyndham Lewis's "Enemy of the Stars." The "marriage" theme of the story, and the ironies of its "indissolubility," might well be seen as a riposte to Wells. "Indissoluble Matrimony" depicts the marital state – that of a solicitor's clerk and his childless wife – as an arena of murderous feelings. Most prominent among these is the man's loathing of his wife's physicality: "He saw her as a toad squatting on the clean earth, obscuring the stars and pressing down its hot moist body on the cheerful fields. She felt his long boneless body coiled round the roots of the lovely tree of life. They shivered fastidiously. With an uplifting sense of responsibility they realized that they must kill each other."[5] The story adopts the husband's rather than the wife's point of view, but only to point up his distorted perceptions, a combination of anger and cowardice. As in D.H. Lawrence's writing, emotions are represented as a radically unstable force field.

Aspects of "Indissoluble Matrimony" were subsequently developed in West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918), in which she extended the uses of limited narration and narrative instability. "Indissoluble Matrimony" was printed in *Blast* after Ford Madox Hueffer's "The Saddest Story," the first installment of what would become his novel *The Good Soldier* (1915), and West's novella reveals the influence of Ford's novel in its "imagism" and its mode of narration. In turn, questions of memory and forgetting, at the heart of *The Return of the Soldier*, were taken up by Ford in his 1920s war tetralogy, *Parade's End*.

Both Ford and West were centrally concerned with the fraught relations between men and women underlying the polite surfaces of upper middle-class Edwardian society, though West departs from Ford in her use of a female narrator and her engagement with women's perspectives on society and war. *The Return of the Soldier* also reveals West's early awareness of psychoanalysis as a theory of remembering, repeating, and repression: her foregrounding of dreams in relation to war trauma anticipates Freud's 1919–20 writings (in particular in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) on the ways in which shell-shocked soldiers' dreams of their war experiences were driven by a "compulsion to repeat." In West's novella, however, it is the narrator, Jenny, who dreams obsessively: the suggestion is that women, too, are psychically caught up in the traumas of war. Margaret, the working-class woman to whom the shell-shocked and amnesiac Chris "returns" (as he "returns," in his memory loss, to a time before his marriage to Kitty, when

he and Margaret were young lovers) is, at one point, imaged as a fellow soldier dragging Chris to safety.

It is the recalled knowledge of his own dead son (whose nursery is retained as a shrine) that brings Chris back to the present, to a notional "cure," and to almost certain death when he returns to the Front. The novel is bitterly ironic and yet lyrical, particularly in its representation of the lost world in which Chris's amnesia, the "hysterical fugue" brought about by shell-shock, has enabled him to take refuge. It is a love story of a kind, through which West explored some of the most complex and difficult questions arising out of the war experience: the irrecoverability of the Edwardian world and its values; the nature of trauma, bound up with both public and private experience; questions of memory and forgetting; the issue of where madness lies in a world given over to war.

West's representations of war and women's mourning also recall the South African feminist writer Olive Schreiner's account (in her 1911 text *Woman and Labour*) of the losses experienced by women when their sons die in war. "It is not," Schreiner wrote, "because of woman's cowardice, incapacity, nor, above all, because of her general superior virtue, that she will end war when her voice is fully, finally, and clearly heard in the governance of states – it is because, on this one point, and on this point almost alone, the knowledge of woman, simply as woman, is superior to that of man; she knows the history of human flesh; she knows its cost; he does not."[6] This understanding also inflected Woolf's representations of war experience and war memory, in her novels *Jacob's Room* (1922) and *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) in particular. The "spectral figures" of the latter novel appear to the "solitary traveller" (in a dream sequence identified with the character of Peter Walsh, returned to London five years after the end of the war) in the form of "an elderly woman who seems ... to seek, over the desert, a lost son; to search for a rider destroyed; to be the figure of the mother whose sons have been killed in the battles of the world."[7] At the close of *Jacob's Room*, it is Betty Flanders who holds out a pair of shoes left by her son Jacob, now one of the war dead.

It is possible that one spur to Woolf's representations of the war in her novels of the 1920s and 1930s (including *To the Lighthouse*, 1927, and *The Years*, 1937), however oblique, was Mansfield's *Athenaeum* review of Woolf's second novel, *Night and Day* (1919). She described the novel as a vessel whose "strangeness lies in her aloofness, her air of quiet perfection, her lack of any sign that she has made a perilous voyage – the absence of any scars ... We had thought this world was vanished for ever."[8] In a letter written to

Middleton Murry, Mansfield describes *Night and Day*, in harsher terms, as "a lie in the soul. The war never has been, that is what its message is."[9] A week later, Mansfield wrote, in response to Murry's enjoinder to her to continue writing her reviews of modern fiction: "The more I read the more I feel all these novels will not do ... I cant imagine how after the war these men can pick up the old threads as tho' it had never been. Speaking to *you* Id say we have died and live again. How can that be the same life?"[10] Both in these letters and in her review of Woolf's novel, Mansfield conflated the perceptions that, firstly, the war had created a radical break in human experience and culture that contemporary literature was failing to represent and, secondly, that the very form of the novel was inadequate to this new world.

Throughout her writing career, Woolf, too, would seek to "re-form the novel," and she early expressed the need "to invent a completely new form." She perceived the short pieces she wrote in the late 1910s, in particular "The Mark on the Wall," "Kew Gardens," and "An Unwritten Novel," as part of the unmaking of her novel written in "the conventional style" (*Night and Day*). She had created in the short pieces, she wrote, "a tunnel" that had led to *Jacob's Room* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, the latter taking its final form when she discovered what she described as her "tunnelling process, by which I tell the past by instalments as I need it."[11] "The Mark on the Wall" (bound together with Leonard Woolf's "Three Jews" under the title "Two Stories") was the first publication of the Hogarth Press, which they began in 1917. Among the press's first, hand-printed publications were Katherine Mansfield's "Prelude" (1918) and Virginia Woolf's "Kew Gardens" (1919). Soon after their first meeting, Mansfield wrote to Woolf: "Pray consider how rare it is to find someone with the same passion for writing that you have, who desires to be scrupulously truthful with you – and to give you the freedom of the city without any reserves at all."[12] Their shared ambition to remake the forms of literary fiction drew both writers strongly toward Russian literature, and each worked with the Russian émigré S.S. Koteliansky to produce translations of writings by Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Gorky, and others, a number of which were published by the Hogarth Press.

The elements of Russian literature that proved particularly significant for both Woolf and Mansfield included its incompleteness: "Nothing is finished; nothing is tidied up; life merely goes on," Woolf wrote in a review of a translation of Tolstoy's *The Cossacks*.[13] She returned to the theme in her essay "Modern Fiction" (1925), in which she wrote of "the inconclusiveness of the Russian mind ... the sense that there is no answer,"[14] an assertion that resonates with one made by Chekhov, published in the *Athenaeum*, to which

Mansfield had called Woolf's attention a few years earlier. In Mansfield's paraphrase of Chekhov's letter: "what the writer does is not so much to *solve* the question but to *put* the question. There must be the question put." Mansfield added: "That seems to me a very nice dividing line between the true & the false writer – Come & talk it over with me."[15] The open-endedness of a number of Woolf's novels, which (as in *Jacob's Room, Orlando,* and *The Years*) draw to a close with an ellipsis or a question mark, relates to this model of the question *"put"* or posed: the endings of Mansfield's stories, too, resist final solution and closure. The open-endedness also bears on the concern, most explicit in Woolf, but to be found in West and Mansfield, with the intertwined futures of fiction and of women: as Woolf argued, we do not yet know what, in different conditions, women might become.

Chekhov's short stories were of vital importance to Mansfield in her development of the form, though she was unhappy with any bounded definitions of the short story as genre, seeing her own experiments as sketches, monologues, or vignettes. She wrote to Bertrand Russell, in 1916, of her wish "to push through the heavy door into little cafés and to watch the pattern people make among tables and bottles and glasses, to watch women when they are off their guard, and to get them to talk then."[16] The role of the observer – "the *one* who is always on the watch"[17] – was fundamental to Mansfield's writing: in her stories there is often a window (literal or figural), or an equivalent threshold space, through or into which her narrators and characters look. In her notebooks and her short stories, Mansfield frequently uses the railway compartment as the space of observation: it was also an arena deployed by Woolf (in "An Unwritten Novel," *Jacob's Room,* and her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," 1924, in particular) to explore the ways in which the modern novelist might read and write "character" and the nature of fiction-making.

Mansfield frequently pushes further, however, at the social and sexual power relations of her scenes. She uses modes of travel and transport to stage narrative and marital separation, as in "The Escape" (1920) and "Marriage à la Mode" (1921). In the latter, the railway journey is used to narrate trains of thought and to represent the workings of distraction and fantasy: the out-ward and return journeys create contexts of anticipation and its disillusion-ment, respectively. "The Little Governess" (first published in *Signature,* October 18, 1915, and reprinted in 1920 in *Bliss*) plays with the genre of the fairy-tale in its representation of the innocent who enters a world whose value systems she cannot understand and fails to negotiate. The railway journey brings into being the self and its double which, for Mansfield, would

be part of the experience of the woman who travels alone: it also creates the duplicity of the "kindly old man" in the railway carriage who is finally revealed as a seducer, the "wolf" of the tale. The story (with its play on poisoned fruits) suggests that it is the little governess's "thirst," her impoverished condition, that makes her turn reality into a fairy-story and then construct herself as the princess within it. In a number of stories, including "The Tiredness of Rosabel" and "The Lady's Maid," Mansfield depicts women's lives at opposite ends of the social spectrum, opening up the working-class woman's desires and the neediness and bad faith of the socially and financially privileged. "The Lady's Maid" gives a central example of Mansfield's use of dramatic monologue and of ironies created through the doubling and repetition of events and words: taken together, the two remembered scenes spell out the unspoken and unwritten word "slavery."

On reading Woolf's "Kew Gardens" in 1917, Mansfield wrote to her that the two of them were "after so very nearly the same thing": "Yes, your Flower Bed is *very* good. There's a still, quivering, changing light over it all and a sense of those couples dissolving in the bright air which fascinates me."[18] In her laudatory review of "Kew Gardens" for the *Athenaeum* (June 13, 1919), Mansfield writes of the story's conjuring up of light, color, and movement and pointed to the sense of a world *in potentia*: "Poise – yes, poise. Anything may happen; her world is on tip-toe."[19] Whereas a number of other reviewers focused on the story's "impressionism," Mansfield was as, or more, interested in the glimpses it afforded of the workings of mind and memory, noting, "for a moment the secret life is half-revealed." Why is it, she asks, that certain images, of all those that we perceive, return to us with such vividness and distinctness? Moreover, in taking up the impersonality of Woolf's story – its lack of interest in pursuing the human characters once they have passed the flower-bed, and its absorption (a mode of narrative camouflage) in the worlds of insects – Mansfield reveals some of the preoccupations that shape her own writings. As she wrote in a letter to her artist friend Dorothy Brett: "I don't see how art is going to make that divine *spring* into the bounding outlines of things if it hasn't passed through the process of trying to *become* those things before recreating them."[20]

Central to the writing she completed after her brother's death in the First World War was the concern Mansfield expressed in her "Kew Gardens" review: the question of the retention and return of particular memories. As she planned "The Aloe," the first version of her story "Prelude," she wrote in her journals of her desire "to renew ... in writing" the New Zealand island on which she had grown up: "Now – now I want to write about my own

country till I simply exhaust my store ... Oh, I want for one moment to make our undiscovered country leap into the eyes of the Old World. It must be mysterious, as though floating ... I shall tell everything, even of how the laundry-basket squeaked at 75."[21] This recapturing, or renewal, of the past was not defined by Mansfield as autobiography. It retained the force of "impersonality" for her, and can be connected to Woolf's comment on the writing of *The Waves*: "This shall be Childhood; but it must not be *my* childhood."[22] There are significant links between Mansfield's "Prelude" and "At the Bay" and Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*: both writers experiment with mobile viewpoints, and with the transmissions of consciousness from one narrative center to another. In "At the Bay" (as in "Daughters of the Late Colonel"), Mansfield used a twelve-part structure, breaking up the story into chapter-like form, while at the same time using the gaps between the sections to play with narrative continuity and discontinuity.

The influence of musical form can be seen here. This was an important dimension of many of Mansfield's and Woolf's writings, not least in their focus on, in Woolf's phrase, "writing to a rhythm and not to a plot," and it was also central to West, whose novels, including *Harriet Hume* and *The Fountain Overflows*, focus on musical heroines. The visual arts, including painting, photography, and cinema, were also shaping forces. "Scene-making" and "moments of vision" were at the heart of Woolf's aesthetics, as of Mansfield's: both writers had close relationships with painters, and were absorbed by the relationship between literary and visual modes of represen-tation. Mansfield would write of her first viewing of Vincent van Gogh's "Sunflowers," "brimming with sun in a pot," in the 1910 Post-Impressionist Exhibition, remarking that it "taught me something about writing ... a kind of freedom – or rather, a shaking free."[23]

Film, too, became a significant medium for Woolf and Mansfield in the late 1910s and 1920: its strategies of narration, representation, and characterization indeed offered significant models (and, at times, countermodels) for many modernist writers seeking to reform narrative structures. Women writers of the period, including H.D., Dorothy Richardson, and Elizabeth Bowen, in addition to Mansfield and Woolf, were particularly engaged with the cinema. They frequently represented it as a dream space into which women's desires could be incorporated, though there was also an understanding that those dreams and desires were vulnerable to manipulation. Such a perception informs the play of illusion and disillusionment throughout Mansfield's writing.

Woolf's acute and prescient essay "The Cinema," published in 1926, explores the connections between films and both dreams and urban modernity: the

essay also bears closely on *To the Lighthouse*, and was written concurrently with the central "Time Passes" section of the novel. In this section, as in the novel as a whole, Woolf explores relations of space and distance, temporal condensations, narrative simultaneity, looking and being looked at, and forms of "cutting" from one scene to the next in ways that have their parallels in the structures of film editing. These effects are strongly at work in "At the Bay," which, like *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves*, uses dailiness and the rhythms of light and dark, time and tide, as structuring principles, from the opening line – "Very early morning" – through to night – "All was still."

Mansfield's art of writing continued to reverberate throughout Woolf's work in the 1920s, in particular *Jacob's Room*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *The Waves*. Woolf's other texts in the late 1920s, including *Orlando* and *A Room of One's Own*, and her work in the 1930s, including *Three Guineas* and *The Years*, were closer, in their preoccupations and at times style, to the work of Rebecca West. West was a prolific writer, whose work did not settle into particular genres or styles: there is little in her personal writings to suggest that she was as exercised by issues of form, experiment, and representation as Woolf and Mansfield, and "realism" was not a mode to be resisted and rethought. Yet she was no less absorbed by questions of art and aesthetics, and of their necessary connections with issues of gender and identity.

While Mansfield explored these questions in her stories, book reviews, and personal writings (in particular her journals and notebooks), West and Woolf turned to the essay form as a significant vehicle for feminist argument. There are important connections between Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and West's "The Strange Necessity."[24] West, in her long essay, published in 1928, explored the "necessity" of art to the human species and the relationship of art to experience. The essay is a digressive one, turning along the way to questions of national identity, the imperialist subject, and the nature of "empathy." West begins and ends the text with the account of a day in Paris, during which she passed Sylvia Beach's bookshop Shakespeare and Company, purchased a copy of Joyce's *Pomes Penyeach*, and began to think about *Ulysses*. During the day's experiences (visits to a dressmaker, a milliner, a bank, an art gallery, and lunch with an acquaintance in the Île St. Louis), she continues to think about Joyce's monumental one-day novel; its greatness and its lowering "sentimentality" (a demerit she also ascribes to Mansfield's work).

"The Strange Necessity" uses similar modes of scene-setting and first-person narration to those of Woolf, notably in "Street-Haunting" and *A Room of One's Own*. In the latter work (which started life as a lecture to

women students at Cambridge), the narrator begins with a conclusion – that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" – and seeks to "develop in your presence as fully and freely as I can the train of thought which led me to think this."[25] She intends the topic of the lecture to "work in and out of my daily life": the second half of the text is, like "The Strange Necessity," a series of arguments and perceptions coincident with, or brought about by, her movements through the city (in the case of Woolf's text, London).

Both texts could be understood as self-conscious "thought experiments" and experiments in thinking, which are closely connected with women's freedom in, and of, the modern metropolis. They are also performances of narrative digression, which act as deliberate refutations of the "trained," and constrained, mind associated by Woolf with masculine patterns of thought. Yet while *A Room of One's Own* focuses on the question of women and writing (as well as the nature, and cultural construction, of the difference between the sexes), West seems more concerned (not least through her extensive discussion of Pavlov and his canine experiments) with the question of species-being than with gender. The "gendering" of the discussion emerges, nonetheless, through West's insistence on the continuities between those pursuits and desires traditionally ascribed to women (fashion, shopping) and "higher" aesthetic responses. This refusal to separate "high" and "low" culture has its echoes in Woolf's writings on the relativity of "values." She was more explicit than West about the differences between male and female values, writing in her essay "Women and Fiction" that "It is probable, however, that both in life and in art the values of a woman are not the values of a man,"[26] but she shared with West a sense that the terms of such valuations – "Speaking crudely, football and sport are 'important,' the worship of fashion, the buying of clothes 'trivial,'" as she wrote in *A Room of One's Own*[27] – are constructed in the interests of men and are not absolute, unchanging standards.

West's interweaving of the purchase of hats and dresses with aesthetic judgment was badly received by Joyce, while the nature of her commentary on his work was taken to be a significant affront to the writer by William Carlos Williams and Samuel Beckett. In his rebuttal of "A Strange Necessity," the essay "A Point for American Criticism" (published in *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*), Williams writes of West's observations as "narrow, inadequate, even provincial, certainly scared, protestant female – unsatisfactory."[28] While a good deal of the argument in "A Strange Necessity," not least in relation to Joyce, is contestable, Williams's

"certainly scared" misses the mark. West was showing herself to be unfazed by *Ulysses*, both in literary terms (by contrast with Djuna Barnes, who, on reading the novel, declared, "I shall never write another line. Who has the nerve to after that"[29]) and in those of conventional morality. While questioning Joyce's representation of women's insatiable sexual appetites, West celebrates Molly Bloom's soliloquy as the novel's triumph – "one of the most tremendous summations of life that have ever been caught in the net of art"[30] – and in so doing declares her indifference to the censor's views of art, life, and "proper" femininity.

Woolf, too, in *A Room of One's Own*, mocks the censorship (and deplores the self-censorship) both of literature and of women's desires. In the context of the obscenity trial of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* for its representations of lesbian sexuality, she invokes, and provokes, that novel's censor, Sir Chartres Biron, in her assertion in *A Room of One's Own* that "Chloe liked Olivia ... Do not start. Do not blush. Let us admit in the privacy of our own society that these things sometimes happen. Sometimes women do like women."[31] Woolf's first imaginings of the novel that would become *Orlando* reveal glimpses of a story that she never wrote in full: one whose lineaments would have been aligned to those of a number of Mansfield's stories. "I sketched the possibilities," Woolf wrote in her diary, "which an unattractive woman, penniless, alone, might yet bring into being."[32] While Woolf had used such a "character" in her essays on the future of fiction (notably "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown"), and would explore her more fully in the representation of her "odd woman" Sara in *The Years*, the figure is at a far remove from Orlando's patrician splendor. Yet Woolf's initial thoughts about the work to come had also included the ideas, fully realized in the completed work, that "Sapphism is to be suggested. Satire is to be the main note – satire & wildness."

West's *Harriet Hume* was published a year after *Orlando*.[33] Its subtitle is "A London Fantasy," and West indeed described it as "a fantasy, not a novel" (with echoes of Woolf's play with genre in *Orlando*, which is subtitled "A Biography"). In West's "fantasy-novel," Harriet Hume is an enchantingly beautiful pianist, who lives alone in a flat with a magical London garden, reachable only through a door in the wall in the grounds of the old house. *Harriet Hume* is at once fantasy, allegory, satire, and wish-fulfillment. Its style is mock-archaic, and it was one of a number of satires and historical fantasies, including *Orlando* and Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson*, to emerge in the first decades of the twentieth century. Harriet is a fantasist, a teller of fairy-tales whose characters also come to life in one of her admirer's increasingly

fevered and care-worn imaginings. In *Harriet Hume*, as in other works of the period, modernism is in dialogue with the eighteenth century, and the London of *Harriet Hume* is that of Nash's and Adam's architecture, its neoclassical figures and ornamentations taking on a life of their own. The city, with its squares, parks, and streets, is an enchanted place in the novel.

Into the 1930s, fantasy writing ceded, for many novelists, to historical fictions with political resonances, to social realism, and to explorations of the complex nature of "fact." West's and Woolf's writing became increasingly engaged with the exigent political and social situations of that decade. In the years leading up to the Second World War, Woolf's major publications included her novel *The Years* (1937) and *Three Guineas* (1938), her anti-fascist essay on women's opposition to war. She also wrote a number of essays in which she addressed the increasing politicization of art and the question of art's "use value": the latter concern was also central to West's "The Strange Necessity." In "Why Art Today Follows Politics" (1936), Woolf defined the artist as a world citizen (in contrast with West's insistence on a rooted national identity as a precondition for great art). In *Three Guineas*, she argued that women, in their formation of what she calls the "Society of Outsiders," should commit themselves not only to "poverty, chastity, derision" ("chastity" here denoting not sexual abstinence but women's refusal to "prostitute" themselves in marriage or the market-place) but also to "freedom from unreal loyalties." She explored the connections between "patriotism" and "patriarchy" (terms that share a linguistic root) and argued that patriarchy and fascism are aspects of the same system. An essay published after the outbreak of war, "Thoughts on Peace in an Air-Raid," defined the "fighting instinct" as "subconscious Hitlerism." And, in *Three Guineas*, Woolf wrote that the dictator is "here among us, raising his ugly head, spitting his poison, small still, curled up like a caterpillar on a leaf, but in the heart of England,"[34] that is, is implicit and immanent in patriarchal England.

Woolf's initial conception of "an anti-Fascist pamphlet" had come to her as she was working on *The Years*. This was a period when her close friendship with Vita Sackville-West appeared to be over, while her acquaintance wit' West seemed to hold the possibility of developing into a more profound connection. In her diaries and letters from the early to mid-1930s, Woolf describes the social occasions on which she met West and records her impressions. She noted her "electric," "vigorous," and "tenacious and muscular mind," writing to Ottoline Morrell at the end of 1933: "I mean she [West] was very upstanding and outspoken, and we discussed religion, sex, literature and other problems."[35] She possessed, Woolf wrote in her diary in

1935, "all the qualities I lack and fear." "Ought I to go and see R. West," Woolf asked herself in her diary (June 13, 1935): "I want to for some reason – partly about fascism."[36] Yet meeting her in company with her husband, the banker Henry Maxwell Andrews, Woolf found her "merely a hard painted woman that night, living in society." In a lengthy diary entry, she recorded having dinner with "R. West and Mr Andrews" at their expensively furnished London apartment, contrasting the formality of the occasion, and its lack of intimacy, with the bohemian "old Bloomsbury." West, she concluded, "has great vitality: is a broad browed very vigorous, undistinguished woman: but a buffeter & battler: has taken the waves, I suppose; & can talk in any language: why then this sense of her being a lit up modern block, floodlit by electricity."[37] Few further contacts between West and Woolf are recorded after 1935.

Woolf's perception of the prosperous and "worldly" West points to a more general sense that (though West would continue to define herself as a socialist) the early radicalism had settled into a more conservative mold. Her early republicanism, for example, had transmuted into a belief, by the mid-1930s, that monarchy was "an essential symbol" for the British people. The terms of radicalism and conservatism are, however, not altogether adequate for an understanding either of West's attitudes or of the political complexities of the times. Concepts of "reason" seemed no longer to have a great deal of purchase in the "barbarism" of the war years. In "The Strange Necessity," West had explored the "necessity" of myth and symbol in human existence, positing there, too, the essential tension in human lives between "my will to live and my will to die."[38] These concepts became central to her monumental study, deriving from the visits she made to Yugoslavia between 1936 and 1938, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*. There she wrote:

> Only part of us is sane: only part of us loves pleasure and the longer day of happiness ... The other half of us is nearly mad. It prefers the disagreeable to the agreeable, loves pain and its darker night despair, and wants to die in a catastrophe that will set back life to its beginnings and leave nothing of our house save its blackened foundations.[39]

Woolf, reading Freud in depth for the first time in the late 1930s, was struck by a similar concept of "ambivalence," the coexistence of love and hate. Freud, in his *Civilisation, War and Death*, and in "Why War?", argued that love and hate could not be mapped in any simple way onto good and evil: it is not merely that they coexist but that they contain each other. Woolf was readier than West, however – as *Three Guineas* makes particularly clear – to

identify the aggressive instincts with masculinity, rather than universalizing them, and to suggest that women needed to work separately, through the coining of "new words" and values, to bring an end to war.

Mansfield's, West's, and Woolf's engagements with the complex world in which modernism was forged were multifaceted. The early years of their writing careers were shaped not only by powerful political forces, including suffrage feminism, but also by the coming of war. Their responses – personal, literary, and political – were by no means identical, and their formations and experiences were very different. Beyond their differences, nonetheless, there are crucial connections between these three writers. Not the least of these is that all three reached out, in their lives and in their work, for freedom, a term and a concept that reverberates through their work. It is there in West's early writings for the *Freewoman* and in her lifelong political commitment to freedom of speech; in Woolf's feminist writings, from *A Room of One's Own*, with its argument that, despite all the constraints placed on women, there is none "you can set upon the freedom of my mind," through to *Three Guineas*, in which the terms "free," "freely," "freedom" ("freedom from unreal loyalties") circulate throughout the text; in the narrative freedoms of Woolf's and Mansfield's "free indirect discourse"; in Mansfield's discoveries, in art, of "a kind of freedom – or rather, a shaking free."

Notes

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2 Rebecca West, *Time and Tide*, July 16, 1926, repr. in *The Young Rebecca: Writings of Rebecca West, 1911–1917*, ed. Jane Marcus (London: Macmillan, 1982), 6.

3 Rebecca West, "The Life of Emily Davison," *Clarion*, June 20, 1913, repr. in *Young Rebecca*, 178–83.

4 Rebecca West, "Marriage," *Freewoman*, September 19, 1912, repr. in *Young Rebecca*, 64.

5 Rebecca West, "Indissoluble Matrimony," *Young Rebecca*, 280.

6 Olive Schreiner, *Woman and Labour* (London: Virago, 1978), 173.

7 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), ed. David Bradshaw (Oxford University Press, 2000), 49.

8 Katherine Mansfield, "A Ship Comes Into the Harbour," *Novels and Novelists* (London: Constable, 1930), 108.

9 Katherine Mansfield to John Middleton Murry, November 10, 1919, *The Collected Letters of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. Vincent O'Sullivan with Margaret Scott, 5 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1984–2008), vol. III, 82.

10 Katherine Mansfield to John Middleton Murry, November 16, 1919, *Collected Letters*, vol. III, 97.

11 *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell with Andrew McNeillie, 5 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1979–85), October 15, 1923, vol. II, 272.

12 Katherine Mansfield to Virginia Woolf, June 24, 1917, *Collected Letters*, vol. I, 313.

13 Virginia Woolf, review of *The Cossacks and Other Tales of the Caucasus*, trans. Louise Maude and Aylmer Maude (Oxford University Press, 1916), *Times Literary Supplement*, February 1, 1917, repr. in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Andrew McNeillie, 6 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1986–2011), vol. II, 77.

14 Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction," *Essays of Virginia Woolf*, vol. IV, 163.

15 Katherine Mansfield to Virginia Woolf, May 27, 1919, *Collected Letters*, vol. II, 320.

16 Katherine Mansfield to Bertrand Russell, December 1, 1916, *Collected Letters*, vol. I, 287–88.

17 Katherine Mansfield to John Middleton Murry, November 4, 1917, *Collected Letters*, vol. I, 339.

18 Katherine Mansfield to Virginia Woolf, August 23, 1917, *Collected Letters*, vol. I, 327.

19 Mansfield, *Novels and Novelists*, 37.

20 Katherine Mansfield to Dorothy Brett, October 11, 1917, *Collected Letters*, vol. I, 330.

21 *Katherine Mansfield: Letters and Journals*, ed. C.K. Stead (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 65 (January 22, 1916).

22 *Diary of Virginia Woolf*, June 23, 1929, vol. III, 236.

23 Katherine Mansfield to Dorothy Brett, December 5, 1921, *Collected Letters*, vol. IV, 333.

24 Rebecca West, "The Strange Necessity," *The Strange Necessity: Essays and Reviews* (Frome: Butler and Tanner, 1927).

25 Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929), *A Room of One's Own; Three Guineas*, ed. Michèle Barrett (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), 4.

26 Virginia Woolf, "Women and Fiction," *Essays*, vol. V, 32.

27 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, 67.

28 William Carlos Williams, "A Point for American Criticism," in Samuel Beckett et al., *Our Exagmination Round His Factification For Incamination of Work in Progress* (London: Faber and Faber, 1929), 171–85 (at 184).

29 Quoted in Kevin Birmingham, *The Most Dangerous Book: The Battle for James Joyce's Ulysses* (New York: Penguin, 2014), 222.

30 West, "Strange Necessity," 47.

31 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, 74.

32 *Diary of Virginia Woolf*, March 14, 1927, vol. III, 131.

33 Rebecca West, *Harriet Hume: A London Fantasy* (London: Hutchinson, 1929).

34 Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1938), *A Room of One's Own; Three Guineas*, 175.
35 Virginia Woolf to Ottoline Morrell, December 19, 1933, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol. v, ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann (London: Hogarth Press, 1980), 261.
36 *Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. iv, 321 (June 13, 1935).
37 Ibid., 327 (June 27, 1935).
38 West, "Strange Necessity," 190.
39 Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1946), vol. ii, 496–97.

Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, and Djuna Barnes

MICHAEL NORTH

Late in his life, Marcel Duchamp claimed that one "characteristic of this century is that artists come in pairs."[1] What he apparently had in mind was the rivalrous collaboration of Braque and Picasso in the early days of cubism, but he might also have been speaking of his own relationship to Man Ray, which was so close Marco Franciolli has referred to them as a "twofold entity."[2] In the case of "Dust Breeding" (1920), for example, Man Ray photographed a section of Duchamp's "Large Glass," deeply coated with dust, and then Duchamp signed the print with Man Ray's signature. Working hand in hand with the dust, the two artists mock the notions of individual creativity and authorial ownership.[3] But this is just one of many masquerades contrived by these two, who repeatedly used photography – ostensibly the most faithful and unambiguous of the arts – to question the notion of identity itself.

The closeness of the pair, however, does not preclude the addition of a third, and many critics have observed in Duchamp's work a quasi-occult affinity for the number three. When asked about this by Arturo Schwarz, Duchamp replied, "For me it is a kind of magic number, but not magic in the ordinary sense. As I said once, number 1 is the unity, number two is the couple, and three is the crowd."[4] At the time of this statement, Duchamp had been living in the United States long enough to be well aware of the idiomatic warning that "three is a crowd," and he must have been playing on this and defying it. As he told Schwarz, there was no real difference for him between "twenty millions or three" and no terror in the anonymity of the crowd.[5] Thus the Société Anonyme, founded in 1920, was so named when Duchamp accepted Man Ray's mistaken notion that the French term for "incorporated" actually means "anonymous."[6]

Djuna Barnes, who knew both Man Ray and Duchamp, was more ambivalent about the state of anonymity. Late in her life, she complained to Natalie Barney that, despite the notoriety of *Nightwood*, she was "the most

famous unknown of the century."[7] Mentioned in virtually every account of twentieth-century modernism, present in anecdotal histories of the avant-gardes of New York and Paris, Barnes is still in many respects a marginal figure, canonized and yet still largely unread, characteristic and yet stubbornly unplaceable.[8] Her relationship to Duchamp and Man Ray may be taken to represent this close and yet tangential connection to modernism in general, for she knew both men for half a century but was never a participant in any of their schemes, much less a partner in the anonymous society they founded.

This somewhat unbalanced trio may also represent more fully than Duchamp and Man Ray alone the real paradox of the Société Anonyme, the movement made up of outlaws, expatriates, and exceptions. For modernism in general was a movement made of smaller circles and groups, clubbing together around little magazines and exhibitions, issuing collective manifestos, and even sometimes producing collaborative works. But the groups were quite frequently groups of nomads and exiles, many of whom had taken great pains to separate themselves from the groups into which they had been born. This is just as true of Duchamp as it is of Barnes. Despite Duchamp's apparently placid acceptance of the anonymity of the crowd, he was never very close himself to the center of the movements to which he ostensibly belonged: at odds in the beginning with cubism; independent of the Society of Independent Artists and then of Dada and surrealism as well. Man Ray, to be sure, was always a happy joiner, but this may be one reason why he seems, at this point, the junior partner in the association with Duchamp. Thus the loose and apparently random grouping of Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes may actually tell us something significant about the crowd dynamics of modernism.

One of the reasons it makes sense to think of these three together is that they followed the same itinerary through the century and across the Atlantic Ocean. Man Ray and Barnes had been drawn into the same general New York orbit when Duchamp arrived from France in 1915. Already notorious in the United States as the artist responsible for *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which had been exhibited at the Armory Show in 1913, Duchamp quickly made his way in the New York avant-garde, despite speaking virtually no English. He met Man Ray in late summer 1915, and they coped with their lack of a common language by playing a game of tennis without a net.[9] Barnes must have met both men at about the same time, perhaps through Berenice Abbott, who was to become one of Man Ray's assistants.[10] Having established herself in the world of New York journalism, Barnes was then able to

use commissions from *McCall's* and the New York *Tribune* to move to Paris in 1921.[11] Man Ray moved there at about the same time, and the two continued to see a fair amount of one another, in part because Barnes was close to Man Ray's muse and mistress, Kiki of Montparnasse.[12] Duchamp returned to France in 1923 and soon set up shop with Man Ray again, continuing the series of collaborative projects they had begun in New York.[13] Barnes maintained an acquaintance with him throughout the Paris years, partly through her friend Mary Reynolds, who was Duchamp's companion for much of this time.[14]

The German occupation of Paris in 1940 sent Barnes and Man Ray back to the United States. It took Duchamp, still a French citizen, two years to accumulate the necessary documents to follow.[15] After the war, the longtime partners Duchamp and Man Ray essentially traded countries: Man Ray moved back to Paris in 1951; while Duchamp stayed in the United States and became an American citizen in 1954.[16] Though both men traveled back and forth a good deal, they essentially maintained their positions as symmetrical expatriates, while Barnes settled into an apartment in Greenwich Village, solidifying her position on the periphery of American letters. She did maintain contact with Duchamp in these years, the last four decades of her life, despite living a somewhat celebrated existence as a recluse.

Following these three very similar paths back and forth across the Atlantic allows us to trace the lines of mutual influence linking the French and American avant-garde in these years. Duchamp was drawn to New York in the first place by American interest in advanced French art; he arrived to find himself already a celebrated artist, with a reputation prepared by events like the Armory Show and by impresarios like Alfred Stieglitz. But Duchamp assured the somewhat goggle-eyed American press that they were themselves living in the midst of the most potent new art in the world, not the easel painting that crowded the walls of the Armory Show but the popular culture, the appliances, and the architecture outside.[17] It was in this apparently unartistic world that Barnes made her first home as a writer, cranking out the pieces now collected in *New York* and *Interviews*, short squibs in publications like the *New York World Magazine* on topics ranging from the tango to the experience of being force-fed. Though it may have looked like busy work at the time, Barnes's journalism of the prewar years was actually helping to define the kind of culture that would make America's name in the world.

When Man Ray and Barnes crossed the ocean in 1921, they were part of a general exodus of American artists and writers, many of whom were

convinced they were leaving Philistia for the true homeland of the arts. Since little magazines like *Seven Arts* had steadily editorialized against America's spiritual and material ugliness,[18] and writers from the time of Twain had made much of their struggle with American Puritanism, it was natural to assume that crossing the Atlantic also meant exchanging "the ugliness of our cities and suburbs" for "the perfection the great contemporary Europeans had achieved in the arts."[19] American expatriates in Europe were thus astonished and a little disconcerted to find that the artists and intellectuals they had envied from afar were actually full of enthusiasm for the very culture the Americans had just escaped. When Harold Loeb told F.T. Marinetti how much Americans looked up to European culture, "he burst into rhetoric extolling America. To his mind, nearly everything important in our day came out of the United States. Energy, speed, acceleration. He cited our skyscrapers, movies, jazz, even machinery and the comics."[20] This was such a common experience that Edmund Wilson memorialized it in *Vanity Fair*:

> Young Americans going lately to Paris in the hope of drinking culture at its source have been startled to find young Frenchmen looking longingly toward America. In France they discover that the very things they have come abroad to get away from – the machines, the advertisements, the elevators and the jazz - have begun to fascinate the French at the expense of their own amenities.[21]

The crisscross pattern that Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes inscribe between the United States and France thus represents an intricate process whereby countries and capitals serve as avant-gardes for one another. In these years, France and the United States served a reciprocal function of representing the future: the French a future of refinement and cultural advance for the Americans; the Americans a future of industrial vigor and machine art for the French. Writers like Loeb and Josephson actually came to appreciate American machine culture, once their own sense of it had been refracted by a European point of view while French artists like Blaise Cendrars and Jean Epstein hoped to jumpstart an entirely new European future by borrowing from America's formidable energy supply. Though this mutual enthusiasm might seem to be based on the shallow misconceptions of both sides, the work that Duchamp and Man Ray did in Paris and New York shows how important the transatlantic partnership was to the real work of the twentieth-century avant-garde.

New York

When Duchamp first arrived in New York, Man Ray was an upstanding member of the more provocative wing of New York Dada. In 1915, he published the *Ridgefield Gazook*, a scrappy little magazine including his visual poem "Three Bombs," which was in fact a series of heavy black lines. Later, he collaborated on another short-lived and short-fused journal titled *TNT*. He also produced a good deal of visual art with the same incendiary motives, including *New York*, which shows a flask originally filled with olives that have been replaced by ball bearings. By these means, he makes a fairly militant visual pun, since the long glass tube now resembles a cannon, stuffed with avant-garde cannonballs. New York, in this abstract version of itself, seems ready to pop its cork or blow its top and release the visual wit of Dada on a defenseless population.[22]

Duchamp, who had left France as much to avoid cubism as to avoid the war, joined the New York social scene that surrounded magazines like the *Ridgefield Gazook*, and he contributed what is probably the most famous Dada provocation of all: *L.H.O.O.Q.*, the celebrated desecration of the Mona Lisa with a carefully scrawled mustache. But the row over *Fountain*, the urinal he contributed to the exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in 1917, probably typifies his peripheral relationship to avant-gardes of all kinds. Where the Society apparently intended to flout the accepted aesthetic standards of the day by mounting an unjuried show that would accept any kind of art without restriction, Duchamp managed to find the limit beyond which their acceptance could not go. The result, which would include not just the urinal itself but also the Alfred Stieglitz photographs of it, the articles defending it in the *Blind Man*, and the whole furor in response, has driven aesthetic speculation ever since. If Dada had intended to mock and degrade the traditional work of art, Duchamp managed to put it all in quotation marks, so that its status would remain an open question forever more.

As collaborators in New York, Duchamp and Man Ray produced a number of works that poked holes in conventional definitions of and boundaries between the arts. Some of these were staged photographs of Duchamp, the most significant of which is the portrait Man Ray took of him as Belle Haleine, set in vignette on a mock perfume bottle, which graced the cover of *New York Dada* in 1921. At this time, Man Ray also took a number of photographs of Duchamp's work, including the dust-covered "Large Glass" for "Dust Breeding" (1920). The ghostly photographs he took of Duchamp

39.1 Unexpected scents: Man Ray, portrait of Duchamp as Belle Haleine, cover of 1921 *New York Dada.* © Man Ray Trust/Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY/ADAGP, Paris 2016.

standing behind his "Rotary Glass Plates" are actually records of a collaborative project, in the course of which the two artists constructed an apparatus meant to spin propeller-like glass plates inscribed with lines. The idea behind this Rube Goldberg device was to find the speed at which the individual propeller blades would blur and appear as a solid disc, ringed with circles, but the experiment almost cost the artists their lives when the glass plates shattered and sprayed in fragments across Duchamp's flat.

The apparition created in Man Ray's camera as Duchamp posed behind the spinning plates is a visible image of the effect of these works, which invert photography's conventional attributes and powers, turning what is supposed to be the most faithfully mimetic of the arts against the complacency of ordinary eyesight. These works are exercises in the power of photography to destabilize and call into question what we think we see. The automatism of the camera, oddly enough, helps to expose the apparent biological automatism of human optics, since so much of what is ostensibly seen by the eye is actually constructed in the brain. The farcical mock publicity photographs produced by the two artists make the same point in a more specifically satirical way. To pose Duchamp in women's clothes, here as the trademark of a nonexistent perfume company, is to show at one and the same time how easily the camera can be fooled and how easily it can fool others. Duchamp's punning alter ego Rrose Sélavy, who first begins to appear in Man Ray's photographs of this time, is a personality made of photographs, but her existence is no more and no less tenuous than that of most celebrities, who are also creatures of the screen or the magazine layout. Through the agency of public photography, the imagination peoples the public sphere, which turns out, in the light of Dadaistic projects like these, to be a fanciful and imaginative place, fit for the most exceptional of artists.

It was in this phantasmagorical public sphere that Barnes did her early work as a writer. The journalistic work she published between 1913 and 1921 is remarkably similar to the newspaper writing that Ernest Hemingway was publishing at about the same time, and the newspaper writing that Stephen Crane had published in New York twenty years before. All three writers, hardboiled newspapermen and a woman writer as well, published most of their reports in the Sunday supplements and not on the front page. Thus they specialized in fads and trends, not breaking news. Barnes thus reports on the circus, the zoo, dance halls, and tea lounges. As a specialist in the celebrity interview, she talks to Lillian Russell and Diamond Jim Brady, Flo Ziegfeld and Billy Sunday, Jack Dempsey and Coco Chanel. She skirts the edge of celebrity herself, mounting a series of stunts that range from the utterly frivolous, like circumnavigating Manhattan, to the seriously satirical, as in the piece on how it feels to be force-fed.

In the interviews, all the celebrities sound like Djuna Barnes. Ziegfeld, for example, offers this remarkably outlandish definition of a vamp, or vampire: "A vampire is a woman who eats lightly of uncooked things; who walks out between tall avenues with spears to die, and doesn't, and finally spends the evening in an orgy of virtuous dreams."[23] A bit more in that vein and

Ziegfeld would have been able to write *Nightwood* himself. These reports are delivered, in other words, with one eyebrow very strenuously raised, with an elaborately arch tone that always threatens to tip over from irony into hoax. The little story, "To Sublet for the Summer," which appeared in the *New York Morning Telegraph Sunday Magazine* in 1918, though it is not a news report at all but a tiny dramatic vignette, may be taken as typical. Two women who share a New York apartment take out an ad for a summer sub-let, but they are so horrified by the brute conventionality of their applicants, including a "man and wife – speaking in the terms of 'we,'" that they withdraw the ad.[24] The story is as much of a hoax as the ad within it, and its attitude toward serious news reporting is more or less the same as that of the two women to their hapless applicants.

On one level, then, Barnes was a specialist in domestic tourism, reporting to her bourgeois readership on the outlandish within its midst. This is especially true of the four reports on Greenwich Village published in various venues, including the *New York Morning Telegraph Sunday Magazine*, in the course of 1916. But these pieces also satirize the very appetite they provoke and satisfy, elaborately mocking the bourgeois need to be scandalized, epitomized by the woman rather cruelly called Madam Bronx in "Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians." Thomas Heise argues, though, that these brief dispatches from the front lines of the culture wars also serve the purpose of restoring some privacy to a civic space that had been forcibly opened to investigation and voyeurism. The mask of irony and double meaning protects a queer space from a kind of imaginative assimilation.[25]

In any case, it should be clear that as a journalist, Barnes was operating in the same general zone of irony as Man Ray and Duchamp, and that their spoofs of commercial publicity also had the effect of spoofing the gender positions defined by advertisers as targets. One additional way in which Barnes's work of this time overlaps with that of the other two is that many of her news reports included drawings. For the most part, the illustrations that Barnes includes with her articles seem deliberately anachronistic, derivative of Beardsley at a time when, elsewhere in town, Duchamp was doing his first readymades. But it may be that these self-consciously "Decadent" drawings are Barnes's way of abandoning the game of aesthetic progress and improvement, as Duchamp had abandoned it by giving up painting. The main exhibit in this case would be the problematic *Book of Repulsive Women*, published in 1915, which has daunted readers ever since because it is so clear that the women described and pictured in it are supposed to be repulsive insofar as they are deviant.[26] To repulse, however, may also mean to defend,

and it may be that Barnes is intent in this work on fighting off both criticism and acceptance, to keep a space of dignity free of evaluation of any kind.

Paris

When Barnes, Duchamp, and Man Ray reached Paris in the early 1920s, Dada was about to be "broken asunder by the surrealists."[27] For Man Ray, at least, this seemed to be an unproblematic transition, and, in fact, *New York Dada* was actually put together in Paris. The piece with which Man Ray commenced his stay there, "Cadeau," a flat iron with a row of thumbtacks glued to its face, was simultaneously a Dada joke and a classic surrealist work, and he soon became celebrated among the French artists who were founding the surrealist movement.[28] In short order, he came to serve as the semi-official photographer of the movement, whose photographs appeared regularly in *La révolution surréaliste*. In fact, the final issue of that journal contained a tribute to Man Ray by André Breton himself.[29] At the beginning of the movement, in the early 1920s, Breton had fervent hopes that Duchamp would turn out to be an exemplary figure as well. But he was well aware, as Gérard Durozoi puts it, that "Duchamp had successively avoided cubism, futurism, and even Dadaism," and that, paradoxically, his exemplary status depended on his aloofness and skepticism.[30] These Duchamp managed to preserve over two decades of public association with the surrealists.

Much of the collaborative work that Duchamp and Man Ray did in Paris simply continues projects, like *New York Dada*, begun in the United States. They produced a few more hoax photographs, such as the "Monte Carlo Bond" that Duchamp devised by mounting a Man Ray photograph of himself, with hair soaped up into devil's horns, on a parodic bond certificate. Duchamp did have a system with which he apparently hoped to break the bank at Monte Carlo, and he actually did sell a few bonds to gullible investors, but the system failed and the bonds turned out to be worthless as investments, though they later turned out to be nearly priceless as works of art.[31] At this time, Duchamp also produced another, more sophisticated, version of his rotary optical device, this one called the Rotary Demisphere, of which Man Ray took a number of photographs. But the two also brought this device into a new phase of their work together by incorporating it into an experimental stereoscopic film, which was meant to preserve the hallucinatory oscillating quality produced by the spinning disk.[32] Films of one kind or another turned out to be the characteristic feature of this phase of their working relationship, starting with the chess match that Duchamp and Man

Ray staged for René Clair's *Entr'acte* in 1924, and culminating in *Anémic Cinéma*, which they made with Marc Allégret in 1926. Man Ray went on to make a number of films on his own, including *Emak-Bakia* (1926) and *L'étoile de mer* (1928). This move to film, according to Dalia Judovitz, evinces a general disillusionment with the visual arts in their current form and a desire to use film to investigate the optical experience on which the visual arts had previously placed a certain unexamined faith.[33] Though *Entr'acte* may have been planned as a kind of Dada jibe against the surrealists, *L'étoile de mer* is a classic late surrealist work and was enshrined as such in *Le surréalisme en 1929*, the publication with which Breton, Louis Aragon, and Paul Éluard hoped to extend the life of their movement.[34]

The account of her life in Paris during these years that Barnes attempted to pull together concentrates on expatriate life in the Latin Quarter and has very little to say about figures such as Breton or Aragon. Still, it has seemed clear to a number of scholars that *Nightwood* is set in a Paris recognizably distorted by the influence of surrealism.[35] At the very least, the titular emphasis on the night, which is also insisted on throughout the novel, seems to link it to a movement founded on an interest in the unconscious and the socially obscure. Night in Barnes's novel is not really a particular time but a general condition. "Men sleep all the way," the so-called Doctor O'Connor tells Nora Flood, and this is a fearful insight, since "night does something to a person's identity, even when asleep."[36] But these invocations of an alternative reality, one in which the unacknowledged dark side of things prevails, has relatively little to do, in any very obvious sense, with the revolutionary unconscious of official surrealism. For an expatriate writer such as Eugène Jolas, whose Paris journal *transition* had many ties with the surrealists in these years, night has a mystical and even a millenarian quality. Influenced by the passages of *Finnegans Wake* he had been publishing, Jolas felt that human consciousness spoke a universal language in the night and that this language, transcribed, would form a conduit between a universal consciousness and a new political future.[37] There is no sense in *Nightwood* that the night is a conduit to anything but frustration and despair.

Even in their Paris years, when their orbits must have crossed innumerable times, these three were not part of a single circle or movement, nor did they subscribe to any common manifesto. Though Barnes and Duchamp were most conspicuous in their reluctance to join in, they also shared an uncanny sense of the individual as forming a group even when alone. For Nora Flood, the enigmatic Robin Vote is really a part of herself, but a part that is always missing, and thus the sense of her own plurality is also the agony of

incompletion. "A man is another person," as she puts it. "A woman is yourself, caught as you turn in panic" (N, 143). When Duchamp invented a woman, Rrose Sélavy, to be himself, it was not in a panic but rather "to have two identities."[38] The essential disbelief in identity is the same, but the multiplication of self that delights Duchamp appears to Nora as division and lack.

For all three artists, however, one result of this sense of oneself as a crowd is a general indistinction of gender in their work. It is probably not a merely incidental fact that Rrose Sélavy is a collaboration between Duchamp and Man Ray. One of the most intricate verbal expressions of their common skepticism about gender is contained in a text called "Men Before the Mirror," generally considered a joint creation, which was included in *Photographs by Man Ray: 1920–1934 Paris*. In this brief prose poem, the men who are doubled in the mirror are also doubled by a self-regard that is created in them by women: "Now they put themselves together like a mosaic out of what pleased women in them."[39] Created by women, they come to resemble the traditional picture of woman, preening in the mirror. In *Nightwood* there is a very similar sense of gender as an internal relation to one's apparent opposite. As Matthew O'Connor puts it in a more than usually enigmatic passage: "In the girl it is the prince, and in the boy it is the girl that makes a prince a prince" (N, 137). Thus *Nightwood* displays a wide range of indistinct gender identities, from Robin, who is described as "a tall girl with the body of a boy" (N, 46), to Matthew O'Connor, who sees himself as a biological mistake: "When it was a high soprano I wanted, and deep corn curls to my bum, with a womb as big as the king's kettle, and a bosom as high as the bowsprit of a fishing schooner" (N, 91).

If gender is indistinct in such works, then, it is because Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes all see it as relational. It is, therefore, inherently public as well. This is especially conspicuous in the films that Man Ray made in Paris, which are full of scenes like the one in *L'étoile de mer* in which the male observer's face is superimposed on the body of a woman adjusting her garter.[40] But it is also apparent in earlier and simpler works like the beautifully spectral egg-beater that Man Ray photographed on his wall, which he displayed alternatively under the titles *Homme* and *Femme*. Amelia Jones argues that the most important part of this photograph is the shadow suspended beneath the egg-beater, since it is this shadow that reminds us that in a photograph the apparently solid metal instrument is but a representation of itself.[41] Thus shadowed and doubled, the egg-beater can take apparently contradictory titles, and can seem essentially male or essentially female depending on the suggestibility of the viewer.

When sexual identity is a matter of representations, shifting and insubstantial, it stands to reason that sexual relations will serve most often to demonstrate the essential incompleteness of the individual. This is most graphically obvious, perhaps, in the strict division in Duchamp's "Large Glass" between the bride and the bachelors. Separated forever from their quarry, stuck in the bottom half of the glass plate, the bachelors can only gaze and "grind their own chocolate," as Duchamp put it. The fact that they can never achieve satisfaction suggests that sexual desire exposes an emptiness inside them. The geometric, mockingly mechanistic forms of bachelors and bride suggest that sexual desire is the result of an inhuman automatism implanted deep within every individual. Man Ray's egg-beater is another visual expression of the same idea.[42] Teresa de Lauretis describes a similar automatism in *Nightwood*, "a traumatic, unmanageable excess of affect leading to abject degradation."[43] As a drive, sexual desire is alien and unappeasable; instead of fulfillment and completeness, it presents a slow, agonizing evacuation of the self.

Representation as Such

Gender and sexual desire are, however, particular instances of the general situation of representation as such, the radical instability of which tends to frustrate every human activity, as Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes see it. One common expression of their shared interest in the nature of representation is the way they each tended to violate the conventional boundaries between the visual and the verbal. Duchamp is certainly the most influential of the three in this respect, since his shift from the ocular, or the purely visual art of painting, to the conceptual, as in the "Large Glass," which is installed within its web of commentary, has determined much of what has happened in art ever since. As Michel Leiris insists, the "inscriptions" accompanying Duchamp's works of visual art are meant to suggest that art itself is a language, that the visual elements in a work like the "Large Glass" are related to one another as if they were the words in an enigmatic sentence.[44] Man Ray's Rayographs, lensless photographs made by placing various objects directly onto photographic paper, also have a distinctly rebus-like quality, and they were influential in a surrealist context because they seemed the visual equivalent of automatic writing.

As a visual artist, Barnes was decidedly less adventurous than these two, though the constant presence of drawings in works like *The Book of Repulsive Women* did at least offer a consistent confrontation between image and text.[45] Though *Nightwood* has no drawings, it is nonetheless an insistently visual text

that seems to struggle at times to turn itself into a modern emblem book. Many of the characters are presented as if they were walking pictures, including Robin, who is especially dangerous "as a 'picture' forever arranged" (*N*, 37). But the most magnificent of these human pictures is the black circus performer so elaborately described by Matthew O'Connor, "tattooed from head to heel with all the *ameublement* of depravity!" The tattoos themselves are emblems, pictures like clasped hands or sailing ships with an obvious symbolic significance, matched to short bits of text like the "terse account in early monkish script," which says something indecent on and possibly about his backside (*N*, 16–17). The crowning glory of the fancy work, and of Dr. O'Connor's fancy account of it, appears "just above what you mustn't mention." There "a bird flew carrying a streamer on which was incised, '*Garde Tout!*'" (*N*, 17). The presence of a caption turns physical form itself into a picture, and the picture into a symbol, or a kind of writing, so that even those body parts that are so bodily they must ordinarily remain hidden acquire a verbal significance and become abstract.

The glib and frantic way in which the Doctor swings back and forth between the graphically obscene and the conventionally symbolic seems a deliberate violation of something more fundamental than the distinction between visual art and verbal text. Barnes is certainly trying to demonstrate what Leiris finds also in Duchamp, "the margin of uncertainty separating the *sign* from the *signified*."[46] But both Barnes and Duchamp seem intent on casting a deeper doubt, "having to do," as Leiris puts it, "with the legitimacy of representation."[47] The pervasive aura of obscenity and dirty joke in both Barnes and Duchamp finally arises from their sense of the illegitimacy of the relations between materiality and idea. These have a sexualized quality because they are as mechanical and automatic as sex, because they arise from drives that are as enigmatic and inimical to consciousness as the sexual drives.

One way this manifests itself in Duchamp is the constant debunking of the spiritual and symbolic as actually material and physical. Perhaps his grandest gesture in this direction is *Fountain*, which has ensured that the work of art as such, in its essence, has to be discussed in terms of a urinal.[48] But the gulf between these is also a major compositional factor in the "Large Glass," where the eternal separation of the bachelors below from the bride above is represented as well in the distance between the emotional ardor of their relationship and the comically mechanical means with which they try to consummate it. If there is anything obscene in this picture of thwarted love, it lies in the illegitimate way in which material life is dolled up in spiritual clothes, a masquerade that many of Duchamp's works set out to expose.

Barnes is, if anything, more stringent in rejecting this imposture than Duchamp. *Nightwood* makes the claim that consciousness itself is an accidental quality, "the accident that made the beast the human endeavor" (*N*, 67). As such, it is only very tenuously attached to the material frame that carries it throughout the world. Thus there is a stark division in the novel between Robin Vote, who is free to move about the city at least in part because she is not weighted with consciousness, and Matthew O'Connor, who is tied to his own bedstead because he thinks too much. Robin is almost completely silent, while O'Connor is voluble in the extreme. But the purport of his talk is that talk is a waste, and so is the consciousness that makes talk both possible and necessary. "We were created," he says, "that the earth might be made sensible of her inhuman taste" (*N*, 82). In other words, consciousness exists not that the material world might become aware and sentient but that it might have some means of enjoying its sheer materiality.

This rather dire anti-humanism appears in a much lighter vein in Man Ray's *Homme*, the egg-beater that is sometimes known as *Femme*. Doubled first by its own shadow and then by its titles, this apparently simple kitchen implement might be made to stand for the common element in the work of Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes. Image and text, male and female, mechanical and yet comically sexual, the egg-beater is an emblem fitted out with meanings it hardly seems to deserve. Yet it is the laughably tenuous relationship between repetitive kitchen labor and abstract thought that the photograph hopes to capture. This gap, between the stark materiality of a urinal or an egg-beater and abstract categories such as art or masculinity, is the place in which the works of Duchamp, Man Ray, and Barnes were finally most at home.

Notes

1 Quoted in Dalia Judovitz, *Drawing on Art: Duchamp and Company* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xxiii.
2 Marco Franciolli, *Man Ray* (Milano: Skira and Museo d'Arte dell Città di Lugano, 2011), 76.
3 Judovitz, *Drawing on Art*, 30.
4 Arturo Schwarz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*, rev. paperback edn. (New York: Delano Greenidge, 2000), 128.
5 Ibid., 128.
6 Man Ray, *Self Portrait* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1963), 77. See David Joselit, "The Artist Readymade: Marcel Duchamp and the Société Anonyme,"

in Jennifer R. Gross (ed.), *The Société Anonyme: Modernism for America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 33–43 (at 35).

7 Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900–1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 234.

8 Brian Glavey, "Dazzling Estrangement: Modernism, Queer Ekphrasis, and the Spatial Form of *Nightwood*," *PMLA*, 124 (2012), 749–64 (at 749). For a discussion of Barnes in relation to Duchamp, see Tyrus Miller, *Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction, and the Arts Between the World Wars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 164–66.

9 Francis M. Naumann, *Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York* (New York: Abrams and Whitney Museum, 1996), 53; Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 163.

10 Neil Baldwin, *Man Ray: American Artist* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1988), 68.

11 Alex Goody, *Modernist Articulations: A Cultural Study of Djuna Barnes, Mina Loy, and Gertrude Stein* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 126–27.

12 Baldwin, *Man Ray*, 108.

13 Tomkins, *Duchamp*, 252.

14 Ibid., 257; Phillip Herring, *Djuna: The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes* (New York: Viking, 1995), 134.

15 Tomkins, *Duchamp*, 328.

16 Ibid., 16.

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18 Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton University Press, 1946), 89.

19 Harold Loeb, *The Way It Was* (New York: Criterion, 1959), 44; Matthew Josephson, *Life Among the Surrealists: A Memoir* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), 66.

20 Harold Loeb, "*Broom*: Beginning and Revival," *Connecticut Review*, 4 (1970), 5–12 (at 7).

21 Edmund Wilson, "The Aesthetic Upheaval in France," *Vanity Fair*, February 1922, 49.

22 Franciolli, *Man Ray*, 69–70, 84.

23 Djuna Barnes, *Interviews*, ed. Alyce Barry (Washington, DC: Sun & Moon, 1985), 73.

24 Djuna Barnes, *New York*, ed. Alyce Barry (Los Angeles, CA: Sun & Moon, 1989), 338.

25 Thomas Heise, "Degenerate Sex and the City: Djuna Barnes's Urban Underworld," *Twentieth Century Literature*, 55 (2009), 287–321 (at 297–301).

26 Bridget Elliott and Jo-Ann Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers: Modernist (Im) Positionings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 136–37.

27 Djuna Barnes, *Collected Poems with Notes Toward the Memoirs*, ed. Phillip Herring and Osías Stutman (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 246.

28 Gérard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, trans. Alison Anderson (University of Chicago Press, 2002), 28–30.

29 Ibid., 115.

30 Ibid., 31.

31 Schwarz, *Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*, 703–04.

32 Ibid., 707.

33 Judovitz, *Drawing on Art*, 59.

34 Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, 178–81.

35 Diane Chisholm, "Obscene Modernism: Eros Noir and the Profane Illumination of Djuna Barnes," *American Literature*, 69 (1997), 167–206 (at 188–89); Monika Kaup, "The Neobaroque in Djuna Barnes," *Modernism/Modernity*, 12 (2005), 85–110 (at 100).

36 Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (1937; New York: New Directions, 1961), 97, 81. Hereafter cited as *N*.

37 Eugène Jolas, "Workshop," *transition*, 23 (1935), 97–106.

38 Quoted in Judovitz, *Drawing on Art*, 29.

39 David Hopkins, "Men Before the Mirror: Duchamp, Man Ray, and Masculinity," *Art History*, 21 (1998), 303–23 (at 307–09).

40 Judovitz, *Drawing on Art*, 74.

41 Amelia Jones, "Equivocal Masculinity: New York Dada in the Context of World War I," *Art History*, 25 (2002), 162–205 (at 183).

42 See Goody, *Modernist Articulations*, 105–06.

43 Teresa de Lauretis, "*Nightwood* and the Terror of Uncertain Signs," *Critical Inquiry*, 34 (2008), 117–29 (at 122).

44 Michel Leiris, "On Duchamp," *October*, 112 (2005), 45–50 (at 48, 49).

45 See the discussion in Elliott and Wallace, *Women Artists and Writers*, 124.

46 Leiris, "On Duchamp," 46.

47 Ibid., 45. See also Marjorie Perloff, *Differentials: Poetry, Poetics, Pedagogy* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 44–45, and *21st-Century Modernism: The "New" Poetics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 91–109.

48 See Jones, "Equivocal Masculinity," 166–67.

Bertolt Brecht, Sergei Eisenstein, Leni Riefenstahl

NORA M. ALTER

In 1931, three remarkable films were in production: Sergei Eisenstein's *¡Que viva Mexico!* (1932), Bertolt Brecht's and Slatan Dudow's *Kuhle Wampe, oder Wem gehört die Welt?* (*Kuhle Wampe, or Who Owns the World?*, 1932), and Leni Riefenstahl's *Das blaue Licht* (*The Blue Light*, 1932). Although their subject matter, formal methods of presentation, and ideological motivations were radically different, all three films were produced as alternatives and, certainly in the case of Eisenstein and Brecht, as directly oppositional to the newly dominant style of American Hollywood cinema. As such, they may be considered as participating in a modernist avant-garde aesthetics of the moving image, whose techniques, experiments, and theories had a broad and profound impact on a widely diverse body of cinematic works throughout the twentieth century. The productions of these directors, in terms of their formal and generic innovations (montage, narrative style, documentary) as well as subject matter (workers, revolutions, masses), changed the way cinema had been conceived as concomitantly a medium for popular consumption as well as a seventh art.[1] In addition, all three figure prominently in discussions focused on the nexus between art and politics – be it termed propaganda or radical aesthetics. In the case of Eisenstein, his pioneering form of dialectical montage continues to have relevance; Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt,* or alienation effect, still holds currency, especially as an aesthetic strategy in contemporary art; and Riefenstahl's work has become synonymous with the term "fascist aesthetics" and continues to be evoked in discussions of propaganda and state-sponsored culture.

Although all three figures made films, it is interesting to note that each had a strong background and training in the performing arts. An awareness of the power of performance and staged spectacle is translated into their varying conceptions of a cinema of attractions – conceptions that are particularly effective precisely insofar as they constitute an interplay between fact and fiction.[2] The basis of modernist aesthetics for each of these filmmakers lies in

40.1 Who owns their world? Shot of Brandenburg Gate from Bertolt Brecht's and Slatan Dudow's 1932 film *Kuhle Wampe, oder Wem gehört die Welt?*

the use of montage to bring together documentary or realist material with imaginary aesthetic "attractions," and to separate and so further develop these different genres.

Each of these three films constitutes a watershed moment in its director's career, although none of them was immediately perceived as a success. *¡Que viva Mexico!*, Eisenstein's unique project made outside of the Soviet Union, was never completed.[3] *Kuhle Wampe* was Brecht's only successfully completed film, and has largely been ignored in favor of his theatrical productions and theoretical writings. *The Blue Light*, Riefenstahl's first foray into film directing, won the Silver Lion at Venice. Yet it was not well received in Germany at the time of its release.[4] A tension between the medium self-reflexivity of modernism and film's indexical ability to record traces of reality, characterizes all three productions. So does film's ability to manufacture dreams, illusions, and narratives. As much as possible, the directors sought to make films on location outside the walls of the studio – a feat that points to the virtuosity of the filmmaking crew as well as to the impulse toward the genre of documentary. *Kuhle Wampe* (Figure 40.1) is a narrowly

40.2 Visual ethnography: image of contemporary Mexicans forced to bear the cross in Sergei Eisenstein's 1932 film ¡Que viva Mexico!

focused presentation of contemporary working-class conditions in Berlin, Germany, which include the misfortunes of a typical worker's family. ¡Que viva Mexico! (Figure 40.2), in addition to being a tragic love story, is a broad ethnographic study of the different peoples of Mexico, locating their cultures in an "exotic" context far removed from the everyday reality of 1930s Russia. The Blue Light, set in the Dolomite region during the 1800s, is a quasi-romantic mystical tale, indicative of the swerve toward spectacular productions. Both Brecht's and Eisenstein's films are montage-based and fragmentary, consisting of episodic documentary footage loosely linked by melodramatic romances. By contrast, Riefenstahl realizes a more holistic product, relying on classical editing strategies to suture gaps and achieve continuity. Significantly, all three films are their directors' first experiments with sound technology, and they use music as a fundamental structuring principle. Sound orchestrates a complicated interplay between narrative fiction and documentary reality.

The opening up of technology to fuse the sounds of modernity to its images had a profound impact on cinema. Already in Dziga Vertov's Man with a Movie Camera (1929), the recording device is mobilized to visualize

blaring whistles, the rhythmic hissing of steam engines, and the rumble of traffic. But the effort is less than successful. The world that is offered to spectators is ultimately mute, and that silence draws the film back to the nineteenth-century era of photography. However, the new sounds of urban modernity filled the acoustic environment – from factory bells and whistles to the chuffing of locomotives and the whirring of machines. It would take the greater part of the century for sound recording technology and projection to reach the level of mastery of Dolby stereo, but already from the onset there was a keen awareness of the different types of sound that could be recorded. Just exactly what could and should be included was an important topic of discussion.

While cinema was never really silent, the myth that it was rests on several prejudices or presumptions that are in part intimately related to aesthetic considerations and to film's status as a "seventh art." That music could be an integral aspect of a film and that an accompanying orchestra was no longer necessary were factors that were immediately lauded. The ability to record voices and dialogue also had a direct impact on cinema; however, it raised a whole array of issues concerning accent, tone, timbre, dialect, and articulation. To be able to do away with clumsy and often inadequate intertitles opened up myriad possibilities concerning means of adding texture and complexity to a film narrative. The sequencing or montage of sound and image is crucial for determining the way in which an image is to be understood. This effect works both within the frame and narrative of the film (diegetically) as well as outside of it (non-diegetically). As media theorist Rudolf Arnheim notes, sound is capable of shattering the frame of the visual plane of representation in significant ways.[5] For one thing, sound can indicate an off-frame diegesis, one that is audible but not visible, thereby creating a double or acousmatic space to which the spectator must attend. For another, sound can direct the audience's attention to an otherwise overlooked character or object within the visual plane of the film. Sound, in other words, functions to highlight. If the camera captures twenty-five people, it is the one who speaks, cries, or sings that attracts the attention of the spectator Manipulation of sound is as effective as – and perhaps more subtle than – the use of camera angles and lenses in the production of meaning. But, at the basic level, sound gives a voice to filmed subjects and thereby obviates the need for intertitles. The speaking subject in film constituted an enormous step forward, with the recorded voice occupying a special place, intensifying the "reality" effect by reproducing the "grain of the voice." Brecht, Eisenstein, and Riefenstahl each had a strong background in music – Brecht

incorporated "songs" into theatre pieces such as *The Threepenny Opera*; Eisenstein looked to music as a compositional strategy; Riefenstahl trained formally as a modern dancer and responded to music as a means by which to unlock the natural movement and expression of the human body, thereby linking humans to nature. All three directors employ music and especially songs in surprisingly similar but also different ways.

In a newspaper article on *Kuhle Wampe* published soon after the film's debut, a critic identified only as E.J. observed that within German cinema it is rare to find productions that do "not show 'people in the theatre,'" by which he meant professional actors on the set at the Babelsberg Film Studio. When people are represented in conventional filmic productions, he remarked, they are never from the working class even if that is who they are meant to represent. In *Kuhle Wampe*, by contrast, "the everyday story of an entire class is constructed – a class that, despite its protection under the constitution and its natural human dignity, barely manages to exist in today's epoch."[6] Brecht and Dudow conceived of *Kuhle Wampe* as a fully collaborative project with the working class, a process in which the directors sought to demonstrate the revolutionary potential of the filmic medium by combining avant-garde formal strategies with socialist realism. Although the social revolution had failed in Germany, left-wing parties and activities remained strong amid optimism that change could still be initiated, despite the rapid growth of fascism.

¡Que viva Mexico! evinces a similar revolutionary and utopian spirit. Mexico in the early 1930s was seen by many to be a context that was ripe for the birth of a new society, sharing many of the conditions that characterized Russia just over a decade earlier. Throughout Eisenstein's film, there is a dialectic play between the premodern and the contemporary, the rural and the modern.[7] The scholars Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen have elaborated on some of the obvious parallels between the Mexican Renaissance and the Russian avant-garde in these years: "In both countries the example of cubism enabled artists independently to develop a specific culture of modern art. In both countries the overthrow of [the] *ancien régime* ... and the recasting of society after political revolutions and civil war gave the avant-garde a particular vision of its role, to produce the new art for the new society."[8] The cultural framework was thus conducive for the production of the type of revolutionary film Eisenstein envisioned.

Produced at the same time and in the same country as *Kuhle Wampe*, *The Blue Light* couldn't be further ideologically from Brecht's project. Whereas the former looks toward a socialist utopian future and ends with the cast

united singing the Solidarity Song with resounding lyrics ("Vorwärts und nichts vergessen," Forward never forgetting), the latter suggests moving back in time to a premodern rural past that is nonetheless anachronistically inflected with capitalism. Brecht's famous dictum comes to mind: "Let's not talk about the good old days [Riefenstahl] but the bad new ones." While both films seem to target capitalism, for Brecht this is manifest on the level of a broad systemic critique, whereas for Riefenstahl it is individualized and centered on the innate greed of humans. Such greed, in Riefenstahl's view, is only spurred by the advent of modernity, and its only antidote is a return to isolationism.

Kuhle Wampe was a collaborative production involving a number of acclaimed left-wing intellectuals and cultural workers: the screenwriter Brecht, the novelist Ernst Ottwalt, the musical composer Hanns Eisler, and the Bulgarian film director Dudow. Ottwalt had just published *Denn sie wissen, was sie tun* (*For They Know What They Do*, 1931), a novel that sharply critiques capitalism, and Dudow had recently made a documentary film on the conditions of workers in Berlin, *Wie der Berliner Arbeiter wohnt* (*How the Berlin Worker Lives*, 1930). Ottwalt's novel, which employs an innovative anti-realist technique, relies on a series of episodes that incorporate documentary material and repeated interruption of the narrative flow with an external commentary; it clearly influenced Brecht and Dudow's recourse to structure *Kuhle Wampe* around independent narrative units interspersed with documentary footage. (The novel bears structural similarities to Alfred Döblin's *Berlin, Alexanderplatz*, as well as to Musil's fragmentary, incomplete *The Man without Qualities*, begun in 1921.) Nonfictional excurses on the weather and statistical reports, which appear like items from newspapers, interrupt the narrative flow of these literary works. For the most part, *Kuhle Wampe* does not include such news items (one exception is a section where the father reads a lengthy article about Mata Hari to his wife); instead, songs are inserted to interrupt the film's narrative flow. Music and documentary shots are used to organize the episodes of *Kuhle Wampe* and to structure the viewer's experience of identification or distance. Similarly, in *Triumph of the Will*, Riefenstahl employs vernacular songs in tandem with an original composition by Herbert Windt to forge a community.[9]

Sound works to equally strategic ends in the version of *¡Que viva Mexico!* that Grigor Alexandrov put together, in line with Eisenstein's instructions, in 1979.[10] Eisenstein documented folkloric parades, weddings, funerals, and the festivities surrounding the Day of the Dead. The spectator is led through the film by the voice-over (added much later by Alexandrov) of the commentator. But the

narrative introduces a counterhistory through a series of contradictions. Thus, for example, in the presentation of the ceremony honoring the Virgin of Guadalupe, the spectator is informed that this rite also (and more significantly) observes the day when the Spanish determined to take possession of Mexico and transform the territory into a colony. Accompanying an image track of Mexicans honoring the Virgin and shots of the pyramids, a voice-over informs the viewer that Cortéz conquered the indigenous population with the assistance of monks and priests who accompanied his expeditions, and who went on to erect churches and monasteries on top of the ancient native structures. The film, through its commentary, lodges a harsh critique of colonialism and its maidservant, religion. In subsequent sequences, this condemnation of colonialism emerges in the layering of fictional narratives on the documentary footage.

Similar fusions of political aims and aesthetic effects are demonstrated in the brutal third chapter of *¡Que viva Mexico!*, where a fictional narrative takes over the documentary footage. A compilation of the manifold wrongs of agrarian capitalism is dramatized in the many turns of the romantic narrative. In contrast to the introductory "chapter" of the film, which follows an anonymous courtship, wedding, and marriage, in the last act the subjects are individualized and given names. The camera in the earlier sequence tracks anonymous "types." In the later episode, a fully fleshed out drama ensues, complete with characters with whom the audience can identify. The situational crises and even melodrama help to compel the identification. Eisenstein used the form of semi-fictional tragedy in order to underscore the horrific consequences of the atrocities committed in the name of the "civilizing mission" of European imperialism. In *¡Que viva Mexico!* he relied on the strategic interplay of fact and fiction to create a cinematic essay that critiques capitalism and its colonial impulse. Eisenstein had worked from historical sources in his earlier films of the 1920s, such as *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *October* (1928), and had based these masterpieces on the restaging of revolutionary events. They were meticulously composed, organized, and arranged at every level, with Eisenstein as director overseeing the entire crew. By contrast, *¡Que viva Mexico!* was from the outset a completely different film, without a script or narrative, and shot on location.

Kuhle Wampe is also a combination of fact and fiction. Unlike previous attempts to represent the working class in German feature films, such as Piel Jutzi's *Mother Krause's Journey to Happiness* (1929), which was produced in the confines of the Babelsberg Film Studio, *Kuhle Wampe* was shot on location, and its reliance on documentary footage impressed local reviewers. The film

features footage of the workers' actual living quarters in Wedding and the wooded camping park of Kuhle Wampe, as well as sporting events at the nearby Müggelsee lake. In addition, most of the film's actors were amateurs; the participation of 4,000 workers, in their capacity as sports club members, was unprecedented in film history. The final scene, shot in a fully operative Berlin streetcar, also struck many early commentators, since it featured a degree of spontaneity that no studio could ever hope to reproduce.[11] In short, such use of documentary material was seen to be one of the most novel features of *Kuhle Wampe*, especially insofar as that material was thought to be capable of enabling the audience to see their lives the way they really were, with a minimum amount of distortion and artificial creation in the studios. As an astute critic observed in reference to the film's initial censorship, "Herein lies the true motive behind the ban: Germany can only be photographed within the fences of New Babelsberg."[12] Thus, what was initially fascinating – and threatening – about *Kuhle Wampe* was its documentary appeal.

The mixture of fact and fiction in *Kuhle Wampe* raises a number of key questions. What purpose was served by such hybridity? And why didn't it suffice to make either a fully documentary film or a purely fictional studio product? One explanation might be related to Brecht's recent clashes with the studio system, which, as his *Threepenny Opera* lawsuit made bitterly clear, privileged rights of the studio over those of the author. From this perspective, Brecht may have considered it desirable to make a film outside the studio system. But a number of theoretical motives also underlay his use of this hybridity. Brecht was aware of the inherent differences between theatre and film, and he was careful not to confuse the two; as a result, he made *Kuhle Wampe* as far from the genre of theatre as possible. In sharp contrast to either a studio production or a play – with their artificial sets and enclosures – the film's extensive shots of nature, as well as those of architecture, the cityscape, and the 4,000 athletes rowing on the Müggelsee, would be virtually impossible to stage. With this film Brecht not only made a clear and distinct break with the medium of theatre, he also used film precisely and specifically to do what theatre could not do, namely to represent everyday life and – through shots of large crowds – a mobilized collectivity. Whereas theatre is grounded in performance and artificiality, film has its roots in photographic realism and therefore lends itself to the documentary form. Moreover, with *Kuhle Wampe*, Brecht also sought to find a way to check what he considered the most problematic features of film: its passive nature and the resulting, often characteristic, lack of interaction between spectator and representation.[13] The challenge was to make a film that would produce an

active spectator. This, he thought, could be accomplished through the *Verfremdungseffekt*, or alienation effect, which would break the audience's identification with the characters and their actions.[14] For Brecht the alienation effect existed in tandem with identification.[15] He once observed that in Chinese theatre (which had a great influence on him), "The alienation effect intervenes, not in the form of an absence of emotion, but in the form of emotions which need not correspond to those of the character portrayed."[16] Working in the medium of film, Brecht tried to strike a balance between identification and distanciation, and he found the possibility of such an accord in the montage of documentary footage and fictional narrative.

While *Kuhle Wampe* was in production, Brecht engaged in a debate with Lukács concerning the nature of realism. Unlike Lukács, Brecht felt that realistic representation could no longer be based on a nineteenth-century model because the context was so different; both society and its regimes of visuality had evolved greatly.[17] "We must not abstract the one and only realism from certain given works," he wrote in the mid-thirties, "but shall make a lively use of all means, old and new, tried and untried, deriving from art and deriving from other sources, in order to put living reality in the hands of living people in such a way that it can be mastered . . . We will not stick to unduly detailed literary models or force the artist to follow over-precise rules for telling a story."[18] Accordingly, Brecht imagined that a new form of realism might be located within cinematic practice. His use of documentary footage in *Kuhle Wampe* created this type of "realistic effect," encouraging the audience to identify with the film and fulfilling his dictum that "one need never be frightened of putting bold and unaccustomed things before the proletariat, so long as they have to do with reality."[19] The inherent realism of actual documentary footage functioned to reassure the audience, presenting it with familiar imagery and thereby heightening the impact of the alienating effects, such as the unusual soundtrack and the anti-narrative, episodic, and disorienting visual composition of images produced in the editing process. *Kuhle Wampe* thereby encourages a new form of interaction, one based not on a passive consumption of images but on the viewer's active participation in the construction of meaning. In this respect, Brecht's further thoughts on Chinese theatre are again relevant: "The spectator's empathy was not entirely rejected. The audience identifies itself with the actor as being an observer, and accordingly develops his attitude of observing or looking on."[20] As with Chinese theatre, the film viewer's response would dialectically alternate between identification and distanciation, and the contradiction between the two responses would culminate in the audience's "awakening."

One particularly powerful example of this phenomenon is the shot of the Brandenburg Gate – an important symbol of Berlin – that opens *Kuhle Wampe*. Serving at the most immediate level to establish the location of the film, the shot reminds the spectator that the revolutionaries of 1848 and 1918 – though now invisible – once met under that historic gateway. By reigniting this memory, it also functions as a galvanizing force, encouraging future revolutionary groups to become visible there once again. The establishing shot of the gateway parallels Eisenstein's shots of pyramids in the prologue of *¡Que viva Mexico!*, where the accompanying voice-over states, "Eternity: it could take place today, twenty years ago, 1000 years ago." In both films, the historic monuments stand for a past that continues into the present. The camera eye has captured their images and preserves them as a record of a past presence.

The major critical and interpretive issue here turns on the use and effect of these stand-alone images. As Brecht wrote of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* AEG factory, the image is inadequate; it is incapable of relating any of the "reality" beneath the surface.[21] *Kuhle Wampe* thus tells the stories of the working classes who live in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate. The same impulse is at play in *¡Que viva Mexico!*, where long shots of the pyramids are followed by close-ups of the free-standing and relief sculptures upon them. Moreover, whereas the pyramids in Eisenstein's long shots stand alone, in the close-ups he poses "natives" whose physiognomies bear a strong resemblance to the stone totems. The commentator's voice intones, "The past dominates the present." In both instances, film is presented as a medium that has the potential to reveal a "reality" beyond that which can be represented by a static photograph; it has the ability to move freely in time from the past to the present and back again. In addition, as the film scholar Masha Salazkina notes in the case of Eisenstein: "Although the shots themselves are static, their multiplicity appears to give an illusion of movement and varying perspectives that brings this image to life, while simultaneously performing a kind of dissection of the shot, breaking it into fragments."[22] The camera reanimates the figures and launches them into movement. Not only is a petrified life moved temporally and historically forward, but a continuum is thereby forged between the ancient past and the present day, underscoring the latter's "timelessness" and reinforcing larger theories of cyclical return. Salazkina rightfully interprets the structure of *¡Que viva Mexico!* as a spiral, rather than an eternal circle, "where the 'Prologue' comes to life, as it were, in the 'Epilogue,' realizing the revolutionary potential of the past and producing the dialectical shift onto a utopian future."[23]

A significantly different orientation toward the past is found in *The Blue Light*, whose screenplay was written by film theorist Béla Balázs and was based on Gustav Renker's novel *Bergkristall*.[24] Set in a legendary foretime, it is a romantic tale about a young woman, Junta (played by Riefenstahl), who is demonized by local villagers, because of her innate knowledge of the mountains that leads her to the extraordinary discovery of a path to a secret grotto filled with crystals. On full moon evenings, the crystals, illuminated by the moon, emanate a blue light, which lures young men from the village to their deaths. One day a painter from Vienna (the cosmopolitan modern city) penetrates the closed community, falls in love with Junta, discovers the secret path to the grotto, and draws a map that the villagers discover. They pillage the grotto, and Junta commits suicide. As this brief description suggests, the plotline is rather simplistic, and what it does not convey is the *mise-en-scène*, setting, and remarkable panoramic cinematography. The film runs 85 minutes, out of which the majority of the time is filled with documentary shots of nature. Already, with a lengthy shot of an impressive cascading waterfall, the opening sequence, filmed high in the mountains, establishes the importance of nature. *The Blue Light* will be replete with images of a nature characterized as beautiful and deadly, with man's relationship to it implying that nature is not to be conquered but instead to be respected and honored. With its relatively weak plotline, the film harkens back to a popular genre in the 1920s – the mountain film – that combined a spectacular cinema of tourism with loose narratives. Mountain films enabled viewers to travel virtually to remote regions, experiencing the mountains through the shots captured by camera men who skied with their apparatuses in hand and filmed under extreme conditions.

In *The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl* (1994) Riefenstahl recalls her initial encounter with a poster for one of these mountain films in a Berlin subway station. The poster prompted her to go to the cinema to see the movie. In the theatre, the film transported her to the mountains – raised in the city, she had only seen mountains through small still photographs. With its large images and moving shots, the film plunged her into that world. Riefenstahl claims that soon thereafter she contacted the director (Arnold Fanck) and expressed her strong desire for a role in his next film, *Der Heilige Berg* (1926), in which she stars as the dancer Diotima. *Der Heilige Berg* is replete with lengthy sequences of Riefenstahl (as Diotima) dancing on a rocky coast by the sea, as well as in a mountain village. Leaving aside the utterly banal fictional narrative, the film functions as a triple documentary: first, it harkens back to the travel genre with its spectacular alpine shots

providing those far from mountains with a glimpse of their natural beauty; second, it records Riefenstahl's performances as a dancer – during these lengthy choreographed sequences the viewer is exposed to modern dance, which for many would have been as exotic and foreign as the mountains; and third, it reflects on the filmic medium's potential to record reality even under conditions of extreme duress. Three aspects combine to compel Riefenstahl to take up the camera and direct her own films – a particularly impressive feat for a woman in the predominantly male world of filmmaking. If we read *The Blue Light* as a documentary combining landscape, persona, and meta-filmic technique, then the next logical step for Riefenstahl was to make what are, arguably, some of the most impressive and innovative nonfiction films of the time. *Triumph of the Will* (1935) features the same combination of elements, with Hitler as the star figure replacing Riefenstahl and the awe-inspiring architecture of the Nazi parade grounds at Nuremberg replacing the mountains, all of which is captured with an unparalleled display of cinematic virtuosity. Not unlike Brecht's and Eisenstein's preoccupation with representing the reality of laborers on the screen, Riefenstahl sought to bring a political reality to the workers.

These realities were not only conveyed visually. As indicated, the technology of sound had recently become available. *Kuhle Wampe* was heralded as the left's first sound film, with its soundtrack arrangement deemed its most exceptional feature. According to its producers, the division of the film into four episodes was determined by the function of sound, which from all accounts arranged the image, and not vice versa. Although the sound in *Kuhle Wampe* is limited to a single channel, a review written immediately upon the film's release makes clear that "from an artistic-technical standpoint, 'Kuhle Wampe' is a positive attempt because it undertakes, out of all of the features and possibilities of a sound-film, to create a sound picture, and the effect reached is that it is the first German sound-film that seriously and substantially breaks away from 'filmed theatre' or from superficial artistic tricks."[25] In the early 1930s, film theoreticians such as Rudolf Arnheim made a distinction between *Tonfilm* and *Sprechfilm* (sound-film and dialogue-film). For Arnheim, it was primarily the *Sprechfilm* that destroyed the development of film as an art. It is important to note that Riefenstahl keeps dialogue to a bare minimum in *The Blue Light*, and when it is used it is done so only sparingly. While remaining unconvinced about the virtues of dialogue, Arnheim noted that background recorded sound increased verisimilitude. Interpreted in this manner, sound is a component of realism and contributes to a film's overall documentary authority, which is in short supply in Riefenstahl's film.

Another soundtrack in *Kuhle Wampe* echoes to the complexity of workers' circumstances. Here, the use of vernacular songs recalls the socially critical function of music in *The Threepenny Opera*, where, as Brecht explains, "music, just because it took up a purely emotional attitude and spurned none of the stock narcotic attractions, became an active collaborator in the stripping bare of the middleclass corpus of ideas. [Music] became, so to speak, a muck-raker, an informer, a narc."[26] Music plays its own role as commentary; it has its own voice that is not always affirmative. This is the trademark of contrapuntal composition, which is based on the theory that there are two tracks or compositions – one that is steady and another that varies against the stable track to become a counternarrative. The use of music, and of a soundtrack more generally, to produce an additional, and at times contradict-ory, meaning to the film is directly related to both Brecht's and Eisenstein's understanding of film as composition based on principles of dialectical montage. An exchange is thus established in *Kuhle Wampe* between two strains of music: popular lyrical songs and modern compositions. Brecht and Dudow juxtaposed "low" and "high" art musical forms in their film to cross class boundaries and erase social hierarchy. The low and the high play as parallel tracks, making *both* equally accessible.[27] The popular songs are grounded in the "real" and the narrative of the film, while the modern compositions operate in the realm of the imaginary and the fantastic. The juxtaposition in the integrated soundtrack parallels the coexistence of fiction and documentary material on the visual track.

Just as the non-studio visual or documentary elements create a sense of realism, so too does the soundtrack, which features the clamor of everyday life. The noise of work and of labor in particular is stressed throughout the film, such as in the deafeningly loud auto shop where Fritz works, the sirens of the ambulance that take the body of Bönike away, the machines in the factory that employs Anni, and even the hammering of tent pins in the suburb of Kuhle Wampe. In short, just as sound is used to increase the reality effect, so too does labor become acoustically defined. Following Eisenstein, who as early as 1928 had praised Japanese kabuki theatre because, as he put it, it allowed the audience to "actually 'hear movement' and 'see sound,'" Brecht and Dudow strategically employed sound in such a way that the film audience "hears labor."[28] Following Eisenstein, their goal was not an aesthetic of reproduction, but one of transformation; sound was to function dialectically.

Whereas *Kuhle Wampe* constitutes a complex medley of musical pieces, Eisenstein adopted a related but different strategy in *¡Que viva Mexico!* He

saw music as a structuring principle, referring to his film as a "vast and multi-coloured Film-Symphony," and its script as a libretto.[29] Each of the six parts is based on a popular Mexican folksong. "Sanduga," for instance, relates to the title of a popular wedding song from the Oaxaca region where Eisenstein was filming, and "La Adelita," intended as the base for the never-completed episode "Soldadera," evokes a revolutionary tune.

In addition to their innovations with music in *Kuhle Wampe*, Brecht and Dudow experimented with dialogue. Their efforts to ward off possible accusations that their film was merely recorded theatre led them to mobilize several tactics, including recourse to quotations and clichés as well as improvisational passages. Speaking in quotations effects a stark detachment or distance between the actors and what they actually say. In one dialectical juxtaposition of sound and image, Anni's elderly father stumbles hesitatingly through a newspaper article on Mata Hari, while his wife sits at the kitchen table trying to balance the family's budget. As his voice describes the seductive curves and sexual prowess of the infamous spy, the aging body of a poor woman fills the screen, and this image is intercut with her household calculations on the price of food and other bare necessities. In this instance, the audial world is one of greed, capital, and the imaginary, whereas the image track presents the real as the site of mundane chores. It is important to note that the husband "reads" from the newspaper; the words are not his but are found materials that function as audial "readymades." The quotations are appropriated and woven into the fictional narrative as documentary inserts, in much the same way as Brecht mobilized popular songs, or as feature films employ photographs and documentary film footage.

Dialogue is not always used contrapuntally in *Kuhle Wampe*; sometimes it is employed to reinforce reality and produce identification. Class, for instance, is prominently figured through accent and dialect. Brecht and Dudow abandoned the clear, educated High German format of most theatre, radio, and film productions of the time in favor of a dialogue sharply marked by colloquialisms and informalities. In the last, allegedly "improvised" scene of the film, shot on location in a Berlin streetcar, each person's class position can be identified clearly through the audial track. A worker says, "Jib dem Ollen doch ne Appelsine und schick'n ins Waisenhaus!" (Give the old guy an apple and throw him in an orphanage), while the middle-class officer intones, "Bei Ihnen merkt man auch, dass Sie nicht mehr beim Kommiss gewesen sind!" (You are obviously someone who has not served in the military). In this sequence, the "real speech" on the soundtrack combines with the documentary visual track to draw the viewer into the film's diegesis. The

addition of sound to the filmic product increases the likelihood of audience identification. More than merely complementing the visual dimension, the sounds of labor, accents, dialects, and manners of eating and drinking represent the working class aurally.

Unfortunately, people and characters in Eisenstein's *¡Que viva Mexico!* remain mute. Whether this was due to their foreign language or to difficulties in recording on-site sound is not known. In Riefenstahl's *The Blue Light*, however, different regional accents and tonalities are emphasized. Thus, the refined Viennese speech patterns of the artist Vigo is noticeably different from that of the rural dialect of the mountain villagers, thereby adding to the "reality effect." However, unlike Brecht's complicated music track, Riefenstahl relies entirely on the Wagnerian composition by Giuseppe Becce (who had composed music for Fanck's silent films) to suture the action and contribute to the wholeness of her romantic alpine fantasy. Three years later, in *Triumph of the Will*, Windt complicates both his composition as well as the soundtrack by incorporating popular Nazi vernacular songs such as "Horst-Wessel-Lied," "Fahne Hoch," "Vorbei, vorbei," and the like.[30] The choice of these songs is not to undercut or directly comment on the images, but rather to construct a soundscape that resoundingly echoed and reinforced the fascist visual imagery of National Socialism – the ultimate effect being what many have referred to as a modernist "Gesamtkunstwerk" of "wholeness" and "utopian unification."[31]

In sum, the films of Eisenstein, Brecht, and Riefenstahl all exhibit a similar tactic of interplay between documentary and fiction, where the combination of truth and artifice that characterizes the visual track is also at work in the audial track. *Kuhle Wampe* and *¡Que viva Mexico!* present a narrative structure that is oppositional, based on a non-fusion of elements at every level, resulting in dialectical productions that operate at the interstices between identification and distanciation, fact and fiction. The opposite is the case in *The Blue Light*, which, rather than highlighting separation and destroying illusion, seeks to construct illusions of wholeness and mythical totality.

Notes

1 Almost from its inception, there was an effort to wrest cinema from its popular fairground origins and to establish it as an art form alongside the other traditional arts of poetry, music, dance, painting, architecture, and theatre. For an excellent study of the relationship between cinema as an art form and popular cinema in France, see Jennifer Wild, *The Parisian Avant-*

Garde in the Age of Cinema, 1900–1923 (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015).

2 See Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," in Thomas Elsaesser (ed.), *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative* (London: BFI Publishing, 1990), 56–62.

3 For an excellent monograph on the history of *¡Que viva Mexico!*, see Masha Salazkina, *In Excess: Sergei Eisenstein's Mexico* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

4 Six years later in 1938, following upon the success of *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia*, *The Blue Light* was re-released to a more positive reception.

5 For an analysis of Arnheim's theory of film sound, see my "Screening Out Sound: Arnheim and Cinema's Silence," in Scott Higgins (ed.), *Reconsidering Rudolf Arnheim* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 69–88.

6 E.J., review of *Kuhle Wampe, Film-Kurier*, August 13, 1931, 153–54. This and all other translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

7 As Salazkina (*In Excess*, 75–76) notes: "Parallels between the situations in postrevolutionary Mexico and the Soviet Union were crucial for Eisenstein. He saw Mexico as a complex society, as a place in which primitive and modern societies coexist."

8 Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, "Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti," *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 81–107 (at 83).

9 For an insightful account of Riefenstahl's relationship to music and its use in her films, see Celia Applegate, "To Be or Not to Be Wagnerian: Music in Riefenstahl's Nazi-era Films," in Neil Christian Pages, Mary Rhiel, and Ingeborg Majer O'Sickey (eds.), *Riefenstahl Screened: An Anthology of New Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 2008), 179–201.

10 Eisenstein never completed the film. Both he and his cameraman, Eduard Tissé, had been dead a number of years when Alexandrov, a member of the original filmmaking team, painstakingly edited Eisenstein's footage, meticulously following his original notes and directions in order to create as faithfully as possible the film that Eisenstein had begun. Eisenstein originally planned for a fourth sequence, "Soldadera," but never filmed its footage.

11 See E.J., review of *Kuhle Wampe*, 154.

12 Anon., *Die literarische Welt*, April 22, 1932, 190.

13 Brecht: "Above all I believe that the effect of an actor's performance on the spectator is not independent of the spectator's effect on the actor. In the theatre, the public regulates the representation. The cinema in this respect has enormous weaknesses which seem theoretically insurmountable." Brecht's journal, March 27, 1942, quoted in Martin Walsh, *The Brechtian Aspect of Radical Cinema*, ed. Keith M. Griffiths (London: BFI Publishing, 1981), 60.

14 Brecht did not formally articulate the concept of *Verfremdungseffekt* until after 1935, but its presence as a theoretical formal strategy can be found in his work of the early 1930s.

15 As the film scholar Dana Polan observes, "insofar as Brecht's political art includes the presence of the familiar world and yet presents a more attractive world as well, Brechtian art is an art of identification. In examining Brecht's theories, critics have too often declared that the theories allow no place for identification. In fact, Brecht's theory of art embodies two identifications: one empathetic and unquestioning – the one connected to the reified vision of the world – and one critical – a new perspective of knowledge from which the old way is scrutinized." See Polan, "Daffy Duck and Bertolt Brecht: Towards a Politics of Self-Reflexive Cinema?" in Donald Lazere (ed.), *American Media and Mass Culture: Left Perspectives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 345–56 (at 353).

16 Bertolt Brecht, "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting" (1936), *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, ed. and trans. John Willet (New York: Hill & Wang, 1964), 94.

17 Bertolt Brecht, "The Popular and the Realistic" (1938), *Brecht on Theatre*, 110: "Copying the methods of these realists [Balzac and Tolstoy], we should cease to be realists ourselves."

18 Ibid., 109.

19 Ibid., 111.

20 Brecht, "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting," 93.

21 As Stephen Heath observes, "for Brecht, the photograph is the sublimation of reality into passive ideality ... A materialist practice of film must then in turn be inevitably involved in combat against the sublimation of film in the luminous reality-truth of the photograph." Heath, "From Brecht to Film: Theses, Problems," *Screen*, 16/4 (Winter 1975/76), 34–45 (at 36).

22 Salazkina, *In Excess*, 47.

23 Ibid., 53.

24 For a penetrating analysis of the film, especially as Riefenstahl strategically employs tropes of "romantic mysticism," appealing to the irrational and to anti-modernist ideology, see Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 27–51.

25 Anon., *Die rote Fahne*, April 3, 1932, 188.

26 Bertolt Brecht, "On the Use of Music in Epic Theatre" (1935), *Brecht on Theatre*, 85–86.

27 Indeed, as Brecht argued (ibid., 87), "So-called 'cheap' music, particularly that of the cabaret and the operetta, has for some time been a sort of gestic music.

Serious music, however, still clings to lyricism, and cultivates expression for its own sake."
28 Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form*, trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harvest, 1949), 22.
29 Sergei Eisenstein, *¡Que viva Mexico!* (1952) (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 27.
30 See Applegate, "To Be or Not to Be Wagnerian," 192–93.
31 For detailed readings of the ideological constructions in Riefenstahl's work, see Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich: Illusions of Wholeness in Nazi Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); and Lutz Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema between Hitler and Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Theme and Variations in American Verse: H.D., Marianne Moore, and Wallace Stevens

ROBIN G. SCHULZE

At the start of the twentieth century, H.D., Marianne Moore, and Wallace Stevens each believed that poetry had reached a deadening impasse. Mired in old conventions of form, style, and substance that did not reflect the rapidly changing times, poetry had in their view become stale and hackneyed. Poets produced artificial rhetoric, dead metaphors, and affected speech rather than, in the words of H.D.'s husband, poet Richard Aldington, "thinking, perceiving, and expressing" themselves "precisely and individually."[1] While H.D., Stevens, and Moore took different paths in their efforts to produce good verse, they each felt the impulse to write in ways that seemed immediate, sincere, and individual rather than formulaic. They each set out to create a new poetry for a new world.

In part, all three poets were responding to the social and political shifts they felt everywhere around them. Indeed, conventions of all kinds were changing in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, as the country experienced massive growing pains that shook every American institution. Immigrants poured into the United States at an unprecedented rate, altering the political and social landscape of the nation and prompting many to wonder if democracy could survive the strain. Rural Americans moved from the country to the city in record numbers to work in factories, challenging the mythology of the nation as a collection of independent yeoman farmers. Rapid industrialization brought new lifestyles, new luxuries, and new conflicts as exploited workers fought for their share of the spoils, challenging the mythology of a classless nation of opportunity. Racial tensions flared as the promises of Reconstruction gave way to the realities of lynching and segregation. Women lobbied for the right to vote and entered college and the workforce in record numbers. Determined to face these shocks, educated Americans turned to new science rather than received

wisdom for answers and began to test old truths. Progressive thinkers argued that, for the good of the nation, no conventions – social, political, intellectual – were sacred. The time had come to sweep the nation clean of worn-out ideas and start fresh.

Except, perhaps, in the arts. As the critics of the time made clear, poems that refused to follow the established conventions of verse were not the sorts of poems people expected to read. Critics of Moore's early work accused her of writing not poetry, but a clumsy form of prose. Her "poems" did not seem to employ the full rhyme, regular meter, or sonic devices that elevated poetry to the level of song. The tight syllabic stanzas that she created to organize her thoughts and the subtle patterns of slant rhyme she constructed seemed oddly cerebral. In terms of content, her poems seemed relentlessly descriptive – literal expositions that made no effort to engage figurative meanings. For many critics of Moore's verse, her poems were often transparently "about" the plants, animals, people, and objects they described. They were a form of quirky scholarship, nothing more.[2]

While equally unconventional, the early Stevens confused critics in different ways. No one accused Stevens of writing prose. His poems were rich in the verbal play and rhyme, alliteration, and assonance that readers recognized. Critics appreciated his craftsmanship, but they often found his poems relentlessly abstract. Rather than deny the metaphorical or symbolic capabilities of language, Stevens reveled in them at the expense of his readers. The poems he created were not prosaic descriptions, but oblique, intensely private designs that denied their connections to literal scenes and ordinary things. "There is a lot," wrote one critic of *Harmonium*, Stevens's first book of poems, "one never quite 'gets.'"[3] For critics of Stevens's verse, the "aboutness" of many of his strange allegories remained inscrutable.[4]

Critics of H.D.'s early poems were the most appreciative, in part because her poetry seemed to exemplify the rules that some proponents of "New Poetry" had set for themselves. In 1912, H.D., along with American poets Ezra Pound and John Gould Fletcher, and British poets Aldington and F.S. Flint, all living in London, began to formulate stylistic principles designed to help poets break free from the conventions they felt were stifling their craft. The group, who dubbed themselves "Imagistes" or "imagists," ultimately produced guidelines that Flint, playing amanuensis for the group, published in *Poetry Magazine* in 1913. Poets, he wrote, should (1) practice "direct treatment of the 'thing,' whether subjective or objective," (2) use "absolutely no word that [does] not contribute to the presentation," and (3) in terms of rhythm, "compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in the sequence of

the metronome."[5] The group also developed a concept of the "image" as the basis of verse. Poets, they argued, should convey sensory images in a style that allowed for an immediate, intense presentation of individual thoughts and feelings, otherwise dulled by abstract terms and formulaic speech. There was to be no rhetorical elaboration of customary sentiments. H.D.'s early critics considered her verse to be the quintessence of the new school. Her poems were hard, austere cameos that, as critic Louis Untermeyer put it, "caught the very gesture of the moment" in their "arresting exactness."[6] Critics dubbed H.D. the "perfect imagist."[7] The beauty that H.D. created, however, often struck her critics as cold and removed. "The jade is flawless," one review observed of her poems, "it is carved in clean-cut, unswerving lines. It has undeniable beauty, but it is the beauty of a crystal, a beauty without soul."[8] Fixated on her lucid style, critics rarely ventured comments on what her concrete images might wish to convey. Her refusal to translate her pictures into conventional emotional expressions, the sorts of sentiment readers expected of female poets in particular, left critics perplexed.

Unconventional poetic forms were part of each poet's efforts to make his or her art new for a new time. Perhaps just as importantly, all three poets had vital things to say in their poems about the stifling intellectual and social conventions they inherited, and about how people might free their minds and bodies. Reading poems from each poet's first book – H.D.'s *Sea Garden* (1916), Moore's *Observations* (1924), and Stevens's *Harmonium* (1923) – suggests just how much the quest for more genuine forms of art and life inspired them each to become poets. Reading these poems side by side in productive pairs, H.D. and Moore, Moore and Stevens, Stevens and H.D., helps us to delve deeper still and reveal the similar tropes these three very different poets employed to argue for a less restrictive, more open-minded culture.

H.D. and Moore

Moore and H.D. crossed paths very early in their careers. They both entered Bryn Mawr College in 1905. While H.D. withdrew after only one term, she and Moore knew enough of each other for H.D. to invoke the Bryn Mawr connection when Moore sent poems to the modernist little magazine, the *Egoist*, in the summer of 1915. Published in London and edited in part by H.D. and Richard Aldington, the *Egoist* was one of the main venues of the self-proclaimed imagist poets. H.D. read the poems Moore sent to Aldington and wrote to her former classmate from across the Atlantic:

I remember you at Bryn Mawr . . . I am "H.D." – also Mrs. R. Aldington, and R. has spoken often of your work. We both think you have achieved a remarkable technical ability! . . . I know, 'more or less, what you are up against [in America], though I escaped some five years ago! There are terrible difficulties and discouragements to be met on this side, too. But at least, it is a fight – there is something definite to fight. I felt so terribly when I was in U.S.A. – the putty that met my whetted lance![9]

Comparing the American reading public to "putty" and her art to a "whetted lance," H.D. pictured the United States as a place that neutralized her energy. Europe, by comparison, was a battlefield where the struggle to survive was invigorating. Ultimately, H.D. satisfied her desire for a more intense artistic life by joining what Pound termed the "London vortex" of expatriate artists determined to work outside the comfortable provinciality of America. Moore, on the other hand, pursued her muse in New York City where she moved with her mother in 1918. She chose to work inside the culture that H.D. deemed a doughy mess.

While H.D. and Moore started their careers in different environments, their early poems expressed a common distrust of conventional modes of thinking and being, particularly in regard to their gender. Both Moore's and H.D.'s first books are filled with emblems of resistance to moribund norms that reflect their different vantage points. In her first volume, *Sea Garden*, H.D., the expatriate, pictures individual freedom as a state of complete exposure. Comfortable, conventional ideas, her poems suggest, rob life of its intensity and mystery. Ecstatic revelations come only through unmediated confrontations with elemental forces. Conversely, in *Observations*, Moore, the New Yorker living with family, pictures individual freedom as a state of complete reserve. Defending the self and storing up innate energies, her poems suggest, grant living things the ability to express themselves in ways that are genuine rather than culturally predicted. Both H.D.'s and Moore's early volumes engage forms of radical sincerity that challenge artistic and cultural conventions in distinct but related ways.

Perhaps the best way to explore the different approaches that Moore and H.D. made to the problem of deadening conventions is to examine an image that each poet employs in her first volume: the image of the garden. For both H.D. and Moore, the curated garden constituted a site of stifling control in which alternative or untamed natures had no place.[10] The working definition of the act of domestication, the garden struck both H.D. and Moore as a fitting emblem for the aesthetic and social conventions they both wished to unmake.

The title of H.D.'s first book, *Sea Garden* (1916), suggests just how central the image of the garden was in H.D.'s mental landscape. As several critics have noted, the title is a conjunction of opposites that suggests her desire to explore a liminal space between safe but repressive beliefs and behaviors (bad gardens) and liberating but dangerous states of psychological and emotional vulnerability (the open sea).[11] As Eileen Gregory writes, "The sea [in *Sea Garden*] represents the harsh power of elemental life, to which the soul must open itself, and by which it must be transformed or die."[12] The flowers of *Sea Garden* ("Sea Rose," "Sea Lily," "Sea Poppies," "Sea Violet," "Sea Iris") thus live at the water's edge, face the punishing ocean, and adapt to survive the extremes of exposure. The adventurous speakers who seek elemental mysteries ("The Helmsman," "The Shrine," "Loss," "Huntress," "Cliff Temple," "Hermes of the Ways") reject protected inland zones and engage in dangerous struggles that bring them to the shattering brink of epiphany. The persons left trapped in the cultivated interior of gardens and orchards ("Mid-day," "The Gift," "Sheltered Garden," "Garden," "Orchard") beg for their release from oppressive, regimented systems and spaces. To live fully, H.D.'s poems proclaim, is to be open to loss, to be a fearless questing soul.

Such a soul cannot, H.D. insists, exist in a land-locked garden. "I have had enough," H.D.'s speaker proclaims at the start of her poem "Sheltered Garden," "I gasp for breath."

> Every way ends, every road,
> every foot-path leads at last
> to the hill-crest –
> then you retrace your steps,
> or find the same slope on the other side,
> precipitate.
>
> I have had enough –
> border-pinks, clove-pinks, wax-lilies,
> herbs, sweet-cress.[13]

The garden sits in an enclosed valley, frustratingly similar on either slope. The difficult paths that seem to lead up and out only cause the speaker to "retrace" her steps, denying new thoughts and visions. The adjective the speaker uses to describe the sudden drop at the hill-crest, "precipitate," also suggests that the inland garden is a solid residue separated from the vital sea, a set of ideas that are in no way fluid. This inland garden is a suffocating trap of conventional notions, which permits no progress. Choked by flowers whose colors and scents suggest clichéd notions of cloying femininity, the

speaker yearns in the poem for the "sharp swish of a branch" and "scent of resin," the wild, fresh products of trees rather than perfumed "border pinks" whose very name suggests limitation. Craving an "astringent," the speaker implies that the domestic garden is a place of sickness that needs cleaning. At the end of the poem, H.D.'s speaker begs for the inland garden's destruction: "O to blot out this garden / to forget, to find a new beauty / in some terrible / wind-tortured place."[14]

Moore, too, offered her prayers for deliverance from the oppressions of the inland garden, but her depictions of landscapes in *Observations* differed from those of *Sea Garden*. In *Sea Garden*, H.D. drew on the mystic landscapes of the ancient Greeks to fashion a world in which escape from the inland garden was a trial, but a possibility. In *Observations*, Moore was more likely to picture her poetic subjects (literary, political, and religious figures, as well as plants and animals) struggling to find freedom *within the garden* rather than outside it. As she states in her poem "Poetry," Moore wanted "the bat / holding on upside down or in quest of something to // eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless wolf under / a tree," a world of natural beings behaving naturally, holding tight to their untamed natures.[15]

In "My Apish Cousins," for example, Moore appreciates a tiger in a zoological garden that, on display for the ignorant crowd, resists the oppressions of those who cannot understand their own constraints. In "Peter," Moore values a tame housecat's ability to retain something of its wild nature: "to sit caged by the rungs of a domestic chair would be unprofit- / able – human," Moore reflects while watching Peter "springing about."[16] Moving to the horticultural garden, Moore pictures a rose in "Roses Only" and a carrot in "Radical" that manage to grow in ways that suit their own priorities in spite of the conventions that seek to shape them. In her great long poem "Marriage," Moore returns to the first couple, Adam and Eve, and the first domestic and domesticating garden, Eden. In Moore's poem, the original garden is not a place of perfect happiness, but a space that reflects the ways in which the conventions of marriage, even the first marriage, distort the innate impulses of both men and women. Moore rewrites the biblical garden as a place where "the strange experience of beauty ... is too much; / it tears one to pieces."[17]

While H.D. balanced her suffocating imaginary gardens with images of the seashore and the trials and rewards of the open water, Moore pictured the seashore as yet another garden. These two imaginative locales coalesce for her in the figure and site of the public aquarium in "Is Your Town

Nineveh?" Here Moore imagines an unhappy person comparing his or her life to that of a fish in the tank. "Why so desolate?" the speaker of the poem asks her downcast friend:

> And why multiply
>> In phantasmagoria about fishes,
>>> What disgusts you? Could
>>>> Not all personal upheaval in
>>>>> The name of freedom, be tabooed?
> Is it Nineveh
>> And are you Jonah
>>> In the sweltering east wind of your wishes?
>>>> I myself, have stood
>>>>> There by the aquarium, looking
>>>>>> At the Statue of Liberty.[18]

As in so many of her other poems, Moore dwells on a place that constitutes the antithesis of liberty, the aquarium. The disconsolate "you" in the poem thinks about the trapped fishes and constructs a rant in which the fishes become allegorical images (a "phantasmagoria") of his or her restricting life. The speaker of the poem, however, considers such a violent outburst to be unproductive. Invoking the biblical Jonah, Moore's speaker chides her friend's anger, comparing it to the wrongful resentment Jonah vents at God because his efforts to become a great prophet have come to naught. To be a Jonah who considers New York to be a repressive and tyrannical Nineveh, then, is to be a prideful, crabby, suicidal, unforgiving soul, the worst kind of person to make anything good of a bad situation. In the last three lines of the poem, Moore's speaker records a different response to the restrictions of the aquarium. Claiming her own resilient selfhood, "I myself," the speaker proclaims that she has "stood" her ground against forces that have tried to trap her. Revealingly, at the time that Moore composed this poem, the New York Aquarium looked out over the upper bay of the Hudson River toward Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. Rather than fixate on the aquarium, then, the speaker has focused her attention on the Statue of Liberty, a feminine symbol of freedom and opportunity. Moore insists that freedom is a matter of holding strong inside the garden, the culture that one can never really escape.

Moore and Stevens

Moore and Stevens did not meet in person until 1943 when Moore was 55 and Stevens 63. Yet, they came to know each other's verse as early as the years of

the First World War. While Moore and H.D. reconnected through the London magazine the *Egoist*, Stevens and Moore connected through Harriet Monroe's Chicago magazine *Poetry* and Alfred Kreymborg's New York magazine *Others*, in which they both published. Moore copied Stevens's early poems into her diaries and proposed a review of Stevens's work for H.D. and the *Egoist* in 1916. In 1924, Moore wrote one of the few positive reviews of Stevens's first book, *Harmonium* (1923). When thanking Moore for her review, Stevens requested a signed copy of her first book, *Observations* (1924). The exchange of volumes began a correspondence that lasted until Stevens's death.

While Moore's and Stevens's poems were stylistically very different, Moore's extensive review of *Harmonium*, "'Well Moused, Lion,'" suggests the aesthetic inclinations that the two held in common. Moore pictured Stevens as a master of metaphor. She also implied, however, that Stevens was a poet at war with his own associative powers. Dissatisfied with his creations, in her view, Stevens always seemed to be anxiously questioning, revising, or unmaking his own metaphors. Ultimately, Moore found the contrary motions of Stevens's poems among their most intriguing attributes. Moore's favorite early image for Stevens's imagination was that of a snake whose very movement depended on the opposing contractions of its body. Stevens's poetic energy, she reflects in her review, "results in order 'as the motion of a snake's body goes through all parts at once, and its volition acts at the same instant in coils that go in contrary ways.'"[19]

What Moore sensed in Stevens's poems was an intellectual openness and restlessness that she shared. As critics have noted, Stevens's first volume presents the extremes of a dialectical imagination that values change above all else.[20] On one hand, Stevens offers poems filled with eclectic vocabulary, images, and sounds that portray the imagination at full sail in summer – the season Stevens associated with the imagination's splendor. On the other hand, the book also contains poems that long for the bareness of the imagination held at anchor in winter – the season Stevens associated with a state of imaginative limitation in which something of the real, material world might come to consciousness. Ultimately, however, neither pole of Stevens's poetic experiment proves wholly satisfying in *Harmonium*.[21] The imagination inevitably pulls the mind away from the concrete sensual world that is the root of all poetry into increasingly stale constructs that shape everything the thinker sees. Stevens's poems also reflect, however, on the ways in which the material world without such constructs can become equally unbearable, a place bereft of meaning, order, and pleasure.

A study in states of mind, *Harmonium* is filled with short, abstract thought experiments in which cartoonish characters represent different ways of seeing the world. Stevens titles many of these poems "anecdotes." The word suggests that no one character's vision is accurate or permanent, but that all the poems are mainly amusing incidents. These poems frequently pull against each other. Poems that plead for imaginative excess sit next to poems that claim that bare earth is best. Verses such as "Infanta Marina," "The Ordinary Women," "Fabliau of Florida," "Homunculus et La Belle Etoile," "Last Look at the Lilacs," "A High-Toned Old Christian Woman," "Tea at the Palaz of Hoon," and "To the One of Fictive Music," revel in the imagination's splendor, while poems such as "The Snow Man," "Metaphors of a Magnifico," "O, Florida, Venereal Soil," "Anecdote of Men by the Thousand," "Anecdote of Canna," "Anecdote of the Jar," and "Life is Motion," represent longings for the refreshments of the real, sensual world.

Stevens's poems also, as Moore's image of the snake implies, frequently pull against themselves, willing change for the mental modes they picture. In "Palace of the Babies," for example, Stevens envisions a determinedly literal mind, a solitary "disbeliever," who walks beside an extravagant moonlight palace. This building provides an emblem of the imagination that the walker need only accept in order to transform his existence. At first, the walker sees the moonlight as mere "moon-blotches on the walls," yellow stains that he associates with disease. As he continues to stare, however, the light changes. Looking up, the walker sees the moonlight on the "still facades" "rock" and "spin," two verbs that suggest not only motion and change but also the domestic activities of a loving mother. The light becomes a lullaby that leads the "disbeliever" to the brink of dreams. He imagines "humming sounds and sleep," and the moonlight palace comes close to thwarting his cynicism with a conditional image of cherubs:

> If in a shimmering room the babies came,
> Drawn close by dreams of fledgling wing,
> It was because night nursed them in its fold.
> Night nursed not him in whose dark mind
> The clambering wings of birds of black revolved,
> Making harsh torment of the solitude.
>
> ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
>
> His broad-brimmed hat came close upon his eyes.[22]

The mothering night feeds the angels that might come in response to the disbeliever's newly hatched dreams. The speaker, however, states that the

disbeliever's mind remains "dark," filled with awkward blackbirds, one of Stevens's emblems for the unadorned material world. Shunning the palace of the imagination and its comforts, the disbeliever puts his head down so that his "broad-brimmed hat" blocks his vision. The hat is an image of the tormented isolation that those who cannot animate the material world with their imaginations must suffer, a marker of the disbeliever's resistance to change.

Along related lines, in "The Doctor of Geneva" Stevens pictures a self-satisfied burgher, a man of set systems and rules who feels "no awe" before the "visible, voluble" wildness of the open sea. Like the blackbirds of "Palace of the Babies," the sea constitutes Stevens's image of the bare chaotic material world. Frustrated by his inability to "plumb" the secrets of the ocean, a verb that implies his desire to make all of nature align perfectly to the fixed straight lines of his ideals, Stevens's speaker recalls how the doctor "stamped the sand / That lay impounding the Pacific swell, / Patted his stove-pipe hat and tugged his shawl."[23] The rigid black vertical hat indicates the doctor's will to "impound," or take mental possession of, the nature that he sees. This is a mind incapable of letting the material world have an impact on it. Despite the doctor's best efforts, however, the sensual "swell" wreaks havoc on his carefully constructed mental landscape. The ocean, Stevens's speaker recalls, sets the doctor's mind "spinning and hissing":

> Until the steeples of his city clanked and sprang
> In an unburgherly apocalypse.
> The doctor used his handkerchief and sighed.[24]

The doctor's mental city is filled with imposing church "steeples" that represent, like his hard, black vertical hat, his rigid doctrinaire mind. The ocean makes the bells in the doctor's steeples toll as if the city might fall. The doctor, however, is so set in his mental ways that his only response is to dab the sweat beneath the hat he has "patted" ever further down onto his head, and utter a repressed "sigh." The hat that Stevens uses in "Palace of the Babies" to represent a mind unable to engage the imagination and embrace the change it brings, then, he uses in "The Doctor of Geneva" to represent a mind unable to engage the sensual world and embrace the change it brings. Neither hat will do.

As different as her early poems were from Stevens's in terms of their language and subject matter, Moore, too, bristled at those who could not keep their thoughts moving in contrary ways. Few things inspired Moore's poetic wit more consistently in her first book of verse than those who

employed immutable rubrics to govern their thoughts and behaviors. "To a Steam Roller," "A Fool, a Foul Thing, a Distressful Lunatic," "To Military Progress," "To Statecraft Embalmed," "Critics and Connoisseurs," "The Labors of Hercules" – many poems in Moore's first volume argue down those who simply cannot modify their views. No one could be more boring or dangerous than a person who, as Moore put it, affected the "haggish, uncompanionable drawl / of certitude."[25] As the word "drawl" suggests, Moore sensed an intellectual sluggishness in those who thought they knew all the answers.

One of Moore's most pointed comments on the wages of inflexibility in her first book occurs in "Pedantic Literalist." As the title implies, Moore offers up her own version of Stevens's "disbeliever," a figure who, as the title of her poem suggests, subscribes to a rigidly prosaic view of the world that he adheres to no matter the consequences.

Like Stevens's walker, Moore's "literalist" refuses to make any leap between literal and figurative meaning:

> Prince Rupert's drop, paper muslin ghost,
> White torch – "with power to say unkind
> Things with kindness, and the most
> Irritating things in the midst of love and
> Tears," you invite destruction.[26]

All three of Moore's opening metaphors speak to the literalist's inflexible vision. Invoking a Prince Rupert's drop, Moore compares her narrow-minded subject to a seventeenth-century firework, a teardrop-shaped piece of molten glass made hard by a shock of cold water. The drop can withstand hammer blows on its bulb, but explodes if the tail end is even slightly damaged. Like the drop, the narrow, literal mind is clear and rigid rather than colorful and flexible. Like the drop, it is also dangerously flawed. A "paper muslin ghost," the literal mind haunts all those who confront it with its utter plainness.

A poetic riposte to such inflexibility shows here and throughout Moore's oeuvre in her extraordinary art of enjambment. Her deep enjambments set up careful patterns of rhyme (ghost/most) that play against the prosy quality of her lines. The stanzas in the poem, as in all of Moore's early poems, are consistently syllabic. Her organizing tactics, her syllabic templates and careful systems of full end rhyme, slant rhyme, internal rhyme, and other sonic devices, frequently fade to the background as organizing forms in the flow of these long, enjambed lines, so that an impression of sonic pattern thus

underlies and unifies the feeling of freely improvisational verse. This is a signature expression of the sensibility she sees at a revealing, antithetical extreme in this poem and others.

Throughout "Pedantic Literalist," Moore offers a series of modified quotes from seventeenth-century pastor Richard Baxter's Christian classic, *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*, a long treatise on how to love God, purify the soul, and prepare for the afterlife.[27] A "meditative man" with a "perfunctory heart," the literalist commits Baxter's sin of merely mouthing words he does not believe and cannot feel. Lacking imagination, Moore's literalist has no empathy. The literalist's system of thought, Moore's speaker declares not once, but twice, is an "immutable production" that ultimately resembles a block of wood. At first, the literalist's "carved" interior seems something "inlaid and royal" that reflects his lofty self-assurance. After further examination, however, Moore's speaker recasts the "production" as a "little 'palm tree of turned wood,'" a leg for a cheap piece of furniture that supports nothing valuable. Like Stevens's "disbeliever," Moore's literalist denies his "once spontaneous core" and refuses to remain open to changes that are key to humor and compassion.

Stevens and H.D.

Critics rarely put Stevens's and H.D.'s work side by side. In part, the resistance stems from the fact that their orbits, H.D.'s in Europe (principally London), Stevens's in the United States (principally New York and Hartford, Connecticut), rarely intersected. They never corresponded and, when they did run across one another, they did not like one another very much. In a conversation between Alfred Kreymborg and H.D. that Moore recorded in her diaries, H.D. calls Stevens a "terrible snob."[28] Moore's diaries also reveal, however, that H.D. and Stevens were well aware of each other's work. Reading *Sea Garden* and *Harmonium* in tandem suggests that while Stevens's and H.D.'s working lives seemed worlds apart, their poems held certain themes and images in common that reflected their desires to put old certainties aside.

Where Moore and H.D. share the metaphoric landscape of the garden, Stevens and H.D. share a metaphoric map of the seashore. In Stevens's volume, the map's location is almost always Florida, the state in which Stevens vacationed throughout his career. Throughout *Harmonium*, Stevens returns to the tropical scene of the Florida Keys again and again in poems such as "Infanta Marina," "Hibiscus on the Sleeping Shores," "Fabliau of

Florida," "Homunculus et La Belle Etoile," and "Two Figures in Dense Violet Light." Florida's balmy weather, waving palms, and exotic flowers become emblems of erotic excess and reflect the extremes of the imagination on fire. The shore dominates Stevens's Florida poems because the beach is where the mind first finds its matter – the veritable ocean that represents the material world that the mind confronts and transforms. Some of these poems' most transcendent moments occur on the coast, where the material world floods the senses, bringing intense feelings that the imagination makes into images and words.

As much as Stevens values Florida as a trigger for fictiveness, however, the place also presents a problem. An ever-temperate tropic, Florida could never represent the opposite pole of Stevens's aesthetic, the cold hard north that stood for a bracing state of the imagination held in check. In Florida, the clarity of the material world could never emerge. As James Longenbach sums up the problem, the Florida poems in *Harmonium* "turn on [Stevens's] double image of Florida as both an earthly paradise and a dangerous illusion."[29]

Even in the poems that seem most eager to champion the imagination that inevitably grows lush in Florida's coastal swamp, Stevens hints that the loss of the cleansing dimension of open water threatens to stifle the mind. In the poem "Nomad Exquisite," for example, Stevens portrays Florida as supernaturally fecund, but, in its fruitfulness, and in the reiterated but unconcluded metaphor, lacking something.

> As the immense dew of Florida
> Brings forth
> The big-finned palm
> And green vine angering for life,
>
> As the immense dew of Florida
> Brings forth hymn and hymn
> From the beholder ... [30]

At first, the "immense dew," the veritable water of Florida, seems to breed plants so sensuously vital that no imagination can match them. The speaker's description of the palm as "big-finned" suggests that the plant, a sea creature, is so alive that it can propel itself from place to place. The "green" vine, Stevens's color for the vibrant reality of the material world, has a rage for life to outmatch any mind's rage for order. The "immense dew," however, brings forth "hymn and hymn" from the "beholder," an ecstatic imaginative reverie born of sensual stimulation. As the imagination takes hold, the "green

sides" of the jungle become "gold sides of green sides," a color Stevens associates with the refulgence of his imagination. The different hues come so thick and fast that they turn into "lightning colors" rather than defined shapes, an abstract internal show that moves far from the flora that inspired it. The poem poses Florida and the beholder's response to Florida as a simile for the speaker's creative process. "So, in me," the Nomad declares, "come flinging / Forms, flames, and the flakes of flames." Stevens's alliteration conjures a mind on fire – an imagination so lively that it revels in the sounds of language and throws off forms like sparks. "There is no arresting and no reversing this new activity of the human mind as it moves out upon the world," George Lensing remarks of Stevens's early Florida poems.[31]

"Nomad Exquisite," then, seems to revel in the transformative power of the mind. The Florida that the beholder and the Nomad encounter, however, is "Meet for the eye of the young alligator." The coastal flora may produce hosannas in the beholder, but the place is only truly satisfying and fulfilling ("meet") for the creature of the swamp, the alligator that *does not translate the scene into metaphor*.[32] Stevens's play on the idiom, "more than meets the eye," suggests that only the alligator can see the place for what it is. For the alligator, the palms and vines have no other meanings. The landscape is "meet for the eye" and offers nothing "more than meets the eye." Stevens's title implies that the Nomad, unlike the alligator, is not at home in the lush green of Florida, but a traveler whose only contact with the "real" is through metaphor. The word "fling" suggests the joyful abandon of turning the world with the mind, but it also suggests that the flames are an impulse that will wane. Only the alligator is truly sated because only he resists the tropes that turn water into fire. The longed for consummation with the object of desire, the sensuous body of the real world, can, it seems, never occur for thinking human beings.

Throughout H.D.'s coastal poems in *Sea Garden*, the shore also represents a point of contact with sensuous realities. H.D.'s shore, however, is no balmy stretch of white sand and lush plants that sends the imagination racing far from its source. Her coast is one of jagged rocks, thrashing winds, and crushing waves. The erotic water's edge in H.D.'s verses does not trigger extravagant fancies, but instead strips those who travel there of protective fictions, forcing them to face difficult sensual truths that, while punishing, make them stronger. H.D.'s "Sea Lily," for example, embodies the risks and triumphs of embracing life in the unprotected sea garden at the brink of the waves.

Reed,
slashed and torn
but doubly rich –
such great heads as yours
drift upon temple-steps,
but you are shattered
in the wind.

Myrtle-bark
is flecked from you,
scales are dashed
from your stem,
sand cuts your petal,
furrows it with hard edge,
like flint
on a bright stone.[33]

"Slashed," "torn," "shattered," "dashed," and "cut" by the wind, the sea lily has been made "doubly rich" by virtue of its torments. Losing its "bark" and "scales," the sea lily has remained open to experience in all its forms, a mode of being that has resulted, counterintuitively, in the lily's regeneration. The sand "furrows" the lily's petal, a word that suggests both a worried brow and the groove of a plow in soil, a place for new growth. The contact between the sand blast of the wind and the lily's petal resembles a hard-edged flint chipping away at a "bright stone." The simile may seem violent, but it also invokes a primitive method of producing fire (flint on shiny iron pyrite), a symbol of energy and inspiration. The last stanza of the poem implies that, once lit, such a fire will prove difficult to quench. The "hiss" that accompanies the "froth" that attempts to cover the plant in the poem's last line suggests the steam that results when water meets an active flame.

H.D.'s battered lily, then, much like Stevens's alligator, constitutes an organic stand-in for a mode of sensual experience that resists the pull into abstraction at all costs. Sincere creative energy, the lily's watery flame argues, is only made possible by an ongoing submersion in the sensual world that does not negate its power or its violence. Both Stevens and H.D. longed in their early verse to engage the erotic power of the sensual world that seemed to have dropped so far out of modern consciousness. For Stevens, the quest for a poetry that could let readers see through the eye of the alligator was an ongoing struggle. As Stevens's metaphorical use of fecund Florida in "Nomad Exquisite" implies, sensual contact with the veritable ocean always seemed to lead the mind to revel in its own creations. Eroticism became autoeroticism,

which, inherently infertile, led Stevens back to the shore once more. As "Sea Lily" suggests, H.D. pictured her shore, not as part of a creative cycle, but as a dangerous gateway to enlightenment for those willing to accept the threat of self-extinction that erotic consummation demanded. While Stevens's Nomad moves inevitably from a point of sensual contact into abstraction, H.D.'s lily remains rooted in the surf.

Conclusion

Thus, while H.D., Moore, and Stevens created poems that flouted formal poetic conventions in very different ways, they each used the content of their poems to comment on the changing times in which they lived. Through their images of the garden, H.D. and Moore used unconventional poems to comment on the stifling conventions and expectations of domesticity. Through their images of unchangeable minds, Moore and Stevens used unconventional poems to critique those who clung to outmoded notions at the expense of material realities, new thoughts, and spontaneous feelings. They also warned readers about how quickly new thoughts might become old. Through their images of the coast, Stevens and H.D. used unconventional poems to express their yearnings for the elemental sensual world that others used conventional habits and behaviors to repress. They both viewed sensuality as a vital component of life and art. All three poets wrote verses that used unconventional forms to argue for the ability to live more authentic, unconventional lives.

Notes

1 Richard Aldington, "The Art of Poetry," *Dial*, 69 (August 1920), 169.
2 For some negative early responses to Moore's poetry, see Ernest Boyd, "Readers and Writers," *Independent*, February 14, 1925, 188; *"Life*'s Brass Medal of the Second Class," *Life*, March 12, 1925, 24; Clement Wood, "The Charlie Chaplins of Poetry," *Independent*, January 12, 1918, 64; and Harriet Monroe, "A Symposium on Marianne Moore," *Poetry* 19 (January 1922), 208–16. For more generous accounts by her modernist peers, see Elizabeth Gregory (ed.), *The Critical Response to Marianne Moore* (New York: Praeger, 2003).
3 Marjorie Allen Seiffert, "The Intellectual Tropics," *Poetry*, 23/3 (December 1923), 155.
4 For some early reviews of Stevens's poetry, see Charles Doyle (ed.), *Wallace Stevens: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985).
5 F.S. Flint, "Imagisme," *Poetry*, 1/6 (March 1913), 199.

6 Louis Untermeyer, "The Spirit of Modern American Poetry," *English Journal*, 13/2 (February 1924), 89–99 (at 96).

7 May Sinclair, "The Poems of H.D.," *Dial*, 72 (February 1922), 203–07 (at 204). See also Lawrence Gilman, "The Book of the Month: *The New Poetry*," *North American Review*, 205 (May 1917), 781–82; Hildegarde Fillmore, "Poems and Poetical Exercises," *Bookman*, 62 (September 1925), 80–81; and William Stanley Braithwaite, "The Year in Poetry, II," *Bookman*, 45 (June 1917), 438.

8 Jessie B. Rittenhouse, "Contemporary Poetry: A Group of the Autumn Books," *Bookman*, 46 (December 1917), 439.

9 Hilda Doolittle to Marianne Moore, August 21, 1915. Marianne Moore Collection, Rosenbach Museum and Library, Philadelphia, PA.

10 See my accounts of Moore's image of the garden in "'Injudicious Gardening': Marianne Moore, Gender, and the Hazards of Domestication," in Linda Leavell, Cristanne Miller, and Robin G. Schulze (eds.), *Critics and Poets on Marianne Moore: A Right Good Salvo of Barks* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2005), 74–89, and *The Degenerate Muse: American Nature, Modernist Poetry, and the Problem of Cultural Hygiene* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 161–204.

11 See Annette Debo's discussion of H.D.'s bid for freedom in *Sea Garden*, in *The American H.D.* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2012), 133–35.

12 Eileen Gregory, "Rose Cut in Rock: Sappho in H.D.'s *Sea Garden*," *Contemporary Literature*, 27/4 (Winter 1986), 525–52 (at 538).

13 H.D., *Sea Garden* (London: Constable, 1916), 18.

14 Ibid., 19.

15 Marianne Moore, *Becoming Marianne Moore: The Early Poems, 1907–1924*, ed. Robin G. Schulze (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 72.

16 Ibid., 94.

17 Ibid., 74.

18 Ibid., 183.

19 *The Complete Prose of Marianne Moore*, ed. Patricia Willis (New York: Viking, 1986), 96.

20 See Bart Eeckhout's intelligent commentary on this line of Stevens criticism in *Wallace Stevens and the Limits of Reading and Writing* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 23–34, 96–100.

21 See my discussion of the poles of Stevens's *Harmonium* in "Teaching Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore: The Search for an Open Mind," in B.J. Leggett and John Serio (eds.), *Teaching Wallace Stevens: Practical Essays* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 179–91 (at 180–82), and *The Web of Friendship: Marianne Moore and Wallace Stevens* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 25–27.

22 Wallace Stevens, *Collected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Frank Kermode and Joan Richardson (New York: Library of America, 1997), 61.

23 Ibid., 19.

24 Ibid.

25 Moore, "In This Age of Hard Trying, Nonchalance Is Good and," *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 70.

26 Moore, "Pedantic Literalist," *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 75.

27 *The Practical Works of the Reverend Richard Baxter*, vol. XXIII, ed. William Orme (London: James Duncan, 1830), 402.

28 Marianne Moore, unpublished notebook, 1921–1922, 1250/25, page 21, Marianne Moore Collection, Rosenbach Museum and Library, Philadelphia, PA.

29 James Longenbach, *Wallace Stevens: The Plain Sense of Things* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 126–27.

30 Stevens, *Collected Poetry and Prose*, 77.

31 George S. Lensing, *Wallace Stevens and the Seasons* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 252.

32 In "Why Modernist Claims of Autonomy Matter," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 32/3 (Spring 2009), 1–21, Charles Altieri suggests that the "beholder" in Stevens's poem can be read as the alligator. Such a reading emphasizes Stevens's desire to encounter the material world without the mediations of metaphor (19).

33 H.D., *Sea Garden*, 12.

Letters Crossing the Color-Line: Modernist Anxiety and the Mixed-Race Figure in the Work of Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and William Carlos Williams

JAMES SMETHURST

US modernity, both in the sense of the advent of the United States as the world's leading industrial power and in that of the United States becoming the most prominent center of the mass culture industries (film, recorded music, music publishing, advertising, radio, and so on) with the centers of those industries (Tin Pan Alley, Hollywood, Madison Avenue) becoming international icons, arose at the same time as the onset and consolidation of Jim Crow. This legal and extra-legal system of racial separation dominated the US South (and other regions of the United States to varying degrees) and the disenfranchisement of African Americans in the South (and elsewhere). This period also saw the racial segregation of urban spaces all across the nation, often without the legal infrastructure of local and statewide statutes that underwrote Jim Crow in the South, relying instead on the cooperation of local government, private financial and real estate interests, and, often, mob violence to maintain the walls of the new black ghettos. In short, the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first two of the twentieth saw the emergence and triumph of the "separate, but equal" regime validated by the US Supreme Court in 1896 and 1898 (*Plessy* v. *Ferguson* and *Williams* v. *Mississippi*) and the creation of the ghetto as a hypersegregated urban neighborhood, which became increasingly associated with African Americans rather than the Jews of Europe. These forms of racial segregation and the hardening of racial boundaries and hierarchy can, in fact, be seen as constitutive elements of US modernity, both in the regulation of labor and in the shaping of

the mass culture industries. Popular culture – particularly music, popular theatre, film, and dance – was deeply inflected by racialized images, figures, and forms (minstrelsy, plantation literature and theatre, ragtime, the "coon" song, spirituals, and jazz). Thus, Black Harlem (there were still important Jewish, Finnish, Italian, and growing Puerto Rican Harlem enclaves in the 1920s) became perhaps the most internationally famous urban neighborhood because of its identification as a locus of those culture industries. As a fantasy, almost a forerunner of the modern theme park created by those industries, it was no longer simply a place where black people lived.

One obvious aspect of the new racial order of US modernity is the adjudication of racial identity, particularly with respect to whiteness and citizenship – or perhaps, one might say, not-blackness and citizenship. As such scholars as Noel Ignatiev and Matthew Jacobson (and James Baldwin, for that matter) have long pointed out, this issue reached beyond the black and white dyad. It encompassed the question of whether people who were legally considered "Caucasian" (e.g., immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe) and never or very rarely placed in the position of "Negro" by the laws and practices of Jim Crow, but socially and racially off-white, so to speak, could truly become "Americans." Similarly, this question was raised with respect to other people who were not legally "white," but also not "Negro" (such as Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans) and were often, if erratically (depending on time period and place), covered by the strictures of segregation. This question of who was or could become a true "American" citizen would have enormous consequences for immigration laws, among other things, in the United States.

However, the question of who was "Negro" or black was also fraught and obviously of great importance in the modern racial regime. After all, one's racial identity governed the range of one's life choices and possibilities to an enormous degree, from whom one could marry, where and at what one could work, and what education was available, to where one could eat, where (and if) one could sit in a movie theatre, and from which drinking fountain one could drink. One might say that all inhabitants of the United States were restricted in their actions and opportunities by these racial categories. However, those classified as "Negroes" were generally far more constrained in their life chances and choices than those deemed "white." While various states, especially in the South, drew up formulae for the

precise amount of African "blood" required to deem a person a "Negro," for all practical purposes, the "one drop rule" applied. That is, if one had any discernible or known African ancestry, then one was a "Negro," whatever one's appearance.

Of course, much of the racial definition between "white" and "Negro" had its origins in the slave era, but it took on a new, demented intensity in the Jim Crow era after some relaxation during Reconstruction. A great new anxiety rose about racial mixing or "miscegenation." After the repeal or non-enforcement of laws prohibiting intermarriage between black and white, thirty states (out of forty-eight) passed various sorts of anti-miscegenation laws between 1913 and 1918; others began to enforce laws that were never repealed, so that intermarriage between black and white (as well as other permutations of "race mixing") were banned in the United States. Given this anxiety and the new legal and social boundaries gener-ated by that anxiety, the practice of "passing" – that is, individuals adjudi-cated as "Negro" but appearing as "white" and disappearing into the "white" population – took on a new significance and had huge material consequences in the cultural realm particularly. Such "passing" by sub rosa "Negroes," combined with the anxiety of both black and white authors toward racial mixing, constitutes the fraught category of the racial imagin-ary in many of the major works of US literary modernism, which we may understand in this regard as a heightened consciousness of unrest in social and cultural circumstances, even – or especially – as the sense of change on which this unrest is based is being contested and resisted in mainstream cultural formations. The modernist representation of these circumstances ranges from early to later in the century, showing already over the long turn of that century in Gertrude Stein's "Melanctha," (1909) and James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912).

One problem with the "one drop rule" was that, while one could know that most black people were "black," at least in the United States, through visible markers of their African ancestry, the category of "white" was never really stable. How could anyone know whether she or he was really "white"? As both Johnson in his novel and William Carlos Williams in *In the American Grain* point out, one might discover in one manner or another that one is "black," that one has some distant, but hitherto unknown, African ancestor. Such a revelation would completely destabil-ize one's emotional, intellectual, and practical identity in the Jim Crow United States, a development Williams evokes in the charged idiom of his own time:

> Do you realize the fascination the story of the white woman who had twin nigger babies has for us? They accused the woman of having had intercourse with the apartment's colored elevator boy. Her husband abandoned her at once, of course – charming man. But you know Mendel's law; they discovered there had been a darky in *his* family six generations before! There's the dénouement for every good American. Be careful whom you marry! Be careful for you can NEVER know.[1]

There is even a sense, as versions of black people and their culture saturate US popular culture, that a "white" person can never really be "white" enough. As Ishmael Reed noted in his novel *Mumbo Jumbo* to hilarious effect, this anxiety provoked waves of official and quasi-official hysteria about black cultural contamination of "American" culture, extending from the minstrel period to the rock and roll era (and, one might add, beyond to the hip hop and contemporary R&B moment). In other words, there is a suspicion by the "white" subject that one is never "white" enough.

For a "black" person "passing" as "white," one is forced to deny one's birth family and live in dread that someone from one's "Negro" past may appear and reveal one's "true" identity, possibly with catastrophic consequences. These included death in the most painful and barbaric way imaginable in the high era of lynching, as William Faulkner represents such outcomes in *Light in August* (1932). Even for African Americans who are ocularly "Negro," but also obviously mixed-race (that is to say, "light," "yellow," or even "brown" as opposed to "black"), there is the issue of being the visible sign of miscegenation, and so bearing all the attendant anxieties and opportunities of appearing "Negro," while not being quite "black" in the Jim Crow and colorist United States. These are anxieties and resentments that black writers from Charles Chesnutt to Toni Morrison represent as afflicting dark-skinned African Americans, albeit in different ways. One sees, then, the twinned feelings of being "black" or not "black" enough.

The racial anxiety underlying the US system shows most notably, then, in the mixed-race subject, who embodies the division and so makes visible that anxiety. This figure is one of the hallmarks of US modernism, and she or he reappears in a huge range of works by black and white authors – and authors, such as William Carlos Williams, arguably neither black nor white. The enterprise in this essay is to look primarily at work by Williams, Zora Neale Hurston, and Langston Hughes, so to consider how the mixed-race figure is deployed by US modernist authors as a register of seismic unrest in the US cultural landscape. The commonalities and differences in that deployment

turn around a single obsession with this figure of an already long, and always lengthening, racial history.

<center>*</center>

Despite Williams's Puerto Rican mother and the racial implications of his friend Ezra Pound's mocking of Williams's "dago" ancestry, he clearly lived his life as "white" as a pediatrician in Rutherford, New Jersey. The picture we see in retrospect was more complicated in its own time, however. There was a difference between the Puerto Rican understanding of race and that of the mainland United States, particularly in the 1910s and 1920s, which is to say early in the US colonization of Puerto Rico; there was also a lack of clarity about the background of certain branches of his mother's family. And so there was something to Williams's own apprehension that he quite possibly had "a darky in *his* family" six generations or so back. He would, then, be a "Negro" according to the racial accounting of the United States.

Racial anxiety and desire in his writing is figured most often through the mother or an alluring, but somewhat monstrous or terrifying, female. This can be seen in his poetry in what is perhaps the most famous portion of *Spring and All* (with the possible exception of "The Red Wheelbarrow"), "To Elsie." Williams rhetorically links the maid Elsie to the Ramapough people of northern New Jersey and southern New York in the opening of the poem – though he does not actually say that Elsie is from that community. The Ramapoughs, like many groups of Native people in the East, have considerable African and European ancestry. Though they identify as Native American, most white people in the region, at least until very recently, recognized them as basically black, albeit a very insular and close-knit community of black "hillbillies" (in the most stereotypically negative sense of "hillbilly") with some Native and white as well as African ancestry, generally using the ironically pejorative term "Jackson Whites."

Elsie's possible "dash of Indian blood" is also the potential dash of Negro blood. A "voluptuous water" with "ungainly hips and flopping breasts," Elsie is grotesquely and even monstrously sexual for the poem's speaker.[2] There is a sense of sexual fascination that seems to reside in the dash of blood, an admixture that is the pure product of the Americas, of conquest, slavery, and migration. There is also the powerful fear of the revelation of a hidden and quite possibly previously unknown (to the speaker/narrator) breach in the wall of US racial identity that is in the American grain, too.

That combination of racial attraction and repulsion, of the beautiful and the disgusting or awful (both in the sense of inspiring awe and that of

provoking terror or horror), is even more clear in Williams's fiction of the 1920s and 1930s. In "The Colored Girls of Passenack – Old and New," the narrator describes his parents' servant Georgie in much the same terms as Elsie, emphasizing a repellent but fascinating sexuality:

> Georgie was a vile cook and sloppy washer woman but I imagine even my parents forgave her her worthlessness for the sheer vitality and animal attractiveness there was in her. She had a queer trick too which my father caught her at one day. She seems to have belonged to a religious group known as "Clay Eaters" back home. He went down in the cellar and found her eating a little heap of earth which she had gathered for herself. He asked her what she was doing. She told him quite simply that she was eating dirt, that the Bible said we all had to eat a peck of dirt in our day and that she was eating hers little by little now.[3]

Like Elsie, Georgie is simultaneously worthless or slovenly, weird, and vitally attractive in an animalistic way. Here, as well as in such later stories of Williams in *Life Along the Passaic River* (1938) as "The Dawn of Another Day" and "World's End," black women are described as almost supernaturally attractive as a consequence, somehow, of the "taboo against the race," which makes them "seem a racial confessional of beauty lost today elsewhere."[4] They also make themselves available to men of all races and backgrounds, resulting in children to whom they often seem indifferent. These women are the occasion for what seems to be a perpetual adolescence or onset of adolescence in white men-children, as evidenced most clearly in the efforts of the then young narrator and his friends to see Georgie naked through a peephole. This blurred or partial view appears "thrilling." Yet, again, it is a moment of anxiety, which marks a breakdown of the segregation of desire from a "white" perspective. That is to say, the black male desire of white women is stereotypically seen in the Jim Crow regime as inherent and a threat to the social order requiring constant policing and repression, but the desire for black women by white men (and boys), while long a social fact, is a threat to the whiteness of the white subject. And, of course, it produces children (and the children of the children and so on unto the sixth generation and beyond) who are threats to whiteness in the uncertainty or ambiguity of their whiteness (and blackness), who might also make blackness suddenly legible, socially, culturally, or physically.

Anxiety, isolation, social detachment, and deracination are associated with racial passing, crossing, and a colorism linked to sexual desire (equally deviant, repulsive, and irresistible). These complex systems of historical wrong and cultural consequence are also apparent as hallmark features of

much black modernism from Pauline Hopkins's *Contending Forces* and James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* to the late modernism of Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston in the 1930s. Though it has rarely been considered in this manner, colorism is at the heart of Hurston's signature novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In the case of the protagonist Janie Crawford/Killicks/Starks/Woods, this colorism fetishizes not so much her "coffee and cream" complexion as her long "rope of hair." In many respects, the novel turns on Janie's beauty, particularly as perceived by men. One question which might be asked with respect to the novel is: what would have happened (or not happened) if men did not find Janie beautiful? Would her grandmother have been less troubled by her emergent sexuality? Would Joe Starks have accepted a drink of water and walked on to his destiny as a "big voice," leaving Janie in the front yard of Logan Killicks? Would Tea Cake Woods have wanted to teach her pool? Would the women of the town, other than Pheoby, have held her in such contempt, fear, and envy? Another question is: what would have happened if this beauty and the way it intersected and conflicted with sexual desire had not been detached from motherhood? In the second case, would Janie's story have resembled that of another mixed-raced woman protagonist in a key black modernist text, Helga Crane of Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*? Would Janie's story have ended on a somber, pessimistic note like that of Helga's rather than as the essentially optimistic vindication of black women's subjectivity and agency through storytelling and art?

So the plot arc of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* depends on Janie's perceived beauty. It's worth noting that this beauty is not off-white or virtually white, after the manner of Iola Leroy in Frances Harper's *Iola Leroy* or Angela Murray in yet another significant black modernist novel, Jessie Fausett's *Plum Bun*. Rather, it is definitely a mixed-race beauty. Again, Janie's skin is not ocularly "white," but "coffee and cream." Early on, the narrator makes a point of Janie's "pugnacious" breasts and buttocks like "grapefruit" and how they draw the eyes of both men and women, though with different responses. Thus, Janie's fetishized "good" hair crosses with other fetishes that have been associated with black women from Sarah Baartman to Beyoncé (herself an icon of this sort of visible mixed-raced beauty), mirroring the visible cross of Janie's complexion.

On one hand, Janie's perceived mixed-race beauty significantly enables her actual (and perhaps her intellectual, emotional, artistic, and sexual) journey in the novel. On the other, it is the product of at least two generations of interracial and intraracial sexual abuse. It also causes the men in Janie's life,

including Tea Cake, to try to possess her, to use her as a badge of office or power. As many critics have remarked, Janie becomes Joe Starks's trophy wife, a marker of his position as mayor, businessman, and "big voice" of the black town that sprang from his imagination and his ambition. Janie's hair in particular is an emblem of Joe's authority, causing him to become unhinged when he sees another man touching it while her back was turned. Joe, then, forces Janie to cover her hair in public so that only he can see it. Of course, as in any public masking or concealment, such covering calls attention to that which it conceals, in this case the signature mark of Janie's mixed-race identity.

Tea Cake, too, is unhinged by colorism, albeit in a somewhat different mode than Joe. As Tracy Bealer points out, Tea Cake's violently possessive behavior in "the Muck" of the agricultural fields of South Florida is even more shocking, in some respects, than that of Killicks and Starks, in part because it seems very out of character with the normal pattern of his relationship with Janie. Because he registers so differently with the reader (and with Janie, even after his mad attack on her after the hurricane) than do Logan Killicks and Joe Starks, his violence toward Janie reveals precisely the self-destructive reach of the system of what Bealer calls "intraracial colorism."[5] Tea Cake comes undone through the mixed-raced restaurant owner Mrs. Turner's admiration of her own white ancestry. Interestingly, unlike the case with Janie, Mrs. Turner's mixed-race appearance, a combination of Europe and Africa, is described not as beautiful or arresting but as peculiar and unappealing:

> Mrs. Turner was a milky sort of a woman that belonged to child-bed. Her shoulders rounded a little, and she must have been conscious of her pelvis because she kept it stuck out in front of her so she could always see it. Tea Cake made a lot of fun about Mrs. Turner's shape behind her back. He claimed that she had been shaped up by a cow kicking her from behind. She was an ironing board with things throwed at it. Then that same cow took and stepped in her mouth when she was a baby and left it wide and flat with her chin and nose almost meeting.[6]

Mrs. Turner has fetishized and abstracted the individual parts and traits that she sees as non- or even anti-Negro, aspects that distinguish her from what she perceives as the more African types of the mass of the black agricultural workers in "the muck." In order to do that, she must repress her perception of her "Negro" features.

In many respects Mrs. Turner embodies the aesthetic dangers of a black fetishization of "whiteness." She is described as a worshipper of "whiteness," a faith that not only judges dark-skinned African Americans like Tea Cake

harshly, but also is a form of self-hatred since she can never fully attain the phenotypical "whiteness" she desires. This dangerous desire of whiteness is the source of enormous psychological, cultural, social, and political consequences throughout the twentieth century, as black artists, particularly black women artists, have pointed out. According to the constructed values of that whiteness, she, like the light-skinned Maureen Peale in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye,* can never be truly attractive, only relatively less ugly than other, darker, more typically "African"-featured black people.

Once again, Janie's marked mixed-race appearance is the key factor. Turner desires to separate Janie from the too-black Tea Cake and interest her in her also unattractively mixed-race brother, a school teacher with straight hair:

> But Mrs. Turner's shape and features were entirely approved by Mrs. Turner. Her nose was slightly pointed and she was proud. Her thin lips were an ever delight to her eyes. Even her buttocks in bas-relief were a source of pride. To her way of thinking all these things set her aside from Negroes. That was why she sought out Janie to friend with. Janie's coffee-and-cream complexion and her luxurious hair made Mrs. Turner forgive her for wearing overalls like the other women who worked in the fields. She didn't forgive her for marrying a man as dark as Tea Cake, but she felt that she could remedy that. That was what her brother was born for.[7]

Even though Tea Cake finds the "white" characteristics of Mrs. Turner and her brother ugly, he is overcome by a mixture of jealousy and rage toward Mrs. Turner's brother. Tellingly, these feelings are directed to him not so much as an individual but as an embodiment of the hierarchy of colorism:

> When Mrs. Turner's brother came and she brought him over to be introduced, Tea Cake had a brainstorm. Before the week was over he had whipped Janie. Not because her behavior justified his jealousy, but it relieved that awful fear inside him. Being able to whip her reassured him in possession. No brutal beating at all. He just slapped her around a bit to show he was boss.[8]

Unlike earlier moments of physical conflict between Tea Cake and Janie, this beating was not a result of jealousy about a relationship or possible relationship with another person. Tea Cake is not being possessive in the sense of actually believing that he is in danger of Janie leaving him, as she had left Logan Killicks. Tea Cake himself admits that it was not motivated by anything his wife had done:

> Ah wouldn't be knockin' her around. Ah didn't wants whup her last night, but ol' Mis' Turner done sent for her brother tuh come tuh bait Janie in and

take her way from me. Ah didn't whup Janie 'cause *she* done nothin'. Ah beat her tuh show dem Turners who is boss. Ah set in de kitchen one day and heard dat woman tell mah wife Ah'm too black fuh her.[9]

In short, Janie's mixed-race status and perceived beauty are the source of much ambivalence, anxiety, and conflict, all of it bringing the eventualities of a long and tortured history of at least three generations of black women directly into the present.

This colorism carries within it a history of racialized sexual abuse reaching back into the slave era. It leads Janie's grandmother, essentially, to sell her into a sort of slavery with Logan Killicks, and it brings all her husbands, including Tea Cake, to try to possess her, even as the beauty and sexual attraction associated with her visibly mixed-raced body cause her grandmother and husbands (all darker than she) great anxiety. Like Helga Crane in *Quicksand*, she is a visual badge of a type of black male authority or potential accomplishment as well as an irresistible sexual figure. If the mixed-race character Karintha in Jean Toomer's *Cane* is "a growing thing ripened too soon" by men, Janie is a growing thing pruned and enclosed too soon – even, with all his virtues, by Tea Cake. It is not until Janie has returned to Eatonville, told her story to Pheoby, and lost herself in artful imagination, where Tea Cake is refashioned as an artistic element or projection rather than a material man, that she seems finally free.

For Hurston's one-time close friend and collaborator Langston Hughes, too, the visibly (or legally) mixed-race Negro body was a source of ambivalence, alienation, and attraction. Hughes did take up racial passing in his earlier short stories, such as "Who's Passing for Who" and "Rejuvenation through Joy," but most often as humorous satire. This satire, much as in George Schuyler's 1931 *Black No More*, turns possible repeated crossings back and forth, so that it is not at all certain who is "white" and who is "Negro": revelations are multiple, ambiguous, dubious. In "Rejuvenation through Joy" a "white" spiritualist conman Eugene Lesche markets a doctrine of primitivist "Negro" joy and emotional/spiritual simplicity to well-heeled bohemian women at an artistic summer colony. After Lesche's death near the end of the story, a tabloid claims that he was really a "Negro" – with no confirmation from the narrator that there was any validity to the claim, even by the peculiar standards of racial definition in the United States. Such an unanswered assertion not only raises the anxious question of whether one knows if anyone (including oneself) is "white" in the United States with any certainty, but, as Sonnet Retman

argues, it also asks how much performance, rather than biological "truth," is at the core of race:

> If Lesche is black – the narrator never confirms nor denies this claim – he covertly performs whiteness and overtly performs blackness. With this possibility, whiteness's claims to invisibility are rendered visible. Moreover, the process by which white ethnics deploy racial masquerade to assimilate to whiteness is made legible. The implications of Lesche's mutually intertwined production of whiteness and blackness are far-reaching: within the terms of the story, formulations of racial purity are enabled by a concealed structure of passing and performance.[10]

There is an invocation of the white anxiety not of hidden "blood" alone but also of cultural contamination or crossing, which many white US modernists and their contemporary critics see as both a source of the distinctiveness of their art and of a "miscegenated" and degraded character.[11] To paraphrase the narrator of Hughes's short story "Passing": there are anxieties inherent to both the legible (that is, visible) and illegible (invisible) "letters across the color line." This affects not least the mixed-race subject himself or herself, whose crossing may have only suddenly been made legible. The psychic, spiritual, and material consequences are dramatic.[12]

In his earlier stories, plays, and poems, Hughes's treatment of visibly racially mixed characters is far more somber than, for the most part, his "passing" figures, though, as with those "passing" figures, this representation is connected to sexual desire, notions of sexual deviancy, and the policing of that deviancy. Basically, to be brown (as opposed to black or white) is to be alone, to be alienated. This is true both of characters who are "mulatto" in the classic sense of having a black parent and a white parent and those who, like Hughes, are visibly "light" but not white, that is, both of whose parents were "Negroes" as the United States figured (and often still figures) such things. It is important to note that, if these characters are tragic, that tragedy does not inhere in some unnatural biological and/or psychological crossing, although, as in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, these characters embody the historical tragedies of enslavement, slavery, colonialism, and Jim Crow segregation. In this long historical story, the black body, especially the female body, has become both commodity and the means for producing commodities, which is to say, more "black" bodies. Hughes's poem "Mulatto" puts it this way:

> What's a body but a toy?
> Juicy bodies
> Of nigger wenches

> Blue black
> Against black fences.
> O, you little bastard boy,
>   What's a body but a toy?[13]

The mixed-race character, then, is both product of and visible testimony to white crime and to the fundamentally inhuman, and dehumanizing, character of slavery and Jim Crow.

A number of scholars have suggested that Hughes used the visibly mixed-race character to figure his own sense of rejection by and alienation from his parents and subsequent surrogate parents/patrons, notably Charlotte Osgood Mason.[14] But Hughes also used the mixed-race subject to embody larger social anxieties and claims of the modern Jim Crow regime, particularly in the stories and plays that were deeply influenced by D.H. Lawrence's psychological treatments of gender, class, and place in early twentieth-century Britain. As Harry and Michele Elam note, "The male child of mixed descent is positioned to show up the arbitrariness of the disinheritance of black people by invoking other competing paradigms of inheritance. Furthermore, the mulatto as a sign of race-mixing threatens the economic and social order not simply because he marks difference, but because he can lay claim to *sameness.*"[15] The mixed-race subject makes visible not only the connection between black and white but also the debt, owed to African Americans in the modern moment, in psychic, legal, and material terms. In other words, the discernibly mixed-raced figure who knows the details of his or her ancestry (as the "mulatto" characters generally do in Hughes's early poetry, plays, and stories) does not have a greater claim on white people than do other black people, but makes the claims of black people in general audible as well as visible: "I'm your son" / "I am your son," goes the refrain in the 1931 *Mulatto: A Play of the Deep South.* The short story "Father and Son" tells essentially the same story as that play and the 1927 poem "Mulatto." This remains the case even – or especially – if white people deny those claims with increasing hysteria, as in the "Father and Son" story:

ROBERT:	(*Still standing*) What do you mean, talk right.
NORWOOD:	I mean talk like a nigger should to a white man.
ROBERT:	Oh! But I'm not a nigger, Mr. Norwood, I'm your son.
NORWOOD:	(*Testily*) You're Cora's boy.
ROBERT:	Women don't have children by themselves.
NORWOOD:	Nigger women don't know the fathers. You're a bastard.
	(ROBERT *clenches his fist.* NORWOOD *turns toward the drawer*

where the pistol is, takes it out, and lays it on the table. The wind blows the lace curtains at the windows, and sweeps the shadows of leaves across the paths of sunlight on the floor)

ROBERT: I've heard that before. I've heard it from Negroes, and I've heard it from white folks, and now I hear it from you. *(Slowly)* You're talking about my mother.

NORWOOD: I'm talking about Cora, yes. Her children are bastards.

ROBERT: *(Quickly)* And you're their father. *(Angrily)* How come I look like you, if you're not my father?[16]

It is important not to confuse these claims with a desire to be "white," despite his light skin and his resemblance to his white planter father. As the Elams note, it is ability and legitimacy of action, of true citizenship, which the mixed-race Robert in *Mulatto* associates with his father, the white plantation owner Norwood, not the ontological status of whiteness. Robert's greatest admiration is for the "real colored people," the "New Negroes" of the cities, one might say, who refuse to genuflect before white people and are willing to say no to white demands, whatever the cost. It is interesting that he tells his brother William, also light-skinned but much more compliant with Jim Crow, that he has seen such "real colored people," not that he (Robert) is one. Rather, he desires that kind of reality through the ability to act, to say no. In the end, it is that sort of "Negro" that Robert becomes as he refuses to deny his ability to say no and kills his father with his father's gun, is chased by a lynch mob, and kills himself with the last bullet of his father's pistol in his mother's cabin before he can be caught by the mob. The play ends in a chaos of hatred and sorrow as Robert's mother Cora faints and the cabin is filled with the mad roar of the frustrated mob.

This volatile mixture of rage, hatred, anxiety, fear, sexual desire, sexual repression, sorrow, and love is focused on the mixed-race character and often culminates in extreme violence in Hughes's early work. This outcome is not a mark of the social, ideological, and psychological stability of the Jim Crow system, a stability that makes any transgression of rigid racial boundaries shocking in rarity. Rather, Hughes's work reveals the system's instability in the face of constant challenge by African Americans. There is a reason why defenders of segregation, particularly in the various iterations of "plantation literature" and its descendants in various media throughout the system's history, tended to always look to the "old days" before the present (except, of course, the moment of Reconstruction). There is also a reason why the trope of the New Negro (or a new type of black person) was similarly persistent

from the late Reconstruction era throughout the Jim Crow era. Also, in a Gramscian way of thinking, it is possible to understand this as a system of labor and social control, which depended heavily on the spectacular violence of the Jim Crow era. It is also worth noting that the status of "white people" in that regime was not as normalized or secure as segregation's defenders liked to claim, even in the "good old days," whenever they were. Again, for Hughes, the mixed-raced figure embodied not only the difficult moments and negotiations of his own family history but the instability, social anxiety, and challenge of this era and the history that brought it into being. Of course, as Hughes shows in these stories and plays, this instability was not only a cause of anxiety for white people, but also for black people, who would find themselves caught up in the often madly violent responses that this instability generated in white people.

The transgressive nature of interracial sex and the uneasy slippage between shame and desire in black and white sexual relationships, all of which are manifest in the body of the visibly mixed-race character, provide a space for Hughes to represent other sorts of transgressive sexuality, particularly gay desire and relationships. Such visibly mixed-race characters are often associated with gay desire in Hughes's work, where, much like interracial desire in the work of Williams, they generate a strange mixture of fear, shame, curiosity, and longing. Near the end of Hughes's 1930 novel *Not Without Laughter*, the protagonist Sandy Rogers, then an adolescent with skin "the shade of a nicely browned piece of toast" and "a head of rather kinky, sandy hair,"[17] is propositioned under Chicago's El by "a small yellow man with a womanish voice" and powdered face.[18] Sandy is fascinated in Hughes's report of his thoughts – "Yet he wondered what such men did with the boys who accompanied them. Curious, he would like to find out" – but, at the same time, he is both revolted and terrified, ultimately rejecting and fleeing from the "small yellow man"; "On the brightly lighted avenue panic seized him. He had to escape this powdered face at his shoulder. The whining voice made him sick inside."[19] Again, as in Williams and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the mixed-race person is a source of sexual attraction and repulsion, of fascinated desire and shame.

One might perform similar analyses of other key texts by black and white US modernists, such as Jean Toomer's *Cane*, Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* and *Passing*, Jessie Fausett's *Plum Bun*, Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem* and *Banjo*, Wallace Thurman's *Infants of the Spring*, Wallace Stevens's *Harmonium*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and William Faulkner's *Light in August*. We can understand modernism in the United States as not just a register of

cultural change but as an often critical artistic response to US modernity, which rises as an iconic landscape of the Fordist system of mass production and its concomitant mass culture industries. In this understanding, the mixed-race figure and the anxieties it embodies can be seen as an image as comprehensive in its critique of the US system as it is inclusive of the often tortured history of the United States. This figure is closely tied to the legal and social edifice of Jim Crow and the intense racial segregation of urban space, all of which significantly shaped the character of the United States of the early twentieth century. These critiques of US modernity may be structured by a fear of the instability of racial categories (as inflected by boundaries of gender and sexuality and, sometimes, class) or as a rejection of attempts to maintain those boundaries; these motives are sometimes weirdly mixed. Admitting the differences between these readings, the literary and cultural history we have followed through this chapter leaves the mixed-race figure as the most vivid and indicative register of a modernist consciousness of unresolved change in US modernity.

Notes

1 William Carlos Williams, *In the American Grain* (1925; New York: New Directions, 1956), 177.

2 *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams*, vol. 1: *1909–1939*, ed. A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan (New York: New Directions, 1991), 217–18.

3 William Carlos Williams, "The Colored Girls of Passenack – Old and New," *The Collected Stories of William Carlos Williams* (New York: New Directions, 1996), 52.

4 Ibid., 55.

5 Tracy Bealer, "'The Kiss of Memory': The Problem of Love in Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*," *African American Review*, 43/2–3 (Summer/Fall 2009), 311–27 (at 312).

6 Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937; New York: Perennial Classics, 1998), 139–40.

7 Ibid., 140.

8 Ibid., 147.

9 Ibid., 148.

10 Sonnet Retman, "Langston Hughes's 'Rejuvenation through Joy': Passing, Racial Performance, and the Marketplace," *African American Review*, 45/4 (Winter 2012), 593–602 (at 597).

11 For an incisive study that considers US modernism and the "African American imaginary" and, among other things, tracks such influence and anxiety, see

Geoffrey Jacques, *A Change in the Weather: Modernist Imagination, African American Imaginary* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

12 Along a parallel track, even while many white critics viewed T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* as a jazz poem from its initial reception to the present, it is worth noting that a sense of cultural dislocation, of shame and alienation that was a product of a cultural "miscegenation," animated Eliot's sense of self and his stance as a writer early in his career. As Herbert Read notes in his memorial to Eliot: "I want to write an essay about the point of view of an American who wasn't an American, because he was born in the South and went to school in New England as a small boy with a nigger drawl, but who wasn't a Southerner in the South because his people were northerners in a border state and looked down on all Southerners and Virginians, and who was never anything anywhere." See David Chinitz, *T.S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 20; and Herbert Read, "T.S.E. – A Memoir," *Sewanee Review*, 74 (Winter 1966), 31–57.

13 *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, ed. Arnold Rampersad (New York: Vintage, 1995), 100.

14 Rampersad argues in his important biography of Hughes: "The theme of a marginalized mulatto was compelling because: 1) he felt neglected by his mother and rejected by his father; 2) of stories that his great-grandfather Captain Ralph Quarles of Virginia had putatively shared a 'loving' relationship with Lucy Langston and his mulatto children; and 3) Hughes felt fury and despair over his rejection by Mason, who called him, condescendingly, her 'dear child': 'Mulatto' ventilates a rage Langston could not acknowledge in his desire to be reconciled with Mrs. Mason, who clearly dominated his thought and feelings during the weeks the work was written." Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), vol. I, 192.

15 Harry Elam and Michele Elam, "Blood Debt: Reparations in Langston Hughes's *Mulatto*," *Theatre Journal*, 61/1 (March 2009), 85–103 (at 89).

16 Langston Hughes, *Mulatto: A Play of the Deep South*, in *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes*, vol. v: *The Plays to 1942*, ed. Leslie Catherine Sanders and Nancy Johnston (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 39.

17 Langston Hughes, *Not Without Laughter* (1930; New York: Macmillan, 1969), 11.

18 Ibid., 282.

19 Ibid., 283.

Modernism and Reification: Lukács, Benjamin, Adorno

C.D. BLANTON

In 1923, Karl Korsch published *Marxism and Philosophy*, an attempt "to organize a systematic study of the Hegelian dialectic from a materialist standpoint."[1] Taking up V.I. Lenin's call to fuse critical theory and practice against a series of reductive materialisms, which had been spawned in the wake of the Second International, Korsch summoned a refrain from the young Marx to formulate a properly Hegelian paradox – "philosophy cannot be abolished without being realised" – and to distinguish two senses of philosophy.[2] Against "the speculative activity of the philosophical idea that basically does nothing but comprehend itself," he urged "a categorical rejection of all theory, philosophical or scientific, that is not *at the same time* practice – real, terrestrial, immanent, human and sensuous practice."[3] So conceived, critical theory after (or in the midst of) revolution would involve a generalized decomposition of the abstract and the timeless into the concrete and historical, a movement through which the dialectic detaches from esoteric heights to suffuse every other practical sphere, from science to art, as a principle of critical self-negation. Like philosophy itself then, each sphere of social activity would divulge its double character, not to abandon its separate and special claim on knowledge, but rather to recognize the social aspect of that knowledge and cognize its place within a larger conceptual unity.

Paradoxically, the synthetic and universalizing practice for which Korsch called would splinter on the divisions of 1917, in the aftermath of incomplete revolutions in Soviet Russia and across Central Europe. By 1924, the Soviet Party Congress had disowned *Marxism and Philosophy* for doctrinal reasons, and within a few years Korsch had polemically embraced a distinction between an orthodox "Soviet" version of Marxist theory and a more heterodox "Western" strain.[4] Seeking its distance from the party's incipiently Stalinist doxa, this alternative formation reached back through Marx and Lenin to reread Hegel, seeking to penetrate and comprehend the unity of a

bourgeois order still stubbornly in place in most of Europe. Branching from Brecht to Gramsci, embracing the Weberian and Freudian fusions of the Frankfurt School, encompassing both the humanism of Sartrean existentialism and the anti-humanism of its Althusserian structuralist rejoinder, the resulting body of experimental thought is too vast and occasionally contradictory to sketch in any systematic way here.[5] But the resultant style of thought might be conceived as a modernist Marxism (an occasionally dissident European variant of the socialist thought now centered to the east) or, indeed, as a Marxist modernism (and thus a species of the larger transformations within interwar bourgeois culture). In either or both of these cases, the object and occasion of these critical systems lay in the historical conjuncture of modernism and, usually, in the larger problem that modernist art was taken to signal.[6] At stake was the contradictory logic of a bourgeois culture that seemed to have reached, and then to have outlived, its historical end.

Georg Lukács: Reification and Totality

In an essay published a few months before Korsch's own (and denounced alongside it in Moscow), Georg Lukács provided Western Marxism with both an enduring philosophical idiom and its central conceptual problem. That piece, "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," originated in an apparently simple question, attempting to gauge the reverberations of Marx's account of the commodity in philosophical and ultimately political terms.[7] Through the commodity-form, it argued, emerged a larger dialectic of "reification": the inexorable process by which every element of social life under capital slowly submits to the force of labor power's commodification, ultimately binding all of bourgeois society under a single regime of monetary value and an increasingly invisible structure of universal exchange. But it also did more, establishing what Martin Jay describes as "one of those rare synthetic visions that launch a new paradigm or problematic in thought."[8] By definition, reification exempts nothing, penetrating and reconfiguring every aspect of conscious or unconscious life. But because it excludes nothing, and because it operates on an incipient universal scale, reification inaugurates a situation without historical precedent. The power to refer subjects, objects, ideas, and things to a single system of measure realizes in concrete fact what theology and philosophy had long dreamt in the abstract: a concept of "totality."

Lukács had arrived at revolutionary politics by way of academic philosophy, formed by Weber and neo-Kantianism, later by Hegelian idealism, with an abiding interest in literature. The idealist overtones in his notion of

totality had sounded already in *The Theory of the Novel*, an attempt to trace the apparent demise of epic forms in the modern world.[9] Writing as European war erupted, Lukács adopted a dialectical method to discern epic's vestigial trace in the high realism of the nineteenth century. The bourgeois novel, he argued, "is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality."[10] As modernity's definitive mode of cultural expression, the realist novel thus divulges the force of a perpetually unmet need to imagine some legible unity in the world it depicts. Divested of the constitutive simplicity of the traditional epic, however, and exiled from the integrated world that enabled it, the novel can only approach the totality it imagines asymptotically, by attempting to represent the abstract categories (of character or social class, for example) from which modern social orders are distilled. But that very act of imagination achieves a kind of binding force in its repeated failure, leaving the simple fact of the novel's emergence as formal evidence of the need to totalize, moving dialectically from particular to universal, from the circumscribed sphere of what can be known and described to the vaster set of conceptual relations that shape and lurk behind them.

What originated as literary criticism therefore manifested something bolder in the end, stepping to the threshold of Korsch's idea of a philosophy abolished and realized in the same gesture. The attempt to grasp the lineaments of a literary form pointed beyond the aesthetic sphere, even as, in the problem of totality, the history of the novel framed a question answerable only in other terms. Radicalized by events around him (he would briefly serve as a minor official in the abortive Hungarian Soviet Republic), Lukács's thought thus assumed a new and broader form, folding philosophy and literature together under the gathering sign of reification, henceforth an effective name for that all-inclusive logic of capitalist exchange capable of resculpting both culture and thought in the commodity's shape. Restlessly searching out the concrete roots of art's imaginative abstraction, and thereby fitting Marxism itself with the speculative power of a fully developed metaphysics, the account of reification would afford a way of describing the field of a social existence that exceeds both immediate experience and subjective speculation. But in so doing, it would also provide the ground bass of an account of modernism in particular, the conceptual instrument through which a materialist criticism might discern in twentieth-century art the apparently final crisis of a social order ungraspable with the more limited tools of what Lukács termed "bourgeois reason."

For Lukács, it is just this impossibility of grasping a totality after which art still blindly strains that calls forth the need for a new concept. The very fact that the world *can* exceed subjective experience in ever more elaborate, encompassing, and determinate ways absolutizes the concept of alienation that Marx had, in turn, extracted from Hegel to refashion the descriptions of capital's operation inherited from classical political economy. Capital's capacity to objectify anything, to reduce even labor-power to an exchangeable value, "something objective and independent" of the laborer and set above him, Lukács argues, allows "the commodity structure to penetrate society in all its aspects and to remould it in its own image."[11] The commodity itself therefore "becomes the universal category of society as a whole," systematically reshaping the entire complex of relations in which individuals are enmeshed as differential aspects of capitalized value.[12] Reification, as Lukács conceives it, does not simply name the operation of the commodity, but more generally registers its codification as a universal norm:

> Reification requires that a society should learn to satisfy all its needs in terms of commodity exchange. The separation of the producer from his means of production, the dissolution and destruction of all "natural" production units, etc., and all the social and economic conditions necessary for the emergence of modern capitalism tend to replace "natural" relations which exhibit human relations more plainly by rationally reified relations.[13]

What matters under Lukács's account, then, is not merely the alienating effect of labor's commodification, but also the corollary movement by which that effect is inscribed as a social law of exchange: the isolation of the individual is but the sign of a deeper systematic integration – a "strict ordering of all that happens" – that transpires all the more forcefully because it transcends consciousness. The fragmentary quality of individual experience is therefore both structural and "only apparent," belied by a totalizing system of production that categorically exceeds the scale of human perception even as it inexorably remakes both the terms and the objects of that perception, what Marx named capital as such.[14] But there are other debts lurking in Lukács's language. The insistence on a concretized mode of universality is derived from Hegel, but the careful distinction between the mere appearance of individual experience and the essence of a "nature" that withdraws from human reason and conceals its social origins is perhaps more crucial, mimicking the formative terms of Kantian reason in order to unravel them. And it is in this exposure of what he terms

"the antinomies of bourgeois thought" that the implication of Lukács's insistence on a logic of totality emerges with greatest force.[15]

The hope and political urgency of Lukács's argument lies in its final turn, arguing for the singular status of the proletariat under developed industrial capitalism. Because the proletariat finds itself most thoroughly reified already – existentially formed as an unconscious collective or class by virtue of its thoroughly exchangeable labor-power, bought and sold according to the mysterious will of an invisible market – it occupies a dialectically distinct space. Both a (collective) political subject and a reified object, the proletariat inhabits the same historical reality as the bourgeoisie, but inhabits it differently, precisely *as* a collective subject and an object, capable of absorbing the logic of the commodity not speculatively but as a simple matter of being. The emergence of the proletariat as a revolutionary class portends something unprecedented because it portends something universal: a subject of experience able to lay claim to the entire system of production under capital, one *formed by* that very system as both part and whole, alienated into being. In the practical terms of the 1920s, the account of reification thus eventuated in the problem of the role of a Leninist vanguard party in relation to a universal working class that it simultaneously invoked as its authorizing source and sought, through the mechanism of the soviets, to represent. Less utopian, however, and perhaps more trenchant in its address to twentieth-century European culture at large, was the position accordingly assigned to bourgeois thought, cut off from the proletariat's integrated future and consigned to reproduce its own reification in a different key. For Lukács, as for most of the thinkers following (even when departing) from him, it is as an historical spasm within the longer history of *bourgeois* thought that modernism thus emerges, the sudden but programmatic expression of a more generalized crisis that manifests as and in art precisely because other languages have failed.

Modernism thus manifests a recurrent – and intensifying – pattern of contradiction within the bourgeois episteme. Unable to measure the limits of their own descriptive laws, the great discourses of philosophy and history, political theory and political economy encounter the world as a persistent anomaly or surprise, discovering ever more extreme cases in which apparently given laws lapse, in which conceptual description and reality diverge, even while the concrete integration of a single but vast economic system allows shocks to reverberate at an ever greater amplitude. The dialectic of reification thus opens what Lukács (borrowing a term from Fichte) terms the *"hiatus irrationalis,"* a constitutive gap or disparity between the concept and the world to which it strains to attach:

the contradiction that appears here between subjectivity and objectivity in modern rationalist formal systems, the entanglements and equivocations hidden in their concepts of subject and object, the conflict between their nature as systems created by "us" and their fatalistic necessity distant from and alien to man is nothing but the logical and systematic formulation of the modern state of society.[16]

So understood, the problem of totality that Lukács had originally posed in literary terms migrates outward, now naming the dialectical remainder that presses on rationalist thought along its far boundary. No longer merely a felt need to think synthetically, the *"problem of totality"* comes categorically to mark that which modern reason cannot possibly think – "the fundamental problem of bourgeois thought, the problem of the thing-in-itself" – even as it exerts itself silently as "a real historical power" in every aspect of social life.[17] Registered only in the appearance of "a catastrophe, a sudden, unexpected turn of events that comes from outside and eliminates all mediations," the emergent universal of which totality remains the sign has no way of being described or narrated in existing terms, but rather enjoins the creation of a new dialectical language capable of discerning the interpenetration of appearance and essence.[18] For Lukács, the critical present of "the World War and the World Revolution" thus delineates a pure conceptual limit at which history and philosophy as they have been practiced must necessarily falter, a materialized *hiatus irrationalis* that both demands and enables a new language of the concrete absolute.[19] But it also marks the historical coordinates – between a war that shakes an old order and a revolution that promises a new one – that condition modernism itself as the aesthetic form that reification assumes in a time of crisis.

Walter Benjamin: Fragment and Allegory

Lukács's attempt to "consider *the problem of the present as a historical problem"* represents the indispensable predicate of a Western Marxist account of modernism.[20] But Lukács himself remains a contradictory figure, both the scourge of modernism's defining aesthetic tendencies and the thinker who most systematically explains the social paradox of their necessity. In a series of increasingly sharp exchanges in the 1930s, staged first with Ernst Bloch, later with Brecht and members of the Frankfurt School including Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno, Lukács returned explicitly to the problem of art by way of reification, deploring the fragmented and ultimately solipsistic style of German expressionism and modernism as a whole, evidenced

in figures as various as Kafka, Joyce, or the avant-gardes, and arguing ferociously for the disenchanted realism of writers like Gorky and Thomas Mann. Modernism, for Lukács, remains symptomatic rather than critical, paradoxically attached to the faithful but extreme registration of mere appearance and therefore blind to the deeper significance of its own fragmentation – an art of effects rather than causes. "As a result of the objective structure of this economic system, the surface of capitalism appears to 'disintegrate' into a series of elements all driven toward independence. Obviously this must be reflected in the consciousness of the men who live in this society, and hence too in the consciousness of poets and thinkers."[21] The categorical construction of art (or even culture) as an autonomous or semi-autonomous domain provides, in itself, lingering evidence of an unresolved antinomy in bourgeois thought, a legible failure to confront the reified totality of an all-determining capitalist reality systematically by matching concept to world. In the world beyond reification, of which Lukács dreams, and in which appearance corresponds to the totality of the thing-in-itself, art reclaims simple mimesis even as it becomes unnecessary.

But this tension also begins to explain the odd centrality of a critical discourse of art to Western Marxism in general, its compulsive need to return to the philosophical problem of aesthetic theory initiated in different ways by Kant and Hegel and to the particular aesthetic challenge of modernism. Thought of in these terms, modernist art is simply the complex sign of bourgeois culture's embattled endurance, its strain to formulate a synthetic concept of reification that its philosophy has failed to provide. If Lukács's judgment is unsparing, then, it is also enabling, offering in the dialectic of reification and totality just the instrument through which art might divulge what bourgeois thought cannot otherwise say. Superficially, no work would seem more distant from Lukács's synthetic ambition than the set of fragments that constitutes the elliptical center of Walter Benjamin's thought. Assembled over a decade, scattered in some three-dozen sheaves or "convolutes" and hidden in the Bibliothèque Nationale as Benjamin fled occupied Paris in 1940, edited and published only posthumously, *The Arcades Project* (*Das Passagen-Werk*) is a massive compendium of textual slivers, a recursive and rambling bundle of notes, quotations, and stray thoughts on the Paris of the Second Empire and everything in it.[22] A work of both experimental historiography and experimental hermeneutics, designed to imagine material reality as a cryptically legible text, it is Benjamin's attempt to re-experience, at the moment of its eclipse, a city and social space formed in the image of a recently ascendant bourgeoisie.

Drawing a presiding emblem from Louis Aragon's surrealist meditation on the Passage de l'Opéra (razed in 1925 to make way for an extended Boulevard Haussmann), the project fixes its wandering attention not only on the shabby spectacle of the Parisian arcades – side thoroughfares enclosed in iron-and-glass to transform isolated shops into ramshackle cathedrals to commodification – but on every cultural aspect that they fitfully touched: the construction materials that remade urban lanes as garish projections of middle-class interiors, the mass-produced merchandise that flooded store-fronts with cheap wares, the crowds that fused as mysterious agglomerations of anonymous individuals, the fashions that diverted and organized their transient attention. Aragon had regarded the arcades as "the secret reposi-tories of several modern myths," "the true sanctuaries of a cult of the ephemeral, the ghostly landscape of damnable pleasures and professions," "places that were incomprehensible yesterday, and that tomorrow will never know."[23] But for Benjamin, their anachronism also encapsulated and revealed a space in which the ubiquitous logic of reification might be glimpsed as a practical phenomenology. *The Arcades Project* thus remains a study in reifica-tion as well, of its suffusion into every recess of existence, but simultaneously of its disguises and masquerades.

Paris's arcades posed a contradiction almost from the outset. The height of novelty when first conceived in the 1820s, they quickly grew outmoded, swamped by the accelerating rhythms and escalating demands of a consumer culture fueled, no less than industrial production itself, by the need for constant expansion. By the time of Aragon's 1926 novel, *Le paysan de Paris*, they accordingly afforded a rare glimpse of capital in the process of becoming historical, offering an already outworn modernity as a way to feel even the present as a forming past, self-consciously tensing the contemporary moment across the splayed and incommensurable historical frames that twist mod-ernism against itself. For Benjamin, they also offered the transient emblem of a world given over entirely to things that no longer aspire to either the timelessness or the symbolic translucence classically ascribed to older artistic forms, things that have become fragmentary not because some ordering aesthetic unity has been lost but rather because the reified fragment has come to underwrite the metaphysical condition of an existence within capital, subject to a process that it can neither fully perceive nor finally conceive. Benjamin's method is thus a deduction from and an inversion of the Lukácsian premise, an attempt to take seriously the epistemological plight of finding a world formed by a totalizing social logic that remains visible only as a set of effects. Every object is inscribed with a meaning, but

one that belongs and refers elsewhere, beyond "the consciousness of poets and thinkers," one that changes and even develops in time, but out of phase with itself, thereby shrouding the world of objects with a cloak of significance to which it cannot fully correspond.

To describe this apparently impossible hermeneutics, Benjamin developed an idiosyncratic notion of allegory, founded in a reading of the baroque mourning-play's (*Trauerspiel*) departure from the canons of classical tragedy. For Benjamin, this bourgeois variation on tragedy unfolds in a series of broken images, certain that its language somehow signifies but is divested of the power to control or even apprehend the signification encrypted within it. Unlike the symbol venerated in romantic criticism, then, the allegorical sign abandons any claim to wholeness, embracing a negation and enabling a different mode of analysis:

> Any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else. With this possibility a destructive, but just verdict is passed on the profane world: it is characterized as a world in which the detail is of no great importance. But it will be unmistakably apparent, especially to anyone who is familiar with allegorical textual exegesis, that all of the things which are used to signify derive, from the very fact of their pointing to something else, a power which makes them appear no longer commensurable with profane things, which raises them onto a higher plane, and which can, indeed, sanctify them. Considered in allegorical terms, then, the profane world is both elevated and devalued.[24]

As Lukács himself later recognized, allegory's simultaneous elevation and devaluation of worldly detail establishes the central movement of Benjamin's modernism, registering the effect of totality by forcing the critic to confront an aesthetic predicated on the separation of the experiential particular from its own universal form.[25] Determinations of value, whether aesthetic or economic, are cast forward, referred to a future standard still unknown. If the allegorical sign thus refrains from the systematic imagination of Lukács's realism, it nonetheless breaks from any conception of art that might pretend to the sufficiency of immediate experience, in effect inscribing the faltering of conceptual language as a formal principle within the artwork itself.

On a vastly expanded scale, this allegorical division of the object from the referential source of its value emerges for Benjamin not merely as an aesthetic principle, but as the social logic of the industrialized world of the nineteenth century, with Paris at its center. Conceived "as the sign that is pointedly set off against its meaning," allegory captures the form of experience common to Benjamin's Parisians – from the prostitute, embodied as a

commodity, to the Baudelairean *flâneur*, absorbed by an experience never purely his – even while insisting that the content of that experience, its essential hollowness, remains opaque.[26] "The modes of meaning fluctuate almost as rapidly as the price of commodities."[27] By inscribing a measure of hermeneutic blindness within the art object, however, allegory visits the same law upon the critic, drastically curtailing the confidence with which interpretation can be ventured. To know Paris, and the entire mode of production that it metonymically indicates, is first of all a matter of settling into its suspensions of present or palpable meaning, searching instead for the slowly emergent patterns or constellations that it disgorges by apparent chance. In a fragment drafted around 1930, Benjamin sketched a program for a literary criticism limited to two elemental techniques: "the critical gloss and the quotation."[28] With the former, the critic preserves the provisional meanings that the allegorical sign accretes over time, "The exegesis, the ideas, the admiration and enthusiasm of past generations that have become indissolubly part of the works themselves and turned them into mirror-images of later generations."[29] By contrast, quotation dismembers texts, cracks writing into particles that escape one context to find another, there to acquire some new purpose or use. *The Arcades Project* pushes this "theory of quotation" further still, seeking "to develop to the highest degree the art of citing without quotation marks," testing a method "intimately related to that of montage" and allowing the fragments of the reified work to jostle against each other.[30]

Benjamin's method of sifting cultural materials thus refrains from critical generalization even as it imbues the artwork itself with an unexpected critical power, amplified in the enigmatic but dialectical relation between citation and commentary. The artwork emerges as the technical or practical aspect of a logic that sets the particular against the universal in order to produce not a concept but something more elusive, the ground of an historical condition of experience lurking beneath the rational articulations of conceptual thought. If Lukács assumed the task of naming capital's historical ontology through a dialectical concept, then, it was Benjamin who sought to adduce and describe that ontology's categories and channels of social existence in a starkly different set of operations. The symptomatic quality of modernist art, its ability to encode social relations even while failing to represent them mimetically, offers a critical opening through which a reified social order acknowledges its own character even while failing to grasp it conceptually, registering a "specific devaluation of the world of things, as manifested in the commodity."[31] Incapable of representing a social totality, the modernist artwork insistently testifies to it nonetheless.

The consummate form of this broken art Benjamin locates in Baudelaire, the poet whose "unique significance" threatens to absorb even the sprawling mass of *The Arcades Project*: "The first and the most unwavering to have *apprehended* [*dingfest gemacht*: made fast or grasped, seized or arrested] the self-alienated being" produced by "the reified world."[32] For Benjamin's Baudelaire, subject of the project's largest convolute, Paris was already an enigmatic set of allegorical signs, each insisting on the impossibility of any straightforward symbolic reading and referring instead to a totality nowhere quite named.[33] Famously, then, in "Le Cygne" the poet clings to the ruins of an old city that is no more, strolling through the scaffolds and glittering monuments of the Place du Carrousel before the Louvre only to recall the stalls and overgrown debris they have displaced, along with the sudden incongruous memory of an escaped swan, equally exiled from its past.[34] The scene's dilation across discrete and apparently unrelated historical planes requires the dislocating movement of allegory ("tout pour moi devient allégorie"), even as it underscores the limitation of the poet's own response ("mais rien dans ma mélancolie / N'a bougé"). The poem's achievement accordingly lies not in any of the scattered figures it conjures momentarily into view – the swan, Andromache, "la négresse" in the muddy street – but rather in the fleeting registration of some informing historical background that each has lost: old Paris, the world of classical myth, "la superbe Afrique." To read the poem is less to interpret it than to attend to the shock of the constitutive thing that it does not and cannot say, to confront a scene cast adrift among the modern city's spectacles, unable to name its historical source. "Particularly vulnerable to these developments," Benjamin summarizes, "as can be seen now unmistakably in our century, was the lyric. It is the unique distinction of *Les fleurs du mal* that Baudelaire responded to precisely these altered conditions with a book of poems."[35] The vulnerability of Baudelaire's lyrics is already evidence of a dialectical effect, then, a formal submission to the logic of reification that also seeks to absorb or sublate it, seizing upon the work's own divided condition as an instrument of recognition. Whether or not a reified proletarian consciousness converts its alienation into agency as Lukács hoped, for Benjamin the Baudelairean lyric has already done so, casting into provisional relief the formal paradox enacted by the modernist art to follow.

Negation and Knowledge: Theodor Adorno

Implicit in Benjamin's notion of modernist allegory, is a strange and somewhat inchoate thesis. Precisely because reification has divided experience

from the knowledge of the totality that produces it, reconfiguring the artwork as an expressive gap and systematically sundering cause from effect, the idea of art must change. The object that Hegel had once defined as "the sensuous presentation of the Absolute" loses the capacity to join sensibility with intellection – to form "new wholes," as T.S. Eliot puts it – and perhaps also loses the symbolic capacity to present any thing at all, instead underscoring totality's force as an absent but real concept.[36] Hegel himself had notoriously prophesied art's end, of course, and in a way the historical fact of the artistic modernism that Benjamin describes seems to both confound and confirm the prediction. To be sure, art continues to exist, in the strange new form of Baudelaire's poems or in the high modernism that follows. But its afterlife depends on both the abandonment of the hope that the absolute might submit to merely sensuous presentation and the radical reconceptualization of that absolute as the historical totality that the work cannot fully express. In a late stage of historical enlightenment, art would therefore assume a dialectically different function than it has previously had, straining to incorporate a dissociation, a negation, in place of a meaning.

Pushed to its limit, this conception of the artwork answers Lukács's condemnation of modernism directly, redeeming the refusal to represent a totality realistically as a recognition that a totality cannot be sensuously presented at all. But it then reaches deeper, into the basic canons of modern thinking about art, to reverse the axiomatic claims of Kantian aesthetics: that art remains formally innocent of logical concepts, a matter of pleasure and judgment rather than propositional knowledge. An art that moves by negation is no longer merely reflective, in Kant's terms, preserved or exempted from the pressure or interference of pure reason, for the simple reason that reification has come to usurp reason's place.[37] Allegorically inclined toward the totality that shapes it but exceeds its expression, this art may register the dissociation of the particular from its informing whole, but it simultaneously reframes that whole as a conceptual problem. Lukács once complained that "modernism means not the enrichment, but the negation of art."[38] In doing so, he named the problem exactly, if unwittingly. By the logic of reification art relinquishes its standing as mere art, dialectically trading categories of beauty for the tenuous hope of knowledge.

What Benjamin glimpsed as allegory in Baudelaire's Paris therefore stands as prelude to the more radical modernist dissolution of art's symbolic function, most fully analyzed in Adorno's late work, culminating in the posthumously published *Aesthetic Theory*. Undoubtedly the most ambitious attempt to secure modernist art's philosophical basis, Adorno's rigorous but

elusive account absorbs Hegel's paradox of art's determinate negation from its first lines: "It is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore, not its inner life, not its relation to the world, not even its right to exist."[39] For Adorno, however, art's postulation as a philosophical and historical problem also entails the converse: modernity more generally, now understood as the history of reification, remains inconceivable without the evidence of art. This impossibility of shunting art off into mere reflection had already been demonstrated in the unsparing thesis of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Max Horkheimer's contemplation of the catastrophe of the second war.[40] Modernity's arrival at a new stage of barbarism, evinced in something as banal as the endless kitsch and mass entertainment of the so-called Culture Industry or in something as gruesome as European genocide, marks not a betrayal of enlightenment reason but its perverse fulfillment: the tendency of a rationalized, administered, and disenchanted world to consume itself by recovering and penetrating the mythic unreason it once resisted. In this fully administered world of late modernity, art is no less a technology of both enlightenment and barbarism than anything else, no more innocent of reification than the historical world to which it belongs. As Adorno, classically trained in composition, confessed in *Philosophy of New Music*, the practical aesthetic companion to *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, "The power of the social totality was self-evident even in such seemingly remote regions as that of music. [The author] could not deceive himself that the art in which he himself was schooled, even in its pure and most uncompromising form, was exempt from the ubiquitous role of reification."[41]

To adumbrate the contradiction by which art's right to exist is not self-evident while its reification is, Adorno isolates two dialectically opposed practices of modernist composition: the twelve-tone serialism of the Second Viennese School, led by Arnold Schoenberg and his pupils Anton Webern and Alban Berg, and the more exuberant tonal dissonance of Igor Stravinsky's early ballets, including *Le sacre du printemps*. At stake is what Benjamin had, in a passage on allegory that Adorno took for an introduction, termed "the configuration of the totality" – not its simple fact or force, that is, but rather its legible contour, the articulating principle by which totality asserts itself through the vulnerability of an artistic form, whether lyric or sonata.[42] Adorno's merciless attack on Stravinsky's work fixes on its desire for authenticity (the same "threadbare jargon" he would later condemn in Heideggerian phenomenology), on the compensatory calculus under which a pastiche of atavistic mythic elements is called forth to assuage the loss of music's traditional governing elements, from tonal dominance to harmony and

melody.[43] In this light, Stravinsky's attempt to use "stylistic procedures to reinstill the binding quality in music" constitutes a desperate refusal to acknowledge the ebbing power of music's own formal language and, conversely, its assimilation to extra-musical (or heteronomous) powers of configuration.[44] Art has ceased to be mere art, but has failed to confront that fact. What distinguishes Schoenberg's serialism, by contrast, lies in its power of accession, its capacity to apprehend (to fix conceptually and to arrest, in Benjamin's double sense) "the reification of all spirit in commodity culture" in the negative.[45] By dislodging tonality absolutely and decomposing such intermediate compositional elements as harmony and melody, the twelve-tone system effectively revokes the myth or consolation of art's privilege, slowly abandoning with each increasingly overdetermined note the idea that music might somehow stand historically apart. Reification's penetration of the artwork now stands as absolute, audible in the music's "total organization of elements," its "total development."[46] Apparent sensuous chaos thus comes to signify a radically different essence: superficial liberation uncloaks the deeper thrall that enlightenment dialectically promises.

For Adorno, however, the twelve-tone system's remorseless predication of every compositional element on a constraint, on some sense of conceptual necessity, lays bare the inner secret of avant-garde practice, indeed of modernist aesthetics at large. It also systematically enacts, on a vast scale, that taut critical relation between fragment and whole that Benjamin glimpsed in the Baudelairean lyric. The formal cancellation of intermediating musical categories – all those aspects that make music recognizable *as* music in the first place – rewrites negation as an artistic and historical event, a sudden "qualitative leap" out of "the old tonal order" (itself "the exclusive system of a society that is based on exchange"), preserving in abstract conceptual form "a totality that first defines and then in turn disintegrates the detail."[47] On one side, the unity of the artwork itself is systematically disassembled: "Today, the only works that count are those that are no longer works."[48] In the same movement, however, music usurps the place that once belonged to philosophy itself, succeeds in fact in giving a shape to just the systemic totality that bourgeois thought has failed to integrate conceptually. "Under present conditions, music is constrained to determinate negation," Adorno argues.[49] But determinate negation is the mechanism through which concepts purchase their claim on an existing world and seek to resolve it into philosophical order. Slowly, even pure form reveals itself as encrypted historical reference, grotesquely but rigorously reproducing the administered condition from which it originates.

The consequences of the contradiction that commits art to determinate negation are cruel ones. They are deliberately drawn with an aphoristic severity, almost gnomically underscoring what Adorno terms "the cognitive power of new music," asking "not how musical meaning can be organized but rather how organization can become meaningful."[50] Even music – traditionally the least referential, the least conceptually mediated of arts – loses its standing and innocence, along with properties of beauty or pleasure, in an extreme instance of reification's assimilating power. Under compulsion, Adorno insists, art has indeed ceded its right to exist, at least as pure art. What it gains in the surrender of its autonomy and own formal language, however, in the fore-closure of its own mode of unknowingness, is the very power denied by bourgeois aesthetics: "With the negation of semblance and play, music tends toward knowledge."[51] Or more cryptically still: "Through antipathy to art, the artwork converges with knowledge."[52] If a modernism like Schoenberg's "converges" with knowledge, however, it does not follow, quite, that it knows what it knows, in any conventional way at least, as content rather than form. In "a society that is not merely represented by modern art but also understood, recognized, penetrated, and thus criticized," modernist art instead figures the last formal possibility of critique as such, the lone instrument through which reification might be rendered so completely as to be thought and experienced at once.[53] It thus stands not as the object but rather as the condition of dialectical thought: "artworks are the thing itself . . . the hidden essence of society, summoned into appearance."[54]

Notes

1 V.I. Lenin, "On the Significance of Militant Materialism," quoted in Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, trans. Fred Halliday (London: New Left Books, 1970), 29.

2 Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, 76, 97. See Karl Marx, "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (New York: Vintage, 1974), 250.

3 Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, 95.

4 For Korsch's response to the charge of "Western Marxism" (as the epithet was first applied to his work and Lukács's), see "The Present State of the Problem of 'Marxism and Philosophy' – An Anti-Critique," in *Marxism and Philosophy*. The term gained wider currency only belatedly, with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's adoption of the usage in the wake of de-Stalinization. See Merleau-Ponty, *Adventures of the Dialectic*, trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

5 On the history of the Institute for Social Research, or Frankfurt School, in particular, see esp. Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). For a brief historical overview of Western Marxism more generally, see Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London: Verso, 1979).

6 For synthetic treatments of the aesthetics of Western Marxism, see Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton University Press, 1971); and Eugene Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

7 Georg Lukács, "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971).

8 Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 103.

9 Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel: A Historico-Philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971).

10 Ibid., 56.

11 Lukács, "Reification," 87, 85.

12 Ibid., 86.

13 Ibid., 91.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., 110–11.

16 Ibid., 122, 128.

17 Ibid., 150–52.

18 Ibid., 154.

19 Ibid., 157.

20 Ibid.

21 Georg Lukács, "Realism in the Balance," trans. Rodney Livingstone, in Livingstone, Perry Anderson, and Francis Mulhern (eds.), *Aesthetics and Politics: The Key Texts of the Classic Debate within German Marxism* (London: Verso, 1980), 28–59 (at 32).

22 Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999).

23 Louis Aragon, *Paris Peasant*, trans. Simon Watson Taylor (Boston: Exact Change, 1994), 14.

24 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), 175.

25 Georg Lukács, "The Ideology of Modernism," *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John Mander and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), 17–46 (at 40–43).

26 Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, 374.

27 Ibid., 369.

28 Walter Benjamin, "Program for Literary Criticism," *Selected Writings*, ed. Marcus Bullock, Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, 4 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1996–2003), vol. II, 290.

29 Walter Benjamin, "The First Form of Criticism that Refuses to Judge," *Selected Writings*, vol. II, 373.

30 Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, 458.

31 Walter Benjamin, untitled fragment in *The Arcades Project*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, *Selected Writings*, vol. IV, 96.

32 Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, 322 (translation modified).

33 For Benjamin's other writings on Baudelaire, culled from the late drafts of *The Arcades Project*, see "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire" and "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," *Selected Writings*, vol. IV, 3–92, 313–55. On the centrality of Baudelaire to Benjamin's conception of modern allegory, see esp. Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 159–201.

34 Charles Baudelaire, *Les fleurs du mal*, trans. Richard Howard (Boston: David R. Godine, 1982), 268–70.

35 Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, 337.

36 G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T.M. Knox, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), vol. I, 70; T.S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," *Selected Essays, 1917–1932* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1932), 247.

37 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 257–60.

38 Lukács, "Ideology of Modernism," 46.

39 Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 1.

40 Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford University Press, 2002).

41 Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 3.

42 Ibid., 7.

43 Ibid., 155; see also Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

44 Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 105.

45 Ibid., 23.

46 Ibid., 45, 43.

47 Ibid., 13, 22–23.

48 Ibid., 30.

49 Ibid., 20.
50 Ibid., 47, 54.
51 Ibid., 36.
52 Ibid., 96.
53 Ibid., 76.
54 Ibid., 101.

Epilogue: Modernism after Postmodernism

STEVEN CONNOR

There was a time when people used to wonder what on earth could ever come after postmodernism. For, if postmodernism was posterity itself, held together not by any positive features of its own, but by the fact of being whatever it was that would succeed upon modernism, how could it ever itself meet surcease? It did indeed seem for some of us, during the heyday of postmodernist theory in the 1980s and the early 1990s, that postmodernism would never have done with having left modernism behind, in a universe ever and irreversibly expanding outward and away from the big bust of modernism. Once entered on this long and low-lit afternoon, how could we ever again know earliness? Of all the candidate definitions of modernism, perhaps the most important is that it was an attempt to step outside of history, to start everything again from zero, thought, belief, experience, expression, without inheritance or precondition. Postmodernism by contrast, in its characteristic blend of resignation and exhilaration, was the recognition of the "always-already," and so of the impossibility of simply bursting open the French windows to step out onto the dazzling white beach of one's newness, since the sands will always have been combed over many times. There is no simple turning of the page into the future when history presses and persists – and, for postmodernism, that history is modernism itself – as the verso behind every new recto.

But, since around the mid-1990s, it has seemed that not even belatedness could go on forever, and that the lingering afternoon has indeed given way to evening, and perhaps even new dawn. And, unexpectedly enough, the answer to the question "What could possibly come after postmodernism?" turns out to have been not, as it was often assumed would have to be the case, a further intensification, in the form, say, of the "post-contemporary," or some other straining pluperfect, but rather "modernism again." Since the end of the 1990s, the allure and prestige of postmodernism and postmodern explanation have fallen away through the floor, while modernism studies have multiplied and diversified in every quarter.

Well, perhaps not in every quarter. For it will be apparent from what follows that if there has been a conspicuous renewal of modernism studies, it has been led much more from within literary studies than other areas. This is an inversion of what happened with postmodernism, in which literary critics found themselves drawn out of their spheres of competence. Both modernism and postmodernism were characterized by their irresistible, if also somewhat syncopated, radiation across arts and disciplines. This made the idea of a modern literature unthinkable without the idea of modern art or modern music, and characterizations of literary postmodernism similarly derived much of their force and intelligibility from what could be described as analogical rather than genealogical definition.[1] The various brands of "new modernism" developed over the last two decades have tended to have their focus in literary studies, even if their aim and tendency have been to make more and different kinds of connection between literature and other areas.

The other feature of these new modernisms has been that they have arisen and been sustained, not by the need to account for new artistic forms, as had been the case with the development of modernist theory from the 1940s onward, or again with postmodernist theory forty years later, but by the need to diversify and, in the process, to stabilize, academic study and, largely, the academic study of literature. The tautology or, if you prefer, oxymoron, of "new modernisms" has arisen not because there are new forms of modernism abroad demanding explication and evaluation, but because there is an institutional appetite for quickly apprehensible and reliably applicable kinds of innovation. So the new modernisms developed since the mid-1990s have been coeval, and frankly pretty much identical with, the rise of what is now called Modernist Studies. Before the 1990s, there were plenty of studies of modernism and modernists (Greenberg, Levin, Kenner), but very little in the way of Modernist Studies. It was never quite clear whether postmodernism was a new thing in the world, or merely a new academic perspective on it; new modernism is almost entirely an enterprise of academic interpretation.

New modernism can certainly not be seen as a mere relapse to the ways in which modernism had been thought about prior to the detonation of postmodernist theory by the appearance of Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* in English in 1984. On the contrary, there can be no doubt that the long and, as it now seems, embarrassingly premature and over-totalizing infatuation with the idea of the postmodern has effected a change in the way in which modernism has been conceived. But it is important to acknowledge at this point that the idea of modernism itself, the idea, that is,

that the best way to characterize the art and writing of the early twentieth century is as the expression of a single, if radiating, phenomenon, was in any case very largely a back-formation from theories of postmodernism. Certainly the term "modernism" was in use before the 1970s, though hardly at all in literary studies. Indeed, I can find only four books published in English before 1975 with either the word "modernist" or "modernism" in the title. Ask your friends to lay bets on what they were about, and you will clean up: for three out of the four are in fact about religion, and specifically the conflict between doctrinal authority and the modernism denounced by Pope Pius X in his encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis: On the Doctrine of the Modernists* of September 8, 1907. The one book to use the word "modernism" in an artistic sense in its title, Scott-James's *Modernism and Romance* (1908), is compelled to make it clear in its opening sentence that "the first word of my title does not bear the special theological meaning which it has lately acquired."[2] Only eleven more books with either of the M-words in their titles appeared between 1975 and 1985 and, of those, a significant number used "modernism" as a way of defining postmodernism on the rebound, for example Brian Wallis's *Art After Modernism* (1984), Douwe W. Fokkema's *Literary History, Modernism, and Postmodernism* (1984), and Rosalind E. Krauss's *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (1985). Tellingly, the book Matei Călinescu published in 1977 under the title *Faces of Modernity: Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch* reappeared in 1987 with the title *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*. Book titles provide a very crude measure of the authority of particular concepts of course, but I would wager all my winnings from the book-title bet that these numbers are roughly in proportion with uses of the term "modernism" and "modernist" in critical writing generally before the mid-1980s. As an undergraduate studying English from 1973 to 1976, I studied almost all the canonical modernists without ever hearing a murmur of the word "modernism." Undoubtedly the term was available and sometimes availed of, but it did not have the unifying power that it came to have as a result of debates during the 1980s about whether it had been decisively dished by postmodernism. So this is an obvious sense in which modernism may be said both to have begotten postmodernism, and also to have been its progeny.

What, then, does it mean now to speak of modernism after postmodernism? How has the modernist effort to "make it new" called for by Ezra Pound itself been renovated by what is increasingly called the "new modernism"? Obviously, in a sense, one of the new things that modernism can be is, simply, not over; the way to be new for modernism is for it unexpectedly to

have stayed news. But it would be more accurate to say that modernism has been upgraded by being pluralized. For many critics, the challenge has been not to come up with a new definition of modernism as such, but more modestly to distinguish a new mode or accent of modernism, whether that be "digital modernism," "queer modernism," "ethnic modernism," "granular modernism," "mongrel modernism," "nostalgic modernism," "vulgar modernism," "vernacular modernism," "transatlantic modernism," "jazz modernism," "cold modernism," "mystic modernism," "militant modernism," "paranoid modernism," "bacteriological modernism," or "modernism at sea." As a result, modernism has diffracted into "modernisms," as shrewdly anticipated in the title of Peter Nicholls's *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (1995). Modernism used to be defined privatively, in terms of what it wasn't, or took its departure from. New modernism is defined inclusively, in terms of the many unexpected and frankly incompatible things with which it can enter into composition.

Modernism was often understood in terms of a split between cultural and artistic practices, known as modernism proper, and the conditions of modernity – changes in technology, economics, politics, and social organization – against which many forms of modernism reacted, even as they borrowed their energies of innovation. Postmodernism, by contrast, was often presented as a more or less conscious project of "de-differentiation," in which the forms of modernist art and formal invention began to be entrained with the flow of modern life rather than recoiling from it, and in which "high" or elite culture borrowed from and mingled with "lower" forms of culture (one sign of this being the modulation of the term "mass culture" popular with modernists into the friendlier "popular culture").[3] The new modernism that has asserted itself over the last two decades is one that anticipates, or perhaps recapitulates, this postmodernist project of de-differentiation.

The becoming new of modernism through drawing in rather than drawing away from its various backgrounds is well illustrated in the title of the journal most strongly identified with new modernist studies, *Modernism/Modernity*, established in 1994 and adopted as the official publication of the Modernist Studies Association, which was formed in 1999. The oblique stroke allows for only the most minimal difference, the thinness perhaps of recto and verso, between modernist practices in art and social and cultural modernity. That this could come about is a result of that great invention of postmodern theory, the idea of "culture," which mediated between art and its contexts as nothing else could. Andreas Huyssen characterizes postmodernism as what happened "after the great divide" between modernist and mass culture.[4]

New modernisms are much less persuaded that this great divide was ever as untraversable as all that. Early issues of *Modernism/Modernity* concentrated on expanding the geographical scope of modernism, as well as broadening its historical contexts, with special issues on "Fascism and Culture" (2/3, 1995; 3/1, 1996), "The Mind of Modernism: Culture, Psychology, and Medicine" (3/2, 1996), and "American Modernism" (3/3, 1996). In *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (1999), the editor of *Modernism/Modernity*, Lawrence Rainey, influentially demonstrates the economic embeddings of modernism.

Cultural copulations thrive elsewhere too, for example in the collection *Modernist Star Maps: Celebrity, Modernity, Culture* (2010). Defining celebrity as "the form that fame takes under conditions of modernity," the contributors to the volume read literary figures like Wilde's Dorian Gray, Woolf's Orlando, and Fitzgerald's Gatsby in the light of "real-life" celebrities such as Charlie Chaplin and Greta Garbo, the two sides being bridged by the figure of Samuel Beckett, perhaps the defining example of the celebrity modernist. For Aaron Jaffe and Jonathan Goldman, the shared concern with celebrity occurred "at a moment when both the exploding Hollywood star system and Joyce's transformation of the myths of Odysseus into 1904 Dublin each exemplified a cultural desire to reconsider the relation between reputation and reality."[5]

Another journal strongly committed to the encouragement of new approaches to modernism is *Modernist Cultures*, which began publication in 2005. The opening essay of its inaugural issue, Marjorie Perloff's "The Aura of Modernism," contemplates another aspect of the convergence between modernism and mass culture by considering the forms of response to various modernist masterworks in readers' Internet comments, finding that, "The Modernist 'masterpiece' – that term of opprobrium – seems to be reasserting its auratic claims upon us, even as Internet discourse, held, in some quarters, to be responsible for the loss of literary 'quality,' is ironically reinforcing its presence."[6] *Modernist Cultures* has subsequently published a special issue on "Modernism and the Everyday" (2006), which measures the ways in which modernism may be said to have invented the everyday, and to be defined by its ambivalent relation to it, as it both invents ways to render the everyday in all its unremarked particularity and in the process renders it new and strange. *Modernist Cultures* has alternated between special issues exploring relations between modernism and different arts, like opera (3/1, 2007), cinema (5/1, 2010), music (8/1, 2013), and dance (9/1, 2014), and special issues devoted to the relations between modernism and modern mass culture, including

special issues on modernism and laughter (2/2, 2006) and modernism and the middlebrow (6/1, 2011), as well as essays on fashion, modernism, and popular photography, the relation between Dadaism and cooking, and "The Taxicab as Feminist Heterotopia."[7]

If modernism has been subject to expansion in this "vertical" dimension of high and low culture, so equally the spatial reach of modernism has hugely expanded.[8] The accounts of modernism that predominated during its first phase – broadly from the 1950s through to the 1980s – represented it as both international and metropolitan. The "exiles and émigrés," in Terry Eagleton's phrase (1970), who made up literary modernism, the nomadic artists who took up residence in the clamorous urban centres of modernism, Paris, Zurich, and New York, seemed to have flown the nets of their places of origin, whether Allegheny, St. Louis, Dublin, Berdichev, Málaga, or Dominica. But, from the 1990s onward, there has been intense and growing interest in the forms which modernism has taken in places less identified with metropolitan or colonial power, as well as in the overlooked kinds of localism that may seem to function within modernism. *Regional Modernisms* (2013), edited by Neal Alexander and James Moran, gathers essays devoted to Scottish, Welsh, Northumbrian, and archipelagic modernisms. The distaste for the cosmopolitan is also to be seen in the tendency, in works like Emer Nolan's *James Joyce and Nationalism* (1995) and Andrew Gibson's *Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in Ulysses* (2002), to argue for the embeddedness within Irish history and experience of the work of James Joyce, a writer for whom being modern had for a long time been thought of as being identical with being international. The complicating feature for both Joyce and Beckett is the fact that their writing may be thought of both as a kind of modernist mainstream, and as articulating a particular experience of marginality or displacement, given the oblique relation of Ireland to colonial history. Reading Joyce and Beckett in the light of their complex allegiances makes for an Irish modernism that is uneasy or out of phase with the heroic vision of modernism articulated in Beckett's statement (made bizarrely in reference to the work of Jack B. Yeats, who would not count as an international modernist for many) that "the artist who stakes his being is from nowhere and has no kith."[9] Mark Quigley finds in a range of Irish writers working from the 1920s onward – Samuel Beckett, Seán O'Faoláin, and Frank McCourt – "a late modernism that is in many ways temporally and stylistically out of phase with the more established modernist practices with which it coincides."[10]

Such temporal hiccups are a feature of the multiplication of local or regional modernisms. In his *New World Modernisms*, Charles W. Pollard

explores the impact on two Caribbean poets, Derek Walcott and Kamau Brathwaite, of the work and ideas of T.S. Eliot. Pollard maintains that Walcott and Brathwaite find in Eliot a theory of the poet as the mediator and shaper of contradictory experience, especially as the bearer and forger of a sense of public tradition, and so perform their own variations on what Eliot called the "mythical method." The essential principles of Eliot's modernism are instanced, rather spongily, in "a poetics that collocates an increasingly diverse set of perspectives to imagine an increasingly comprehensive but still contingent sense of cultural wholeness." But this is no mere revival, or servile homage to the writer who dominated Anglo-American poetics, and whose work was distributed through what is excitingly called "the British Empire's channels of cultural distribution" – even if this turns out to mean that records of Eliot's ponderous readings were made available by the British Council, scarcely a very effective medium of world domination. Rather, Brathwaite and Walcott "creolize" Eliot's modernism, for their own purposes, and in order to create "vibrant and complementary New World poetics."[11] So a particularly influential strand of modernism (or at least of Anglo-American literary modernism) here becomes a motive principle for a form of postcolonial cultural definition, interrupting the logic that associates the postcolonial with the postmodern.

Pollard's *New World Modernisms* is an example of what Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz describe as "transnational modernism."[12] This phrase names work that is concerned, not only with enlarging modernism's scope, to allow account to be taken of other places and traditions in which forms of modernism were developed, whether in South America, Africa, China, Russia, or Korea, but also with the movements and transactions between different regions and cultures. This kind of transnational modernism is amply exemplified in the essays collected in the substantial *Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms*, in which each of the regional modernisms discussed emerges, in the words of Laura Doyle in the final essay in the book, "as tilted in at least two directions at once, inward and outward, toward the local and the global."[13] As the co-editor of another significant collection of essays, Doyle joins Laura Winkiel in proposing another term, which has exerted considerable traction in the expanded understanding of modernism: "Geo-modernisms" attempts to show "how canonical white Anglo modernism is itself determined by contact-zone clashes and reversals and how it, too, is haunted by ghosts – the repressed ghosts of an African modernity, an Atlantic modernity, a subaltern modernity . . . we begin to see all kinds of modernism as they make themselves and are made from the *outside in*."[14]

If one term epitomizes the relation between modernism and its formative context, it is "technology." Writing of visual technologies, Jonathan Crary argued in 1992 that "any effective account of modern culture must confront the ways in which modernism, rather than being a reaction against or transcendence of processes of scientific or economic rationalization, is inseparable from them."[15] He was followed in this judgment by Tim Armstrong in his *Modernism, Technology, and the Body: A Cultural Study* (1998), which argues that modernist texts and artworks were part of the effort to remake the body technologically: "Modernism is, then, characterized by the desire to *intervene* in the body; to render it part of modernity by techniques which may be biological, mechanical, or behavioural."[16] *Modernism/Modernity* has been particularly hospitable to explorations of the relations between modernism and technology, with essays on the figure of the propeller in futurism, the culture of the tank, and motorized speed in Proust.[17]

On a parallel track, modernism has been represented increasingly as anticipating our own contemporary entanglement with media. Following the interests of the essays gathered in *Transatlantic Print Culture, 1880–1940: Emerging Media, Emerging Modernisms* (2008), Stefanie Harris (2009) demonstrates that "the shock of new media is itself not new"; she recounts the ways in which German writers like Rilke, Musil, and Döblin responded to the "mediascape" emerging in the first decades of the twentieth century.[18] Others have made stronger claims for the formative role of modernist texts. Julian Murphet's *Multimedia Modernism* (2009) proposes that "the secret story of modernism" is that modernist forms figure the relations between different media:

> Let us imagine the fabled landscape of literary modernity as the geological outcropping of seismic shifts in modern capitalism's media ecology. Rather than see the "talented individual" as one gifted in her ability to exploit the capacities of her chosen medium, I want us to learn to see the medium itself seizing hold of the individual in order to tell the cryptic and allegorical tale of its relations, some friendly, some less amicable, with other media.[19]

Mark Goble's *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (2010) uses its readings of American literature to demonstrate that "modernism itself desired communication and the many forms it took, not just as a response to the power of media technologies in the twentieth century but as a way of insisting that this power was already modernism's own."[20] In *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars* (2013), David Trotter proposes similarly that the "awareness that the technological mediation of experience

had become both widespread and irreversible," produced an affinity as electric as it was elective between technology and modernist technique.[21]

Alongside the many forms of new modernism, the new mood of hospitality to modernism, or impatience with what is taken to be the evasiveness and triviality of postmodernism, has also produced some stern defences of "high" modernism conceived in more classical or traditional ways. One of the least forgiving is that of Gabriel Josipovici in *What Ever Happened to Modernism?* (2010). For Josipovici, Modernism (which he always capitalizes) is not really an historical phenomenon, so much as a tradition, albeit a discontinuous and unconscious one – "a tradition of those who have no tradition."[22] The writers associated with this tradition, which is as urgent in Cervantes as it is in Mallarmé, Hofmannsthal, Kafka, and Beckett, "feel impelled to write, this being the only way they know to be true to their own natures, yet at the same time they find that in doing so they are being false to the world – imposing a shape on it and giving it a meaning which it doesn't have – and thus, ultimately, being false to themselves."[23] With its recurrent burden being the culpable limits of the imagination, this kind of modernism is produced by the perplexed but tenacious response to a predicament rather than the exploitation of an opportunity. Modernism is therefore all about the possibilities of art, for it is only art that may be looked to for what nevertheless can never be done – namely to render the world without distorting it into intelligibility. Josipovici thinks of modernism almost entirely in terms of narrative, since it is in narrative that the contradiction between the narcotic lure of story and the disgusted recoil from it is most marked, and "what Modernism does is to drive the contradictions out into the open."[24]

It is hard to believe that such a defining claim could be made about the nature of modernism with no reference at all to the definition offered by Jean-François Lyotard of postmodernism, in the manifesto he placed at the end of the English translation of *La condition postmoderne*, "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" For Lyotard stresses something very like the animating predicament that Josipovici offers:

> The postmodern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable; that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unpresentable.[25]

Almost the only respect in which Lyotard's once widely quoted formula for postmodernism might be thought incompatible with Josipovici's characterization

of modernism is that Lyotard suggests that, in modernism, "form, because of its recognizable consistency, continues to offer to the reader or viewer matter for solace and pleasure."[26] And yet, Lyotard maintains that postmodernism is in fact a modality of modernism, in its refusal of what seems to be given by tradition, such that "postmodernism thus understood is not modernism at its end but in the nascent state, and this state is constant."[27]

Perhaps the only substantial difference between Lyotard's postmodernism and Josipovici's modernism is one of mood. Modernists are perhaps postmodernists who have forgotten, or have yet to learn, how to play with their predicaments. As for mood, then, Josipovici's modernism must be set austerely against "post-Modern insouciance."[28] But even this is anticipated by the protest against "slackening" with which Lyotard opens "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" In the end, Josipovici's account has most in common with the melancholic earnestness of T.J. Clark's *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes From a History of Modernism* (1999), which similarly identifies, amid the many forms of modernism it observes, a certain animating and authenticating indigence, such that "art, in our culture, finds itself more and more at the limits, on the verge of emptiness and silence. So that practitioners have continually been forced to recognize how little space, or representational substance, they are given to work with in the all-consuming world of goods."[29] The association between modernism, seriousness, and suffering is made clear in Clark's protest that "Anyone who cannot hear the shouting and arguing still going on in a Pollock or Picasso has, to my way of thinking, a tin ear for agony."[30]

During postmodernism's heyday in the 1980s and early 1990s, writers might be gratified to have their explorations and experiments in form characterized as postmodernist. Ironically, to have described oneself as modernist in the 1990s might have seemed an ironic enough gesture to count as postmodernist. A sign of the waning excitement and authority of postmodernism is the fact that some authors now seem to have no objection to being thought of as modernist – though I don't know whether other kinds of artist are quite so ready to see honor once more in the designation. One of the most vigorous contemporary promoters of modernism, and a self-promoter by means of it, is Will Self. In "Modernism and Me," an article published in the *Guardian* in August 2012, Self leans heavily on Gabriel Josipovici's revival of modernism for his description of his own intellectual formation, and coincidentally offers his newly available novel *Umbrella* (2012) as the fruit of his turn away from the "fantastical and antic cast" of his earlier writings to a kind of modernist seriousness. *Umbrella* is the expression of his

urge to smash the dominion of "the dominant school of fiction [which] remains character-driven and narrative ratcheted," and to have done with "'jolly good reads' with a beginning, a middle and an end – including almost mandatory redemption for a previously morally vacillating protagonist – [which] is the very stuff of books, just as it's the stuff of life on this right, tight little island."[31] Self worries that some of the readers of his story, where a psychiatrist's inner life becomes mingled with that of a patient suffering the long-term effects of encephalitis lethargica, might have succeeded against all his best efforts in finding his characters and their stories interesting – and this despite the novel being obediently praised by one reviewer a few days later in the same newspaper as "old-school modernism."[32] He might not have noticed that readers have been succeeding for decades in taking their revenge in this way on modernist texts determined to educate them out of the pleasures of identification.

As a media citizen, Self has also been alert to the opportunity to mediatize modernism. In September 2013, he broadcast a program for BBC Radio 3 entitled *Modernism Redux*, which opened with the news of a code machine called a "remitter" developed alongside the first radio transmitters, the purpose of which was "to retrieve or 'remit' past radio signals out of the air." Self borrows from popular science fiction and supernaturalist belief the idea that, once transmitted, radio waves persist indefinitely and, given the right technology, can be restored. Self asks us to imagine that the remitter has itself recently been restored and augmented by more advanced technology, enabling the retrieval and re-broadcasting of "signals from the entire history of broadcasting and from all corners of the earth."[33] Where the writers of a previous generation had consented to being thought of as the terminators of modernism, Self here constitutes his own function ironically in terms of the very machine he invents; for he is surely offering himself as the Remitter of Modernism. Like the "RP1 Ethermatic Remitter," his move is "simultaneously revolutionary and reactionary." Like other revisionist modernists, Self sees significance in the coincidence of the fact that the BBC began transmissions in 1922, the same year as the publication of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*, and imagines "an investigation of the evolution of technology and culture, using newly-sourced 'remissions' to create an air-assemblage of modernist art and ideas." Predictably, the broadcast material does not in fact emerge from the turbulent moment of modernism itself, but from the later decades in which the ideas of modernism and the modern began to be canonized. Though Self imagines a modernism that would be "directly synchronous with the technology itself," the very terms on which his

program is constituted and transmitted, as a knowing pastiche, is an acknowledgement that the one thing that modernism can never in fact be, or ever have been, is on time, or in phase with itself. In fact the only broadcasts that Self's Remitter is able to assemble are not emanations from the pulsing heart of modernism, but scraps of well-known recordings made at various times by certain writers – Joyce reading a passage from "Anna Livia Plurabelle," recorded by C.K. Ogden in 1929, Virginia Woolf broadcasting some thoughts (some rather traditional and unmodernist thoughts) about the nature of words in 1937, and T.S. Eliot's recordings of *The Waste Land* in 1935 and 1946. Modernism seems here to be the name not for a lost condition or tradition, but the name for a desire – the desire for there to have been an authentic modernism, that might be able to be recovered intact. Self's apparently earnest attempts to establish himself as the true apostle of modernism are indistinguishable from the acknowledgement of the belatedness of this gesture.

Incontestably, the modernism that has been awoken by the collapse of the postmodernism that was supposed to come in its wake is richer, more unexpectedly various and more full of possibility than the kinds of modernism that postmodernism claimed to supersede or sought to push into crisis. One must however be allowed the suspicion that the pluralized and expanded modernism released by the exhaustion of postmodernism will come to seem like a thoroughly postmodernized affair. The new modernism is becoming so de-differentiated, and so supersaturated with so many things, that there is increasingly little that it can be said to exclude – unless it be the very forms of exclusion denounced by postmodernism in the old modernism. Those proscriptions would include: heroic individuality, transcendental appetite, contempt for the popular combined with sentimental yearning for the primitive, the drive to ethnic and aesthetic purity, fanatical overestimation of the powers of art, ahistorical absoluteness, and authoritarian body-worship; all of these attitudes are subject to discreet and citizenly purging in the new modernism. These wholly unexceptionable inhibitions make it clear how thoroughly the new modernism has been programmed by the now-concluded interlude of postmodern reformation. Modernism seems to have inoculated itself against postmodern critique by assimilating almost all of it; while perhaps all postmodernism needed to ensure its indefinite survival after all was a change of name to Modernist Studies.

What seems most of all to belong to the kind of outlook that used to be designated as postmodernist is the cat's-cradle chronicity that connects us

to modernism. Modernism is more than ever what it anyway always was, at once analeptic and retroactive. It is not just that we had the experience but missed the meaning of modernism; now, several generations on, the experience of modernism (which is certainly ours rather than the modernists') must wait upon the meaning that we make out for it.[34] For the more that modernism multiplies, the more implausible it seems that there could ever have been a modernism for or in itself, as opposed to the many modernisms that are currently teeming in the womb of time, ready to fulfil the different functions required of them. The more it continues to unfold in our ways of happening upon it, the less it may seem that modernism can be said in any simple sense to have happened. Modernism is no longer something in the past to which we are compelled to make out a relation; it is the product of that relation itself, to a past continually new-minted as whatever we will need to mean by "modernist." It remains to be seen whether this need will itself come to be understood as an outcome of the era in twentieth-century cultural history we call "modernism."

Notes

1 Steven Connor, *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), vii.
2 R.A. Scott-James, *Modernism and Romance* (London: John Lane, 1908), ix.
3 Scott Lash, *Sociology of Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 5.
4 See Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
5 Aaron Jaffe and Jonathan Goldman (eds.), *Modernist Star Maps: Celebrity, Modernity, Culture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 9, 3.
6 Marjorie Perloff, "The Aura of Modernism," *Modernist Cultures*, 1/1 (2005), 1–14 (at 12).
7 See Mark Gaipa, "Accessorizing Clarissa: How Virginia Woolf Changes the Clothes and the Character of Her Lady of Fashion," 4/1–2 (May 2009), 24–47; Elena Gualtieri, "Kodak Modernism: Avant-Garde Poetry in the Age of Popular Photography," 7/2 (October 2012), 180–204; Sara Crangle, "Dada's Tender-hearted OnIons," 7/2 (October 2012), 231–53; and Anne Fernald, "Taxi! The Modern Taxicab as Feminist Heterotopia," 9/2 (October 2014), 213–32; all published in *Modernist Cultures*.
8 Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "The New Modernist Studies," *PMLA*, 123/3 (2008), 737–48 (at 738).
9 Samuel Beckett, *Disjecta: Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment* (London: J. Calder, 1983), 148–49.

10 Mark Quigley, *Empire's Wake: Postcolonial Irish Writing and the Politics of Modern Literary Form* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 5.

11 Charles W. Pollard, *New World Modernisms: T.S. Eliot, Derek Walcott and Kamau Brathwaite* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 6, 4.

12 Mao and Walkowitz, "New Modernist Studies," 738.

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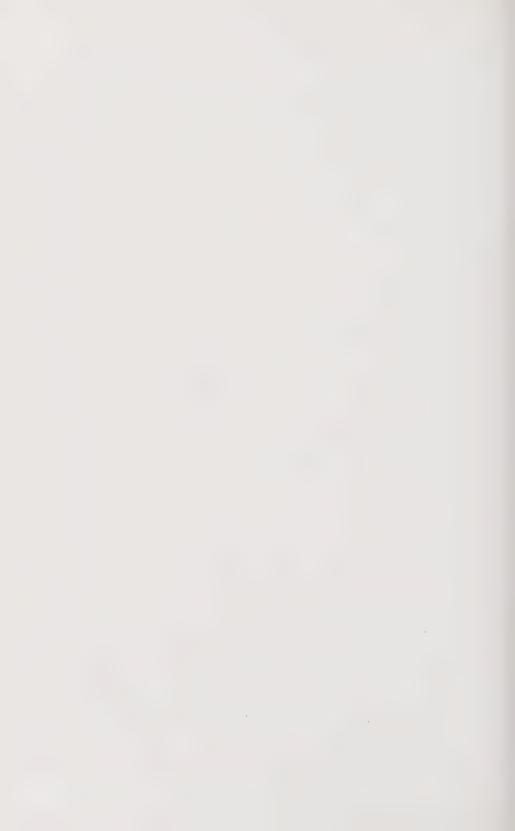
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VINCENT SHERRY is Howard Nemerov Professor in the Humanities and Professor of English at Washington University in St. Louis. A prominent scholar of modernism, he is the author of *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (2015), *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (2003), *James Joyce's Ulysses* (1995, 2005), and *Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and Radical Modernism* (1993). He has also written *The Uncommon Tongue: The Poetry and Criticism of Geoffrey Hill* (1987) and edited the *Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the First World War* (2005).

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