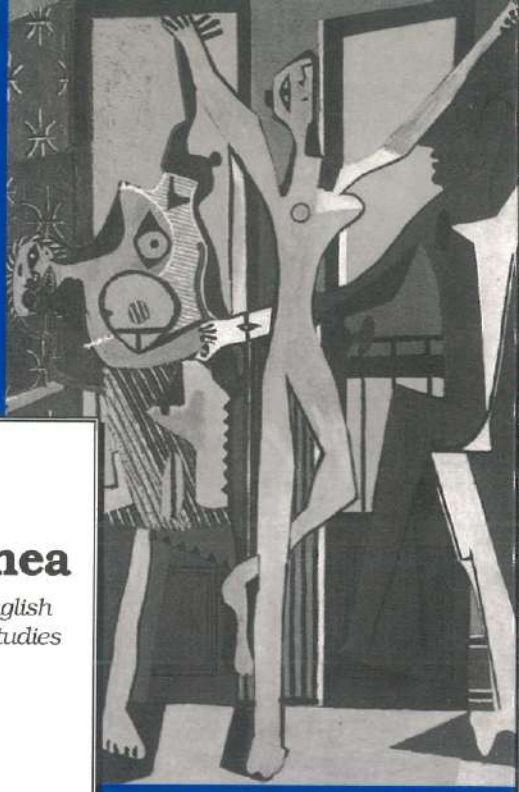

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INTRODUCTION: MODERNISM'S COMINGS AND GOINGS

JENNIFER BIRKETT AND STAN SMITH

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

T. S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock".

Within these breakwaters English is spoken; without
Is the immense improbable atlas.

W. H. Auden, "Dover".

I. TRANSLATING MODERNITY

Situating themselves in that space T. S. Eliot designated "Tradition", the "mind of Europe" —in the first half of the twentieth century still the darkening heart of "the immense improbable atlas"— the individual talents of Anglophone modernism constituted the first self-consciously transnational, intercontinental literary movement. To be sure, that massive transformation of sensibility retrospectively known as "romanticism" was an international, if largely European, phenomenon, but each of its manifestations was rootedly national. In any discrimination of modernisms like that which A. O. Lovejoy (1926; 1948) proposed for romanticism, one common feature at least will be discernible in all its manifestations. What distinguishes Anglophone modernism from earlier movements is its self-consciously cosmopolitan orientation *ab initio*.[1]

Modernism's founding figures encapsulate this cosmopolitanism in their lives. Eliot himself, born in St Louis Missouri, became in 1927 a naturalised Englishman, describing himself a year later, in a letter to Herbert Read, as "an American who wasn't an American, because he was born in the

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South and went to school in New England [...] but who [...] felt himself to be more a Frenchman than an American and more an Englishman than a Frenchman" (Read, in Tate 1967: 15). Ezra Pound, born in Idaho, found himself in the 1940s broadcasting anti-American propaganda from Rome Radio on behalf of Mussolini and Italian fascism, and almost went to his death for this *trahison*. James Joyce began writing his foundational modernist epic, set in Dublin in 1904, as a British subject, but finished it the citizen of the newly emergent Irish Free State. As the last words of *Ulysses* inform us, the novel was composed in "Trieste-Zurich-Paris, 1914-1921", while a European civil war waged all around, and it drew for analogic structure on that originary European narrative of war, displacement and exile, Homer's *Odyssey*. W. B. Yeats, similarly translated in mid-life from British to Irish nationality, repeatedly proclaimed his wider allegiance to European artistic values epitomised by the Italian city states of the Renaissance, and to political ideals of hierarchy and order embodied in his fantasy of Byzantium. Dying in France, his body was interred there for the duration of that second European civil war which broke out in 1939.

D. H. Lawrence, in so many ways the archetypally English writer, nevertheless left his native Britain in 1919 to wander the globe, displacing his English characters to narratives which could find their resolutions only in the exotic locales of Italy, Australia, Mexico. Lawrence's turbulent marriage to the bohemian German aristocrat Frieda von Richthofen finds an echo in W. H. Auden's marriage of convenience to Erika Mann, the lesbian daughter of the great German modernist Thomas Mann, to provide her with egress from Nazi Germany. Auden himself, together with his friend, collaborator and sometime lover Christopher Isherwood, reversed the pattern established by Eliot, leaving Europe for the United States in 1939, and becoming an American citizen in 1946. That multiply displaced person, Joseph Conrad, born in the Ukraine as a Polish subject of the Russian Czar, for many years wandered the waters of the immense improbable atlas where English, *pace* Auden, was still the hegemonic *lingua franca*, to write, as a British subject, naturalised in 1884, those polyphonic novels of defection and disillusion which exposed the dark heart of all imperial systems, whether Russian, British, Belgian or, implicitly, in *Nostromo*, Anglo-American. The last great Anglophone modernist, Samuel Beckett, not only underwent the involuntary translation from English to Irishman, but engineered an even more fundamental translation, moving to France permanently in 1936 and, after his first two novels, writing all his works in French, thereafter translating them into English (and later, German).[2] Even Virginia Woolf, in a sense the most rootedly English, indeed parochially metropolitan, of writers, puts the

provisionality of the uncompleted voyage, the process of transit between two worlds, at the core of her writings.

Similar stories could be told of many of the second and third ranks of the modernist movement. Hemingway, for instance, follows Jamesian and Eliotic precedent by making a Europe in tumult the place where his American anti-heroes find themselves in defeat, the improbable progeny of Eliot's impotent Prufrock and bisexual Tiresias. Jean Rhys, the Caribbean-born daughter of a Welsh father and a Creole mother, came to Europe in 1910, married a Dutch poet, moved in modernist circles in Paris in the company of Hemingway, Joyce and Ford Madox Ford, and set her fictions either there or in the West Indies, deconstructing, in her late masterpiece, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), the imperial narratives of gender and power. As Craig Monk's essay reveals, such leading writers of modernism's dying generations were underwritten, sometimes pre-written —circumscribed and prescribed— by the wider culture of expatriation spawned in the short-lived little magazines that sprang up and disappeared all across the cultural battlefield of Europe. Pointedly, the most influential and long-lived of these, which fostered the work of Joyce, Beckett and Gertrude Stein, another American abroad, was called (in aggressive lower case) *transition*. Transition, the crossing of frontiers, a trope which Auden was to universalise in the 1930s, was indeed the condition of all the modernist writers. And transition is reflected in the texts of modernism by a foregrounding of the idea —and practice— of *translation*, in its original etymology, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, "Transference; removal or conveyance from one person, place or condition to another [...]. Transference of a body, or form of energy, from one point of space to another" (*COED* vol. II, 1971: 3081-3082).

The texts of modernism repeatedly internalise the translation, and thereby the transvaluation, of diverse national cultures. Pound's early lyric poetry "translates" (and in the process travesties to explosive effect) the literatures of classical Greece, imperial Rome, imperial China, dynastic Egypt, the Provence of the *troubadours*[3] and the Italy of Dante, Cavalcanti and innumerable other writers and artists. Eliot's *Waste Land* is traversed by Sanskrit scriptures as well as the "universal" and "classic" texts of most of Europe's literatures.[4] Yeats's "singing masters" emanate from medieval Italy, ancient China and imperial Byzantium as well as from the Celtic Twilight and the "fabulous darkness" ("Two Songs from a Play") of the supernatural and otherworldly (Yeats 1977: 437). His Irish poets, in a last valedictory address, almost a will ("Under Ben Bulben"), are urged to learn their trade not only from their own native culture but also from "stark Egyptian thought" and "[f]orms that gentler Phidias wrought", indeed even from such

quintessentially English artists as Calvert, Wilson and Blake as well as Claude and Michelangelo (Yeats 1977: 636). Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* are masterworks of panglossia. Beckett, who had been the purblind Joyce's amanuensis for a time in the 1930s, finds his dual citizenship of (or double subjection to) English and French transporting him to deconstruct and relativise all discourse, language defecting by way of pun and paronomasia into the interstices of a transcendent otherness which can never finally be uttered. Even when they celebrate national identity and ostensibly reject modernity in the name of tradition —Yeats, writing angrily of "We Irish, born into that ancient sect/ But thrown upon this filthy modern tide", wrecked by the "formless spawning fury" of modernity (Yeats 1977: 610), Eliot in *Four Quartets* affirming, at the burning heart of the Blitz, that history is "Now and in England" (1963: 215), Pound in the *Cantos* lamenting the defeat of Mussolini's fascist *aggiornamento*, "wrecked for an error" (Pound 1975: 795) —the modernist writers retain at the heart of their project the idea of translation, the bearing of discourse, and of bodies, from one place to another. And, by definition, translation deconstructs "identity" even as it affirms modernity.

It is this very plurality, this protean elusiveness, that is central to the "identity" of modernism. Not for nothing does Joyce in *Ulysses* have his questers after an authentic, truthful narrative wrestle with Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea. For this volatile and unpredictable element is the very embodiment of a revolutionary modernity, as Auden implied in his polyphonic masque, "The Sea and the Mirror" (1944), and as he proposed explicitly in the lectures collected as *The Enchafèd Flood*, linking origins and apocalyptic ends in a single figure, as "that state of barbaric vagueness and disorder out of which civilization has emerged and into which [...] it is always liable to relapse" (1951: 18-19). Stephen Spender's seminal 1930s study of modernist literature, *The Destructive Element*, had spelt out the implications of this ubiquitous trope by reference to I. A. Richards's deployment, in an account of *The Waste Land*, of Conrad's vatic injunction to the modern soul in *Lord Jim* (1900): "In the destructive element immerse. That is the way". Spender commented that "T. S. Eliot, he implies, has thus immersed himself", and linked this immersion in turn to Pound's expatriate castaway Mauberley and Yeats's "blood-dimmed tide" (Spender 1935: 12). But while Spender, Auden and their leftist peers, in the 1930s, could take troubled delight in the idea of surrendering to the blood-dimmed tide of anarchy and social disintegration, Eliot's stance is openly reactionary, setting against the sea's dissolute wilderness the urge, Canute-like, to "at least set my lands in order".

"*Oed und leer das Meer*", declares an anonymous voice in *The Waste Land*, citing directly Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. This waste and desolate sea, which sunders individuals and divides nations, also flows around and links all the disparate states and subjects of the modern world. It can be transfigured into the redemptive element which Auden finally finds in *The Enchafèd Flood*, reflecting on Shakespeare's emblematic use of the trope in his last plays. Virginia Woolf in *The Waves* (1931) likewise moderates and transforms into the very figure of human history the image of an estranging sea which, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), had threatened to render nugatory all human endeavour and aspiration. At once dividing and connecting, this is the same ambivalent element that Joyce's Stephen Dedalus has to cross to find himself translated elsewhere —to a Europe which, whether in a literal Paris (or Trieste, or Zurich), or in the literary reaches of Ibsen's Norwegian fjords, lives out the crisis of modernity in terms of a perpetual displacement— down the chain of signifiers, certainly, but also through all the anterooms of national and cultural identity. Joyce's three great novels all equate the sea, language and the modern condition. It is this same sea that Yeats's old man must traverse in "Sailing to Byzantium" before he can engage with the artifice of eternity, which may be no more than the gold mosaic of a wall (in Ravenna, or a Byzantium which is no longer Constantinople but already Istanbul) (Yeats 1977: 407). And in all these comings and goings, the one element that persists is the caducity, volatility and translatability of the self across frontiers and languages, as a various music floats by upon the waters.

2. MAKING IT (NEW)

Making it new —negotiating the formal break with history— is without doubt one of the principal unifying rhetorics of modernism, in all its many forms. John Middleton Murry offered his definition of the relation of artist and cultural heritage in the first issue of the short-lived little magazine *Rhythm*, in 1911:

> The artist must take up the quest where his fathers left it. He must identify himself with the continuity that has worked in the generations before him. His individuality consists in consciously thrusting from the vantage ground that he inherits; for consciousness of effort is individuality. Art is movement, ferocity, tearing at what lies before. [...]

> The present is the all-in-all of art. Derive its very elements, the matter of its being, from the past if you will; it remains the creation of a new thing, and by these unending creations alone Life proceeds and Art exists. The search for individuality of expression may become bizarre; yet the search is of the essence of art, for art is self-conscious and works in travail and tears. To say that art is revolutionary is to say that it is art. In truth, no art breaks with the past. It forces a path into the future. The flesh and the bones of the new creation may come from the past, but the form is new; and the form and not the flesh is art. The attempt to compel the present to submission to the past is but the puny fiat that Life shall cease and the universe perish. (in Pondrom 1974: 57)

Murry is probably the first to use the word "modernism" of the transformation of sensibility that forged modern literature, though his usage, in context, is too generalised to refer to any specific literary movement. The new world that was "worlded"[5] by Eliot, Joyce and Pound extended back into, and broke away from, a past that was already dislocated and disfigured in the texts of French symbolist poetry.[6] Both Eliot and Yeats acknowledge the formative influence of Arthur Symons's collection of lectures, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899), in construing modernity for them, while Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1915), goes one better by writing symbolist poems which are parodic for his author but sincere and heartfelt pastiches for Stephen himself. But the originating moment of modernism was the entry of America into the cenacles and salons of London, Paris, and the other European metropoles. This cultural movement constructed in hybridity, re-enacting the earlier engagement of Greece and Rome, married Europe's perception of its own decay —the decay of a culture that had founded empires— with America's perception of its own imperial future. The vision of the fragmented culture cast into new forms, in *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, is embodied in the Fisher King's wish to "set my lands in order", or in Earwicker's dream, in a night as long as history, which struggles to form a new universal discourse out of the incoherent babble of the world's languages. These texts offer fragments shored against the ruin of civilisation, perhaps, but also the rearticulation and transvaluation of discourses that might make possible the emergence of a common culture on a global scale.

Eliot early and famously argued, in 1919, that the European inheritance was under threat, and in need of reclamation by a more robust (implicitly, American) sensibility:

> The poet [...] must be aware that the mind of Europe —the mind of his own country— a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind, is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing *en route*, which does not superannuate either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen. (Eliot 1951: 16)

That reclamation involved hard work:

> Tradition [...] cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense [...] and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. (Eliot 1951: 14)

For Eliot and Pound, Henry James's translation to Europe in 1876, and his British naturalisation in 1915, became the model for their rejection of what Walt Whitman celebrated as the "barbaric yawp" of a democratic, technologically advanced but intellectually retarded America. When Pound speaks autobiographically in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, in 1920, of being born "In a half savage country, out of date" (1973: 205) he sums up the attitude of this first generation of American modernists to their native culture.

In 1956, in the depths of that Cold War which followed the second "war to end all wars", W. H. Auden cast a cold eye on the moment when its American progenitors came to situate Anglophone modernism within a European imaginary. For Auden there is a continuity between Whitman, who had first contrasted the themes afforded by the New World with those of the Old, and Eliot himself:

> What [Whitman] does not say, and perhaps did not realize, is that, in a democracy, the status of the poet himself is changed. However fantastic, in the light of present-day realities, his notion may be, every European poet, I believe, still instinctively thinks of himself as a "clerk", a member of a professional brotherhood, with a certain social status irrespective of the number of his readers (in his heart of hearts the audience he desires and expects are those

> who govern the country), and taking his place in an unbroken historical succession. In the States poets have never had or imagined they had such a status, and it is up to each individual poet to justify his existence by offering a unique product. [...] "Tradition", wrote Mr T. S. Eliot in a famous essay, "cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour". I do not think that any European critic would have said just this. He would not, of course, deny that every poet must work hard but the suggestion in the first half of the sentence that no sense of tradition is acquired except by conscious effort would seem strange to him. (Auden 1956: 17-18)

For the poet whose aim is to relativise history —make the break with his own past— being American is a great advantage. Some identification with a culture is important, but it is distance that brings clear sight:

> When a revolutionary break with the past is necessary it is an advantage not to be too closely identified with any one particular literature or any particular cultural group. Americans like Eliot and Pound, for example, could be as curious about French or Italian poetry as about English and could hear poetry of the past, like the verse of Webster, freshly in a way that for an Englishman, trammelled by traditional notions of Elizabethan blank verse, would have been difficult.
>
> Further, as Americans, they were already familiar with the dehumanized nature and the social levelling which a technological civilization was about to make universal and with which the European mentality was unprepared to deal. After his visit to America De Tocqueville made a remarkable prophecy about the kind of poetry which a democratic society would produce.
>
> > "I am persuaded that in the end democracy diverts the imagination from all that is external to man and fixes it on man alone. [...] The destinies of mankind, man himself taken aloof from his country and his age, and standing in the presence of Nature and of God, with his passions, his doubts, his rare prosperities and inconceivable wretchedness, will become the chief, if not the sole, theme of poetry".
>
> If this be an accurate description of the poetry we call modern, then one might say that America has never known any other kind. (Auden 1956: 19-20)

There is more than some irony here. The Englishman who has assumed American identity invokes the Frenchman translated abroad to fix the image of America's devotion to its manifest destiny, by writing of an American who has become an Englishman in order to enshrine that destiny in modern poetic form.

In October 1944, a month after American forces first crossed the German frontier near Trier, T. S. Eliot gave a talk to the Virgil Society in London called "What is a Classic". For all its cool, lightly-worn scholarship, the paper was alert to the momentous significance of current military and political developments, tangentially figured in a discussion of the cultural inheritance of the Roman Imperium. In August 1944, the Warsaw rising had begun, the Eighth Army had taken Florence, the Russians had launched their offensive in Bessarabia and Rumania, and de Gaulle's Free French forces had marched into Paris in the wake of American troops. Eliot's mind was already on the post-war reconstruction of Europe. He spoke with the same voice that, in *The Waste Land*, addressing "the current decay of Eastern Europe" figured in the Russian revolution, and the fall of cities as diverse as Vienna, Munich, Athens and London that might follow, had translated from the Sanskrit to set forth a solution: "Give, sympathize, control". In defining the classic text, and explaining what it is to say the classic has "maturity", Eliot also made it clear that in order to reinvent your history you have to relativise it, as Virgil did by appropriating the destruction of Troy as the foundation myth of Roman origins. The Romans, he suggested, expropriated Greek culture to invent themselves:

> Maturity of mind: this needs history, and the consciousness of history. Consciousness of history cannot be fully awake, except where there is other history than the history of the poet's own people: we need this in order to see our own place in history. There must be the knowledge of the history of at least one other highly civilised people, and of a people whose civilisation is sufficiently cognate to have influenced and entered into our own. [...] From the beginning, Virgil, like his contemporaries and immediate predecessors, was constantly adapting and using the discoveries, traditions and inventions of Greek poetry: to make use of a foreign literature in this way marks a further stage of civilisation beyond making use only of the earlier stages of one's own [...]. (Eliot 1945: 19)

The rallying-point of the classic in European culture, said Eliot, was the Latin tradition (Virgil handing on cultural leadership to Dante). This was the

ground on which "provincialism" could be challenged. As the Germans retreated, Eliot made a place in the continuum for Goethe, too provincial, limited, marked by "the germanism of the sensibility" to be a classic author (Eliot 1945: 27), but indisputably a "universal" one, whom everyone should read. The reconciliatory gesture nevertheless required that one principal European tradition, the "Germanic", be absorbed into the other, in the process of creating a global culture:

> We need to remind ourselves that, as Europe is a whole (and still, in its progressive mutilation and disfigurement, the organism out of which any greater world harmony must develop), so European literature is a whole, the several members of which cannot flourish, if the same blood-stream does not circulate throughout the whole body. The blood-stream of European literature is Latin and Greek —not as two systems of circulation, but one, for it is through Rome that our parentage in Greece must be traced. What common measure of excellence have we in literature, among our several languages, which is not the classical measure? What mutual intelligibility can we hope to preserve, except in our common heritage of thought and feeling in those two languages, for the understanding of which, no European people is in any position of advantage over any other? (Eliot 1945: 31)

Seven months earlier, writing in the little magazine *Horizon*, Cyril Connolly also called for a rescue mission for the European tradition, deploying a figure of Asiatic conquest which, in its covert allusion to the military advances of Soviet armies, had more urgent contemporary relevance than the Persian Wars of the fifth century B.C.:

> The bombing of Monte Cassino is a terrible warning of what we may expect to happen in Rome and Northern Italy. Two facts must be recognized. The Germans will let military considerations override any feeling for art and culture and so will we. [...] Even more serious is the general public's indifference to the glories of our civilization. [...] We should all try to realize (1) that we are the trustees of European Culture for Posterity; (2) that culturally, all Europe is one, there is a common ownership of its civilization; and (3) that Europe is its civilization, and that if we strip it of its monuments and antiques, as we are stripping it of its political and economic power, then we will have utterly destroyed its magic, its prestige in the world and therefore our own, and so it will go back into being that miserable appendage of Asia which it was till the Greeks defeated the Persians. (Connolly 1944: 149-150)

Eliot's friend and colleague, John Lehmann, in a Foreword to the Autumn 1944 issue of his influential little magazine, *New Writing and Daylight*, took a wider perspective than Eliot himself, in announcing that "one of our objects in coming numbers will be to develop the European side of *New Writing and Daylight* as intensively as possible, not merely in the sense of publishing the work of new European authors, but of attempting the rediscovery of the European tradition and our own place in it. Needless to say, we hope that renewed contacts with Russia will play an important part in this" (Lehmann 1944: 6). The selection in that issue was a wide-ranging one, including theatre and film in Nazi Germany as well as Greek poetry, prose by Gide and Saint-Exupéry, Polish and Chinese theatre, and poems such as Alun Lewis's "The Jungle", bringing back from the Indian front, as Lehmann wrote in his own closing essay, "The Armoured Writer", a sense of change, and the glimpse of a new (if actually ancient) continent. In a number of emerging English poets, he noted a tendency to "classicism", against which he issued his own caveat:

> Classicism, if it is to be a reality in our future, surely implies not merely a respect for the experience of the past and for the delicate evolution of meaning in words and symbols, but also a new integration, an attempt to map some system of thought and feeling wide enough and deep enough for our culture to exist in. The rejection of political or semi-political formulas as spiritual habitations, which has been so decided a tendency of poetry for the past five years —a rejection which was implicit in the work of the poets of the thirties as it was developing already before the war started— must be the first condition for the growth of such a classicism; and nothing [...] is more striking in the work of [the new writers] Tiller, Yates and Fuller than the suggestion of deeper and often terrifying truths of our historic existence that have begun to emerge from the clash of nations and beliefs we have been forced to take part in; the sense of being about to discover a master-key to the riddle. (Lehmann 1944: 171-172)

Europe, Lehmann implied, had learned the hard way the dangers and limits of cultural nationalism. Discreetly negotiating fresh alliances and orientations, he saluted in both Eliot's *Four Quartets* and Edith Sitwell's *Green Song* work which took on the task of reintegrating past, present and future; and he joined to them a new generation of poets who looked beyond the Latin Imperium to include Europe's Germanic inheritance:

> With such a work English poetry again becomes one with all that is finest in the European tradition. And when, at the same time, one sees how deeply many of the younger poets have been influenced by the major contemporary writers and philosophers of Europe, by Rilke, Lorca and Kierkegaard to name only three, and how prevalent the impulse is —for instance in the work of Henry Reed and Lawrence Durrell— to search for the illumination of modern spiritual problems in the legends of Europe's earliest civilization, one can indeed hope that English poetry will regain in the new post-war epoch that pre-eminence in a revived European culture which it has more than once achieved in the past. (Lehmann 1944: 175)

3. IMAGINARY MUSEUMS

Franco Moretti has stressed the resistance of many modernist writers to conscription to the dark imperial heart of the European enterprise, invoking Conrad's famous critique of colonial duplicities in *Heart of Darkness*:

> Truth is, for the great generation of exiles Europe is no longer enough; they perceive it as a limit, an obstacle to the intelligence of reality. "All of Europe had contributed to the making of Kurtz"; yes, but Kurtz's truth, and with him Europe's, is down in the jungle, not in Brussels or London. Marlow's audience is still a European one, but the material of his stories belongs to the East, to Africa; and their formal pathos lies in the difficulty of saying in a European language experiences which are European no longer. Pound's poetics, and quite a few of the *Cantos*, are obsessed by the (frustrated) ambition of finding a Western equivalent for ideogrammatic writing. The last word of *The Waste Land* is a Sanskrit term, hieratically repeated three times, but declared untranslatable by Eliot himself; and the poem emphasises more than once the Eastern roots of European symbols and myths, just as Joyce had accepted, a few years earlier, Victor Bérard's thesis on the Phoenician basis of the *Odyssey*. (1994: 108-109)

Moretti sees only pathos in this struggle to speak of other cultures in the tainted discourses of the European *mentalité*. Anglophone modernism is the child of an imperialism rooted in what Winston Churchill in the post-war world grandiosely designated "the English-speaking peoples". Auden's 1937 poem "Dover" speaks of the damaged subjects of empire returning home to

retirement after a lifetime spent serving an imperial illusion. "The eyes of the returning", "filled with the tears of the beaten or calm with fame", may "thank the historical cliffs" for the promise that now "The heart has at last ceased to lie, and the clock to accuse", fondly believing that, in some primal English scene, "Everything will be explained". But the poem clearly casts this as a self-serving delusion. After three hundred years of imperialism, bringing it all back home (even if, like Conrad's Marlow, one decides that a wise and taciturn discretion is the better part of valour) is the primary European experience. The bitterness of disillusion and personal defeat, powerfully rendered in the second- and third-generation colonial novels of Graham Greene and Joyce Cary, is the subjective obverse of that parade of trophies and trumpery with which the "subaltern" consciousness demonstrates the triumph of empire.

The imperial display of the spoils of Africa and the Orient on the walls of European museums is something the modernist painters emulated in their very canvases and collages. The writers, likewise, created what Donald Davie, adapting a phrase of André Malraux's, called an "imaginary museum" (Davie 1976), juxtaposing polyglot fragments of innumerable discourses, ripped out of context, and reconfigured within the taxonomies of an hegemonic cultural will-to-power. Modernist writing recuperated what Eliot spoke of as the "disturbance" of the new, the previously unknown and unformulable, to reconfirm its own discursive control. Eliot's own Sanskrit mantra, "Shantih shantih shantih", of which he offered a "feeble translation", in the mock-scholarly Notes to *The Waste Land*, as the Christian "Peace that passeth understanding", like his forays into the European classical past, is not so much a gesture of despair as a reassertion of the authority of a cultural elite. Within all this, however, the profound melancholy of the modernist sensibility continues to fester.

If we are to speak of modernisms, as Peter Nicholls has rightly proposed, then we must also speak of Europes, in the plural. Individual modernist writers engaged in active dialogue with a differentiated Europe which was neither a monolithic unity nor a mere disparate congeries of autonomous nation states. Erin G. Carlston suggests that modernism is best defined

> not in terms of period or a group of canonized authors, but in terms of a set of textual tropes [... it represents] a close engagement with questions emerging from nineteenth-century discourses about individual and social bodies: questions not only about sexuality but also about the definition of the nation, the significance of racial difference, and the meaning of individuality and subjectivity in an age of mass culture. (1998: 7-8)

Some of the most important of these conversations were with the innovatory writers and artists of 1880s and 1890s France, who supplied the stimulus and the matter for the first great flowering of Anglo-American modernism. Ezra Pound's introduction to his anthology "French Poets", first published in the *Little Review* in February 1918, was categorical: "The time when the intellectual affairs of America could be conducted on a monolingual basis is over. It has been irksome for long. The intellectual life of London is dependent on people who understand the French language about as well as their own" (Pound 1934: 159). Cyrena Pondrom's 1975 anthology remains a major source-book for the influence of French poetry on the modernists of the 1910s and 1920s.[7] Pondrom gathers together the key mediators in that seminal moment, along with Eliot and Pound, such figures as F. S. Flint, Richard Aldington, T. E. Hulme, the principal magazines through which the new material flowed (*The Egoist*, *Criterion*, Orage's *New Age*), and the main suppliers of information on the Paris scene, of whom the best known is now Remy de Gourmont, co-founder with Alfred Vallette of the great *Mercure de France*. According to Aldington:

> From its foundation in 1890 until the war, the *Mercure de France* was one of the best, if not the best, of the independent literary periodicals in France. Nothing like it has existed in England and America, though the *English Review* under Ford, the *Dial* under Scofield Thayer, and T. S. Eliot's *Criterion* did succeed in reproducing some of the *Mercure*'s features. But for years the *Mercure* introduced many of the best European writers, so that one bought practically any book with the familiar caduceus and wings on it. Moreover, its notes on French and international literature, art, and thought, were unrivalled. (1968: 159)

The selective expropriation by first-generation Anglophone modernists of end-of-century French culture produced some deformed versions of that culture and its key figures. Jeremy Tambling refers to Eliot's widely remarked interest in Charles Maurras, the monarchist founder of the right-wing *Action Française*, whose cult of Latin civilization and the classical ideal appealed deeply to the poet of order. It was an interest that never —deliberately or otherwise— probed much below the surface. The slightest scratch, and Maurrasian traditionalism reveals the disorderly, disreputable bundle of mystifications and complexes which was *fin-de-siècle* French mysticism. When the figures of the pre-Maurrasian moment did appear in the work of Eliot's generation, they commanded, bizarrely, a certain respect. The Sâr Joséphin Péladan, novelist, dramatist (admired by Strindberg), art critic,

fanatic of Wagner, was a figure of fun to his French contemporaries. To Ezra Pound, who shared his fascination with Dante and the *troubadours*, he was a writer of some intellectual standing. In 1906, Pound reviewed with interest Péladan's thesis on the mystic cult of love, *Le Secret des troubadours* (1905), along with *Origine et esthétique de la tragédie*, which Péladan wrote in the same year.[8]

Remy de Gourmont was a favourite of the early Eliot, who took over some of his innovatory ideas on style and form. Eliot's concept of the dissociation of sensibility comes from Gourmont, together with some of his most important insights into the physical basis of language and the operations of metaphor.[9] Gourmont's "A French Poet on Tradition" (Gourmont 1914), published more or less simultaneously in 1914 in two little magazines close to the heart of the Eliot-Pound coterie, *The Egoist* and *Poetry*, is a source of Eliot's essay on "Tradition and the Individual Talent".[10] Pound admired and propagated Gourmont, and invited him to be the French collaborator for his projected periodical linking New York, London and Paris (Pound 1960: 356). His essay of 1920, "Remy de Gourmont: A Distinction", acknowledged that "Gourmont prepared our era" (Pound 1960: 339). Pound recognised the strength of Gourmont's unique blend of symbolist imagination with Enlightenment rationalism, and praised the modern, materialist sensibility deployed in writing which showed in operation "the senses of the imagination" (Pound 1960: 345). But even Pound failed to grasp the full materialist dimension of works such as *Le Problème du style*, with its ground-breaking references to the work of the psychologists Théodule Ribot and Paul Chabaneix, and its linking of personal form to historical moment.[11] Pound played up the sensualist, the anti-democrat, the anti-feminist. He closed his eyes —if he ever saw him— to the radical Gourmont, the self-designated anachronism, the satyr in the city park, flirting with the New Woman, conceding the supersession of his own caste.

Much of the conservative misrepresentation of Gourmont, and the obscurity into which he has fallen for present-day English-speaking readers, must be attributed to his main propagator, Richard Aldington. As editor of *The Egoist*, Aldington began promulgating Gourmont in 1914. He saw in him the last representative of European individualism, the Egoist (Gourmont's own term) *par excellence*, defending civilisation under siege (Aldington 1968: 21), who could stand emblematically for the aesthetic unity of European culture, beyond petty nationalisms (157). He gave Gourmont his chief currency in the English-speaking world, in the volumes of oddly-chosen, strangely-excerpted selections published in the UK and US (Gourmont 1929; 1932). Gourmont, consigned at the end of his life to

relative poverty, welcomed the money the Aldington/ Pound/ Eliot connection brought. Whether he would have appreciated the strange, deradicalized half-life of anti-democratic dreamer into which it eventually cast him is another matter. No-one, certainly, reading Aldington, would expect to find Gourmont's name in the folders of Walter Benjamin's Paris project (for his comments on the historical uses of cultural detritus), or see him classed with the radicals in Julia Kristeva's 1970s study of *fin-de-siècle* literature and society, *La Revolution du langage poétique*.

Eliot's lecture, "What Dante Means To Me", delivered at the Italian Institute in London in July 1950, is striking in giving almost as much attention to a French model as to the Italian mentor named in his title. The essay acknowledges complementary debts to Baudelaire and Dante. From Baudelaire, Eliot says, he learned how to confront the shock of modernity, how to see

> the poetical possibilities [...] of the more sordid aspects of the modern metropolis, of the possibility of fusion between the sordidly realistic and the phantasmagoric [...]. From him, as from Laforgue, I learned that the sort of material that I had, the sort of experience that an adolescent had had, in an industrial city in America, could be the material for poetry; and that the source of new poetry might be found in what had been regarded hitherto as the impossible, the sterile, the intractably unpoetic. (Eliot 1965: 126)

From Dante, however, he learned how to translate that particular experience and poetic practice into forms that could inspire others to take it for their own. Dante, he said, taught him how to show ordinary men how to feel, how to widen their emotional and perceptual range by giving them a new language to express themselves. Dante taught Eliot how to transform the "local" into the "European":

> What I have been saying just now is not irrelevant to the fact —for to me it appears an incontestable fact— that Dante is, beyond all other poets of our continent, the most *European*. He is the least provincial —and yet that statement must be immediately protected by saying that he did not become the "least provincial" by ceasing to be local. [...] The Italian of Dante is somehow *our* language from the moment we begin to try to read it; and the lessons of craft, of speech and of exploration of sensibility are lessons which any European can take to heart and try to apply in his own tongue. (134-135)

There was nothing in modern Italy to match the sensibility of Dante, or the Cavalcanti who provided the initial impulse for Eliot's 1930 poem "Ash Wednesday", and the options their language could be crafted to carry. Futurism put in an appearance, through the work and personality of Marinetti (writing in French). According to Olga Taxidou, Edward Gordon Craig did his best to ignore him, and so, it would seem, did everyone else among the first-generation modernists. Aldington, Pound and Sturge Moore took Marinetti along to see Yeats, but the visit was not a success. Mercifully, Aldington records, Marinetti could not understand Yeats's poems, since, if he had done, he would certainly have dismissed them as out of date. Marinetti bawled out his own work, and Yeats had to ask him to stop in deference to the neighbours banging in protest on all the walls (Aldington 1968: 98). Marinetti's lecture at the Doré Gallery (on the occasion of the second "Exhibition of the Works of the Italian Futurist Painters and Sculptors", April 1914) was broken up by concerted heckling from the *Blast* contingent, led by Wyndham Lewis.[12]

The work of D. H. Lawrence has clear analogies with the writing produced by the German expressionists, and is marked by their guiding philosophies: anti-technologism, idealism, vitalism and irrationalist activism. But Lawrence's writing in the last analysis took a different path, enriched, Hans Ulrich Seeber argues, by the insights of Weberian anti-capitalism. Taxidou's analysis of Edward Gordon Craig's dramatic theory shows German influence pulling in the opposite direction. Craig's leanings towards Kleistian idealism helped justify the distance he sought to maintain between his work on dramatic representation (marionette theatre) and the attempts of other contemporary theorists to develop new acting techniques for living actors. One of the most important inspirations from Germany came through the commissions offered to the translators Edwin and Willa Muir, introducing the themes and forms of Hölderlin, Hoffmansthal, Rilke, Kafka, and Broch. Storm Jameson, welcoming the translation in 1932 of Herman Broch's trilogy, *Die Schlafwandler* (*The Sleepwalkers*), which traced "the gradual disintegration of values from the start of the process at the Renaissance to the present day", made a telling connection:

> At this final stage, [...] in this zero hour of our civilisation, men are oppressed by a sense of futility, our life, they say, has no meaning. Silence isolates each of us, "each in his prison Thinking of the key". (That is Mr. T. S. Eliot, and it is a very curious experience, and one which I suggest to you, to read *The Sleepwalkers* and *The Waste Land* side by side. In Herr Broch's

> language, Mr. Eliot has now become a romantic, the man who seeks safety in an outworn tradition). (Jameson 1939: 106)

Along with France and Italy, Spain was the theatre of discovery for the ambiguous, damaged selves that emerged from the First World War, in the texts of Hemingway considered by Geoffrey Harris. The Spanish Civil War provoked a major reconsideration of what Europe, and modernism, were really about. Michael Murphy tracks the political tergiversations of allegiance and defection which characterise Auden's simultaneous engagement with Spain, Yeats and fascism.

Modernism spoke from the margins, and on the move. If Auden was the poet of frontiers, Vassiliki Kolocotroni demonstrates that this was Joyce's location too, closely observing the movements of trains. In Craig Monk's account, the largely American editors of little magazines travelled between Paris, Rome, Berlin, London, Chicago. Capital cities, the metropoles, were nevertheless favourite places to be marginal, where modern artists could exchange ideas, and sign contracts.[13] Peter Brooker addresses the urban aetiology of modernism, through the familiar trope of the Baudelairean poet-*flâneur*, a sensibility forged by the city streets and shop displays of the1860s. But he also re-establishes the historical distance between the original and those multiple translations to which criticism post-Benjamin has subjected him.

Anglophone modernisms, unified within the diversities of English, are transformed and developed by the negotiation of Europe's many tongues. In the process of translating they are also translated. Of all the tropes of the movement, this is the one to which writers and critics regularly return. Translators, proposes Alasdair Macrae, "are crucial prompters in a mysterious process of fortuitousness, coincidence or synchronicity". In translation, modernism grasps the plurality of languages that is the European inheritance, and turns it to material purpose. Peter Marks quotes the Lawrentian hero rejoicing in the temporary relief afforded by heaping abuse in French, German, Italian on English authoritarian power in the form of "the military canaille. *Canaille*! *Canaglia*! *Schweinerei*! He loathed them in all the languages he could lay his tongue to". But the ends of translation change. The (auto-)translation of Samuel Beckett, arguably the Last Modernist,[14] poised on the threshold of postmodernism, marked something new in the European air. Leslie Hill's comments on Beckettian translation serve retrospectively and by antithesis to sum up the whole modernist project:

> For Benjamin, as for Beckett, the object of translation is not what Beckett, speaking of Joyce, once called the scant cream of sense. Its role is not to formulate ideas, but more nearly to dissolve them, to use them as pretexts for the silent motion of language itself [...]. Translation can be understood here as an endless movement across the multiplicity of languages, a constant matching, as Benjamin puts it, of fragments of language with each other in the attempt to fashion not an ideal whole (implying the reduction of all languages to one) but rather another piece in a larger puzzle, a puzzle which is the multiplicity of languages themselves. And this, as the object of translation, is what Benjamin, in messianic vein, calls pure language, "*die reine Sprache*". (in Birkett and Ince 1999: 106)

Where modernism rejoices in multiplying differences, Leslie Hill goes on to argue, Beckett's attention is focused otherwise, on "the movement of difference across and within languages [...] in the search for that something else, neither an experience nor an object, which lies between and beyond those differences, in the shape of the figure of indifference" (107-108).

The condition of "indifference", Eliot wrote in "Little Gidding", at the end of *Four Quartets*, lies "between two lives", for a culture as for the individual, and "This is the use of memory":

> For liberation [...]
> From the future as well as the past. Thus, love of a country
> Begins as attachment to our own field of action
> And comes to find that action of little importance
> Though never indifferent. History may be servitude,
> History may be freedom. See, now they vanish,
> The faces and places, with the self which, as it could, loved them,
> To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern. (1963: 219)

That other pattern was to emerge in the wake of the Second World War, to which this poem was the eloquent response. For, it could be said, to adapt an earlier poem of Eliot's, "The Hollow Men" (1963: 92), that between difference and indifference, "the essence/ And the descent", falls the shadow of the post-Modern.

NOTES

[1] See Bradbury and McFarlane (1991), Nicholls (1995), and the invaluable Italian collection edited by Cianci (1991) for overviews of the variants of modernism. The nationalist dimension of modernism is receiving increasing attention. Matei Calinescu has indicated the role French modernisms, in particular, were called on to play in intra- and international debates and conflicts, arguing that the word "modernism" was invented in 1888 by Ruben Darío, adapting French literary innovation in a Latin America seeking to declare its cultural independence from Spain (Calinescu 1987: 69). Attributions of the modern usage to Baudelaire actually translate the word "*modernité*", a rather different and all-embracing concept. The *Oxford English Dictionary* identifies the first instance of the word "modernist" in 1588, in a reference to "sundry other neotericall mathematicians and modernists". Jonathan Swift spoke of "modernists" in *The Tale of a Tub* (1704), and from Swift onwards, "modernism" has been used of various innovations, newfangled devices or inventions, usually disapprovingly (*COED* vol. I, 1971: 1828). From the start of the 20th century, and in particular after the Papal Encyclical of 1907, "modernism" was applied to the liberalising movement in the Roman Catholic Church, and some of the partisan connotations the concept generated may have been transferred to its earliest secular usages (*COED* vol. III, *Supplement* 1987: 581). The "modernist" writers never formally constituted themselves under this name. Indeed, Ezra Pound, in his 1932 obituary for Harold Monro in *The Criterion*, described them as "a movement to which no name has ever been given". (On this, see Smith 1994: 1-5.) As Stan Smith argues below, the words "modernism" and "modernist", in their contemporary application, emerged in every decade of the first half of this century, but only began to stick in the early 1960s, virtually coincident with the appearance of the usurping tanist, "postmodernism". Herbert Read, for example, in an Address to the National Poetry Festival, Washington DC, in October 1962, spoke of "American poets so essentially post- or anti- modernist (again I borrow a judgment from Mr. Jarrell) as Robert Lowell [...] John Berryman, Richard Wilbur, Delmore Schwartz and Randall Jarrell himself" (Read 1967: 155). The mediation of Jarrell is probably crucial here. John Crowe Ransom, the friend of Robert Graves and Laura Riding and a founder-editor of the *Fugitive*, in a series of articles for American literary/ academic journals collected as *The World's Body* in 1938, deployed the words variously of a general condition or state of mind or of this specific literary movement (1938: 55, 56, 62, 63, 64, 145, 166-167). He also seems to endorse Jarrell's identification of modernism with W. H. Auden, drawing, in an essay on *Murder in the Cathedral*, an analogy between Eliot and "Auden [...] that most witty and far-gone modern poet" (1938: 170-171).

[2] For translation in Beckett, see Hill (in Birkett and Ince 1999).

[3] For Pound's quality as a translator of Provençal, see Makin (1976), Ricketts (1992).

[4] Eliot makes the distinction between the two concepts in *What is a Classic?*, discussed below.

[5] The concept (Spivak 1990: 1) avoids the ambiguities of "mapping", which implies a relatively objective representation of a pre-existent reality. It draws attention to the partiality of the interests that move writers, and to the status of the writerly world, constituted in its maker's own image.

[6] The present collection contains various examples of the disruption of form from within, which Peter Marks characterises in his essay on Lawrence as "one of modernism's signature tactics". On Yeats's and Mallarmé's relationships to romantic symbolism, see Potolsky; for the negotiation with the picaresque, see Marks on Lawrentian journeys, in fiction and fact, and Kolocotroni, who draws the connections between Joyce's European wanderings, in exile on the frontiers, and the evolution of a new version of narrative based on digression and diversion, chance and happenstance. Jennifer Milligan sees in the writing of Jean Rhys an active deconstruction of the *Bildungsroman*, working on parody, pastiche and intertextual allusion. Geoffrey Harris traces the echoes of the search of second-generation modernism for new narrative strategies in the work of Malraux and Hemingway. The disruptions of form reflect the dissolving confidence of the virile hero in his self-image, generated by the experience of war and the perceived challenge of emancipated femininity. Teresa Brus shows how Auden's drama adapts the forms of light play (popular song, masque, cabaret) to produce intimations of tragedy, figuring the modern moment, a perpetual awakening to a sour taste in the mouth. Jazz, in John Lucas's essay, enacts a similar process in musical terms, ludic play with conventional musical form that reveals a serious edge. Brian Cosgrove's discussion of modernist irony points to the larger discursive and philosophical frame that supports all these formal experiments with disruption and contradiction. Irony, as Cosgrove presents it, is the primary mode of European modernism, a process of "form-giving" whose main purpose is to signal detachment, to imply that the speaking subject possesses objective, totalising knowledge while at the same time denying it. In the European tradition, irony is a way of surviving real knowledge of the present. Cosgrove's analysis identifies three different inflections of irony in that tradition, which represent different national relations with the real and, correspondingly, different routes to survival. The version favoured by the German romantics valorises the possession of total knowledge; Flaubert, the proto-modernist, emphasises detachment; Nietzschean irony proclaims the joyful possession of a pluralising knowledge, founded in the body, and proclaims a positive relation with the real. Joyce, in Cosgrove's reading, carries traces of all three. Heir to all Europe's ironies, we might argue, Joyce can serve as emblem of the double function of the Anglophone modernist in Europe: absolute synthesiser of the past, and absolute disrupter.

[7] See also Svarny (1988) and, casting a wider net, Kolocotroni *et al.* (1998).

[8] On Pound and Péladan, see Surette (1979, chs. 2 and 3; 1993: 128-130, 209-216). For Péladan, see Beaufils (1993), Birkett (1999).

[9] See Burne (1963); Doyle (1989).

[10] See for example Doyle 1989: 27-28, 331 nn 5, 6. Doyle notes that the two epigraphs to *The Sacred Wood* are from Gourmont.

[11] See Birkett (1999); Sieburth (1978).

[12] Wyndham Lewis, detaching himself from the "propagandist[s] for Action", lumped together Machiavelli, Sartre, and Marinetti ("the father of Italian fascism"): "action in this context means action of a material and mechanistic type. [...] [S]uch principles as these I have combated, since the first days of my public life, when I led a band of hecklers into the Doré Gallery in Bond Street where Marinetti was lecturing" (Lewis 1984: 178). See also Cianci (1991).

[13] Ch. 4, "The City", in Butler (1994) is a rich source of interdisciplinary references. See also Crunden (1993).

[14] Kenner (1986); Cronin (1996).

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I. CONTEXTS OF MODERNISM

LINEAGES OF "MODERNISM", OR, HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM NASHVILLE TO OXFORD.

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1. A PACKAGE DEAL

Literary modernism was a cosmopolitan, stateless hybrid, shuttling backwards and forwards across the Atlantic as its progenitors and carriers shifted between Old and New Worlds, endlessly repacking their intellectual baggage. The trade in modernism was as diverse as the freight carried by the word "modernism" itself. The history of that word, as it sneaked across frontiers and through cultural customs barriers, is symptomatic of the twentieth-century dilemmas to which Anglophone modernism, spawned in sundry estaminets of Europe by an odd assortment of expatriate Americans, Irish and Britons, was a series of inadequate attempts at an answer. To trace the lineages of that history, viewed through a sequence of retrospective frames, is to see how closely modernism itself was bound up with the great historic catastrophes that punctuated the twentieth century. A century of diasporas and displacements, the construction, reconstitution and dissolution of states, and the kaleidoscopic recycling of alliance and counter-alliance, produced a literature to match in its polymorphous and polysemic perversity. As a new, "postmodern" millennium begins, the burden of that modernist past remains: unfinished business, a package deal we have all bought.

"A Package Deal" is the title of a review of Robert Graves's *Steps* by an up-and-coming young critic in *The Observer* shortly after the book was published in 1958. "The title of this review", writes John Wain, "is an Americanism: I use it as a code signal of solidarity with Mr. Graves, whose

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English vocabulary and sentence-construction are becoming daily more Americanised":

> Looking through this book at random, one finds the pages peppered with such words as "rangy" (meaning tall and loose-limbed), cable "collect" (i.e. with charges reversed), "around" (for English "round," e.g. "around the corner"), "jibe" (meaning "fit in" —this last in a poem), etc., etc.

Wain's donnish indignation seems quaintly mock-antique now, an index of how far the Americanisation of English usage has proceeded since the 1950s. His explanation of the phenomenon in Graves is patronising equally of the English poet and of Americans, with its knowing hints about the transatlantic groupies currently congregating in Deyá, Majorca:

> The reason is clear: Mr. Graves, in his Balearic fastness, talks Spanish with the neighbours and English only with the visitors; many of these same visitors, and especially the young, literary ones who make up Mr. Graves's entourage, are American; as a result, his ear is losing the power to distinguish between the two languages.

For Wain, the erosion of *English* English figures also the failing of cultural and political powers. Not for nothing does he deploy the idiom "losing the power", with its implicit sense of a decline in both sexual and geopolitical potency.

Americanisation means the loss of everything at the level of cultural register that has made Britain great, from Jane Austen's regulated hatred, the reflex of an imperial stiff upper lip, through the Anglicised mandarin subtlety of James and Eliot, those masters of nuance and scruple, to the intrinsically English discriminations of an F. R. Leavis and —no doubt— the columns of *The Observer* in January 1959.

Wain suggests a more than metaphorical connection between loss of linguistic hegemony and commercial decline. The British once traded around (or round?) the world. Now they have been sold a "package deal" by former colonials:

> So, as a token of our respect for him, let us speak of this book, even in these English pages, as a package deal. As business men are well aware, a package deal is a way of unloading on to the customer a certain amount of stuff he doesn't want. The buyer has to take all or nothing; since the package contains certain items he really needs, he takes all [...]. The nauseating blurb gives an arch description of the treat in store for the fortunate child who gets this lovely stocking ("He continues to wear his variegated learning — as lightly as his customary crownless straw hat") and winds up the catalogue with, "Twenty-two new Poems complete the jaunt."

Graves has become a court jester in the service of his American entourage, a vaudeville entertainer in a straw hat, putting on an act of eccentric stage Englishness to gratify his American patrons. But Britain itself has bought the package which runs from Lend Lease through Marshall Aid to the Cold War and Coca-colonial penetration of its economy and culture alike. We inhabit a client state, a subaltern culture, which has sold its heritage for a mess of bubblegum.

Wain has one qualification: "If this book is worth thirty shillings of anybody's money", he says, maintaining the snooty tone of a nation of shopkeepers confronting shoddy foreign imports, "it is the poems that tip the scale". In Wain's world, Graves's poetry remains an island of English purity in the midst of a commercialised —which is to say Americanised— culture.[1] The package, that "day-to-day stuff that Mr. Graves writes to make a living —all of it more or less pointless and trivial", is, like newspaper around British fish and chips, "wrapped round twenty-three wonderful pages of poetry". The offence justifies vandalism: "Probably most discerning readers will tear out the pages of verse and throw the rest away in the interests of conserving shelf-space, and I don't blame them":

> But really it is intolerable when one of the finest poets alive in the English-speaking world, a man whose poetry gets better and better, continually purging away its dross and refining itself by the sheer heat of its own imaginative strength and virtue — when such a writer offers us twenty-two poems, nearly all of them up to his own highest standard, we should be asked to accept them as a makeweight in a volume of barrel-scrapings.

That "English-speaking world" gives the game away. This new post-war locution, familiarised by Winston Churchill's contemporaneously published *A History of the English-speaking Peoples* (1956-58), reveals the shift in the balance of power effected by Britain's wartime reliance on US aid and military support, for which we are now paying the price. The Americans are over here, overpaid, and over-voluble, seducing our poets with the literary equivalent of nylons and chewing-gum: Graves, in Wain's perception, is a poetic GI Bride. And yet "English-speaking" makes another claim, one implied in Churchill's

appropriative title. This language was ours before it was theirs: if America speaks English now it is because we gave it to them. Churchill's formula was an attempt at recruitment: his quixotic post-war ambition had been the political reunion of United Kingdom and United States.

Graves as poet, however, Wain insists, continues to produce something that in its purity and its refinement is quintessentially English: "Where the prose is unbalanced, opinionated, aggressive, perverse, the poetry brings order and harmony, resolving conflict in the discipline of its strict and yet generous art". Wain used, he says,

> to find it a mystery that Graves's poetry criticism should be so ludicrous, when his poetry is so superb; but as I live longer I begin to understand that there are some artists who, loving their art too much to blemish it with their own private grudges, envies, hatreds and irritable obsessions, must find an outlet for them elsewhere.
>
> Mr. Graves's literary criticism is just steam-blowing.

This is a familiar antithesis. There is Graves's pot-boiling work, mundane, quirky and bogged down in personality. And then there is the impersonal, transcendent purity of art. But why does he engage in such polemic flights of rhetoric in the first place? Wain's answer is clear, though implicit: Robert Graves does it for money:

> Surely everyone admits that Wordsworth wrote many clumsy poems; was it really necessary for Mr. Graves, when an audience had turned out on a February night in Chicago to hear him speak on "Pulling a Poem Apart", to treat them to a demolition of the sonnet "Great men have been among us"?

Yet, in the fidelity of his commitment to his Muse, Graves stands proud and solitary on an island of the self —an island not unlike that which stood alone in 1940, without American assistance, against the dark tides of unreason. More than a decade after that war ended, but only two years after American intervention brought an end to Britain's nostalgic imperial kickback over Suez, Wain's embattled language speaks with the tones of some Dunkirk-spirit film from Elstree Studios:

> It is in his poetry that the quarrel with himself, the long war to impose order and significance on the shifting atoms of thought and feeling, has been fought, bravely and honourably, in the silence of his own mind [...]. For anyone who loves language, it is easy to become so engrossed in its variety of effects that the thing he is supposed to be celebrating can be smothered under technique. But the defence against this is not, as our latest breed of moon-baying yard-dogs would have it, to abandon technique; it is to follow the example of such as Graves, who can love the shape and texture of a poem just because it fits so snugly to what it is conveying.

And who precisely, in 1958-59, are these "moon-baying yard-dogs" who have abandoned technique? Could they, perhaps, be Americans? "Beat Poets" such as Allen Ginsberg, whose *Howl and Other Poems* was published in 1956; or Lawrence Ferlinghetti, whose *A Coney Island of the Mind* was published in the same year as Graves's book?

Among those already following Graves's example, whose technique fits so snugly —and possibly smugly— what it is conveying, Wain himself is a prime candidate, his 1956 volume *A Word Carved on a Sill* actually taking its title from one of Graves's poems. So too are the other contributors to Robert Conquest's *New Lines* anthology in 1956, which set itself up in antithesis to Anglo-American modernism and its successors, positing instead a return to a pre-modernist, native tradition, represented by Hardy, Edward Thomas *et al.*, of strict metrical forms and domestic scenarios, to which Graves, without consultation, had been recruited.

Wain's own anti-Americanism, combining Left and Right attitudes in a characteristic post-war blend, is revealed in his long poem, "A Song about Major Eatherly" in his 1961 volume *Weep Before God*, which blends the anti-nuclear rhetoric of CND, founded in 1958 and then at the height of its influence, with a more traditional anti-Americanism, contemptuous of the commercialised mass culture for which conservative thinkers had maligned the United States from de Tocqueville onwards. Major Eatherly is the American pilot who dropped the atom bomb on Nagasaki. His subsequent remorse, the poem suggests, did not affect his cash-flow:

> Good news. It seems he loved them after all.
> His orders were to fry their bones to ash.
> He carried up the bomb and let it fall.
> And then his orders were to take the cash.

"Taking the cash", while nurturing a sense of virtuous purity, is precisely what Graves's journalism is indicted for; whereas his poetry represents a disinterested, one might say characteristically English, resistance to such meretriciousness. Wain's review, then, sets up an English/ American antithesis for which Graves is the stalking horse. Wain's rhetoric proclaims retrenchment, Little Englandism, the anti-modernist stance of *New Lines*. If

English is on the wane, Wain is on the up. Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti are the heirs of Whitman's barbaric yawp, but Whitman is not "one of us". Odd, then, that in the introduction to one of his first post-war volumes, *Poems and Satires* (1951), Graves should cite Whitman as if with approval, as the justifier of a deep contradiction in the self which is the birthright of the poet, just that "quarrel with himself" of which (quoting the Irish Yeats) Wain speaks. Odd, too, that Wain should so ignore that seminal work of literary criticism, *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, with its deep admiration for and understanding of Anglo-American modernism, from Eliot to Hart Crane and e. e. cummings, that a youthful Graves had written in 1927 in collaboration with Laura Riding, a young American poet whose influence effected the transplant to his etiolated Georgian idiom of a tougher, more acerbic transatlantic register.

Far from polluting Graves's poetry, in fact, it could be argued that the shock of American modernism gave it a kick-start. When Graves in the 1950s evinces an "English vocabulary and sentence-construction [...] becoming daily more Americanised" ("in a poem" even), this is something right at the supposedly English heart of a poet who, going into exile with an old cloak in 1929, kicked the English dust off his feet, declaring *Good-bye To All That*, to live in a Spanish island fastness.

We need to look a little more closely at this particular package. After all those other questions, "What was modernism?", "When was modernism?", "Is modernism gendered?", etc., I want to ask another one:

2. WHICH SIDE OF THE POND WAS MODERNISM?

In 1932 Ezra Pound wrote of the literary revolution he and Eliot initiated as "a movement to which no name has ever been given" (1932; rpt. 1937). He was not quite correct. Graves and Riding, in their 1927 study *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, published in England, had first given currency to the epithet by which the movement was to be generally known, in the second half of this century.[2]

Curiously, though, the term "modernism" did not become general usage until the later 1960s, when it emerged holding incestuous hands with its sibling/ progeny "postmodernism" (blind Oedipus led by an attentive Antigone). It has been suggested that it was not until Harry Levin's essay "What was Modernism?" in 1960 that, in the words of Morton P. Levitt, "The term first appeared in a literary context", and not until the essay's republication in the book *Refractions: Essays in Comparative Literature* in 1966 that it achieved wide circulation (Levitt 1992).[3]

Superficial support for this might be provided by Stephen Spender's *The Struggle of the Modern*, published in 1963, but based on lectures given in the United States in 1959 and 1961. Spender's introduction attempts to distinguish between traditional writing about "modern subject matter" and the specific object of his study, in which "I am only discussing obvious examples of modernism or anti-modernism", while his chapter on "Moderns and Contemporaries" distinguishes "art which is modern [...] from several movements grouped approximately under the heading 'modernism'" (1963: xi-xii, 71ff.).

Nevertheless, Levitt's 1960 is far too late, even though the first instance of "modernism" used in its current sense cited in the *Complete Oxford English Dictionary* is an editorial comment in *The Listener* on 23 November 1961 (848/1) which speaks of "The American Modernism introduced by Mr. T. S. Eliot, following Mr. Ezra Pound". That "American" is a moot point, given not only the expatriation of these two authors, but also the cis-Atlantic status of other key modernists, and the history of the word's usage.[4]

"Modernism" in our current restricted sense has in fact surfaced and disappeared with equal rapidity in every decade of this century. Graves and Riding did not invent the concept. Though there is an early use by John Middleton Murry in the short-lived little magazine *Rhythm* in the 1910s,[5] its genealogy, applied to the revolution of the word effected by Eliot, Pound and Joyce, can be traced to the slightly longer-lived little magazine *The Fugitive*, edited from Nashville by John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson and Allen Tate between 1922 and 1925. It was here that Graves and Riding found the word and took it home for adoption. That etiology is of some interest, in that it mimics the larger global reconfiguration of Anglo-American political and cultural relations in this century.

In a letter of 21 July 1922, Allen Tate wrote to his fellow editor Donald Davidson, of the new, "revolutionary" poetry: "perhaps we shall have to get a new term by which to designate this latest genre of literature". A couple of days later Davidson's reply spoke of "the Cubists, the Futurists, the Imagists, etc." and "even these Dadaists to some extent"; but none of these epithets seemed quite right. Shortly thereafter Tate wrote of "the master of the genre, T. S. Eliot", who "goes straight to the real thing; this is of course his "modernity"" (Fain and Young 1974: 20-26 *passim*).[6] But the *mot juste* was first stumbled over publicly in an editorial by John Crowe Ransom, "The Future of Poetry", in *The Fugitive* in February 1924. There Ransom reflected that "The arts generally have had to recognize Modernism —how should poetry escape?", before adding "And yet what is Modernism? It is undefined". Ransom alluded to imagism and free verse, before qualifying the assertion that "The future of poetry is immense" with the remark: "One is not so sure

in these days, since it has felt the fatal irritant of Modernism". In a subsequent issue, Allen Tate continued the discussion of "the Modern poet of this generation", speaking of his [sic] intellectualism and complexity, and invoking Carl Sandburg, Marianne Moore, e. e. cummings and Hart Crane —all names which will appear in *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* and thereafter in Graves's criticism.

"Modernism" in these discussions is still more a state of mind, "modernity", than a precise literary movement, but the formula is beginning to congeal. What I want to pick out, though, is what looks at first like a purely fortuitous conjunction. Immediately following Ransom's essay, an editorial announcement welcomes a new contributor to the journal:

> Laura Riding Gottschalk, who was one of the contestants qualifying last year for the Nashville Prize [...]. We count it as a special privilege to present, in this and our succeeding issue, a number of poems by a young writer of such distinguished promise.

Laura Riding has arrived, right on cue, at the very same moment that the new poetic movement gets its christening —a wicked or benign witch at the font according to how you rate her poetry and/ or personality. It is not a coincidence *she* would have missed. Henceforth, Riding casts herself as the avatar of modernism, carrying its gospel everywhere, and specifically across the Atlantic. And Robert Graves will soon be recruited as her apostle.

"Robert Graves, the English poet" had already been lauded in the pages of *The Fugitive* in 1922, for his critical study *On English Poetry*, with its Freudian account of poets as "men of repressions and inner conflicts", who "contain within themselves the conflicting emotions of different classes of society", its exploration of "the social function of poets" and its "absorbing" "study of the psychological origins of poetry". Graves himself is praised as "the first man to handle it who compounds in his own person a genuine poetic talent with modern psychological learning". In the final issue that year, an essay on "Modern Art" argued that "perhaps T. S. Eliot has already pointed the way for this and the next generation", but added, confidently: "However, the Moderns have adequately arrived", while an editorial announcement welcomed Graves as one of the "visitors come among us in this issue".

By 1924, the next generation was not only knocking at the door, but had talked its way into the drawing room, with the announcement that the Nashville Prize of $100 had been awarded to Laura Riding. She was, according to the judges, "the discovery of the year, and they deem it a privilege to be first in calling attention to the work of a young writer who is

coming forward as a new figure in American poetry".[7] By the first issue of 1925 Riding's advent needs an editorial annunciation:

> We expect general felicitations upon the recent acquisition of Mrs. Laura Riding Gottschalk of Louisville, as a regular participating member of the Fugitive group. It will be unnecessary in future to introduce her as a foreign contributor to these pages.

Meanwhile, Graves was making his own mark. The same issue which announced Riding's Nashville Prize also advertised Ransom's collection *Grace after Meat*, selected by Robert Graves. *Pace* Wain, Graves was already, in 1924, engaged in transatlantic hustling on behalf of his American "entourage", for he had in fact arranged the book's publication by Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press in London. Graves's own *Poetic Unreason* was reviewed in volume 4, no. 3, along with Hart Crane and cummings, and Graves reviewed Ransom's *Chills and a Fever* in the *Saturday Review of Literature* in late December 1924. There is, in the infancy of modernism, much taking in of each other's washing —including some rather dirty linen— on the analogy of the Scilly Islanders Graves used in his preface to *Poems 1938-1945* and reused in *The Crowning Privilege*.

The *Fugitive's* lauding of Graves's modernity, together with the clear evidence of his promotional talents, could only fire the imagination of a young poet eager to establish her own modern credentials, and to make influential contacts. Not entirely disinterestedly, Tate worked hard to kindle the flame. Having introduced each to the other's verse, he wrote to Davidson in March 1924 that "she will be thrilled over Graves' liking for her work; I pass on the news. I feel almost paternal" (Fain and Young 1974: 98).

With some reason, perhaps, since there is a rumour, of mysterious provenance, about an affair with Tate culminating in an abortion.[8] Whatever the case, Tate vigorously encouraged the literary trysting with Graves, and in particular Riding's growing resolution to take on literary England. Of her stay in the Tate *ménage*, he wrote, a little disingenuously:

> It is great to have Laura here. I've been informed, to my exceeding pleasure, of her coming success in England. I saw Graves' letter; it was the highest praise. I'm betting on the young lady, and when she gets over thinking every poem she writes is great because it's hers, I'll bet everything on her. Laura is great company, and we've had a fine time since she arrived [...]. She would put life into —well, into anything [...]. Carolyn [his wife] finds her very charming, if strenuous! (Fain and Young 1974: 145)

In July 1925, Graves's essay "Contemporary Techniques of Poetry" had enthused about Riding's verse. A match was being prepared in modernist heaven. By mid October 1925, Tate was writing that Laura was "destined to great fame before two years are out. She'll be the most famous of us all" (Fain and Young 1974: 146). This less than disinterested praise is also tinged with relief. Laura is off his hands, crossing the Atlantic to mess up some other couple —taking the love-child of modernism with her as a dowry.

3. A NEW STYLE OF HAIRPIN: OXFORD, CRADLE OF MODERNISM

The year after the publication of Graves's and Riding's *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, Roy Campbell, writing on "Contemporary Poetry" in Edgell Rickword's collection *Scrutinies*, deployed their second-hand word as a term of abuse held at arms' length by scare quotes, indicting "The most formidable innovations with which the more conscious "modernists" have threatened poetry so far" (1928: 177-179).

Campbell, however, applies the term not to Eliot (whom he had just praised as the author of "the one outstanding poem of our time") but to "his most unconditional imitators of to-day". These imitators he refers to as "the younger university poets" —in 1928 a clear reference to the coteries around W. H. Auden in an Oxford abuzz with modern attitude. Auden's *Poems*, haunted by the cadences of Eliot, Graves and, most especially, Laura Riding, had been printed privately by Stephen Spender in the very year Campbell was writing, and Auden had co-edited the undergraduate magazine *Oxford Poetry* in 1926 and 1927. For these allegedly "modernist" poets Campbell has only contempt, observing that their "technical innovations, which are invested with such importance by contemporary critics, are about as likely to influence poetry as the invention of a new style of hairpin would be to revolutionise engineering".[9]

The linking of the Graves/ Riding epithet with Oxford is not coincidental. Graves, a recent Oxford graduate, had spent his first post-war years living on Boars Hill, outside the city, and was now encamped, with Riding, close by. In his autobiography *Ruling Passions*, Tom Driberg, Auden's intimate friend in those years, confides that: "one of my few talents has always been that of the madame; I like introducing or recommending suitable people to each other" (Driberg 1991: 62-65). One of the more salubrious introductions he effected was that between Oxford and modernism. Not only did he in 1926 introduce W. H. Auden to *The Waste Land*, but he also introduced Laura Riding to Oxford and, I suspect, an impressionable

Auden to her poetry. Certainly, Auden's earliest poems everywhere inscribe Riding's presence and, on several occasions, verbal and cadential echoes close enough to plagiarism to warrant a forceful rebuke from Graves, to which Graves was still alluding in the 1960s.

Driberg is, in a sense, modernism's "madame":

> When I first met him, Auden was unknown as a poet outside Oxford. With Cecil Day Lewis he edited the slim annual volume *Oxford Poetry*, in which a few of my poems were published. [Indeed, it's likely that Driberg is the Oxford poet who gave the macho Campbell gravest offence.] But I also made the acquaintance of several established writers. One of the most impressive of these was Robert Graves, who at that time shared a house at Islip, near Oxford, with the American poet Laura Riding. They received me hospitably, and it would seem that the hospitality was returned [...]. This [...] should have been an agreeable friendship. I liked what I had seen of both Graves and Laura Riding. He was already famous for his poetry but had not yet written his first world war memoir [...]. Graves was tall and burly, with a heavy, gipsy-like face that looked, in repose, sulky, and a sensual mouth: Riding was slight, pale, and fey, as spare and taut as her verse. As I say, my relations with them should have gone smoothly [...]. Alas, something went wrong —a misunderstanding mainly attributable to my own social ignorance and gaucherie, but also, I think, to unusually thin-skinned touchiness on the part of Graves and/ or Riding.

Driberg's *faux pas* was to enquire of a third party, the poet Norman Cameron, whether he should address Riding as "Mrs. Graves", which produced an intemperate letter from Graves:

> Look here, Tom Driberg,
> [...] I wish to God you'd cut it out. It is some months now since I heard from Norman Cameron about your attitude to Laura Riding but it made me feel pretty sick and the effects are still here. You asked him that entirely unpardonable question as to whether you should address her as Mrs. Graves, because etc. —I was so sick that I nearly asserted my Elemental, Virile, Sulky personality and came to beat you up.[10]

Graves sarcastically reproduces here the terms Driberg had used of him in a review of his book *Mrs. Fisher*. The letter continues:

> It is the same sort of attitude which ascribes the word-by-word collaboration of *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* to Mr. Robert Graves alone: and does not hesitate to see Mr. Graves' master-hand behind her individual writings, (the boot being as it happens on the other foot altogether — I contributed nothing to hers and L. R. did a good deal of the difficult work in *Mrs. Fisher*) and regard this flat as mine, not hers.

There are the hints here of a territorial dispute between trans- and cis-Atlantic foster parents to the ownership, not just of a Hammersmith flat, but of the adoptive lovechild of modernism itself. Riding certainly had strong claims on the brat. And, in inserting it into the English, Oxford context, Driberg has some claims to being its fairy godfather. According to Geoffrey Grigson, in June 1927 Driberg invited Edith Sitwell to speak in Oxford. Holding up a copy of Eliot's journal *The Criterion* (possibly the very one in which he had shown Auden the text of *The Waste Land*), he spoke "gracefully, at a small table, of the delights of intellectualism and modernism" (the same verbal link made by Tate in *The Fugitive*). Driberg introduced Sitwell with fulsome praise for "the synaesthetic poems of our distinguished guest", and "she returned the compliment handsomely". (Grigson 1950: 114-115; Wheen 1992: 55-56). Sitwell's performance, according to Grigson, was part of a series at the new English club involving several "eminent and curious ladies", including "Miss Laura Riding", who spoke on Poe at University (Spender's college), Sitwell herself, who spoke at Somerville on (of course) the Sitwells, "Mrs. V. Woolf", who spoke on *A Room of One's Own*, presumably in a room of her own, and "Miss Gertrude Stein", who spoke on "God knows what at Christ Church" (Auden's college). Significantly, Sitwell, Woolf and Stein were all at this time friends of the Graves/ Riding *ménage*. Grigson suggests a relation between this whole sequence of events and Driberg's involvement with the Auden circle:

> There were poets in the university who were to dominate letters before very long, W. H. Auden, for example, and Louis MacNeice [...]. But it was Thomas Driberg who now appeared to dominate the obvious and outer and smarter intellectuations of the university, who wrote poems in the blend of Eliotese and Edith-Sitwellese which appeared week by week in *Cherwell*.

(That's the student newspaper, not the river).

A little later, Grigson records of Stephen Spender, a later populariser of the term, that by the time he left Oxford he was "almost exclusively interested in [...] the "experimental" modernism of Eliot and Joyce and Ezra Pound and Virginia Woolf and Laura Riding", adding ""Modernism", then, was working like a mole in spring under the smooth beds of the garden", though "what was alive in this modernism was kicking hard with life" (1950: 121-122).

Kicking with life the "idea" may have been, but, after its brief Oxford fling, the "word" seems to have been dropped into the Cherwell (that's the river, not the student newspaper), and to have sunk without trace. For the next decade, the term is applied hardly at all to those poetic revolutionaries identified in *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*.

There are one or two exceptions. R. D. Charques's extremely interesting study *Contemporary Literature and Social Revolution* (1933) uses the word to link Eliot and the new generation of socialist poets. And Percy Wyndham Lewis uses both "modernist" and "modernism" in *Men Without Art* (1934), a concerted assault on the "critical standpoint we associate today with the name of Mr. T. S. Eliot and his school". Significantly, though, his key chapter on "T. S. Eliot (Pseudoist)" moves beyond the men of 1914 to praise the modernity of Auden's *The Orators*, for finally having "really given the coup de grâce to Mr. Eliot's spell" over the younger generation: "at last the spell has been broken. And Mr. Auden has done it". The concept is clearly in flux in Wyndham Lewis's text, where scare quotes reflect its recent borrowing from other artistic discourses. He defines Hemingway's reportorial style, for example, as "an art [...] like the cinema, or like those "modernist" still-life pictures in which, in place of painting a match box upon the canvas, a piece of actual match box is stuck on [...] a poster-art [...] a cinema in words" (Lewis 1934: 200, 266, 251, 236-237).[11]

The word probably ran a long underground course in more informal contexts, but usually with a fine-arts rather than literary significance. Thus Dylan Thomas in a letter of November 1933 says of a thick black squiggle at the end of his letter: "This is not a modernist design but an afterthought on a particular glowing sentence". However, in a joky poem included in a letter about the same time, he refers to Eliot and Pound and, *inter alios*, Joyce, Cummings and "young Auden's chatter", all of which are above the "middle brow" on "modernist Parnassian heights" (Fitzgibbon 1966: 55, 69-70).[12]

Nevertheless, it is only at the end of the 1930s that Graves is dug up and Riding rides again in a more public critical use of the term "modernism". In 1935 Louis MacNeice had contributed an essay on "Poetry To-day" to Geoffrey Grigson's collection *The Arts To-day* in which the word is conspicuous by its absence. MacNeice refers instead to such well-established "isms" as imagism, futurism, surrealism and post-impressionism, and merely observes that "in 1922 appeared the classic English test-pieces of modern prose and verse —*Ulysses* by James Joyce and *The Waste Land* by T. S.

Eliot". He speaks of Graves and Riding as "very conscious moderns and purists" without using their own 1927 term for such self-conscious modernity. If Eliot provides "a bridge between the dominant poetry of the early nineteen-twenties and the dominant poetry of the early nineteen-thirties", it is primarily in his admiration for Dryden. "Eliot's influence has been towards classicism" and under it "Auden, who to start with was very difficult [the Riding influence], is grinding his verse into simplicity" (Grigson 1935: 32-62 *passim*).

MacNeice's study *Modern Poetry* in 1938, however, uses the Graves/ Riding term to make a key distinction. Much of the book, like its title, still speaks of "modern poetry". But it reserves the Graves/ Riding epithet for discussions which focus on the disjunctive lineage running from Eliot, through the 1920s, to MacNeice's own generation and the one that follows it. It is as a historical and changing dynamic that "modernism" *per se* is here constituted: "Modernist poetry, as introduced to England by Eliot, inherited its use of imagery both from recent French poets and, among English poets, from the late Elizabethans and the Metaphysicals". "The younger poets whom I admire, Auden and Spender", he says, now "write differently" from Eliot and Pound but also from their own successors Empson and Dylan Thomas. At Oxford, MacNeice had noted earlier, "I also read Wyndham Lewis's attacks on the leading modernist writers, subsequently published in *Time and Western Man*". It is not Eliot and Co, that is, but the generation *affected by* "the methods of The Waste Land", and, in particular its most distinctive poet, Auden, who spring to MacNeice's mind when he discusses modernism (1938: 103, 105, 169).

Like Wyndham Lewis, MacNeice in 1938 still gave the word a painterly inflection, recalling schooldays when, "misled by a theory about progress, I assumed that the modernist painters were in every sense an advance on their predecessors" (1938: 51). By the time, however, that he came to write *The Poetry of W. B. Yeats*, completed in September 1940, published in 1941, the formula "modernist art" had become a general designation for all avant-garde art forms. MacNeice nevertheless still reserves it, not for Eliot and Co, but for his own coevals. Discussing the impact on him of the German invasion of Poland (the subject, of course of one of Auden's first American poems), which had rendered most artistic concerns "unreal", "belong[ing] in a sense to a past order of things", he comments:

> The unreality which now overtook them was also overtaking in my mind modern London, modernist art, and left-wing politics. If the war made nonsense of Yeats's poetry and of all works that are called "escapist", it also made nonsense of the poetry that professes to be "realist". My friends had been writing for years about guns and frontiers and factories, about the "facts" of psychology, politics, science, economics, but the fact of war made their writing seem as remote as the pleasure dome in Xanadu. For war spares neither the poetry of Xanadu nor the poetry of pylons. (1941: 2)

Remarking, later, how Yeats's later work "made such an impression on the younger English poets of the time, who had been brought up on *The Waste Land*", MacNeice admits to "a certain snobbery in our new admiration, a snobbery paralleled in Yeats's own remark: "I too have tried to be modern"". "The word "modern"", he continues, "is always relative. What did Yeats's modernity —a quality which in his youth he had violently repudiated— consist in?" (1941: 178-179). However, having already discerned aspects of the later, modernising Yeats "paralleled in W. H. Auden" (1941: 163), he has no difficulty in repeating the claim here. Indeed, his penultimate chapter, "Some Comparisons", even attempts what he admits at once to be a "fallacious" distinction between a school of Eliot and a school of Yeats, among whom he numbers specifically Auden and Spender: "In England about 1930 a school of poets appeared who mark more or less of a reaction against the influence of Eliot. Curiously, in spite of their violently "modern" content, they were not so much in reaction against Yeats" (MacNeice 1941: 223-234).

Another, complicating dispute over the birthright of "modernism" is going on here, between Anglo-Irish and Anglo-American, with the English Auden, it would seem, the young pretender. Just, however, as MacNeice was formulating this last best claim for cisatlantic paternity, Auden himself resolved the conflict by departing for the United States, taking modernism's family silver with him. The "Oxford Poets", the contributors and editors of *Oxford Poetry* in 1926 and 1927, may have picked up the mantle trailed for them by Graves and Riding. But they now write themselves backwards, in elegiac mode, as the heirs of a movement which gets christened only, it would appear, on its gravestone.

It is, then, the very last years of the 1930s which witness the emergence of a concept of a "modernist" as opposed to a merely "modern" poetry, a concept associated primarily with the Auden generation, but always, it would seem, in terms of the retrospective configuration that generation makes with the founding fathers Eliot, Yeats and Pound. Geoffrey Grigson's 1939 Preface to his *New Verse* anthology is tantalisingly ambivalent in its use of the concept. Claiming that, in editing the journal *New Verse* "my virtue, or at least my intention, has been to reject mannerism, esotericism, eclecticism, and fraud", Grigson adds a footnote which leaves unresolved whether the

contrast is between Auden's generation and a generally bogus modernism, or between an authentic British variant and a bogus American one:

> I don't say there is no mannerism, eclecticism, etc. in any of these poems. Something genuine embedded in a stew of literature (e.g. Prokosch) is better than the pure bogus modernism, e.g. of so much American poetry. (1939: 23)

A year later, the newly revised edition of a literary history which had wielded considerable influence throughout the preceding decade uses the word unequivocally to define a specific literary lineage with a restricted membership, which a talent such as Auden's is able to turn to full and fruitful account. A. C. Ward's *Twentieth-Century Literature* first appeared in 1928 and went through six editions before being revised and enlarged in September 1940. It saw another three editions by 1946. The moment of revision, coincident with MacNeice's study, marks a watershed in the evolution and understanding of modernism. The last two sections of Ward's chapter on recent poetry, "Innovators and Others" and "The New Metaphysicals", address contemporary writers, but while they speak of Eliot's "use in poetry of modern imagery and modern idiom" and of "re-establishing the "conceits" of the metaphysicals in modern dress", it is to "the young poets of the new generation", whose "cant phrase" is "Poetry for the Workers", that the accolade of true modernity falls, and it is of them that the word "modernism" is used. Once again, however, it is deployed only in the context of discussing the configuration this new generation makes with that of its immediate predecessors. If, "as more than one critic has noticed, their voices lack individuality", Ward observes, "differences of quality can nevertheless be detected and, more especially, differences in the degree of ease with which they accommodate themselves to the modernist manner". A footnote added to the revised 1940 edition refers to Grigson's Introduction to the *New Verse* anthology, and Ward's conclusion draws conspicuously on Grigson's usage:

> Of the leading poets in this group, W. H. Auden alone appears to have found a natural personal language in the modern idiom and to be capable of accepting its restrictive conventions without sacrifice of poetic stature. While MacNeice is a good poet when he escapes from the limitations of modernism, Auden is as often a good poet while within its confines. (Ward 1940: 198-201)

"Modernism", it seems, consummates a paradigmatic marriage of true minds: American eclecticism (for which, read omnivorous tasteless cultural imperialism) and Oxford cleverness; and it is chaperoned to its bridal bed by that matchless mid-Atlantic couple, joining Oxford and New York through the mediation of the Nashville publicity machine, Graves and Riding.

4. CHANGING PLACES, OR: MODERNISM'S COMING HOME

There is one last mid-Atlantic irony in all this. In 1939 Auden departed to live in the United States. In 1946, he assumed American citizenship. This was generally seen in Britain as the spiritual kiss of death of his poetry, and critics such as John Wain and Philip Larkin were keen to distinguish the early English Auden from the etiolated, flaccid conservative who had sold out his birthright, and his idiom, to America (the same anxiety revealed in Wain's review of *Steps*). Ironically, though, it is an American admirer and acolyte of both Auden and Graves who pronounced the funeral rites both of Auden and of the modernist impulse. He is also, on my incomplete assay, the first transatlantic critic to reintroduce Allen Tate's word "modernist" to describe this tradition, and he introduces it precisely to announce an obituary.

Randall Jarrell, reviewing Auden's first volume written in the United States, *The Double Man*, in *The Nation* in 1941, confers the newfound title on Auden at the very moment that he ceases to warrant it, a lost leader who has forfeited his right to the authority of modernism. As Jarrell sees it, the transit from "modern" to "modernist" has taken a decade, and in using the term he writes both the birth certificate and the obituary notice of a movement to which, previously, no name had stuck. In 1931, he says, when Auden first burst onto the scene, "the decline and fall of modernist poetry [...] were nearer than anyone could have believed":

> The poetry which came to seem during the twenties the norm of all poetic performance —experimental, lyric, obscure, violent, irregular, determinedly antagonistic to didacticism, general statement, science, the public— has lost for the young its once obsessive attraction; has evolved, in Auden's latest poem, into something that is almost its opposite [...]. How fast the world changes! And poetry with it! (Jarrell 1941: 440-441)

Modernism is dead, long live postmodernism.

There are one or two last twists to the story. When Stephen Spender wrote in *The Struggle of the Modern* that "the confrontation of the past with present seems to me [...] the fundamental aim of modernism. The reason why it became so important was that, in the early stages of the movement, the moderns wished to express the *whole* experience of modern life" (1963: 80), he also identified, unconsciously, the key element in the transition of "modern" into "modernist". Modernism emerged as, centrally, a genealogical concept, and it emerged out of a tug-of-war, on the site of the modern, between the past and the present, conducted by a generation that sought, in Oedipal terms, both to perpetuate and to dispossess its adoptive founding fathers. But, as Spender makes clear in *Love-Hate Relations: A Study of Anglo-American Sensibilities*, published in 1974 but drawing on his Clark Lectures in 1966, a decade after Graves's own, it was also a negotiation between English and American cultures in which the rising son, in true Gravesian fashion, slays the waning father, to bed the man-eating goddess of poetry.

In the 1930s, T. S. Eliot in his plays and such works as *The Rock*, can be seen pastiching the work of his young admirer Auden. But what of Graves, that indefatigable opponent of all that Auden stood for? Auden's literary debt to Graves and Riding is a matter of public record, on both sides of the transaction, from Auden's own admissions of influence to Graves's story of his ultimatum to Auden, chivalrously standing up for Laura Riding as the injured party in a poetic theft. Auden always admired Graves. Less remarked on is Graves's grudging acknowledgement of Auden both at the latter's birthday party in New York in 1958, and when he came to succeed him, with Auden's keen backing, as Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1961. I think, however, there are many instances of Graves surreptitiously engaging in tit-for-tat larceny —not so much taking in the other poet's laundry as stealing it from the tumble-drier in the mid-Atlantic laundromat, or snatching it off the poetic line. I can only, here, produce a few examples, but they are telling ones, addressing as they do that very ratio of exile, expatriation and desire to belong that links both poets in the lineage of modernism.

Poems such as "Nocturne I", in *The Shield of Achilles* in 1955, reveal an Auden whimsically taking up and replying to, with parodic guile, Graves's cult of the White Goddess, summed up in *Steps* in Graves's Housmanish faith in the "poem which is moon-magical enough to walk off the page [...] and to keep on walking, and to get under people's skins and into their eyes and throats and heart and marrows". What strikes one most about "Nocturne I", though, is not the dialogue between Muse worshipper and sceptical modernist, who translates a Gravesian "Mother, Virgin, Muse" into "that bunch of barren craters", but Auden's description of the moon as "one who

knows where she belongs". Auden refuses Graves's self-aggrandising conceit of being the Muse's darling. He is only —in a jovial Kafkaesque metamorphosis— "a small functionary" of poetry. But the tone and vocabulary with which the poem closes is close enough to Graves's hard-boiled cynicism in a poem such as "The Blue-Fly" to make one think twice. The moon, unlike Auden and Graves, is one who knows where she belongs.

Graves and Auden, different kinds of expatriate, share that characteristically modernist deracination Graves summarised so admirably in "The Cloak". This poem's aristocratic fugitive goes "Into exile with only a few shirts", only to be returned again and again to Sandwich, Deal or Rye by contrary winds, in the end getting no further than Dieppe —rather like Graves himself, who had to follow up his valedictory autobiography in 1929, *Good-bye To All That*, with the rueful admission of his 1930 play: *But It Still Goes On*. "This nobleman is at home anywhere,/ His castle being, the valet says, his title", the poem observes. But the obverse of this is that he is at home nowhere in particular, a condition which Auden explored in England in the 1930s and then, from the 1940s onwards, throughout his American residence. Indeed, ironically, almost as soon as he had become a US citizen, he came back to Europe, to live *à la* Graves and Riding on a Mediterranean island —amidst a large number of Americans— and then in Austria for the last quarter-century of his life.[13]

To examine Auden's poem "A Permanent Way", knowing his talents for plagiarism and pastiche, is to presume that it is obviously a rewriting of Graves's "Here live your life out!" The theme is roughly similar: both poems concern what looks like an ideal place to settle down, observed in passing from a non-stopping train. So too are the strategies adopted by each speaker in dealing with the imaginary tension between settling down and moving on, resolved by the good excuse for comfortably mixed emotions that a non-stopping train affords. In fact, Graves's poem cannot have influenced Auden, since Auden's was written in 1954 and collected in *The Shield of Achilles* in 1955, and Graves's appeared in *More Poems 1961*, with the information, in a prefatory note, that the volume was the supplement to *Collected Poems 1959*, and contained only four poems, none of them "Here live your life out!", which were revisions of earlier work. Clearly, there was a lot more surreptitious reading by Graves of his arch-enemy's poetry than he ever let on, particularly, perhaps, at the moment he was to succeed him as Professor of Poetry in that cradle of modernism where they had first crossed swords, and pens, over the honour of Laura Riding so many years before.

What links the two poets, in this convergence of themes? Their poems' separate endings suggest what this is, each of them in different ways confirming the client relationship both these quintessentially English poets

have, as Wain suggests in his 1959 review, to American modernism. What does Auden say but take the money and not so much run as lie back and think of England, with "at least a ten-dollar cheque" in your pocket (about what a poet might have been paid for a poem in a journal in those days, I suspect):

> And what could be greater fun,
> Once one has chosen and paid,
> Than the inexpensive delight
> Of a choice one might have made...

Possibly a dig at Graves's American friend Robert Frost as well, here.

Graves is ostensibly more intransigent. But he too eschews the heroism of the "simple-hearted", lacking the resolution, or perhaps the sincerity, to pull the train's emergency chain. It is, supposedly, the scene which withdraws from the would-be faithful traveller, and not vice versa. He could, however, return in a private car, and "sue for possession". Like Auden, though, he knows this would be pure romantic "folly". And why? Because the birthright has already been sold. The culture is in the hands of the colonials, those usurpers whose money and influence have bought up all our native estates, and who now own the language:

> Too far, too late:
> Already bolder tenants were at the gate.

And, one might add, in the yard, baying at the moon that was soon to wear a rakish American flag. The package deal, that is, has given way to the package tour. But the real (which is to say the imaginary) home of modernism is on that train, always in transit. For it is only in perpetual motion that modernism finds its truly "permanent way".

NOTES

[1] Commercial television had been introduced in the UK in 1955, to much brouhaha from intellectuals on the Left and traditionalists on the Right that it would lead straight to the brash Americanisation of British culture.

[2] I have discussed this particular genealogy more fully in Smith (1994: 1-14).

[3] On this, see Coyle 1996. Levin may have picked up the term from Wyndham Lewis. In *Rude Assignment* (1950), Lewis inveighs against Levin's *James Joyce* (1944), for misrepresenting —and possibly plagiarising— him on Joyce in *Time and Western Man* (1927). Lewis does not, however, use the word "modernism" in that book, though he does use it in *Men Without Art* (1934). See also n. 11 below.

[4] A year earlier, Philip Larkin, in his 1960 article "The Blending of Betjeman" in the *Spectator*, had observed that "it was Eliot who gave the modernist poetic movement its charter in the sentence, "Poets in our civilization [...] must be difficult'" (rpt. Larkin 1983: 129). Early instances of the word tend to use it as a blanket term for all the arts, but predominantly the plastic ones, only belatedly including poetry. Rene Wellek, for example in *Twentieth Century English* in 1946, speaks of an analogy between "the fine arts themselves and the art of literature", both of which, he says, "reacted against realism and naturalism in the direction of symbolism and other "modernism"" (W. S. Knickerbocker (ed.) 1946: 69, in *A Supplement to the OED*, vol. III: 581). The use of scare quotes, as with Spender, indicates that this is still an uncommon usage, alluding to a vaguely generalised concept rather than a particular movement, and frequently implies disapproval. Compare, for example, Christmas Humphreys, "Poetry, Ancient Versus Modern —Or is it?" in *The Poetry Review* in 1943: "I may be sentimentally senile, but are not most of the "moderns" painfully intellectual? [...] Are there none living who could revive that beauty [of Christina Rossetti's "Remember me"], or is love, in the modernist mind, a matter of sex and convenience?" (Humphreys 1943: 22).

[5] Murry, "Art and Philosophy", in *Rhythm*, I, I (Summer 1911: 12):

> The artist attains to the pure form, refining and intensifying his vision till all that is unessential dissolves away memories and that false knowledge which would bind him down to a mere existence, untrue because it is unlived. He must return to the moment of pure perception to see the essential forms, the essential harmonies of line and colour, the essential music of the world. Modernism is not the capricious outburst of intellectual dipsomania. It penetrates beneath the outward surface of the world, and disengages the rhythms that lie at the heart of things, rhythms strange to the eye, unaccustomed to the ear, primitive harmonies of the world that is and lives". (rpt. in Pondrom 1974)

Murry's phrasing here echoes *fin de siècle* Symbolism, as presented by Yeats, for example, as well as the Bergsonian/ Sorelian vitalism fashionable in the 1900s. (Murry was a friend of D. H. Lawrence). This occurrence of "Modernism" seems like a one-off usage referring largely to the plastic arts and music, when Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and the post-impressionist Exhibition were making their first impact on London.

[6] On this early history of the word "modernism", see the important study by Langdon Hammer (1993), to which I am generally indebted.

[7] The somewhat jejune commendation indicates some of the characteristics associated with her modernity:

> With a diverse play of imagination she combines in her poetry a sound intellectuality and a keen irony which give her work a substance not often found in current American poetry. Her poetry is philosophical in trend, yet not divorced from life, but generally tense with emotion and concerned with profound issues. Furthermore, she has developed her own idiom of expression —an idiom which manifests itself in a variety of forms, conventional or unconventional, and which gives her poetry the stamp of an original personality.

[8] This is discounted by her biographer, Deborah Baker (1993: 75-77).

[9] W. H. Auden's *Poems* (1928) was privately printed in a numbered and limited edition by Stephen Spender. For Auden's contribution to *Oxford Poetry* (published annually by Basil Blackwell, Oxford) and other Oxford journals, see Carpenter 1981: 59-60.

[10] Driberg's protestations of innocence about what he calls "this confusing, and surely confused letter", affirming his "general, uncomplicated liking" for Riding, are somewhat disingenuous, given his notorious misogyny and his (tongue-in-cheek?) surprise, here, at Graves's "disrespectful reference to heterosexuality", which he retrospectively and ever-hopefully attributes, along with "the violence of Graves's reaction to my olive branch", to the repression of "an unconscious homosexual impulse" on Graves's part.

[11] For Wyndham Lewis, the word, as one might expect of one adept as artist as well as writer, usually has a plastic arts origin. For example, *Rude Assignment: An Intellectual Autobiography*, a retrospective written in 1947, speaks of contemporary ""modernist" circles in the art world", and observes:

> Now how much "modernist" art —in this term we can include the French Impressionist school— has battened upon what is silly and ugly, upon the commonplaces and vulgarities of modern everyday existence, is forgotten or not realised. And Picasso, who started as an impressionist [...] made a fetish almost of a box of matches, a bottle of beer, an ugly vase or kitchen chair". (1984: 170)

But he also uses the word in the more general sense, to refer to a state of mind, modernity, as in *Hitler* (1931: 37-41), speaking of "the great "aryan" inventors and technicians, who have been responsible for all the destructive "modernism" of the present Western World".

[12] Thomas is likely to have got the term from Victor Neuberg, the eccentric literary journalist who had adopted him as a *protégé*, and published his first poems. Neuberg wrote in September 1933, of Thomas's poem "That sanity be kept", that it was "perhaps the best modernist poem that as yet I've received" for his newspaper, *The Sunday Referee*. (See Ferris, 1978: 88.) The curious shadow existence the term leads in this decade is evidenced by another instance which also indicates its slow resurfacing as the decade progresses. Maurice Wollman's *Modern Poetry 1922-1934: An Anthology* (1935), has a substantial set of notes which makes plain its pedagogic function as a school anthology. It contains poems by most of the leading modernists from Eliot onwards, and discusses their work, not altogether approvingly, in an Introduction which reserves the epithet, peculiarly, for "Mr. Richard Church, half modernist and half "Georgian", with frequent affinities with John Donne" and for "Mr. Austin Clarke, Irish modernist technician" (1935: x). Interestingly, for once, the scare quotes are here reserved not for "modernist" but for "Georgian", as if this were the more problematic term. Research may well show that "modernist", like the recently coined "highbrow", was used more frequently during this period, with varying shades of disapprobation, by commentators on the margins rather than at the centre of the literary profession, like the provincial ex-schoolboy Dylan Thomas, son of a Swansea English teacher, and Wollman, described on his title page as "senior English Master at Barking Abbey School".

[13] In the 1930s, Auden wrote begrudgingly in *The Orators* of Robert and Laura "spooning in Spain". Again, getting their geography wrong, in *Letters from Iceland* (1937) he and MacNeice bequeathed in their mock "Last Will and Testament", "the Isle of Wight/ To Robert Graves and Laura Riding, because/ An Italian island is no good place to write". Who knows what part this faulty geography played in Auden's own post-war choice of an Italian island for his exile's return ? A Spanish island, however, was out of the question because of Auden's active and propaganda support for the Republic during the Civil War.

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MODERNISM IN TRANSITION: THE EXPATRIATE AMERICAN MAGAZINE IN EUROPE BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

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The importance of the little magazine in the history of modern American art has long been acknowledged. In their landmark 1946 study of the subject, Frederick Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn Ulrich maintained that little magazines "introduced and sponsored every noteworthy literary movement or school" that appeared in the United States from the years immediately prior to the first world war (Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich 1946: 1-2). They argued convincingly that a developing modern American literature was both fostered by and helped revitalize a tradition of literary periodical publication in the United States that extended well back into the nineteenth century. Their claim also emphasized the importance for American art of the watershed years between 1900 and 1914. In this time, Americans abroad like T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Gertrude Stein confronted the developments of a modern European art; subsequent events in the United States like the Armory Show of 1913 foreshadowed the arrival of Francis Picaba and Marcel Duchamp in New York before the end of the decade. These happenings facilitated the cultural encounters frequently desired by the editors of little magazines, encounters that altered the course of American art forever.

The changes that ushered in a modern art in Europe had been discernable for more than fifty years, as European cities like Berlin, London, Paris, Prague, Vienna, and Zürich became important cultural centers for successive generations of artists interested in producing work that responded effectively to the modern world. European periodicals played a role in promoting movements and spreading ideas across the continent, but little of this

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material found its way to the United States. The expatriation to Europe of artists from America is as old as the republic itself, but in the crucial period that followed the first world war an unprecedented number of Americans looked with curiosity once more to Europe, following the most recent example of Eliot, Pound, and Stein. What Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich could only suspect in the 1940s was that these Americans abroad found little magazines the most effective forum for their work, potent weapons by which to confront the conservatism of art in the United States with examples and adaptations of innovations readily apparent in Europe. Pound served as a good exemplar: he had already made use of small English and American literary magazines himself, well before the arrival of the new wave of expatriates following the war.

It was from among these later expatriates, however, that figures would emerge who would go further by actually editing their own publications abroad. Titles like *Broom*, *Secession*, and *This Quarter* spent much of the 1920s hoping to promote the work of expatriate Americans to an audience in their native United States; these magazines would also import to their homeland the sometimes daring and exotic art of young Europeans, a wealth of material the potential impact of which had only been suggested by the scattered examples that appeared in magazines edited in America. By the middle of that decade, however, an American named Eugene Jolas concluded that the enthusiasm that had marked these expatriate publishing ventures had waned. He believed that while political concerns threatened to overtake interest in aesthetic innovations throughout the western world, the battle for truly modern forms in America had not yet been won. Even though American writers in Europe seemed to be on the verge of achieving a great fulfillment of their own artistic aims, the threat was renewed that this achievement might pass unnoticed in the United States. In response, Jolas established *transition* in Paris, a magazine that sought to uncover the most innovative work being undertaken by writers of all nations, a magazine that sought to present an encyclopedic cross-section of that material to anyone who was still largely indifferent to the innovations of modern art. For this reason, the story of *transition* helps chart developments seen in American and European art at what is now read as a critical moment of high modernism; as the largest and most important expatriate American magazine in this period, it underlines the entrenchment of an artistic program in the United States that we now recognize as modernism itself. That said, the achievement of any single publication must be judged within the context of the larger movement that fostered the artistic ambitions of Americans living abroad between the world

wars. For all of these bold publishing ventures helped make hospitable to Americans the foreign centers of modernism, the teeming cities that nurtured the modern.

Just before the first world war, Ezra Pound wrote to Amy Lowell that London was "the only sane place for any one to live if they've any pretense to letters" (Paige 1950: 33). Following the example of Henry James, who settled in London rather than Paris, Pound arrived in the English capital in 1908. But while he had gone to Europe to search for the *paradiso terrestre*, the poet also held out hope for a great artistic awakening in America. He foresaw an "American Risorgimento", an uprising to "make the Italian Renaissance look like a tempest in a teapot". American art had "the force [...] and the impulse", and a magazine in the United States could help provide "the guiding sense, the discrimination in applying the force". Thus he began his association with Harriet Monroe's *Poetry*, with a letter written in August 1912. He concluded that her plan for a publication appeared "not only sound but the only possible method. There is no other magazine in America which is not an insult to the serious artist and to the dignity of his art".

Published in Chicago, *Poetry* was a deathblow to the literary pretensions of genteel, commercial magazines in the United States. In his first letter, Pound acknowledged that *Poetry* should concentrate on American poets, among whom he still counted himself and his expatriate brethren, but he also maintained that loyalty to these writers should never "mean a blindness to the art". For this reason, Pound suggested that the magazine "must keep an eye on Paris", for example, and that if Monroe wanted "poetry from other sources than America", he might "be able to be of use". In his role as foreign correspondent for *Poetry*, Pound arranged the appearance of Americans like T. S. Eliot and Robert Frost; he sought from poets of all nationalities "experiments that seem serious, and seriously and sanely directed toward the broadening and development of the art of poetry". But his overwhelming desire to "support American poets —preferably the young ones who have a serious determination to produce master-work" led Pound to consider founding his own magazine in London. While he suggested to Monroe that it was not "any of the artist's business to see whether or no he circulates", he confessed that he too had been "nevertheless tempted, on the verge of starting a quarterly" (Paige 1950: 9-11). Pound's uneasiness reflected some acknowledgment of a traditional divide between editor and publisher, on the one hand, and artist on the other. One of the primary functions of the little magazine had been to challenge this distinction, and while it took Pound more than a decade to actually bring forth his own review, his work with

other magazines on behalf of young artists served to bring down barriers to modern literature in the publishing world.

Poetry was, in many ways, too conservative a venture to fulfill all of Pound's needs. In the same manner that he collaborated with Monroe on her publication, Pound became involved with magazines like the *Dial* and the *Little Review*. He told Margaret Anderson that he wanted "an official organ", a medium for his "regular appearance" and the promotion of writers he admired (Paige 1950: 106-107). Sometimes, as in the case of Alfred Kreymborg's *Others*, Pound would simply petition American magazines to include his submissions. Critically, he grew to take a more active role with such English magazines as the *New Freewoman*, soon published with Richard Aldington as the *Egoist*, where Pound was installed as literary editor; most importantly, he collaborated on *Blast* with Wyndham Lewis. He mentioned founding his own magazine again in a letter to Marianne Moore in December 1918. "I hope to start a quarterly here before long", he wrote, and "part of the funds are in hand". Truthfully, financial conditions were not right for any such new endeavor in England, and Pound admitted to Harriet Shaw Weaver that "the cost of printing" was "soaring" in London, and even an established magazine like the *Egoist* was forced to "retrench at all points" (Paige 1950: 144). In any case, Pound had by this time soured on London, long ago concluding that "England is dead as mutton" (Paige 1950: 24), so he set off to Paris in the early 1920s. In the meantime, he was concerned about the fate of the American writer, and he still envisioned a role for the little magazine in fostering talent. He asked Harriet Monroe, "How can the blooming provincial poet be expected to keep a pace unless we set it?" (Paige 1950: 35).

While he was no provincial poet, Harold Loeb bought a share in a New York bookstore after the armistice, in part, so he could learn more about contemporary writing and publishing. With the wealth of both the Loeb and the Guggenheim families behind him, this prospective literary man decided that he might start his own magazine. "I wanted to write, had always wanted to write", he later admitted, "and a magazine would give me an incentive as well as an outlet" (Loeb 1959: 3-4). Besides nine thousand dollars in seed money, Loeb had an additional advantage: he shared a house with Alfred Kreymborg, who had established himself as a discerning little magazine editor during the previous decade with the *American Quarterly*, *Glebe*, and *Others*. Loeb was ambitious enough for both men; there were many magazines publishing in the United States, and there were even many that "were devoting much space to experimental poetry, prose, and painting", he

admitted, but he wished to concentrate on younger, unheralded figures. With Kreymborg as co-editor, Loeb devised a plan to publish his magazine in Rome. "As far as I knew, no one had ever published America's young writers in old Europe", he later reflected, "where it was supposed in certain circles that American literature had stopped with Edgar Allan Poe" (Loeb 1959: 6).

Would *Broom*, as the new magazine was christened, be a magazine for European readers unacquainted with contemporary letters in the United States? Loeb's observations underlined his own uncertainty about the audience he might engage. Like many Americans who went abroad during the 1920s, he held an equivocal view of his European hosts. Indeed, one of the reasons why even expatriate American magazines with commercial aspirations failed to sustain themselves between the wars was simply because few ever developed effectively an audience among European readers, in spite of their idealistic intentions to serve the widest possible readership. Kreymborg claimed that he too saw *Broom* as "a splendid opportunity to introduce lesser known Americans to European circles" (Kreymborg 1925: 362). But while American writing would need an international stage if it was ever to scale the heights envisioned by Ezra Pound, most American editors, including Pound himself, proved themselves most concerned with shipping magazines back home. As Loeb viewed it, *Broom* could develop in one of two ways: it could either appear "in small editions of a few hundred, just enough copies to fill the subscriptions wheedled from friends and would-be contributors, plus enough extra copies to supply the few avant-garde bookshops", or it could be produced for "a broader audience, in editions of several thousand". He perceptively noted that the first option could never generate revenue; the magazine would appear only until the initial money ran out. The second option required greater short-term risk, but it promised a chance of the profitability that might sustain *Broom* indefinitely (Loeb 1959: 13-14). Unfortunately, Loeb chose the second option. Operating on this greater scale, the magazine lost a thousand dollars a month from the time it first appeared in November 1921; by the next spring, Loeb had discharged his co-editor, banking the salaries he had used to entice Kreymborg and his wife to Europe. In truth, the partnership between the two men was never satisfactory, for Loeb suspected that Kreymborg saw him as little more than a "wealthy backer" who was a "dullard" in literary matters (Loeb 1959: 94).

Rome cannot be judged a cultural center for modernism, but Loeb was determined to use his location in Europe to his advantage. He believed that he "could recognize America's significant aspects more easily by living abroad for a while and observing them from a distance" (Loeb 1959: 8). In their first

number, Loeb and Kreymborg proclaimed the magazine "a sort of clearing house where the artists of the present time will be brought into closer contact". They promised that the "path-breaking artist will have, when his material merits it, at least an equal chance with the artist of acknowledged reputation" ("Manifesto I" 1921: n.p.). The writing of such manifestos would define the little magazines of this period, and as much as possible *Broom* attempted to live up to these professed aims. But in spite of contributions from Conrad Aiken, John Gould Fletcher, Amy Lowell, Marianne Moore, Gertrude Stein, Wallace Stevens, and Louis Untermeyer, its earliest numbers are now judged as rather conservative. Loeb was a hesitant editor; he was slow to put his mark upon the magazine through the writing of editorials, and *Broom* lacked identity and direction. Short on bombast, he hoped the "glamour" of the carefully printed and sometimes elaborate publication would be enough to engage readers until his "ideas crystallized" (Loeb 1959: 77).

In the meantime, this "international magazine of the arts published by Americans in Italy", as it was billed, captured the attention of the expatriates who were assembling in Paris, American writers like Matthew Josephson. Like many other literary hopefuls in the United States, Josephson found himself at the end of the war working in the newspaper trade. His friend Malcolm Cowley later observed that in those days "young writers couldn't buy luxuries even on the installment plan. They didn't want to advertise or sell them or write stories in which salesmen were the romantic heroes". These were the writers, then, who looked abroad immediately after the war. "Feeling like aliens in the commercial world", Cowley concluded, "they sailed for Europe as soon as they had enough money to pay for their steamer tickets" (Cowley 1961: 6). In this fashion, Josephson found his way to Paris in 1921, and he fell in immediately with a circle of Americans publishing the magazine *Gargoyle*. Edited by Arthur Moss, one of the earliest expatriates to arrive from Greenwich Village after the armistice, this short-lived venture was the first magazine brought out by an American abroad, and it is noteworthy because it followed faithfully international developments in art seen in the French capital. Without the sort of financial backing enjoyed by Harold Loeb, *Gargoyle* breathed for little more than a year, and by the time Josephson found himself in its orbit it was already struggling to generate enough revenue to continue. In a November 1921 letter to his friend Kenneth Burke, Josephson mentioned that a fellow expatriate named Gorham Munson had become associate editor of the magazine, and the two men hoped to make it less "Villagy", so that *Gargoyle* might "try to get circulation purely on artistic merits". He also complained casually that the first number of *Broom*

to reach Paris appeared "rather indecisive", a sentiment not inconsistent with Loeb's own assessment, and that the whole Italian operation seemed "like very weak coffee after the advance notices" (Matthew Josephson Papers 2: 30). Over the next few weeks, Josephson and Munson discussed the idea of starting their own review, perhaps a publication to rival *Broom*. With this in mind, Munson struck out for Vienna with five hundred dollars. The culture of the Austrian capital had been reshaped over the previous forty years by an interesting interplay of artistic impulses both conservative and experimental. But while the city itself would have been of interest to a young expatriate American, Munson also discovered that a twenty-four page magazine could be printed there for up to five hundred readers for little more than twenty dollars (Munson 1985: 163). Hence, *Secession* was born.

In its first numbers, the new magazine took direct aim at its competitors. The *Dial* required "its pretenses abandoned" (Munson 1922a: 24); the *Little Review* was "like a rudderless ship blown about in all directions by breezes from the left of Paris or London or Chicago"; *Broom* was "a cacophony", a magazine with "the principle of the general merchandise store. Have everything in stock, what one customer doesn't want, another will" (Munson 1922b: 30). *Secession* had bombast; what it did not have was an editor committed to the expatriate life. Munson announced from the beginning, "The Director pledges his energies for at least two years to the continuance of *Secession*". A little magazine established for a brief run can be very effective, as Munson acknowledged when he claimed that "beyond a two year span, observation shows, the vitality of most reviews is lowered..." (Munson 1922c: n.p.). But while he would not abandon the magazine, he longed to go home after only a year abroad, and he realized that to continue *Secession* in the United States would be impossible with the money he had. As a result, he devised a plan by which Josephson would assume responsibility for editorial matters and printing in Europe; he and Kenneth Burke would control editorial matters and distribution in New York.

Details of the subsequent disagreement between Munson and Josephson are steeped in expatriate lore, and separate accounts can be found in numerous memoirs of the day. Traditionally, little magazine editors have had difficulty sharing control of their publications, especially when great distances complicate attempts at communication. With *Secession*, the material that was subsequently included in the magazine and that which was left out suggested to Munson that Josephson was circumventing their original agreement. Munson later claimed that Josephson had to take full responsibility for the contents of the third and fourth numbers of the

publication; John Brooks Wheelwright assisted from Europe in the printing of the fifth and sixth numbers, but he too did not undertake the task to Munson's satisfaction. The magazine that featured the work of Hart Crane, e. e. cummings, Malcolm Cowley, and William Carlos Williams disbanded soon after. Indeed, Cowley later used the *Secession* incident to repudiate the existence of a "lost generation" of expatriate Americans between the wars. "They were never united into a single group or school", he concluded, speaking of the Americans who went abroad. "Instead they included several loosely defined and vaguely hostile groups", and "all of them differed constantly with all the others" (Cowley 1961: 6-7).

Josephson was unable to devote himself fully to Munson and *Secession*, in part, because he had developed a real loyalty to *Broom*. Before he set up his own magazine, Munson actually approached Loeb with an offer to replace Kreymborg. However, it was Josephson who eventually became associate editor after Loeb tired of Rome and relocated in Berlin, beginning with *Broom* 3: 4 (November 1922). Of all the Americans in Europe at this time, Josephson had one of the most pronounced interests in the work of experimental European writers. In his first months in Paris, he wrote Kenneth Burke, "Since I have assumed the living standards of a very poor man, I have joined the camp of the Dadaists". It would be wrong, of course, to suggest that Josephson followed slavishly the European paradigms being worked out around him. Indeed, in the same letter he admitted of the dadaists that "looking at a mass of their reviews gives you vertigo". But he did find them "young" and "stimulating", and he held out hope "that some of them will crawl out from under their rubbish and begin to work in earnest" (Matthew Josephson Papers 2: 30). He would eventually reject this art outright, but in the early 1920s he suggested to the readership of *Broom* that there was some benefit to be found among the most maverick artists with whom he surrounded himself. It was not that any single movement could provide an archetype for the American artist, but rather that through their work "a strong impetus has been given to unlimited experiment with form, to a greater daring and more penetrating humor" (Josephson 1922: 269). Josephson said later that he believed that "it might be fun if we Americans, who were in Europe at the time, would start a literary movement of our own for the younger generation" (Josephson 1962: 153). It was with this spirit that Josephson threw himself into a more active role with *Broom*, for by 1923 Harold Loeb had tired of the magazine altogether, and he found that even the backing of his generous relatives had its limits. Berlin, the center of a burgeoning modernism in the late nineteenth century, was now truly

overshadowed by Paris after the war, and Loeb moved to France to write a novel. In time, Josephson took *Broom* back to New York for its final numbers, brought forward with the assistance of Cowley and Slater Brown. One of its last battles was over the objections raised to its content by the United States post office. Determined that "by virtue of its extraordinary career in the art capitals of Europe [...] *Broom* has acquired a particular bent for rejecting that which is dull and worthless", these final numbers appeared more spirited than the magazine's tentative beginnings (*Broom* in America 1923: n.p.).

Cowley wrote that at that time "the exiles of art came straggling home by twos and threes, year after year" (Cowley 1961: 171). Indeed, the mid-1920s was, according to Josephson, the time during which many expatriates returned to settle into more respectable employment. But the Europe they left behind did have Paris as its undeniable seat of modern creative achievement. After the war, Eugene Jolas travelled to Lorraine, but when financial necessity drew him away from his family there, he did not return to his newspaper work in New York; instead, he plied this trade in the French capital. What he found there struck him profoundly. "Paris today is doubtless the cerebral crucible of the world", Jolas wrote in the Paris *Tribune*. "Nowhere does the visitor from America face such a plethora of ideas, revolutionary concepts, boldly destructive philosophies, ferociously new aesthetic principles..." (Ford 1972: 96). Jolas noticed with interest that writers working in English had a number of little magazines at their disposal. Most notably, Ford Madox Ford brought his British sensibilities to bear in publishing the *transatlantic review*. Unfortunately, financial difficulties made its influential run necessarily short. Equally promising at the time, however, was the appearance of *This Quarter*, founded in the city by expatriate American Ernest Walsh.

Malcolm Cowley described a publication well-suited to its title: "existing in the pure present" (Cowley 1961: 9). It is true that few magazines found the rhythm of its time so well, and Walsh quickly earned the respect of his peers. Like many of the magazines published abroad by Americans, *This Quarter* was itinerant: the editor moved it from Paris to Milan to Monte Carlo in short time. In the first number, Walsh proclaimed that his publication "exists primarily to publish the artist's work while it is still fresh" (Walsh 1925: 259). Indeed, Walsh and his collaborator Ethel Moorhead sought new manuscripts aggressively; the first two numbers featured Djuna Barnes, Kay Boyle, Morley Callaghan, H. D., Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Robert McAlmon, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams. Walsh,

whose work had previously appeared in *Poetry*, was a good writer and critic, and these numbers contained a great deal of his material. Sadly, neither Walsh nor *This Quarter* would ever fulfil their promise. Rather prophetically, the first poem to appear in the magazine was Emmanuel Carnevali's "Sorrow's Headquarters". It begins, "The hospital waits: I, today, You tomorrow" (Carnevali 1925: 3). Within a year, Walsh was dead from the residual effects of a war injury; expatriate Americans did not expect the cold hand of the conflict to reach so far into the ensuing decade. Walsh's ambitious editorial program had little opportunity to take shape; Moorhead published a number of his works posthumously in the subsequent number along with her promise to continue. But it was not until 1929 that she handed over *This Quarter* to Edward Titus, and the revived publication never regained the standing it achieved in its abbreviated run under Walsh.

The death of Ernest Walsh not only silenced a promising literary figure, it also closed an important venue for expatriate American writers. Ezra Pound, who had been living in Rapallo since 1924, decided that the tragedy held for him a new challenge. In October and November 1926 he wrote to his father that he was "having fool ideas of starting a magazine". Remembering specifically the disputes he had with Harriet Monroe over *Poetry*, he liked the idea of having "absolOOT controll" of a magazine with "no more combinations or compromises" (Ezra Pound Papers 61: 2692). Moving quickly, Pound launched his *Exile* in the spring of 1927. While this medium offered him perhaps his greatest opportunity to speak directly to a waiting readership, there were numerous distractions that prevented him from shaping his distinct editorial platform. First of all, Pound encountered innumerable difficulties in shipping the magazine from France, where he had arranged to have it printed, to the United States for its primary distribution. This delay and the annoying pecuniary details of running a magazine tired him. Second, he decided to concentrate more on the creative side of *Exile*, putting forth some of his own *Cantos* as well as the work of Ralph Cheever Dunning, John Rodker, W. B. Yeats, and Louis Zukofsky. Pound claimed to his father, "I seem to have a sort of head of steam up [...] for the editorial part of the show (Ezra Pound Papers 61: 2692); but in the third number of the magazine he admitted that there seemed to be little "room for our editorials. Any scrap of creative work being in our eye more than lengthy discussion of what might be but is not" (Pound 1928b: 102).

Pound claimed consistently that selection was the most valid form of criticism, and more perhaps than any other American little magazine editor he left readers to assemble the critical acumen at work in the *Exile* through their

own assessments of the texts. For this reason, he would savage amateur poetasters, like an unknown Canadian versifier who complained to Pound's representative in New York that if he ever figured out what the editor wanted, he would write exactly that. "I suppose, though", he continued, "that he will take a swig of good, strong vinegar, suck a piece of lemon, and then return my ms. with a few sarcastic remarks..." (Ezra Pound Papers 42: 1790). What direct editorial guidance and encouragement Pound did give his readers was sterling. "Quite simply: I want a new civilization. We have the basis for a new poetry", he wrote. "If you have a thousand architects of great talent working ten hours a day, you cannot exhaust the new possibilities of steel structure. If you have a hundred musicians of genius working half the day and all night, you cannot exhaust the new impulse in music. Why worry? There is plenty of work to be done" (Pound 1928a: 108).

After the complications that dogged the first number, delays that cost him money, Pound entered into an agreement with the publisher Pascal Covici to bring out the magazine in Chicago. Covici believed that Pound's name would carry the *Exile*, and he hoped to use the liaison to gain the publishing rights to the poet's newer works. Unfortunately, the venture proved so unprofitable that the magazine was disbanded after four numbers, and Covici's new partnership with Donald Friede in New York scuppered the appearance of planned future works. In a fit of anger, Pound wrote his father: "*Exile* will appear when and where I see fit..." When he had collected enough material "thought to be unsaleable" by commercial publishers to "demand a new issue", he was determined to bring forth the fifth number. With a bitter "Merry Xmas", Pound signed off, but that was in fact the last heard of the *Exile* (Ezra Pound Papers 61: 2696). This is not to say that Pound himself lost interest in little magazines; indeed, he made plans to launch a new review as late as the 1950s.

At the same time that Pound was at work in Rapallo, Eugene Jolas returned to France from a trip to the United States with the idea that if the conditions were right, he might start his own magazine in Europe. Originally, he and his wife intended to stay in America and take over the *Double Dealer*, a little magazine published in New Orleans. At one time, that publication had been well-received as a magazine of the American south, one of the sectional or so-called "regional" magazines that championed a twentieth-century realist fiction that Jolas had already rejected in his newspaper columns and which he countered in his own writings in favor of an approach that celebrated the power of the imagination. Although the heterogeneous cultural makeup of Louisiana was well suited to Jolas's

temperament, the southern United States in the 1920s was hardly the base from which to champion experimental American and European literature. Jolas believed that by editing a review in America, no matter how international in scope, he would be limited by what he saw as the existing partiality of his initial readership. One of the keys to *transition*'s remarkable success was that it effectively courted an international readership, the unrealized goal of many American magazines published abroad. Jolas's publication combined the bombast of *Secession* with the editorial certainty of *This Quarter*, and while it stumbled along in search of funds, it appeared on roughly the same large scale as did *Broom*. Jolas found that Paris had grown no less vital than it had been in the earlier part of the decade; he wrote that the city remained "a hotbed of literary and artistic insurrections". Examples of modern European art were still in abundance, and in spite of the absence of writers and critics like Cowley, Josephson, and Munson, the cafés were filled with other expatriate Americans who gave truth to Jolas's belief that writing in English was readying itself for an unprecedented burst of innovation. Jolas's own poetry had been published in *This Quarter*, and after the death of Ernest Walsh, Jolas concluded that a new magazine had to step in and take the initiative. In the United States, many of the best little magazines were devoting themselves to political concerns. Pound's risorgimento had not yet occurred, and time seemed to be running short. In reflection, Jolas concluded, "I felt there was a need for a review in English which would be a focal point for creative experiments of the period" (Jolas 1931: 186).

The first number of *transition* was published in April 1927, and although the magazine appeared irregularly for more than a decade, its first year of monthly numbers was in some sense its most exciting. Jolas collaborated with a co-editor, the well-known American newspaperman Elliot Paul. They believed that art could play a unifying role in the world of discord. "Of all the values conceived by the mind of man throughout the ages, the artistic have proven the most enduring," they maintained. The continuity of art "joins distant continents into a mysterious unit, long before the inhabitants are aware of the universality of their impulses" ("Introduction" 1927: 135). Initially, the magazine appeared in a small, compact form, and because of its modest size, it was somewhat limited in the visual art it could reproduce and the length of submissions it could accept. Still, these first twelve numbers featured a very impressive collection of writers and other artists. American contributions appeared from Djuna Barnes, Kay Boyle, Hart Crane, H. D., Ernest Hemingway, Man Ray, Laura Riding, Gertrude Stein, and William Carlos Williams. Important Europeans included Gottfried Benn, Léon-Paul Fargue, André Gide, Juan Gris, Pablo Picasso, and James Joyce. Most critically, perhaps, American readers once again found themselves privy to the work of radical European artists. Just as Josephson abandoned them, Jolas found material of interest from former and current members of the dadaists (Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, Tristan Tzara, Kurt Schwitters) and surrealists (André Breton, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, Robert Desnos).

Beyond this first year of monthly appearances, the magazine continued as a quarterly until 1930, when financial problems forced a two year suspension. Later numbers were marked by a greater enthusiasm on Jolas's part to define his editorial platform and encourage experimentation. This was accomplished through a series of critical articles provided by Jolas and his closest collaborators, as well as through the appearance of two manifestos: "The Revolution of the Word" in 1929 and "Poetry is Vertical" in 1932. But while these documents were discussed both by expatriates in Paris and by the *transition* readership worldwide, the crash of the stock market in the United States was what truly jolted American magazine publishing abroad at this time. From the early 1930s until the beginning of the second world war, *transition* had few direct competitors in Paris; indeed, it was a time during which even American newspapers abroad were forced to retrench. Some of the new little magazines that appeared in the French capital, along with the remounted *This Quarter*, were noteworthy because their editors were also interested in the questions of language that so preoccupied Eugene Jolas. Sadly, the difficult economic conditions in which publications like *Tambour* and the *New Review* appeared certainly detracted from the effect of the important aesthetic debates they carried out. These magazines were rarely active at the same time, but the frequently unanswered positions plotted out by their editors have become central concerns for scholars interested in the literature of the period. In *Tambour*, for example, editor Harold Salemson printed a manifesto titled "Essential: 1930". Although Salemson signed "The Revolution of the Word", he used his own magazine to raise the possibility of "The Revolution of the Idea" and separate himself from what people saw as the social ramifications of Jolas's ideas. While Salemson claimed to have the backing of American writers in the United States and abroad, his magazine folded before they were revealed to his readers. Similarly, Samuel Putnam used his *New Review*, in part, to voice his skepticism about Jolas's work. Putnam actually launched his magazine in response to Edward Titus's running of *This Quarter*, but he promised that the *New Review*, "an international notebook for the arts published from Paris", would be "the organ of no school of movement" ("The *New Review*" 1931: n.p.).

In these later years, a number of other expatriate American magazines appeared in Europe, and while their editors may have been less concerned with the aesthetic issues raised by recent developments in modern literature than was Eugene Jolas, many of them had past connections with *transition*. Whit Burnett and Martha Foley signed "The Revolution of the Word", and two years later they brought forth *Story* magazine. While they claimed that their new publication had "no theories, and is part of no movement", in its modest, mimeographed beginnings can be read the desire to explore innovations in fiction as Jolas explored innovations in poetry. The magazine was not even distributed in England and the United States, initially, and the publication sought stories "of significant merit [...] by no matter whom and coming from no matter where" ("*Story*" 1931: n. p.). Similarly, Syd Salt had also published in *transition*, and he resurfaced in 1934 with *Caravel*. In both cases, these magazines were published on the continent, and they reflected something of the turbulent life abroad for Americans in the 1930s. While Burnett and Foley traced a well-worn trail to Vienna, Salt found himself in Majorca. But these publications were little more than interesting exceptions; the period of growth in expatriate American publishing abroad was over for the time being. More Americans returned to the United States, and those writers who did stay in Europe were distracted by the ominous political developments they encountered.

In the period leading up to the beginning of the war, Jolas too found himself back in the United States, working for an international news agency in New York. While in America, he brought forward three so-called "New York numbers" of *transition* on a more-or-less regular quarterly schedule between June 1936 and May 1937. Like Pound, Jolas had relied on a commercial publisher for these later numbers; like Pound he now found himself at loose ends, for the Servire Press went bankrupt. Jolas discovered that the cultural circles in New York City were now dominated exclusively by the discussion of political concerns, not surprisingly, and he simply did not fit in. While he was more comfortable in France than many expatriates, he concluded that his place was in America. It is true, however, that he never belonged to the bohemia of Greenwich Village in the same manner that he belonged in Montparnasse. But towards the end of 1937, Jolas returned to Paris to arrange a permanent move to the United States, fearing the inevitable outbreak of hostilities on the continent. After surveying the political climate in France, he made arrangements to publish a "Tenth Anniversary" number of *transition*, abandoning his own apolitical nature to make this final collection of international material a defiant stand against fascism.

Literary circles in Paris had changed, as well. The most notable American magazine operating in the French capital was perhaps the *Booster*. Originally a publication of the American Country Club of France, it was taken over and surreptitiously converted into a literary magazine by Henry Miller and his friends, a familiar cast of characters including Lawrence Durrell, Anaïs Nin, and Alfred Perlès. It henceforth bore no resemblance to the original publication, however; the editors kept the name, they announced, only "because it appeals to us". Assessing the tense conditions around them and clearly led by Miller, they sought to become "a contraceptive against the self-destructive spirit of the age". The editors proclaimed, "We are not interested in political line-ups, nor social panaceas, nor economic nostrums" ("Editorial" 1937: 5). They were forced by April 1938 to use the name *Delta*, but by Christmas of that year, they brought forward the final number. Many of the American contributors to this venture found a temporary outlet with British magazines like *Seven*, a publication that was able to carry on until 1940. The war made publishing literary magazines of any kind virtually impossible in Europe. Laura Riding and Robert Graves carried on with *Epilogue* in Spain as long as they could, but conditions there created an irregular publishing schedule. They used *Epilogue* 3 (Spring 1937) for a long and eloquent renunciation of the corruption of poetry by political concerns, written with Harry Kemp.

War could only abate temporarily the rush of expatriates, however. By the late 1940s, Paris was again awash with Americans, and the story of the magazines to which they contributed, publications like *Points*, *ID*, *Janus*, *Merlin*, and *Zero*, is interesting in its own right. These magazines did not publish the same writers who had appeared in *Broom*, *transition*, or the *New Review*. More than ever, these older figures found themselves with access to commercial publishers, and the revival of American magazines abroad saw young writers attempt to distance themselves from earlier expatriates. But the success of one publication from this later time, the *Paris Review*, best helps to frame the achievement of the expatriate American magazines that once found success between the wars. The *Paris Review* distinguished itself by marrying commerce with art in a way never seen before; it worked out a compromise with the publishing establishment that shifted the emphasis of independent publishing to forms that developed from the 1960s on the back of new technologies, from the photocopier to the internet. After the war, the whole mode of literary production changed, a revolution that accelerated through the rest of the twentieth century. The modern little magazine was no

more, replaced by new generations of little magazines that in their own fashion responded to a different world around them.

Recent critiques of the modern canon, like that of Walter Kalaidjian for example, have reminded us of the minimizing tendency in reading modernism, especially high modernism in the America, as a narrow and specific period defined by fixed historical boundaries. He begins his study by pointing out how "criticism exploits historical framing to prop up disciplinary authority, institutional force, and canonical power" (Kalaidjian 1993: 1). Kalaidjian is particularly wary of a narrow view of the period between the wars because he properly recognizes in its art a radicalism that worked against the establishment of a cultural dominant in the United States. Nowhere was this "alternative discourse of racial, sexual, class, and transnational experience" more apparent than on the pages of the little magazine (Kalaidjian 1993: 3). Because his study is not concerned with the little magazine, *per se*, Kalaidjian is less interested in what his observations say about the nature of these publications. But we can see that modern little magazine editors like Eugene Jolas, Gorham Munson, and Ernest Walsh were torn between the genuine radical impulse to resist a publishing establishment with which they retained only tenuous links and the desire to have their vision of modern art acknowledged as the cultural dominant. Figures like Ezra Pound sought on the one hand to establish this cultural dominant to respond to the conditions of the modern world, while the heterogeneous nature of the publications they used to promote their texts resisted the creation of any monolithic view of that art. That is why a single number of any little magazine is likely to contain both essays designed to enhance the critical reputations of certain writers now recognized as canonical modernists and works of genuine avant-gardists who sought to oppose the institution of art itself.

Kalaidjian's critique also serves to remind us that one must be careful in viewing the second world war as the historical terminus of the modern artistic impulse. This simply is not the case. But as assessments of American art in the first half of the twentieth century began in earnest after the war, the attitudes of younger artists, like the expatriate Americans again publishing little magazines abroad, suggested that their predecessors could indeed be read as "something", and they themselves were beginning to look less and less like what that something might be. This older group was not difficult to identify; the writers at work between the wars sought to a degree virtually without precedent to recognize their peers. So, when literary historians set about the "writing" of "modernism" in the second half of the twentieth

century, they found that their work had largely been done by the modernists themselves. One need not, indeed should not, leave this version of modernism unquestioned some fifty years later. But canonical revision must be approached methodically. Modernism, as has been acknowledged, is fond of its internal contradictions: it is easy to see why the canonical texts of the movement have been culled from the heterogeneity of little magazines. But identifying the dissenting impulses in the little magazines themselves allows contemporary scholars of modernism an opportunity to better trace its faultlines, and it provides them better access to the primary documents that trace the origins of critical concerns central to modernist debates.

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PUPPETS, ACTORS AND DIRECTORS: EDWARD GORDON CRAIG AND THE EUROPEAN AVANT-GARDE

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The work of Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966) occupies an ambivalent position within British modernism. The son of Helen Terry and the architect E. W. Godwin, Craig first worked in the theatre as an actor with Henry Irving's company at the Lyceum. By 1909, having directed several operas, he was ready to abandon England and indeed one its great theatrical families, and settle in Italy for the rest of his life.[1] By turning himself into an exile —a quintessential modernist stance— Craig consciously places his work within the context of the European *avant-garde*. He also distances himself from both the Victorian actor-manager tradition in the theatre and the modernist experiments in poetic drama conducted by Eliot, Yeats and later Auden and Isherwood.[2] His approach to the "art of the theatre" not only makes him unique within the Anglo-American tradition but it also places him alongside European figures such as Reinhardt, Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and Artaud. To see Craig's work within the context of the European *avant-garde* is to highlight some of the visionary qualities that have inspired such contemporary theatrical producers as Peter Brook. It may also point towards some of the contradictions and sometimes utopian impossibilities that Craig's theoretical work presents.

Unlike any other theatrical project in Britain at the time, Craig's work embraced all the concerns of the *avant-garde*, exploring the relations of theatre, religion and politics, connecting with the traditions of oral performance, establishing relationships with the "theatres of the Orient". While such preoccupations can be found in the poetic dramas of Eliot, Yeats or Wyndham Lewis, the whole experiment in Britain remained stubbornly

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literary, initiated by writers and not "men of the theatre" —Craig's term for those great directors of the European *avant-garde* who sought to create a language of performance that would "liberate" theatre from a parasitic relationship to the written text. The "rise of the director" can be seen as a quintessentially modernist phenomenon, in which a new charismatic leader figure resurrected the collective dimension of theatre. Ritualistic, synaesthetic, quasi-democratic, *avant-garde* theatre on the Continent offered an exciting platform to stage experiment in the "total work of art", while at the same time renegotiating the complex relationships between aesthetics and politics. It was with this dimension of the modernist stage that Edward Gordon Craig engaged when he left Britain.

W. B. Yeats's experiments with the forms of Japanese Noh drama, stimulated by Ezra Pound's work on Ernest Fenellosa's papers, were also significantly influenced by Craig, the designer for Yeats's plays for the Abbey Theatre.[3] In his designs for *The Hour Glass* Craig first used his subsequently famous screens, as a means of creating a non-naturalistic space. Unlike Yeats, however, Craig was not a poet but an "artist of the theatre" —another of the many phrases Craig invented in search of a name for the director's role. Craig's aphoristically-expressed theories —his desire to replace the actor by the *Ubermarionette*, his advocacy of the total rule of the director, and his wish to see women banished from the stage— created a reputation of which any serious critical attempt to historicise his project must take account. Known as the man who hated actors, whose screen designs for the famous Moscow *Hamlet* fell over, who was impossible to work with and who treated women badly, Craig appears as a charming but difficult Englishman abroad, a modernist *flâneur* who travelled around Europe recording his experiences in his journal, *The Mask*, usually in letters to himself under various pseudonyms. He was also one of the few English directors to work with Reinhardt, Stanislavsky, Isadora Duncan and Eleonora Duse, to meet the Italian futurists, and to create a body of performance theory that has remained influential until today. He also flirted with fascism while in Italy, and tried unsuccessfully to interest Mussolini in funding his ambitious theatrical schemes. By contrast, he persuaded Count Kessler, the "red" count of the Weimar Republic, to fund several such projects. Craig was never an articulate or "theoretical" fascist, but his search for a totalising theory which would restore a collective dimension to the theatre and construct the quasi-religious figure of the director certainly attracted him to the ideology of fascism. He wrote in his Daybook of 1908-1909: "I want to study the theatre. I do not want to waste time producing plays [...]. I want to

leave behind me the seeds for the Art, for it does not yet exist. Such seeds are not discovered in a moment" (1908: 1).

Like Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and other modernist directors, Craig spotted very early the need for a language of both performance and pedagogy. The "art of the theatre", reconfigured for probably the first time in history as the art of directing and acting as opposed to the art of writing plays, was in search of an epistemology.[4] Modernism effected a crucial shift from the Aristotelian paradigm of theatre. From Aristotle to Nietzsche, whose *The Birth of Tragedy* influenced many experimenters of the period, Craig included, theatre had been read as an essentially written, textual practice, for all Aristotle's interest in *mise-en-scène* and related matters. The notion that theatre is "produced" and not simply written, that it involves "reception", and that it occupies a civic space, are all ideas that spring from viewing theatre as performance rather than literature. Acting, stage design, lighting, the role of the audience, the theatrical space —all become relevant to the way theatre happens. Theatre is no longer seen as a translation or simple embodiment of a play-text. The new view proposes theatre as a distinct discursive practice, independent of the text, and requiring its practitioners to acquire and deploy distinctive new skills.

It is no coincidence that most of the director-theorists of the period founded schools and established their own methods of training. Indeed, it was only as a result of their re-working of the institutions and practices of theatre that their roles as directors could come into existence. Craig followed this pattern, establishing a school in Florence (The School for the Art of the Theatre) and creating and publishing from there one of the period's most important magazines on theatre, *The Mask* (1908-1929). The journal, which combined the "book beautiful" tradition of English 1890s aestheticism with the more futurist notions of continental design, deploying a rhetoric which was radical and aphoristic, couched in the style of a *manifesto*, was a site of Craigian thought and experiment for almost twenty years. It was here that Craig conducted his debates with the Italian futurists, recorded his work with Stanislavsky in Moscow, and mounted his furious attacks on naturalism. The "Futurist Manifesto on the Variety Theatre", by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, appeared in the pages of *The Mask* in 1913, in one of its first English translations. Of this, Craig wrote (*The Mask* 1913: 88-193): "I want you to remember that it is not essential to our understanding in any way to mistake the Futurists as a band of wild madmen or silly fools. They are neither. They are quite serious and strong fellows".

Later in the same article, however, he comments, with typical contradictoriness: "The Futurist Manifesto is the most impertinent piece of ignorance that ever a set of courageous and frisky young men trumped up to deceive themselves with while occupied with other and more profound thoughts".

Craig's quarrel with the Italian futurists was not about their politics or their provocative style. It was rather about their adoration of technology, and their total embracing of modernity. Craig's way to tackle what he saw as the "problem" of modernity was to seek to create a stage that was highly stylised, ritualistic, and reminiscent of the Wagnerian "total work of art". The futurists' celebrations of modernity seemed alien to him; his revivals of the collective and ritualistic dimensions of theatre owed far more to the influence of German idealism. For all his proclamations about banishing the actor from the stage and replacing him with a *marionette*, he himself never actually made what the futurists unashamedly called "robot plays". The two movements with parallels to Craig's work, Italian futurism and Russian constructivism, both celebrate the modern. In both, technology appears as an emancipatory force. Craig, nurtured in the aestheticist arts and crafts tradition of the previous century, was a technophobe. One way of situating these different projects in relation to each other is by contrasting the theories and pedagogies of acting that are a constitutive part of all three.

Central to modernist theories of acting is the "puppet and actor" debate. The argument is as old as Plato,[5] and can sometimes be read as a reconfiguration of his attack on the theatre. The stage is held to create "a double fantasy", a world twice removed from the ideal by the operations of mimesis, and the process of acting is seen as corrupting the actor. Walter Pater wrote in *The Mask* that "Contact with the stage, almost throughout its history, presents itself as a kind of touchstone, to bring out the bizzarrerie, the theatrical tricks and contrasts of the actual world" (1911: 174). The "bizzarrerie" that in another cultural context might be read as exciting, even magical (the actor perceived as *shaman*), here leads to the designation of the actors themselves as unreliable, unstable material for art, since the process of mimesis "contaminates" the actor, body and soul. Craig proclaimed in his famous essay, "The Actor and the *Ubermarionette*", that:

> Acting is not an art. It is therefore incorrect to speak of the actor as an artist. For accident is an enemy of the artistic. Art is the exact antithesis of Pandimoniun [sic], and Pandimonium is created by the tumbling together of many accidents; Art arrives only by design. Therefore in order to make any work of art it is clear we may work in those materials with which we can calculate. Man is not one of these materials. (*The Mask* 1908: 3)

This is a legacy Craig inherited not only from the aestheticist 1890s but also from such romanticist writers as Kleist, whose essay, *Uber das Marionettentheater*, saw its first English translation in *The Mask*. Walter Pater, Arthur Symons and Oscar Wilde all appeared in the pages of the journal to support the case for a theatre of puppets. The *Petit Théâtre des Marionettes*, run by Maurice Bouchor at the Galérie Vivienne (1889-1894), had acquired almost cult status among English and European artists at the time. Oscar Wilde wrote in a letter to the editor of *The Daily Telegraph* in 1892:

> I saw lately, in Paris, a performance by certain puppets of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, in M. Maurice Bouchor's translation. Miranda was the image of Miranda, because an artist had so fashioned her; and Ariel was true Ariel, because so had she been made. Their gestures were quite sufficient, and the words that seemed to come from their little lips were spoken by poets who had beautiful voices. It was a delightful performance, and I remember it still with delight, though Miranda took no notice of the flowers I sent her after the curtain fell. (in Hart-Davies 1962: 311)

The artificiality of the puppet, as opposed to the lifelikeness of the actor, was what appealed in such theatre. The puppet is seen as the figure that will ritualise the modern theatre and connect it to the "great" theatres of the past. Rather than celebrate technology, Craig's *Ubermarionette* will help to re-introduce the sacred onto the modern stage. In an issue of *The Mask* devoted solely to the *marionette*, Craig wrote, under a pseudonym:

> This number of *The Mask* being dedicated principally to the Marionette, we have asked Mr. Gordon Craig, who has studied him so closely and knows him so well, to act as Master of Ceremonies and make the Introduction; and so together with Mr. Anatole France, "Yorick," Mr. Arthur Symons and others of those who believe in "the majesty of the marionettes," make better known to many who have long been estranged from these wonderful little things which, with centuries of life behind them and centuries before, have "in them something of the divine" and "live with the life of the immortal gods". (*The Mask* 1912: 1)

These "divine" creatures could also, of course, help to construct the "godly" figure of the all-powerful director. A major function of Craig's writings on the *Ubermarionette* was to make the case for the directorial role.

The Russian constructivists, and particularly Meyerhold, provide a fascinating parallel to Craigian experiment.[6] Meyerhold's theoretical background was Russian formalism, which he combined with Marxism and Taylorism to produce a highly original notion of theatre in general, and acting in particular, which designated both as forms of labour. This view might seem to be in direct conflict with Craig's concept of theatre as ritual and magic, a force that could transcend modernity. However, Meyerhold was heavily influenced by Craig, whose "First Dialogue On the Art of the Theatre" had been pirated and published in Russia in 1906. Meyerhold wrote in 1909 that "It is remarkable that in the very first year of this new century E. G. Craig flung a challenge to the naturalistic theatre [...] this young Englishman is the first to set up the initial guideposts on the new road of the Theatre" (in Senelick 1981: 114). Craig was aware of Meyerhold's work but the two men did not to meet until 1935, just before Meyerhold's disappearance and subsequent murder by the Stalinist regime.

They never worked together, but the similarities between them are striking. Both men had read Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* in the early years of the century. Both experimented with theatres that were visionary and totalising, and had both aesthetic and philosophical purposes; both made utopian claims for their work. The shape of their utopias were, however, very different. Meyerhold, a proclaimed Marxist, embarked on his modernisation of the stage in the framework of a utopian romanticism inflected by theories of technology and faith in revolution. Craig, the anti-modern, saw his "new" theatre as a way of becoming more involved with what he called the "great theatres of the past". A telling instance of their different attitudes to the past appears in their responses to the *Commedia dell'Arte,* the Italian popular theatre of the 15th-17th centuries.[7] For Meyerhold, this was a perfect example of "organic" popular form; most importantly, it gave him ideas for his theories on stylised acting and what he called the "carnivalisation" of the theatre. In a classically modernist gesture, followed by Picasso and others, he appropriated the *Commedia* to his new aesthetic. For Craig, the *Commedia* was not a model of theatre to be appropriated, but one to be revered. *The Mask* is full of scholarly articles on the *Commedia*, arguably the most comprehensive accounts available in English at the time.[8] Nowhere, though, do we see Craig invoking the *Commedia* in the context of his own work

— not even for the construction of the *Ubermarionette*, where the potential for adaptation is obvious.

For both men, the idea of the puppet offered a way of resolving the particular difficulties that theatre sets in the way of the dramatist or director committed to the exploration and representation of abstract form. The physicality and "naturalness" of the human form make it resistant to abstraction and stylisation. By contrast, the puppet allows the objective representation of abstract form on stage without tainting it with the subjectivity of psychological expressivism. For Meyerhold, supremely, the puppet provided a model for a mode of training. Mechanical, reproducible, functional, it could help transform the theatre from high art into a mode of production that resembled other forms of labour, ensuring, in Meyerhold's words, that "The work of the actor in an industrial society will be regarded as a means of production vital to the proper organisation of the labour of every citizen of that society" (in Braun 1969: 120).

The various traditions in puppetry, east and west, provided him with a basis from which to create his elaborate system of training, *biomechanics*. This was an attempt to mechanise the human form, to make it trainable, and hence turn it into appropriate material for a constructivist form of theatre —one that, as in constructivist painting, could deal with the materiality of people and things. Rather than ban the human form from the stage, Meyerhold sought to break it down, dissociate it from its conventional psychological and biological contexts, and turn it into raw material. This new kind of acting found its model, not its replacement, in the puppet. Meyerhold's experiments completed a full circle which, in the end, returned to the human form:

> The director came to his senses when he realised that there is a limit beyond which there is no alternative but to replace the puppet with a man. But how could he part with the puppet, which had created a world of enchantment with its incomparable movements, its expressive gestures achieved by some magic known to it alone, its angularity which reaches the heights of true plasticity? (in Braun 1969: 128)

The objective of a theatre pedagogy for Meyerhold was to reproduce in the human form the magic, the angularity and the plasticity of the puppet. He believed that "Above all drama is the art of the actor" (in Braun 1969: 128). Craig on the other hand was more interested in consolidating the role of the director. His views on acting are those of Plato: actors distort reality rather

than enhance or comment on it, and acting itself is a decadent and corrupting activity. As late as 1928, he prefaced an article entitled "Flesh, Blood and Marionettes" with a "Nineteenth Century Note" by Joseph Conrad:

> The actors appear to me like a lot of wrong-headed lunatics pretending to be sane. Their malice is stitched with threads. They are disguised and ugly. To look at them breeds in my melancholy soul thoughts of murder and suicide —such is my anger and my loathing of their transparent pretences. There is a taint of subtle corruption in their blank voices, in their blinking eyes, in their grimacing faces, in their light false passion, in the words that have been learned by heart. But I love a marionette show. Marionettes are beautiful, —especially those of the old kind with wires, thick as my little finger [...] heroic, superhuman, fascinating [...]. I love the marionettes that are without life, and that come so near to being immortal! (*The Mask* 1928: 76)

While the futurists were writing and performing robot plays, Meyerhold experimenting with his *biomechanics*, and the Bauhaus mounting the *Triadic Ballet*, Craig turned his back on the modern and nostalgically revived a late-romantic vision of the function of the puppet. Kleist's essay of 1810, referred to above, was his main source of inspiration. Deploying, in the form of a polemic dialogue with a fictitious antagonist, an argument that Craig would later reiterate, Kleist had written that

> however clear his paradox might be he would never persuade me that there could be more grace in a mechanical doll than in the structure of the human body. He replied that a human being was simply incapable of rivalling the marionette in this respect. Only a God could measure himself against matter [...] and this was the point, he said, where both ends of the world's circle fit into each other.[9]

The limitations of the human form are imposed by its materiality; the need, then, is to de-materialise the body of the actor. For Kleist, this was the task of a God; for Craig, it was the work of the director.

Meyerhold, worlds away from both, rather than de-materialise the body of the actor, sought to re-materialise it with a theory of training that could be reproduced and developed. But for Craig, like Kleist, the *marionette* presented an ideal which was not meant to be realised, let alone reproduced. Though he owned the best collection of puppets in Europe (Wyang, Bunraku, Sicilian

and so on), and filled his journals with designs, reproductions and scholarly articles on puppets and traditions of puppetry, he never tried to make the *Ubermarionette* that would displace the actor. Despite his theoretical preference for "men of the theatre", and his radical influence on men such as Meyerhold, Craig never himself perceived the threads that connected his work to the larger context of European experiment. While he was writing on about the graces of the *Ubermarionette*, the futurists, literally just down the road, were performing *marionette* plays. Craig wrote of just such a performance in Florence:

> Just got back from the Teatro dei Piccoli [...] Diavoli. It is quite as bad as you guessed. The music had just about as much form and structure, the colours true futurism, and as ugly as the music, which as usual contained not one sound not displeasing to the ear [...]. Their announcements in the paper spoke of studies in light and rhythm, etc [...] to me the whole thing is like a young girl proposing to play her scales, not well, in public [...] and talking all the while about the "beauty of diatonic sequences" and "harmonic simplicity." That would be funny if anyone else were fooled [...] but perhaps not, since there is never a lack of gulls. (*The Marionette* 1918: 4)

In a turn of phrase that combined his misogyny and his distaste of futurist experimentation, Craig presented his account without the slightest reference to the *marionettes* themselves. He was articulate when talking about puppets of the past, but became vague and general when criticising *marionette* productions of his time. Oddly enough, he showed no hesitation in identifying Henry Irving as the perfect actor/ *marionette*:

> I consider him to have been the greatest actor I have ever seen, and I have seen the best in Italy, France, Russia, Germany, Holland and America. They were all imitable, and yet he was unique. By Irving the Mask and the Marionette were better understood than by all other actors [...]. If you will be an Actor in such a day as this, and if you are an English man, take but one model [...] the masked marionette. (*The Marionette* 1918: 6)

It is impossible to imagine other modernist theatre experimenters accepting Irving as the prototypical *Ubermarionette*. The distinction could not be more clearly exposed. Craig's adherence to the Kleistian tradition sets his *marionette* theory in a quasi-religious context, where the central preference

was for an idealised, abstracted version of human action rather than naturalistic representation. Craig's counterparts in the European *avant-garde*, Meyerhold, the later Stanislavsky, the Italian futurists, the Bauhaus, Dada, found new ways forward. Craig's "theatre of the future" remained rooted in the past. Yet for all its contradictions, failures and confusions, the radical gesture it represented has continued to make itself felt in the work of such key innovators as Grotowski and Brook. In this, Craig's thinking helped build the bridge between the European *avant-garde* and the Anglophone modernist stage.

NOTES

[1] Before leaving for Germany and later Italy he had directed operas and masques: *Dido and Aeneas* (1900); *The Mask of Love* (1901); *Acis and Galatea* (1902), Laurence Housman's nativity play *Bethlehem* (1902), and Ibsen's *The Vikings* (1903).

[2] There is a considerable body of work in Anglophone modernism which can be distinctively characterised as "poetic drama". See Jones, ed. (1960). On Yeats, see Cave, ed. (1997); for the influence of Noh on Yeats see Taylor (1976). For Auden and Isherwood see Mendelson, ed. (1989).

[3] Yeats was a regular contributor to Craig's journal *The Mask*, and Craig in turn reviews the work of Yeats throughout its pages. Yeats appears in *The Mask* in the following issues: Vol. 2, p. 148; Vol. 4, p. 61, p. 161; Vol. 5, p. 2; Vol. 7, p. 137, p. 174; Vol. 9, p. 50; Vol. 10, p. 66; *The Hour Glass*, Vol. 3, no. 4, frontispiece; Vol. 3, pp. 190-192; Vol. 5, pp. 327-346 (play and preface printed); Vol. 7, p. 174; *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (rev), Vol. 8, p. 39; *Plays and Controversies* (rev), Vol. 10, p. 90; *Plays for an Irish Theatre*, illustrated by Edward Gordon Craig, Vol. 4, pp. 342-343 (rev); Vol. 7, pp. 139-140; "The Tragic Theatre" (article), Vol. 3, p. 77.

[4] See Roach (1985) for a discussion of the history of theories of acting.

[5] "So you are interpreters of interpreters", see Plato. *Ion.* 535a; in Russell, ed. (1985).

[6] Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874-1940) was one of the visionary theatre makers of the Russian/ Soviet *avant-garde*. He trained under Eisenstein and started his career working with the naturalist director Stanislavsky. In 1921, he set up his own studio, the Moscow State Higher Theatre Workshop, where he sought to create a revolutionary theatre incorporating the latest technological developments. Meyerhold's view of technology as emancipatory is similar to that of Walter Benjamin, who visited him and watched his rehearsals. He had also a major influence on Brecht. In 1937 he was criticised by *Pravda*, and a year later the Meyerhold Theatre was closed down. In 1939 Meyerhold and his wife, Zinaida Raikh, were arrested and later murdered. For many years information about Meyerhold and his life was suppressed. Now there is a Meyerhold Museum in Moscow. See Braun, ed. (1969), and Kleberg (1993).

[7] See Oreglia (1968) and Rudlin (1993).

[8] The impressive coverage of the *Commedia* in *The Mask* is mainly the work of Dorothy Nevile Lees, an Italian scholar. Many of the articles on the *Commedia* signed by Craig were written by Lees. Lees was also Craig's "secretary" in Florence and they had a child together while he still had a wife and family in England. The contribution of Lees to the whole Craigian project has not yet been fully researched. See Taxidou (1998).

[9] Heinrich von Kleist, *Uber das Marionettentheater, Berliner Abendblatter*, c. 1810. Craig printed the first English translation of Kleist's essay (trans. Amedeo Foresti) in *The Marionette*, 1918. *The Marionette*, also produced and edited by Craig, was a leaflet more than a journal. It appeared in 1918 as a substitute for *The Mask*, at a time when Craig had financial difficulties. It dealt more specifically with the lives and histories of puppets. It was also a comic equivalent of *The Mask*.

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MODERNISM IN BLACK AND WHITE: AMERICAN JAZZ IN INTERWAR EUROPE

JOHN LUCAS
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I

Anyone at all familiar with the lives of jazz musicians knows that the tenor saxophonist Lester Young never recovered from the experience of his war years. Geoff Dyer's semi-fictional account of that experience in *But Beautiful* feels at once authentic and sufficiently detailed to suggest why Young latterly withdrew into a near-catatonic, drink-fuddled paranoia:

> Exercises in the daybreak cold, men shitting in front of each other, food that made his stomach heave before he even tasted it. Two guys fighting at the foot of his bed, one of then pounding the other's head on the floor until blood spotted his sheets, the rest of the barracks going wild around them. Cleaning out the rust-coloured latrine, the smell of other men's shit on his hands, retching into the bowl as he cleaned it.
> —It's not clean Young, lick it clean.
> —Yes sir. (1991: 14)

What broke one of the greatest of all jazzmen was not the German but the American army. And those who bullied and beat Young loathed him not merely because he was an uppity nigger, but because they suspected that although a married man and adored by women —most famously by Billie Holiday— Pres was a faggot.

There is no space here to offer detailed reasons for this suspicion. I do however need to remark that the American jazz world itself was for the most part aggressively *macho*. Coleman Hawkins, who in the 1930s preceded Young in the tenor chair with the Count Basie orchestra, and who was renowned for the fullness of his tone, for his determination to "cut" any rival,

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typifies the *macho* manner which Young opposed, sometimes by outplaying "Bean", usually by choosing to perform sitting down and then raising his instrument until it was in a horizontal position —as though his tenor was a flute, someone recalled— but never by trying to outdo Hawk's volume. Herschel Evans, a tenor man who idolised Hawkins, once said would-be insultingly to Young, ""Why don't you play alto, man? You got an *alto* tone." Lester tapped his head. "There's things going on up there, man," he told Herschel. "Some of you guys are all belly"" (Shapiro and Hentoff 1962: 302). But confrontation was not Young's style. He enjoyed giving the big men names which contained more than an element of camp. Harry Eddison told the historian of jazz, Max Jones, that "Prez started calling me "Sweetie-Pie" [...] and at times everybody was called Lady. It was "Lady Basie" and "Lady Duke" you know, and so Billie was "Lady Day"" (Jones 1987: 112).

You know. As Clarence Williams remarked of the early New Orleans pianist Tony Jackson, "Yes, Tony Jackson was certainly the greatest piano player and singer in New Orleans [...]. About Tony, you know he was an effeminate man —you know" (Shapiro and Hentoff 1962: 302). And many years later Duke Ellington's biographer, James Lincoln Collier, wrote that although Duke grieved for Billy Strayhorn's death —"he was my right arm, my left arm, all the eyes in the back of my head, my brainwaves in his head, and his in mine"— Strayhorn had not necessarily been a good influence on the master. "Ellington always evinced a tendency —weakness, if you will—towards lushness, prettiness, at the expense of the masculine leanness and strength of his best work, the most "jazzlike" pieces. Strayhorn encouraged this tendency" (Collier 1987: 272-273). This is as close as Collier comes to acknowledging the fact that Strayhorn was gay.

It seems that Strayhorn himself only came out towards the end of his life, by which time he had ceased to work regularly with and for the Duke. He died in 1967, Pres ten years earlier and Tony Jackson earlier still. For any of them to have been open about their sexuality would have been difficult, given that homosexuality was as officially prohibited in the USA as it was unofficially anathematised in the jazz world. But —and this is the point— had any of them spent time in Paris they would have found life a great deal easier. For Paris was not only sexually far more permissive than virtually every city in America, it was little bothered by racism. Not only that. Paris was also the great good place for jazz and had been so from the period immediately following the great war, when American jazz musicians first played there. Roger Shattuck dates the arrival of the music in Paris to 1918,

> the year after *Parade*, when a Negro orchestra from America played at the Casino de Paris. It became fashionable in the twenties, when Cocteau and *les Six* adopted the Bar Gaya as their haunt. Here the enterprising pianist Joseph Wiener, who had helped to make Satie's music known before the war, earned his keep by playing jazz with a Negro saxophonist by the name of Vance Lowry. (1968: 155)

And with the arrival of Josephine Baker in 1925, the interest in negritude which had been so marked a feature of early French modernism re-awoke and for some became the fashion of the season, for others a cause, and for still others an opportunity to rationalise and, as some would nowadays say, theorise their interest in jazz.

All of which brings us to what is undoubtedly the problematic nature of jazz's position within modernism, especially anglophone modernism. For while much in modernism opposes mass culture and mass civilisation, so that the task of "saving civilisation" often turns into a responsibility to save an ideal civilisation from its contemporary actuality, jazz by its very nature can, as we shall see, appear degenerate to some modernists —and thus an expression of the fallen world of commercialised culture, while for others it is a "pure" (for which read "primitive") pre-commercialised art form. There is an element of special pleading in both positions which often masks what is quite simply racism: blacks are inferior, therefore their art form is inferior. Or: blacks are noble savages therefore their art form is untainted by an enchained civilisation, even if —or because— black jazzmen and women have only recently been literally freed from the chains of slavery. And to say this takes us into the heart of the problem.

Most forms of modernism find their champions among their practitioners. The modernist artist, writer, musician, dancer, is typically also the self-conscious theorist. But to the best of my knowledge not a single *manifesto* exists by any jazz performer from the years historians of the music usually agree to call "the classic period", that is, roughly from 1920 to 1940. The explanations of jazz, the justifications and championing of the music, therefore came from people who did not play it, or who had no first-hand experience of the jazz life, to whom it was indeed new and strange. And in the USA, where jazz originated, racism made explanation improbable, to say nothing of discriminative appraisal. Scott Fitzgerald is credited with coining the phrase "the jazz age", but his use of the soubriquet reveals that he saw it as applying to the taste of white twenties America for illicit drink and fast

living, rather than to the nature of the music which had spread out and up from the deep south, of which I suspect he knew little enough.

This is to imply no criticism. In *The Great Gatsby* there is a telling moment when the semi-literate Tom Buchanan worries that

> Civilization's going to pieces [...]. I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read *The Rise of the Coloured Empires* by this man Goddard? [...]. The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be —will be utterly submerged. It's all scientific stuff [...]. It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out or these other races will have control of things". (Fitzgerald 1958: 19)

It would be absurd to argue that *The Great Gatsby* is flawed to the extent that Fitzgerald does not introduce any black characters to expose Buchanan's racist clap-trap (which hasn't stopped some commentators from so arguing); but, given the representativeness of Buchanan's attitude, it's not difficult to grasp why black jazz musicians should look to Europe, and France in particular, for an understanding and appreciation of their art which they could hardly expect to find in the USA. And given the homophobic nature of American society, as well as the widespread *macho* stance of most black jazzmen, France offered an especially attractive alternative for those seeking to "cancel the inertia of the buried", in Auden's memorable phrase, as well as for those wanting to escape the oppression, ignorance and bigotry of a nation where jazz was for the most part only tolerated if played by white musicians or by blacks to white audiences. For several years in the 1920s The Cotton Club, in Harlem, featured nightly performances by Duke Ellington's orchestra, one of the very greatest groups of musicians in jazz's history and playing works by the greatest of all jazz composers. No black people were allowed into the audience. But as Shattuck notes, Parisian clubs welcomed black musicians, just as proponents and exponents of modernism, artists, writers, musicians, intellectuals, responded enthusiastically to the actual music.

As it happens, however, the first serious essay on jazz —it is still one of the best— was written in London in the autumn of 1919. That year the black American musician Will Marion Cook had negotiated to take his orchestra and choir on a European tour, and in order to give his orchestra extra appeal, or so he hoped, he signed up the young Sidney Bechet, already known in New York and Chicago as a clarinet *virtuoso*. Cook's tour of Europe began in London, where between July and December the orchestra and choir gave over 200 concerts —afternoon and evening performances— at the

Philharmonic Hall. The concerts were not always well attended, but among those who went more than once was the Swiss conductor Ernst-Alexandre Ansermet, then in London with the Ballet Russe. On October 19 Ansermet's article on the SSO, as the orchestra became known, appeared in *Revue Romande*. As it is of great significance it deserves to be quoted at length.

Ansermet begins by remarking that "ragtime has conquered Europe; we dance to rag-time under the name of jazz in all our cities". And, he adds, the music "is passing into what I will call for lack of another name, the field of learned music: Stravinsky has used it as material for several works, Debussy has already written a cake-walk, and I well believe Ravel will lose no time in giving us a fox-trot" (1966: 116).[1]

Ansermet then spends some time analysing what he rightly sees as the harmonic limitations of the music played by the SSO, although he is quick to point out that a black musician will typically use "a succession of seventh chords, and ambiguous major-minors with a deftness which many European musicians should envy" (1966: 120). The harmonic limitations are nevertheless real enough, even if they are compensated for by deft rhythmic syncopation and the improvisational skills of individual musicians. The explanation for these skills is, Ansermet suggests, that the jazz he has heard is "popular art, —an art which is still in its period of oral tradition" (1966: 120). And he therefore concludes his article by paying tribute to

> an extraordinary clarinet virtuoso who is, so it seems, the first of his race to have composed perfectly formed blues on the clarinet. I've heard two of them which he elaborated at great length, then played to his companions so that they are equally admirable for their richness of invention, force of accent, and daring in novelty and the unexpected. Already, they give the idea of a style, and their form was gripping, abrupt, harsh, with a brusque and pitiless ending like that of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto*. I wish to set down the name of this artist of genius; as for myself, I shall never forget it —it is Sidney Bechet. When one has tried so often to rediscover in the past one of those figures to whom we owe the advent of our art [...] what a moving thing it is to meet this very black, fat boy —with white teeth and narrow forehead, who is very glad one likes what he does, but who can say nothing of his art, save that he follows his "own way," and when one thinks that his "own way" is perhaps the highway the whole world will swing along tomorrow. (1966: 121-122)

In his autobiography, *Treat It Gentle*, Bechet implicitly contradicts Ansermat's claim that he had little to say for himself. With perhaps pardonable exaggeration he remarks that the Swiss conductor "used to come to every performance [...]. Many a time he'd come over to where I was and he'd ask me all about how I was playing, what it was I was doing, was I singing into my instrument to make it sound this way. We talked a whole lot about music" (1964: 139). I incline to Bechet's side in this. My guess is that he had plenty to say about his music but that he said it in ways, and using an idiom, that would have baffled the classically-trained conductor or have left him feeling that he had heard nothing of any consequence from Bechet's mouth.

I don't at all blame him for this. Until comparatively recently there has always been a self-protective not to say self-deprecatory element in the way jazz musicians talk among themselves and to others, a belief that the world out there won't take seriously what they do so they'll get their retaliation in first. But as Ansermet's article makes clear, he *did* take jazz seriously, and what he has to say is of the first importance, as much for its timing as for its intelligent appreciation of the music he heard. Moreover his praise of Bechet undoubtedly did much for the musician's self-esteem, as well as for his reputation and, of course, for the reputation of the music he played.

II

Jazz in other words was now on the map.[2] We might put it more forcibly and say that in the aftermath of the Great War a new art form arrived in Europe as an antidote to what many saw as the discredited art of the old world. To put the matter this way is to run the risk of sounding merely parodic, but it is a fact that those who took up jazz most enthusiastically were the young, for whom it was or could be made to represent the spirit of rebellion: of the revolt of the sons and daughters against the fathers. I have set out the influence of jazz on this revolt in chapter four of *The Radical Twenties* and do not need to repeat the argument here (Lucas 1997: 111-135). I must however note that if, for a brief period, Bechet became a musical hero to those who heard him and/ or wrote about him, the halo was knocked askew when he was deported from Britain for some pretty wild behaviour. Not surprisingly, perhaps, Bechet in his autobiography has nothing to say about the episode that led to his fourteen-day imprisonment followed by enforced departure from the UK. Accounts of what actually happened in the early hours of Saturday 2 September 1922 vary, but what is certain is that Bechet

was found guilty of unlawfully assaulting a woman he claimed was a prostitute. The most reliable version of the night's events is to be found in John Chilton's biography, *Sidney Bechet: The Wizard of Jazz*, which despite its title is by no means a work of hagiography, as is the case with far too many jazz "Lives" (Chilton 1987: 53-54). Chilton tells us that Bechet was sent to Brixton prison, served his term, appealed against the deportation order, lost, and on 3 November, 1922, was put aboard the *SS Finland*, bound for NewYork.

Given Bechet's success in London it is no wonder he had wanted to stay on. After he finished his tour of duty with the SSO he played with a variety of groups, by now featuring the straight soprano saxophone he had bought in 1920 in Wardour Street, and of which he was to become the supreme exponent. To earn extra money he took on pupils, he appeared as a featured soloist with café orchestras, and he became known to the London *cognoscenti* as "the King of Jazz". A far cry from the *de facto* segregation of musicians and the contemptuous term "race music" of his native land. Three years after his ignominious return to that land, Bechet signed up to appear with the pit orchestra of *The Black Revue* for its European tour, beginning in Paris in October 1925.

The star of the show was Josephine Baker. Many years later she recalled that on board the liner bringing then to France she had voiced her fears about the Revue's possible reception of Bechet, and "my spirits lifted when he talked about Paris. I shouldn't be afraid he said. Parisians didn't notice people's skins" (1978: 46). In fact, negritude in twenties France, especially Paris, was a positive advantage.[3] The rapturous reception of Josephine Baker herself gave her a status she could never have enjoyed in the United States. As for Bechet, once the tour was over he stayed on as he had in London, playing with various groups. He also paid visits to Frankfurt and Moscow, although by autumn 1928 he was once again in Paris, and once again he became involved in a fracas that led to imprisonment followed by an order to leave France.

In *Treat It Gentle* Bechet provides a fairly muddled, not to say opaque, account of the episode, in which he emerges as the innocent victim of others' deviousness. Chilton makes what sense he can of the drunken quarrel at a Montmartre cafe which culminated in Bechet aiming to shoot a banjoist and in the event hitting a pianist in the leg. (Banjoists are a frequent butt of Jazz jokes but shooting them is going a bit far.) The judge ordered Bechet to prison for fifteen months, although he served rather less than a year. When he came out he moved to Germany, where he played with what by all accounts

was a succession of second-rate bands (1987: 86-87). Within a year he was back in the United States.

But if Bechet made something of a mess of his attempts to find settled work in Europe, other black musicians were more fortunate. Among those who lived in France for extended periods during the 1930s were the trumpet man Bill Coleman, and Coleman Hawkins, after he broke away from the Basie Band. In his monograph on Hawkins, Burnett James speculates about why a musician of Hawkins' stature should choose to move to France, particularly as he would be certain to find himself surrounded by inferior musicians:

> One reason was that he was not the only expatriate among jazz musicians. Other Americans were around, notably in Paris, including Benny Carter and Bill Coleman. In addition, many American musicians, like Dicky Wells, were visitors in Paris and recording there. Beyond that again, the Europeans were learning their business, and a number of good bands were emerging and [...] were quite capable of providing substantial support for their natural superiors. And there was at least one European Jazz musician of unquestioned originality, the Belgian guitarist Django Reinhardt, with whom Hawkins recorded in the mid-1930s. (1984: 35-36)

Astonishingly enough, James never considers the possibility that Hawkins chose to work in Paris because he had heard from other American musicians that the Parisians he would be likely to meet were non-racist and were enthusiastic and discriminative lovers of jazz. But then he is at a loss to explain just why Hawk returned to America at the end of the 30s. Was it "because of the now inescapable threat of war in Europe or some more complex reason" (1984: 45). Complexity be blowed. I would have thought the Nazi threat to black musicians who played "decadent" music would be quite enough to explain why the Hawk packed his bags for America.

And to say this helps to explain why black musicians coming to Europe in the inter-war years favoured France above all other countries, and Paris above all other cities. Paris was quite simply the most tolerant towards them as human beings, as well as being the most consistently appreciative of their music. These matters need some amplification.

III

I earlier noted how Sidney Bechet's performances with the SSO made him into something of a hero for Londoners who went to hear him play. No less an authority than Edward J. Dent of the *Athenaeum* was struck by Bechet's performance of "Characteristic Blues", and although Chilton is surely right to remark that the SSO did not play a great deal of jazz, there is no doubt that what it did play centred on Bechet, and that as a result he became the musician to attract most notice, nearly all of it highly favourable (1987: 38-39). Yet the approval of the SSO's music did not spill over into widespread acceptance of black musicians. Chilton tells us that Bechet found a place to live in Bloomsbury, which adjoins Soho,

> and for the next few months most of [his] life, at work or at play, was spent within this square mile. Had [he] tried some other hotels in London [he] would certainly have encountered racism. Even during the early 1930s black entertainers such as the Mills Brothers, Louis Armstrong and the Peters Sisters found difficulty in booking rooms. The black clarinettist Rudolph Dunbar wrote of his experiences in London during that era: "In most lodging houses where there are "rooms to let" signs, if a black man should apply the reply will be "I am sorry but that room I had vacant has just been let"". (1987: 36)

Nor was this racism dead by the end of the thirties, as Chilton rather optimistically implies. I have heard that when the great guitarist and blues-singer Big Bill Broonzy came to Nottingham in the mid fifties, where he was due to appear at the city's Rhythm Club, the owner of the hotel into which he had been booked came out to greet him with the words "No coloureds here".

It is probably true that had the hotelier known Broonzy was a jazz musician he would have behaved in a more civilised manner. To say which is in no way to excuse his foul behaviour, but it does serve to remind us that from the late 1940s interest in "classical" jazz was running high in the UK —out of it came many local "revivalist" bands— and that as a result black musicians, especially those who could trace their roots to the Storeyville of "balconies, flower-baskets and quadrilles/ Everyone making love and going shares", in Philip Larkin's words, were granted iconic status. They gave interviews on the BBC, their early records were re-issued, their later performances, often accompanied by the starry-eyed British bands who had

brought them over, were in huge demand, and they were written about in reputable newspapers and journals. Francis Newton, a.k.a. Eric Hobsbawm, had a weekly column devoted to jazz in the *New Statesman*, and Philip Larkin reviewed jazz records for the *Daily Telegraph*. *The Melody Maker*, *New Musical Express*, *Jazz Journal*, which all sold in respectable numbers, were eagerly read by the jazz world, and by 1957 Rex Harris's *Jazz*, first published as a Pelican Special in 1952, had gone into its seventh edition. The Notting Hill Riots make plain that in the 1950s racism was, as it still is, a prevalent feature of English life, but for all that, jazz was both widely accepted and highly reputable.

In 1920s Britain jazz also enjoyed a certain reputation. But although home-grown musicians and composers were increasingly fascinated by it, the intellectual and social climate of the 1930s between them depressed the opportunities for black musicians to play or, even more important, to want to play in the UK. By the end of the decade the Musicians Union had instituted a ban on overseas orchestras or groups, and while individual musicians were occasionally allowed to tour, they had to be accompanied by British musicians. You could hear Fats Waller, but not his rhythm, Louis Armstrong, but not his orchestra. Both musicians came to Britain in the latter 1930s. Neither much enjoyed the experience.

Leave the fact that they could not tour with their own musicians out of it. Both Waller and Armstrong were billed as "entertainers", with all that implied of racist assumptions about "nigger minstrel" shows. The music itself did not matter to the agents and managers who hired them. That this should be so tells us a good deal about changed perceptions of the music in the 1930s. In the previous decade jazz had been seen by those who thought themselves in any way progressive as part of a new wave of energy, of radical creativity. But in the 1930s intellectuals, especially left-wing intellectuals, scorned it. Far from being progressive, it was commercial, decadent, debased. So at least the party line on the left ran, and it ran in tandem with that of the right.

There were exceptions to this rehearsed response, the most eloquent perhaps being Constant Lambert's. In his *Music Ho!* (1934) Lambert devotes over twenty pages to an account of jazz, in the course of which he writes sympathetically but critically of Louis Armstrong as "one of the most remarkable virtuosi of the present day", who "enthralls us at a first hearing, but after a few records one realises that all his improvisations are based on the same restricted circle of ideas", a remark which can only be understood if we conclude that Lambert had been listening to the wrong records. They will

have been the "showman" waxings Armstrong was forced to make in the 1930s, not the early recordings of the Hot Five, Hot Seven, nor the work with King Oliver, which between them represent some of the greatest music ever made by jazz musicians. Those classic recordings were not easy to obtain outside America. The recordings Armstrong made under the "guidance" —that is, pressure— of his mafia-installed manager of the thirties, Joe Glaser, are a different and vastly inferior matter, for all their moments of individual genius. I do not blame Lambert for finding them limited in scope.

With Duke Ellington, on the other hand, Lambert is wonderfully perceptive. It has to be said that Ellington's recordings were easier to come by, and as he was not being run by the Mob —his music and image were not as commercially exploitable as Armstrong's— he was therefore free to record more or less as and what he liked. From tracks Lambert lists, we know he had heard some of the best of the Duke's music. Ellington is, he says, "a real composer", and then he goes on:

> The real interest of Ellington's records lies not so much in their colour, brilliant though that may be, as in the amazingly skilful proportions in which the colour is used. I do not only mean skilful as compared with other jazz composers, but as compared with so-called highbrow composers. I know of nothing in Ravel so dexterous in treatment as the varied solos in the middle of the ebullient *Hot and Bothered* and nothing in Stravinsky more dynamic than the final section [...].
>
> The exquisitely tired and four-in-the-morning *Mood Indigo* is an equally remarkable piece of writing of a lyrical and harmonic order, yet it is palpably by the same hand. How well we know those composers whose slow movements seem to be written by someone else —who change from slow Vaughan Williams to quick Stravinsky and from quick Hindemith to slow Cesar Franck. The ability to maintain the same style in totally different moods is one of the hall-marks of the genuine composer, whether major or minor. (1948: 155-156)

There is more in the same vein and although it is a pity that in the last sentence quoted Lambert seems to be hedging his bets, his remains one of the very best pieces of writing about Ellington that I know.[4]

Edward Crankshaw had presumably read Lambert's book when he contributed his essay on "Music" to Geoffrey Grigson's *The Arts To-day* (1935). At all events he cites it in his short list of "Books to Read". But he has nothing to say about jazz. Perhaps he thought Lambert's enthusiasm for

it an amiable eccentricity. Those on the left were liable to be far less accommodating. Here, for example, in his *Marxism and Poetry*, is the classical scholar George Thomson, offering advice to young poets to cultivate the lost tradition of folk song and ballad:

> Poetry must be reunited with music. Poetry recitals are at present unattractive to the people, because they are unfamiliar; but they can still be drawn to song recitals. Moreover, there is a serious shortage of contemporary British working class songs. Having regard to these two circumstances, I would recommend a young poet seeking a popular audience to try his hand at making new songs for the people —either new words to a new tune, if he can find a composer to work with, or new words to an old tune. Then, having had his words performed at some demonstration or rally or even an ordinary branch meeting, let him call as many as possible of his listeners together and ask them how they liked it and how they think it could be improved. If he does that, he will soon find that many of them have a genuine feeling for poetry. (1941: 78)

This is characteristic of much marxist writing of the 30s. Thomson takes for granted that "the poet" will not come from "the people", but will have to act as their instructor and guide. They receive what he alone can offer. He must take them by the hand and lead them away from the debased expressions of popular culture on which they rely. And what are those expressions? Why, "jazz and other forms of commercialised music" (1941: 80).

Thomson undoubtedly took his line from Moscow, via the Communist Party of Great Britain's offices in King Street. There, disapproval of jazz went with dismissal of western cinema. Both were assumed to be commercialised expressions of decadent, capitalist culture, an assumption to be in the course of time turned into specious argument by Theodor Adorno, for whom jazz created the "*illusion* rather than the reality of free creation, and thus revealed its location in mass culture" (1989: 155). As Kathy J. Ogren rightly notes of this in her impressive *The Jazz Revolution: Twenties America and the Meaning of Jazz*, "Adorno was not informed nor was he sensitive to the origins of jazz in black music and he regarded the use of popular song in jazz compositions as evidence indicating its commercialisation" (1989: 155). Still, never let ignorance of your subject stand in the way of a good theory about it.

We might perhaps detect something rather more disreputable than ignorance at work here. Fredric Jameson apparently thinks Adorno must have had in mind the music of Paul Whiteman, which bears about as much relationship to jazz as formica does to marble, but Peter Brooker convincingly argues that this is unlikely, given Adorno's references to jazz's African roots (1996: 211). It is at least possible that what motivates Adorno's criticism of jazz is an unstated racism or, perhaps, a feeling that jazz's roots in a kind of *ur*-peasant society makes it unacceptable in an enlightened socialist culture. Either way, it is clear that what we might call the Stalinised response to jazz was very different from that prevailing in 1920s Moscow which, as we have seen, Bechet visited in 1926, and where he and other black musicians seem to have been welcome guests.

According to Chilton, at least two black bands were in Moscow in the spring of that year, and "the musicians soon linked up socially". Bechet became deeply interested in "serious" music: contemporary work and Tchaikovsky. At that time Monday was a work-free day in Russia, and one of the musicians recalled that "Monday night was the time for all musicians and actors and dancers to meet at various clubs. We had a wonderful time in Moscow. The women loved Sidney" (1987: 77-78).

They loved him in Germany, too, which he briefly visited in 1928. But neither Germany nor Russia would have loved him in the middle of the following decade. Hitler and Stalin were as one in their condemnation of the music Bechet played.[5] As for Italy, Mussolini banned all jazz. Hence, the importance of France —well, Paris— for jazz musicians, especially black ones. Because quite apart from the city's characteristic racial and sexual tolerance, and the informed delight that many took in jazz, Paris had one great advantage over most other capital cities of the twenties and thirties: the kinds of clubs where the music best thrives.[6]

Berlin certainly had such clubs in the 1920s, and as is well known they tolerated sexual transgressiveness. Hence, of course, Auden's going there in search of boys. Tony Jackson, Lester Young and Billy Strayhorn would all have felt at ease in Berlin, especially as, according to John Willett, in Weimar Germany "a new spirit permeated all the arts [...]. One model here certainly was the "production art" which had evolved out of Soviet Constructionism; another was the Anglo-Saxon mythology of jazz, sport, easy humour and a hard-headed respect for facts" (1984: 567). But although Willett reports that Paul Hindemith first heard American jazz in 1921 and found it "a model of economical orchestration and dynamic drive", and despite his reproducing photographs of the Bauhaus jazz band and a 1927 painting by Carl Hofer of a "Six-Man Band" (1984: 99), I am not convinced that jazz ever made the impact in Germany it undoubtedly did in France. And this is less

because Hofer's painting shows a front-line of saxophonist and violinist (unlikely but by no means impossible) than because as far as I know American jazzmen simply did not go to Germany as frequently or with such enthusiasm as they did to France. Clubs there might be: in Berlin, in Frankfurt, in Bonn, at least until Hitler closed them down, but where were the German musicians who really understood about jazz?

By contrast, London had a number of good musicians but lacked the clubs. That is to say, such night spots as there were typically lacked drinking licences and were liable to be raided by the police looking for illegal liquor and/ or drugs. Then why bother with London when Parisian night clubs were so much more attractive than London's? For one thing, Parisian policemen were on the whole less likely to come crashing into a club, especially as clubs were mostly licensed, so that you could drink in comparative freedom and comparatively cheaply. For another, the drink was of better quality, and it could be drunk for longer hours. By the late twenties the Bar Gaya had "lost out to another fashionable *boîte de nuit*, *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*" (1968: 155), but there were plenty of other clubs where you could go to hear or play jazz, among them *Les Ambassadeurs*, *Chez Florence*, *Bricktop's*, *Les Trois Matelots*.

In his beautiful, affectionate account of Bill Coleman, whom he knew well in that great trumpet man's later days, John Wain writes:

> Sometimes, now, I try to imagine the life that Bill Coleman, in his early thirties, lived in pre-war Paris. It was a Franco-American life, of course; many of his professional contacts were with fellow-Americans —fellow-blacks, for the most part— who spent a week or two in Paris and needed his services in getting their music up to the right pitch of energy and inspiration. But, after a week or two, they went back to America, to the security of their regular jobs and their regular surroundings, distasteful as these must always have been for the black man. They enjoyed Paris, breathed its more human air, and went home. Coleman stayed. He worked with French musicians like Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli. He played in Parisian clubs and recorded in Parisian studios. He had his regular drink in Chez Boudon, the chosen cafe of the jazz fraternity. He was happy, and he made wonderful music. (1986: 121)

And that, I think, says it all. For many engaged in the modernist enterprise "jazz" was a term that signified a variety of either virtues or vices. But for the men and women who performed it, jazz was what they did. This jazz would later be contrasted with "modern jazz". Philip Larkin's triple-headed horror,

Parker, Pound and Picasso, aligns post-1940s jazz with more mainstream modernism. Yet we have seen that from the moment it reached Europe, jazz, especially the "classic" jazz so loved by Larkin, was regarded by modernists as an art-form (could it be?) of which they had to take account. For those deeply involved in music, as composers, conductors, critics —Hindemith, Stravinsky, Ansermet, Lambert— this seemed an especially urgent matter. But for others, too, jazz was at the very least a phenomenon which required critical attention, if not endorsement. Meanwhile, the musicians made music.

NOTES

[1] Ansermet's article, which has acquired an almost legendary status in jazz history, has often been translated and made available in English versions, although many of them are abridgements of the original. The text I use, taken from Ralph De Toledano's *Frontiers of Jazz*, is the most reliable. For an excellent account of the *SSO* in London, see John Chilton's biography of Sidney Bechet, especially pp. 35-44 (see Works Cited).

[2] The perception among European musicologists and composers in the early years of the twentieth century that jazz was a radically new and energising form of music cannot be examined properly in an essay. What *can* be said is that during the interwar period, at different times, jazz began to affect most forms of music. For more on this, see Constant Lambert's *Music Ho!* and other texts in Works Cited. At first, jazz seems to have been thought of as coterminous with rag-time, but by 1919, as Ansermet's article makes clear, rag-time was properly understood to be one expression of jazz among many others. The "Shakespeherian Rag —/ It's so elegant/ So intelligent" of *The Waste Land*, as well as the syncopated talk of the characters in *Sweeney Agonistes*, is evidence of Eliot's reactionary modernism, his belief in jazz as a marker of decadence, although he is clearly, if grudgingly, fascinated by its rhythmic energies. For more on this see Lucas, *The Radical Twenties* (1997: 130).

[3] This is a complex matter and, as with the perception of jazz as radical music, not one to be explored within the confines of the present essay. But the late nineteenth-century discovery of "primitive" art, and its enthusiastic reception in Paris, is of considerable importance for artists, writers and musicians, and is discussed in Roger Shattuck's *The Banquet Years*, and in biographies and critical

studies of such important artists as Gauguin, Picasso and Matisse, as well as of Jarry and Satie.

[4] In a fuller account I would want to consider Lambert's discussion of what he calls "Symphonic Jazz" —that is, the use of jazz idioms by "serious" composers, including some named by Ansermet, as well as Hindemith and, a little later, Vaughan Williams. The other side of this coin is the wish of some jazz composers and musicians to be "serious", which in one expression leads to Gershwin's surely overblown "Rhapsody In Blue" —to name one example of many that could be cited— and in another to the misbegotten recordings made by, among others, Billie Holiday and Charlie Parker, in which jazz combos are accompanied by banks of violins. There is also the beyond-parody, "no expense spared", rendition —as it might be called— of "St Louis Blues" by Leonard Bernstein and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which grotesquely intrudes into the film *Ambassador of Jazz*. The film, made in the mid-1950s and purporting to celebrate the genius of Louis Armstrong, is in fact a woeful piece of Cold War propaganda, intended to show that jazz is at once High Art and the Music of the People. Eat your heart out, Zhdanov.

[5] For more on the hardening Soviet hostility to jazz during the Stalinist period, see Marshall Stearns (1958: 202-203).

[6] It also of course played host to many whose interest in jazz spilled over into enthusiastic endorsement of the sources of jazz. Hence, in part, the inspiration for *Negro*, a vast anthology edited by Nancy Cunard and her black jazz-pianist lover, Henry Crowder, and published by Cunard's Hours Press in France —where else?— in 1935.

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EDWIN MUIR: ONE FOOT IN EUROPE

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A central feature of interwar modernism was its cosmopolitanism. Works as diverse as *The Waste Land* (1922), *Ulysses* (1922), Hugh MacDiarmid's *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926), Pound's *Cantos* (1917-1970), and David Jones's *In Parenthesis* (1937) incorporate extensive material from other eras and languages. Translators are crucial mediators and prompters of the mysterious processes by which influences and themes are transferred between cultures, by accident, coincidence or design. Would Ezra Pound's career, for example, have taken a different tack if the widow of Ernest Fenollosa had not entrusted her husband's papers on *The Chinese Written Character* to the poet? Edwin Muir (1887-1959) was a considerable poet as well as a pioneer translator. His main contribution to the culture of modernism, however, consisted less in his own work than in the kinds of writing he made available to his contemporaries, as one of the leading translators and promoters of European, and particularly Germanic, literature in the English-speaking world. To examine how Muir came to be a translator of Continental literature, and the impact of his mediations on the second generation of Anglo-American modernists, is to cast a representative light on the role and significance of translation in the production of Anglophone modernism.

In a 1931 essay on Virginia Woolf, centred on her newly published novel *The Waves*, Edwin Muir wrote:

> Nothing is stranger in modern literature, and nothing probably could tell us more about it, than this hostility to tears, the mark at which once even the greatest writers aimed [...]. In spite of all [D. H. Lawrence's] anti-intellectualism he was more penetrated by what he himself called the virus of intellect than George Eliot, though she was as powerfully resolved to be intellectual, as he to be "instinctive". Indeed almost all modern novelists are more intellectual in a certain sense than any of their predecessors of fifty

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> years ago: in the sense that the intellect conditions their emotional responses more decisively, making those responses less naive and immediately satisfying. More deliberate and unsure also, however; for it is difficult to achieve, where the intellect is in part control, any effect possessing the simple inevitability of a burst of tears. This may partly account for the sense of emotional frustration, of indefinite postponement, which so many modern novels produce [...]. The old catharsis was definitely impossible; the new one was difficult to find. In *The Waves* a new catharsis has been found. Its art is at once modern and complete. (In Butter 1988: 24-25)

The essay compares *The Waves* favourably with Pirandello's "much overpraised" *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and with Rilke's "superb prose" (probably particularly in *The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge*), "which was a sort of inspired shorthand". The essay is typical of Muir's critical procedures. Three elements emerge clearly. First, Muir is not afraid to make large general statements about cultural history or trends in literature. Second, he looks to literature to reveal certain values and to provide certain effects for readers. Third, he locates and appraises a literary work in a wide comparative context. In considering Muir's relation to the European intellectual tradition, I shall concentrate mainly on the third, from which, indeed, the other two can be seen largely to derive.

Born in the Orkney Islands, north of the Scottish mainland, in 1887, Muir spent his early years in a largely oral culture. There were few books in his parents' farmhouse. He could remember the *Bible, Pilgrim's Progress* and a copy of Burns's poems. There was, however, a strong tradition of playing music, ballad singing and story-telling. By the time he was fourteen, he had left school, had left the Orkneys with his family and he was reading voraciously whatever books he could find. As a menial clerical employee in various concerns, including a beer-bottling factory and a bone factory, he was not subject to the orthodoxies he would have encountered in a university education. What prompted a direction in his reading was a socialism forced on him by his experiences in industrial Glasgow in the early years of the twentieth century. Public libraries gave him access to journals which combined political and literary interests, and in his early twenties he began to subscribe to the radical little magazine *The New Age*, edited by A. R. Orage.

With like-minded socialists in the Clarion Scout Rambling Club and the Independent Labour Party (I. L. P.), and as treasurer of the new local branch of the National Union of Clerks, Muir discussed not only such classic authors as Marx, Shakespeare, Pascal and Hume, but also more contemporary

figures such as Havelock Ellis, Bergson, Joyce and Sorel. He found Heine's poetry and prose intoxicating, and Dostoyevsky painfully close to what he detested in his own life; but it was in Nietzsche that he found an empowering force which allowed him to rise above the misery around him. He had written to Orage in 1909 asking for intellectual guidance. Orage wrote back sympathetically and recommended the reading of the complete output of a great mind. Orage himself had read Plato in this way and now suggested the *Mahabharata* to the young man. Muir, instead, decided to read Nietzsche, whose works had been published in English, edited by Oscar Levy, and whose thought had been propagated in the pages of *The New Age*. For more than ten years, starting when he was twenty-two, Muir was "more attracted to him than to any other writer. He has *spoken* to me as no one else has" (in Butter 1974: 21). But he later regarded Nietzsche as a misguided and misguiding enchanter, the power of whose writings was ultimately meretricious.

By his mid-twenties he was widely but unsystematically read, in a way that did not distinguish clearly between "literary" and "non-literary" works. He read to expand his world of parochial drudgery, to explore challenges to the assumptions and dictates of that world, and to take pleasure in visions of life beyond his own, constructing a cultural realm for himself rather than inheriting one from his class, family, educational training or nationality. He began his writing career in 1913 with contributions of verse and prose to the journal which had helped shape his thought. His first book, based on these contributions to *The New Age*, was published in 1918 as *We Moderns: Enigmas and Guesses*, a choice of title which somewhat qualifies Bradbury's and McFarlane's contrast in *Modernism*, between the "near-obsessive concern for the term "modern" [on the Continent] and the comparative disregard of it during these same years in England, where between Meredith's *Modern Love* of 1862 and Michael Roberts's anthology *The Faber Book of Modern Verse* in 1936, the term is rarely used in any programmatic way" (Bradbury and McFarlane 1976: 37-38).

The American propagandist of the novel, H. L. Mencken, was so impressed by Muir's book that he arranged for its publication in America with an enthusiastic preface by himself; while Herbert Read, soon to become an advocate of modernist writing, wrote in his *War Diary* in June 1918: "I don't remember a book that I have found so full of acceptable suggestions" (Read 1963: 133). Muir himself by 1924 found his book of thoughts on contemporary culture "raw, immature, and an expression of a lamentable bad-taste" (in Butter 1974: 35). What he presents as "modern" is progressive ideas related to emancipation, in contrast to mere modish novelty. Heavily

influenced by Nietzsche, who is lavishly referred to, Muir's view of "modern" writing seems very tame. Galsworthy, Wells, Shaw and Chesterton are assessed and found deficient in progressing beyond the nineteenth-century figures he rates highly: Goethe, Ibsen and Nietzsche. Poetry emerges weakly and there is no awareness shown of Eliot, whose *Prufrock and other Observations* had been published in 1917, or of Pound, some of whose work Muir must have encountered in *The New Age*, to which Pound was a fellow contributor. Stranger still, there is no reference to the First World War or any public events of the time. It is as if Muir were simply showing off his reading, expressing a disappointment with his contemporaries, and waiting for more significant developments.

Some of these developments featured in his next two prose collections, *Latitudes* in 1924 and *Transition* in 1926, although the titles both indicate travelling rather than arriving. As early as 1925, however, he could express a guarded optimism. A period of the "full grown" in literature, he writes,

> may come in the generation to follow ours if the experiments of this age are successfully prosecuted and should open out a new opportunity [...]. At any rate, with all the disadvantages, I would far rather live in this age which can show Joyce and *Ulysses*, than in the last one, which could show nothing better than Shaw [...]. I know the expense of spirit in this waste of shame which our generation is; the mysterious spiritual destruction of such really fine and gifted natures as Eliot, the spiritual twisting of Joyce, the distortion of everything, the chaos between the fall of one set of values and the discovery of another. (In Butter 1974: 47-48)

Major changes took place in Muir's circumstances in the early 1920s. After his marriage in 1919 he moved with his wife, Willa, to London, where he became assistant to Orage on *The New Age*, made a meagre living by literary journalism, and underwent psychoanalysis in an attempt to release pent-up confusions and anxieties. As a consequence of the publication of *We Moderns* in the United States, Muir was invited to contribute regular, well-paid articles to a new, radical, American magazine, *The Freeman*, and the income allowed the Muirs to travel to the Continent. They settled in Prague for seven months and then moved about between Germany, Austria and Italy during the next couple of years. Their work as translators began in 1924 with the plays of Gerhart Hauptmann. Muir would also date his writing career proper in poetry, fiction and criticism from this spell abroad. His first book of poetry, *First Poems*, was published in 1925; his first novel, *The Marionette*, appeared in 1927.

In the language, syntax, structure, narrating voice and ideas of his own three novels and eight volumes of poems there is little that would allow us to describe Muir as a modernist writer, and his attitude to modernist experimentation in his contemporaries was deeply ambivalent. Exasperation with some experimental authors breaks out at times, as, for example, in what is presumably a reaction to parts of "Work in Progress": "Joyce I have given up, and Stein has always seemed to me a stupid person with good intentions. [Wyndham] Lewis is hammering away at something or other, but he has not divulged to his readers what it is: perhaps he does not know himself" (in Butter 1974: 67). In this same letter to Sydney Schiff in 1929, however, he recommended two books he had read recently: Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*, written in 1910 and to be published in translation as *The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge* in 1930, and Franz Kafka's *Das Schloss*, published in 1926 and to be translated by the Muirs as *The Castle* (1930). Much as he was thrilled by the intense introspective prose of Rilke, Muir found his poetry often brilliant but unsatisfying. He wrestled with his difficulties and one form of his usefulness to readers of his criticism is that he involves the readers with his problems and encourages them to try Rilke for themselves.

In his novel *Poor Tom* (1932), Muir quotes in German from the opening of the *Duino Elegies*: "and even the nodding beasts are aware/ that we don't feel very securely at home/ in this interpreted world" (translation by Leishman and Spender: 170). The insecurity diagnosed by Rilke was, for Muir, a central feature of modern consciousness and a major element in his own work. It can be related to what he described as "the chaos between the fall of one set of values and the discovery of another" (in Butter 1974: 48). His discovery of the work of Kafka was utterly appropriate —one of these seemingly inevitable conjunctions which happen with artists— and Muir was immediately caught by that alarming Kafkaesque mixture of otherworldliness and solidity.

A perusal of Elgin W. Mellown's *Bibliography of the Writings of Edwin Muir* and the indexes of his *Selected Letters* and collections of critical essays reveals the extraordinary range of reference to non-Anglophone literature in his work. Poetry, fiction and drama appear to have been equally attractive to his eclectic appetite, and thinkers such as Kierkegaard, Spengler, Jung, Gabriel Marcel, Schopenhauer and Simone Weil feature in his discursive prose. The "poetic" or imaginative, however, always appealed more to him than realist writing. It was *Peer Gynt* and *Brand*, not *A Doll's House*, that he rated highly in Ibsen and, indeed, it is *Peer Gynt* that has come to be commonly regarded as a seminal work in the early phase of modernism.

Probably Muir's longest-running and most substantial promotion of a foreign writer was of the German poet Hölderlin, who died in 1843, having spent almost half of his long life in a state of quiet insanity. Not well-known even in Germany till a more complete collection of his poems was published in 1916, Hölderlin's poetry was first written about by Muir in 1923. He included two substantial essays on him in *Essays on Literature and Society* (1949) and he was still discussing him in a letter of 1956 when he describes him as "the great modern representative figure" of "bewilderment" (1974: 187-188). Hölderlin's poetry exerted considerable influences on Rilke and Stefan Georg. His juxtapositions and meltings of past and present, physical and spiritual, human and divine, mythical and immediate, and his dislocations of ordinary syntax, anticipate aspects of modernist poetics, a connection which Muir makes:

> The derangement of Hölderlin's mind can be more clearly seen in the extreme disconnections of some of his poetry, where a gap seems to yawn between one statement and the next, producing an effect as if the reader closed his eyes for a moment and found himself in a different place when he opened them again. (Muir 1949: 87)

Michael Hamburger, the main translator of Hölderlin into English, similarly relates him to later developments in symbolism and imagism, suggesting that some pieces "prefigure the kind of association practised by twentieth-century innovators, such as Mr. Ezra Pound in the *Cantos*" (Hamburger 1980: 15). The figure of Hölderlin appears several times in Muir's own poetry, for example:

> Mad Hölderlin
> Praised God and Man, cut off from God and Man
> In a bright and twisted world. (In Butter 1991: 285)

He features also in "Hölderlin's Journey" and "A Mad Poet". Obviously something in Hölderlin's intense and fractured story matched an aspect of Muir's own psyche, and some clash between a romantic, idealist aspiration and the denial of that aspiration in modern harshness seemed, to Muir, to be emblematic of the hazardous situation of the individual in our century.

A second poet promoted by Muir is the Austrian Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874-1929). Interestingly, although their lives were completely dissimilar, Hofmannsthal, like Hölderlin, entered something of a poetic silence in the second half of his career and devoted his energies to the

theatre and opera. (In 1923, when Muir was reading Hofmannsthal and Hölderlin, he was also excited by the work of Rimbaud, another poet who absconded from poetry). As late as 1956, Muir was still eager to write something substantial on Hofmannsthal. The ambition was never fulfilled, but the Austrian poet is highly praised in his essays and letters: "I don't think that for sheer perfection there is any other German poet to touch him" (in Butter 1974: 89), and he is compared with Rilke, Georg and Trakl. In the famous *Letter of Lord Chandos* (1902), Hofmannsthal presents the dilemma, experienced by all serious poets in various degrees, of the gap between words and things, and the untransparentness and self-defeat in the enterprise of writing. Although Hofmannsthal in the dramatic disguise of the *Letter* seems to concede the inadequacy of lyric poetry, Muir felt that the actual lyrics disproved him. Muir also found confirmation of his own beliefs about literature in some of Hofmannsthal's contentions in other prose pieces. In his essay, "The Poetic Imagination", Muir writes:

> Hugo von Hofmannsthal said once that great imagination is always conservative. By this he may have meant that it keeps intact the bond which unites us with the past of mankind, so that we can still understand Odysseus and Penelope and the people of the Old Testament [...]. Or he may have meant something more: that imagination is able to do this because it sees the life of everyone as the endless repetition of a universal pattern [...]. Imagination tells us that we become human by repetition [...]. Or Hofmannsthal may have meant that in the past only is the human pattern complete, that there is the place to which the present turns back to find its finished and timeless pattern. So that the present is a question perpetually running back to find its answer at a place where all is over. (Muir 1965: 225)

All three suggested meanings fit well with what we find in Muir's own poetry.

Obliged to earn his living with literary journalism, Muir wrote on many topics not close to his heart (he produced around a thousand reviews), but he was free to express opinions and make assessments according to his tastes. When we come to the books he helped to translate we are in different territory. *The Freeman* ceased publication in 1924 and some way had to be found to earn a living. The publisher of the magazine invited Muir to translate Hauptmann's plays, plays which Muir was to find stupid. Willa Muir had taken a degree in Classics but she quickly attained a competence in German when they travelled abroad. Edwin Muir's progress was slower, but

his ability to read German advanced faster than his spoken German. It is worth noting that they did not undertake to translate poets; in fact, apart from some verse in the books they translated and some quotations used in his essays, Muir embarked on no translation of poetry with an intention to publish. Willa translated a number of books on her own and she probably did more than her share on some of the longer novels. Particularly in the case of Leon Feuchtwanger, where none of the novels is short and some are over seven hundred pages, the work was often numbingly tedious.

Feuchtwanger's *Jew Süss*, published in London and New York (entitled *Power*) in 1926, a year after its German publication, was an enormous commercial and critical success. The Muirs did not share in the profits (they were paid a set fee), but their work was widely praised, as for example in the reviews quoted on the end-papers of *The Ugly Duchess*, their next Feuchtwanger novel, published in 1927: "Mr and Mrs Muir have rendered it in a translation so beautiful that even commendation seems almost impertinence" and "The translation [...] is a remarkable feat". As a result of this they were soon in a position to propose further books for translation. It was thus they came to translate Kafka's *The Castle*. When they had been in Prague in 1921-22 they had not known of his existence. They had mixed only with Czech speakers, such as the dramatist Karel Capek, and were unaware of the small groups of German speakers. Kafka was there or thereabouts during their stay and it seems rather Kafkaesque that they, who were to become so intimate with and entangled in his work, may have passed him in the street without recognition.The entry for Kafka's diary on 18 October 1921 reads:

> Eternal childhood [...]. Life calls again. It is entirely conceivable that life's splendour forever lies in wait about each one of us in all its fullness, but veiled from view, deep down, invisible, far off [...]. It is there, though, not hostile not reluctant, not deaf. If you summon it by the right word, by its right name, it will come. This is the essence of magic, which does not create but summons. (In Brod 1964: 393)

This coincides with a central contention of Muir's thinking later to be fully developed in his final volume *One Foot in Eden* (1956), Part II of which opens with the poem addressed to a Kafka seen as a redeeming figure:

> But you, dear Franz, sad champion of the drab
> And half, would watch the tell-tale shames drift in [...]
> [...] and read-on-all the leaves of sin ...
> Eternity's secret script, the saving proof. (In Butter 1991: 116)

Quite how entangled both Muirs became in the work is evidenced by Muir's account:

> At one stage Kafka's stories continued themselves in our dreams, unfolding into slow serpentine nightmares, immovably reasonable. They troubled us, but not as real dreams would have done, for they did not seem to come from our own minds but from a workshop at the periphery of consciousness busily turning out, for its own private satisfaction, a succession of weird inventions. (Muir 1954: 240)

Their procedure for translating a book was straightforward: tear the book in half, each translate a half, then edit the other's half. It has been claimed that Muir reads something Christian into the Kafka translations, even though Muir would not have described himself as a Christian in the period when they were translating the novels. Certainly he detected in Kafka's fables a sense of what in Christian terms is called "original sin", but he saw that element not as specifically Christian but as a kind of alienation similar to that he detected in Hölderlin and Rilke.

The three novels and most of the short stories of Kafka were translated and published in the 1930s. It is impossible to assess how much of the serious literature written in English since then owes some debt to Kafka as mediated by the Muirs. The slewed, implacable logic, the movement without progress, the falling in and out of focus, the dread, the begging for acceptance, are all parts of the world of *The Trial*, *The Castle* and *Metamorphosis* which would have found an echo in the second generation of Anglophone modernists. In retrospect, we see Kafka's stories as parables of that interwar "Age of Anxiety", waiting for the end, and indeed W. H. Auden's allegorical poem of that name about the Second World War, like its predecessor *New Year Letter*, both pay homage to Kafka as the spokesman of the modern condition.

Kafka's reputation remains high but the other writer in whom the Muirs invested much time and energy in translating seems to have slid out of sight. *Die Schlafwandler* by Herman Broch (1886-1951) is an enormous, difficult novel, of six hundred and fifty pages. Elizabeth Huberman has written a fascinating essay on the laborious business of translating Broch, borne with

remarkable tolerance by the Muirs (Huberman 1990). Although they admired *The Sleepwalkers* greatly and translated *The Unknown Quality* three years later, they declined when Broch requested them to translate *The Death of Virgil*. *The Sleepwalkers* was written as a trilogy, with the Muirs translating as the parts were written. For some critics, it, along with *The Death of Virgil*, takes the novel beyond the point reached by *Ulysses*. The three sections have each a different narrational focus, operating within and outside different characters at different times in different social and class situations and also with a narrator's or author's voice spliced in. The style of each section is special to that section; plain narrative mingles with dramatic scenes in dialogue, discursive essays and sequences of verse. Even in the syntax there is unpredictability. The reader is faced with huge sentences and tiny ones; some chapters are bulging and indigestible and one chapter consists of a single short sentence. The action moves from 1888 to 1918, but in jumps rather than as a linear chronicle. Each of the three sections has a subtitle, "Romanticism", "Anarchy" and "Realism", which suggests a wider authorial viewpoint or mode of cultural interpretation. This larger scheme is emphasised by a series of chapters entitled "Disintegration of Values".

In such a period of disintegration people sleepwalk towards a total breakdown. Muir was astounded at the beauty of some passages, the psychological acuteness of others, but what most impressed him was Broch's overall stylistic control. Broch, in turn, approved of an essay written by Muir to coincide with the publication of the translation and act as a help to prospective readers of the novel (in Butter 1988). The essay was published in August 1932 in *The Modern Scot*, and in November in the American *Bookman*.

Muir's connection with Scotland needs some comment. Although, between leaving Glasgow for London in 1919 and 1932, he had spent only a couple of short periods in Scotland, he had met the main intellectual figures such as Hugh MacDiarmid, Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Francis George Scott, the composer, and Neil Gunn, and kept in touch with events in Scotland. He considered himself a nationalist and, when he was in Prague or Vienna listening to concerts of Schoenberg or Stravinsky or attending the plays of Capek or Hofmannsthal, he imagined that, in an independent Scotland, Edinburgh could enjoy a similar cultural life. His relationship with MacDiarmid was friendly until he published his book *Scott and Scotland* in 1936, which made an enemy of MacDiarmid for the remainder of his life.

Muir, like MacDiarmid, wished to demolish the parochialism endemic to Scottish culture, but politically and aesthetically as well as temperamentally the two men were incompatible. Although he valued MacDiarmid's poetry highly, Muir considered that the campaign to resurrect Scots as a literary language was unwinnable and misguided. MacDiarmid, despite the fact that he was at that very time in the process of moving from Scots to English in his poetry, saw *Scott and Scotland* as an act of betrayal to him and to Scotland. A much more exciting, inventive and dangerous poet than Muir, he wished to be where "extremes meet" not in reconciliation but in conflict. If Muir favoured meditative models seeking salvation, MacDiarmid sought wilder, revolutionary examples. Muir found support in a kind of quietist German tradition; MacDiarmid gave his adherence to Dostoyevsky and an anarchistic Russian tradition. His example was Leon Shestov, whose *All Things are Possible* was published in England in 1920 (with a preface by D. H. Lawrence), and who argued against rationalist explanations and tidy consistency.

The divide between Muir and MacDiarmid is apparent in their different attitudes to the famous "Caledonian Antisyzygy", a phrase developed by MacDiarmid from G. Gregory Smith's *Scottish Literature: Character and Influence* (1919), which pointed to the antithetical forces of the real and the fantastic, the controlled and the anarchic, seen by Smith as a schizophrenic condition endemic in the Scottish intelligence. The clash of opposites is welcomed by MacDiarmid and, in his poetry, is a mark of his modernism. Muir claimed accord with Coleridge in asserting that "the mark of all great poetry is that it reconciles all opposites in a harmony. If Scottish poetry is doomed forever to express the Antisyzygy, then it contains no principle of progress, no dialectic, to use the fashionable cant term, and must remain stationary" (Muir 1982: 36).

Although Muir was, as a literary critic, superior to MacDiarmid, and although he contributed so much to a clearer thinking about modernism and the European intellectual tradition, it is Muir's poetry that is stationary and MacDiarmid's that is dialectical and progressive in the modernist mould. It was Muir's receptiveness, his eagerness to listen for what a variety of Continental writers could do in prose or verse, rather than a desire to quarry material for his own work, that made him such an informed, perceptive and generous commentator on writing in English, and such a powerful mediator of European modernist writing to the heirs of the literary revolution effected by Pound, Eliot and Joyce.

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THE WANDERING *FLÂNEUR*, OR, SOMETHING LOST IN TRANSLATION

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I

The *flâneur* is a frequent visitor to literary commentary and cultural studies, an appropriately fleeting, casually knowing reference, accompanied perhaps by a scholarly nod in the direction of Charles Baudelaire's poetry or the commentaries on him in the work of Walter Benjamin. The idea of the stroller or window-shopper as somehow congruent with an emergent modernity, and its symptomatic expression in the developing city, has become part of modern criticism's shared sense of cultural history, and of its own present discourses upon contemporary forms of urban experience. Beyond any number of passing citations, the figure, or idea, have given an exciting focus to discussions of questions of identity and perception in the city, often in conjunction with other theoretical discourses from feminism, postmodernism and postcolonialism (see Tester 1994). As many recognise, however, in the process the concept has also become detached from its moorings in Baudelaire or in Benjamin's writings: to the point indeed where one wonders how its current usage is exactly warranted, and why it is that the concept persists in the much changed urban environments of the postmodern, when the world is more likely to be viewed from a car window or the supermarket checkout than in a slow tour round an elegant shopping arcade. The idea has gone walkabout, so to speak, leaving the historical figure behind.

I want to comment on this different usage in what follows, and to suggest ways in which contemporary theory has not only reconfigured the *flâneur's* earlier more precisely historical meanings, sometimes in a productive way, but has also lost sight, particularly, of Benjamin's reading of the figure. I want to draw attention here to the way Benjamin understood, not

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simply the more discrete cultural character of the *flâneur*, but the relation of this figure to the urban crowd as well as to a later contrast between the pedestrian and proletarian. The looser meanings of recent theory turn out, in fact, to be both emptier than, and in excess of, earlier accounts, and to reveal less about any contemporary equivalent figure than about the problematic relationship between this late modern cultural moment and an earlier modernist agenda. What the sketchy lineaments of the postmodern *flâneur* especially embody, I suggest, is the problematic self-conception of the academic theorist or critic in relation to the crowd or mass: the observed social world the theorist seeks to theorise. My general recommendation is straightforward. If the term is to be retained in re-articulated postmodern contexts, then we ought to try to re-articulate these fuller cultural implications too. This means historicising all the participants in the debate, including contemporary commentators.

There is a common double conflation to begin with of the figure of the *flâneur*: firstly with Baudelaire, who identified this and related types in the new urban environments of mid nineteenth-century Paris, and, secondly, with Benjamin, who commented upon the cultural significance of this figure in his early twentieth-century readings of Baudelaire in his own Arcades Project. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (1993), for example, speak of "Benjamin's arcade", of his work as "famously "botanizing the asphalt" as *flâneur* immersed in the urban experience" (8), when the arcades were, if anything, the historical domain of the *flâneur* and Baudelaire, and "botanizing the asphalt" is Benjamin's famous later description of their earlier style and method. Frequently, however, Baudelaire is nowhere in sight. It is Benjamin himself who becomes "the exemplary *flâneur*" (Keith and Pile 1993: 8), and Benjamin who is said to define "people by their spatial activities: prostitutes, *flâneurs* or street prowlers [...] sandwichmen" (Shields 1996: 230).

What is striking in this sometimes compound after-life granted to the *flâneur* Baudelaire/ Benjamin, is that the *flâneur* belonged strictly to the early and mid-nineteenth century, even especially to Paris, and was of interest to Benjamin, writing in the 1930s, as an allegorical expression of decline associated with this fleeting moment in the life of that city; and that Benjamin writes as a theorist of modernism and as a marxist; both of which, as the world knows, are now routinely discredited.[1]

We should remind ourselves, firstly, of some of the details of Baudelaire's and Benjamin's conceptions of the *flâneur*. The *flâneur* had been anatomised as an urban type in popular journalism from the early nineteenth century.[2] He was a stroller, a gentleman of leisure with a scrupulous eye for fashion who moved from café to boulevard, arcade and opera. Baudelaire drew attention to the figure in essays of the 1850s and 1860s, particularly in "The Painter of Modern Life" (in Frascina and Harrison 1982). Here he associated but did not identify the *flâneur* with the artist Constantin Guys. Guys's sketches of fashionable Parisian life answered Baudelaire's call for an art of modern life. "By "modernity"", Baudelaire famously resolved, "I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable" (1982: 23). Guys's glimpses of beauty (the "poetry of history") in the ostentatious and squalid appearances of the everyday answered this description and gave him, importantly, "an aim loftier than that of a mere *flâneur*", for he sought to extract and distil something "more general, something other than the fugitive pleasure of circumstance" (1982: 23).

Benjamin's main essay on the *flâneur* forms a part of his unfinished study of Baudelaire, itself the core of his uncompleted study of the Parisian Arcades, first conceived in the 1920s. Benjamin (1973) linked the figure with other "heroic" urban outcasts (the apache, dandy, ragpicker, prostitute) and saw the poet Baudelaire (not Guys) as patterning "his image of the artist after an image of the hero" they supplied (1973: 67). They were "so many roles to him. For the modern hero is no hero; he acts heroes" (1973: 97). Amongst much else that is both rich and enigmatic in Benjamin's discussion, three key co-ordinates in this identity are relevant here. All of them stress the figure's ambivalence: his association with the intermediary spatial domain of the arcade, "a cross between a street and an *intérieur*" (1973: 37), his relation to the crowd, and his relation to commodity production. Entering the crowd, Benjamin's *flâneur* was by turns intoxicated and contemptuous, lost in its anonymity but aloof in his conspicuous singularity; at once voyeur, connoisseur, companion type of the modern detective, and the observer, above all, of passing women whose "beauty" he gauged and suffered in its agonising transience. Entering the market place "in reality [...] to find a buyer" (1973: 171-172), he retained a distance from the bourgeoisie and world of commerce as he did from the women his eyes pursued. His protest lay in his idleness and aestheticising gaze, at one with the pleasures of petty bourgeois society in "empathising with commodities", though Baudelaire, at least, "had already half withdrawn from it" (1973: 59).

What one must add is that Benjamin clearly saw this environment, class position and artistic distance as passing, as themselves "modern" in the 1860s, and thus, as this moment ran into the course of history, as allegories of decay. The arcades fell into disuse, the nuances of gaslight were lost in the glare of electricity. Baudelaire's "sensitivity" to this process lent a "self-awareness [...] to the strolling commodity" (1973: 61), but the protest of the heroic individual was doomed. It was, said Benjamin, "uncritical" (1973: 66). The *flâneur* rose and fell on the cusp of early modernity, before the urban scene was inescapably awash with commodification and proved his creative incognito unsustainable. "The *flâneur*", Benjamin writes, "still stood at the margin, of the great city as of the bourgeois class. Neither of them had overwhelmed him. In neither of them was he at home" (1973: 170). Within a decade, however, this very system was to commercialise *flânerie* itself in the form of the department store. The advent of this fully commodified realm of active shopping, Benjamin announces, was "the *flâneur*'s final coup" (1973: 170, and see Ferguson 1994: 34-35).

Later debate, and its reactivated *flâneurs*, should be understood in relation to these writings and their respective cultural moments. I want here to comment on two specific tendencies. The first, occurring within feminist literary and social criticism, has debated the *flâneur*'s association with art or writing in relation to gender and the position of women in early or late modern urban environments. The second has assimilated the concept to the discourses, broadly defined, of poststructuralism and postmodernism, and extrapolated the figure to a contemporary perspective, in terms of the changed identities said to characterise global cities or post-Fordist economies.

III

Perhaps the most influential essay in feminist accounts of the *flâneur* remains Janet Wolff's "The Invisible *Flâneuse*" (1985). Wolff makes it clear that the *flâneur* was a male figure, inhabiting the predominantly male public sphere of nineteenth-century Paris as of other cities. This social reality was compounded, she argues, by the newly emerging discipline of sociology which, like the literature of modernity, ignored the private sphere, which was women's domain. The women whom Baudelaire and later sociologists identified as occupying the public realm (the female *passante* and lesbian, prostitutes, victims, widows, consumers) were viewed as approximations to the male type, or the appendage of male status —objects of fascination, disgust, and display; while other women "in domestic service [...] in their factories, mills, schools, and offices" (1990: 44) were simply not observed in

the literature or the academic discipline. Wolff's essay is titled "the invisible *flâneuse*", but the point of her argument is that there was and could be no female *flâneuse* in these conditions. The social reality and ideological construction of modernity meant that such a figure was not simply invisible but non-existent.

Elizabeth Wilson (1991) feels this argument, in Wolff and also Griselda Pollock (1985), has been overstated, and that women played an active as well as passive part in the spectacle of "consumerism and erotic illusion" (57) which was the Paris of the Second Empire. Both writers, she feels, confuse the ideology of separated private and public spheres with the social reality in which unchaperoned women did come to occupy the newer public places. But if the prostitutes, courtesans and other figures of the *demi-monde* Wilson describes were active in the economy, sometimes close to the centre of financial and political power, and indeed symbolic of the disturbing sexuality of Paris of the period for writers such as Zola and the Goncourts, they were also, Wilson concedes, "the ultimate objects of conspicuous consumption" (1991: 57). The new sites and scenes of city life and entertainment (the opera, department stores, hotel foyers), or the gay subculture where women could perhaps appear alone in an urban spectacle of sexual innuendo, flirtation and outright display, introduced intermediate interior places between the public and private spheres. For middle-class women of leisure especially they extended one realm into the other, chiefly through the nexus of consumption which connected the bourgeois home with these other sites. In some sense these more feminine places were not unlike the intermediate zone of the earlier arcades claimed by the *flâneur*. However, unlike the *flâneur*, courtesans and shoppers were not strollers, dependent upon but distant from the world of commodities (*contra* Wilson, Wolff, Bowlby, and Ferguson are agreed that the active female shopper is not a *flâneuse*). Nor, until a later figure such Simone de Beauvoir, cited by Wilson, was a woman who spent her time between her hotel room and the pavement café also an artist, intellectual or writer. Janet Wolff is surely right, therefore, to conclude that there is no point inventing a *flâneuse* where there was none.

Or not at least for the period of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Rachel Bowlby argues that while women were "disqualified from *flânerie*" in early modernity (1992: 6), the later coincidence of modernity with the consolidated expressions of literary modernism produced the conditions for an emergent modernist *flâneuse*. Her example is Virginia Woolf, whose arrival as *flâneuse*, as Bowlby shows, also overtakes the figure of the *passante*, the female passer-by, who had been the subject of Baudelaire's original poem "To a passer-by", and had become a presence in much subsequent modernist

literature. The *passante* was the object of the male *flâneur*'s desiring gaze; of "love at last sight" as Benjamin had put it (1974: 45): a figure whose allure consisted precisely in the unfulfilled promise conveyed in a fleeting exchange of glances. The *passante*, we might say, comes thus to express the very features of modernity as described by Baudelaire. In the instant she passes by, the woman embodies an ideal of beauty ("the very woman", Peter Walsh in *Mrs Dalloway* "had always had in mind"; in Bowlby 1992: 13). As such, and while the *flâneur* keeps his distance, the *passante* is the emblem also of the commodity, intoxicating and untouched, just as she is. The *passante* then is the focus not simply of the male gaze but the necessary "other half" of the *flâneur*'s very being as the ironical, distanced male artist of modernity, at once his object and mirror. Without her he is nothing.

That Virginia Woolf can in *Mrs Dalloway* parody this now "dominant street story", itself "knowingly fictionalised" by its participants, as Bowlby suggests (1992: 15), is a sign of the changed conditions opening the city to the *flâneuse's* own kind of narrative. As modernist street-walker she does not simply join the *flâneur*, nor turn the tables, in the sense that the woman now steps out, stride for stride, and can look at the man, or look as the man has looked. She looks but looks differently and goes off —strolling, dallying, sauntering— in similar style but in another direction. What this entails, says Bowlby, appears in Woolf's essay, "Street Haunting: A London Adventure" (1927). This confirms the woman walker in the role of writer (she goes out, ostensibly, to buy a pencil, and visits a boot shop) but does so, as Bowlby points out, by way of a complex and ambivalent account which involves, not least, the loss of "the self our friends know us by" as the walker joins the "agreeable" society of "a republican army of anonymous trampers" (Woolf 1967: 155). I wish to comment here on one passage in the essay where I think another reading than Bowlby's is called for. This involves the relation of the still individual, "fugitive" figure of the adventuring *flâneuse* and the less mobile social types she encounters. The woman in the essay (a Woolf *persona* we assume, who presents herself in the first person plural) comes at one point upon "the maimed company of the halt and blind" between London's Holborn and Soho:

> They do not grudge us, we are musing, our prosperity; when, suddenly, turning the corner, we come upon a bearded Jew, wild, hunger-bitten, glaring out of his misery; or pass the humped body of an old woman flung abandoned on the steps of a public building [...]. At such sights the nerves of the spine seem to stand erect; a sudden flare is brandished in our eyes; a question is asked which is never answered. (1967: 159)

Bowlby feels Woolf resolves the tensions in this encounter: that there is a "rapprochement, -even--an -identification" -(1992: 24)- cancelling the felt reprimand and shock of difference. Woolf's "derelicts", she suggests moreover, "freely choose" their position: "They are not beggars, but ideal consumers" (1992: 24). This follows Woolf's notion that the sites these street dwellers "choose" near theatres, restaurants, and shop-windows provide them with "sofas [...] tables [...] sideboards [...] carpets" (Woolf 1967: 159). The more obvious explanation would be that, resentfully or not, they position themselves near the places and people who might spare them a mite of their prosperity. More importantly, the scene would seem to trigger as it hurries to annul the sudden impact of class difference: most transparently in the suggestion that the derelicts are provided with the furniture of a middle-class interior —of precisely the kind Woolf goes on to furnish in her imagination "with sofa, table, carpet" (and rug, bowl, and mirror), as her eye picks creatively over the possibilities displayed in the stores of Oxford Street. The plain fact is that these street people have neither furniture nor home, while she, with "a room of her own", does not need to buy these things and can indulge her fancy. True to the role of the *flâneur*, she can window-shop but does not (need to) buy. As she returns home she muses how one can tell oneself stories of those encountered, in the "illusion" that she and they are linked; that "one could become a washer-woman, a publican, a street singer" (1967: 165). The "illusion" is precisely that: the stuff of fiction. The *flâneuse*, like the *flâneur*, is fascinated by but distanced from these others in the crowd: a figure apart, economically, socially and in the very reflections her walking the street makes possible. The expression of modernity in this case is embodied not by the *passante* but by these others who are the object of her fictionalising gaze: the old, the poor, the ethnic down-and-outs, whose social meaning flares and dies in a shocked moment but haunts her still. The truth of the essay lies not in the rapprochement or linkage it may wish for but in the gulf exposed in the glare of the moment it cannot look at: the question it poses but cannot answer.

What therefore remains interesting both about the *flâneur* and the later *flâneuse* is their relation with others in the city, defined by a configuration of class and ethnicity as well as gender, and the way these factors come to light, and so reshape this figure, in the changing conjunctures of urban modernity. If Elizabeth Wilson over-identifies the *flâneuse* with women in public places, she has some interesting things to say, in terms of this fuller context, about the *flâneur*'s relation to women in the sexual economy of the emerging metropolis. "It was the *flâneur* not the *flâneuse* who was invisible", she announces (1995: 75). What this neat reversal means is that the sexualised

presence of women in public places served in fact to "attenuate" the *flâneur*'s masculinity. Following and extending Benjamin, Wilson sees here the forms of "the sexual life generated by capitalist relations" (1995: 74). The "violent dislocations" of urbanisation had destabilised masculinity, making the *flâneur* less the predatory male of standard myth than a figure who registers its disintegration: "a projection of angst rather than a solid embodiment of bourgeois power" (1995: 74).

Angst, of a different kind, but connected in its own way with a shock to bourgeois power, is surely what is felt by Woolf's *flâneuse*. Both figures in fact register something of the "fear, revulsion and horror" Benjamin had suggested was provoked by the encounter with the city crowd (1970: 176): this, and the "attenuation and deferral of satisfaction" accompanying commodification (Wilson 1995: 74). The desire for oneness Woolf entertains is only the other side of this social sexual and psychic instability. Both figures, and not only the *flâneur* of Wilson's description, are newly ambivalent, passing types, who venture out to risk the new geography and unequal social/ sexual relations produced by capitalism.

As such, both figures stand in need, as Wilson says of the *flâneur*, of a new discourse to replace the old (1995: 74). In fact, one waits in the wings. "The repetitive monotony of the *flâneur's* regime of strolling", Wilson writes, recalling Benjamin once more, "is an instance of "eternal recurrence" —the eternal recurrence of the new which is "always ever the same"" (1995: 74). We recognise here a description of the logic of commodity production which has produced the discourse of postmodernism. Is this, or a version of it, the discourse of the newly transformed, or the discourse of endless novelty which is the hell of late capitalism? Does it offer new life to the once extinguished *flâneur* and destabilised bourgeoisie or spell still further disintegration?

IV

"Is the *flâneur* someone to be appropriated for our *post*modern times?" asks Sally Munt (1998: 35). If we use our imaginations, is her answer, gazing after the "metaphor" of the *flâneur* as "borderline personality" of "angst and anomie" (1998: 35), as it passes from "the archdandy, Baudelaire" to "[Oscar] Wilde's sexual wanderings" (1998: 34), George Sand's cross-dressing, gay and lesbian life in Harlem, Greenwich Village and present-day Brighton. Actuality stands flat-footed, as symbol and image release a "roving signifier" of "indeterminate sexuality" (1998: 36).

Munt knows what she is doing: "simplifying, condensing, extracting and probably bowdlerising the *flâneur* here, as a vessel to be filled by the lesbian narrative, so that I can contribute to the unfixing of the supremacy of the heterosexual male gaze" (1998: 36). But what is perplexing is why this unfixing needs to stick with a term which in its own way asserted this unwanted supremacy. Perhaps because unfixing history, as this usage does, leaves only a set of words as symbols and signifiers, the detached rhetoric of what Edward Said has termed "travelling theory" (1983: 226-247), to supposedly match a mobile transgressive subjectivity.

Tim Cresswell, following the implications of the metaphor of travelling, sees the *flâneur* as a figure adopted by a privileged "artistic elite who romanticised the outcast" (1997: 361), and links this with the "romanticisation of the nomad as the geographic metaphor *par excellence* of postmodernity" (1997: 360). His examples are Edward Said himself, Michel De Certeau, Deleuze and Guattari, and Iain Chambers. The *flâneur* in this thinking mutates into a company of similarly representative outcasts or marginal figures: the vagrant, the refugee, the exile, and above all the migrant and nomad. These symptomatic types are seen to express the condition of movement, decentredness and displacement marking the postmodern, and are deployed to critique the ideas of belonging, stability, unity, and tradition (or the quest for these) seen to characterise modernism and modernity. Cresswell is critical of the dehistoricising generalisations this produces and of the sleight of hand by which "migrant experience" is equated to "migrant thought" (1997: 362); that is to say, how a highly differentiated social experience is appropriated to a supposedly migratory postmodern intellectual consciousness.

I cannot here consider postcolonial or postmodern experience, nor the operation of these characteristic metaphors; nor do I wish to suggest that the populist or anarchistic character of this tendency in postmodern theory is without its disruptive force. What is remarkable is the way the figure of the *flâneur* haunts or is directly recruited to its ranks. De Certeau, for example, famously contrasts the totalising, rationalistic mentality of a vision of the city from above (the World Trade Center in New York in his example) with the everyday "operation of walking, wandering and "window shopping"" (1984: 97) down below. Pedestrians are "passers-by", walkers and writers combined, "whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it" (1984: 93). These ambling, rambling, illegible stories of the everyday are the narrative traces of "ordinary man" and the "common hero"; "tactics" which deviate from and deflect the disciplinary "strategies" of technocratic civic authorities.

Miraculously, the *flâneur* appears not only to have multiplied but to have changed sides, no longer the detached hero of modernity and lost in the crowd so much as at one with it. This metaphorical appropriation, invariably risking the emptying out of historical specificity, is plainest of all in the description given of the *flâneur* by John Lechte, in a reading of James Joyce. He writes that:

> The *flâneur*'s trajectory leads nowhere and comes from nowhere. It is a trajectory without fixed spatial co-ordinates; there is in short no reference point from which to make predictions about the *flâneur's* future. For the *flâneur* is an entity without past or future, without identity: an entity of contingency and indeterminacy (1995: 103).

The *flâneur* is identified here entirely with the fleeting and contingent, with one side only of Baudelaire's definition of the art of modernity. The *flâneur*, Wilson had commented, "floats with no material base" (1995: 74). Here he continues his flight into the skies above all material reference: "at home when he is not at home" (1995: 103), but somehow embodied in the figure of Leopold Bloom in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and in the text of *Finnegans Wake*, an "exemplary instance of writing as indeterminate" with "no intrinsic link with signification" (1995: 104).

Ironically, all of this, we might suspect, remains allegorical of wider processes in something approaching Benjamin's sense. For now, in a dehistoricised or trans-historical reading, the *flâneur* becomes an allegorical self-portrait of the postmodern critic him/ herself: the intellectual nomad in search of a new discourse, scooped up in the very swirl of mass commodification Benjamin had anticipated. But if the *flâneur* is really a name, in the fullness of a historicising allegory, for this condition, this reading too is abbreviated, caught mid-logic so as to produce a self-validating "image" (as in Lechte) of a now thoroughly textualised modernist "figure", valorised for its very emptiness and disconnection: a real nowhere man (or woman). This hollowness, once achieved, is necessary, as Munt realises, if the figure is to be filled with a new content. The problem is that there is so much indeterminate "content" that it overflows and spills everywhere: to the opera, the park, cafes, bars, and malls; to anthropologists and social explorers, common pedestrians, lesbian and gay icons; to shopping, travelling, theorizing; some of these analogous to but some at a considerable (metaphorical) distance from the nineteenth-century *flâneur* and modernist *flâneuse*, and their symptomatic ambivalence towards the crowd and commodity production.[3]

V

"The utopian moment of flânerie was fleeting", writes Susan Buck-Morss (1995: 344). The historical *flâneur* was harassed and overtaken by modern transport and mass production, cordoned off in "the artificially created environments of pedestrian streets, parks and underground passageways" (1995: 344) as in a zoo or museum. What survives, Buck-Morss argues, is a mode of perception and of "being in the world" of mass consumption, a world that extends *flânerie* to the imaginary gratifications of advertising, illustrated journals, fashion and sex magazines, cruising the mall, cinema-going or slaloming across TV networks and the internet (see Anne Friedberg 1994). Whatever else, these examples evidently lessen the connection the original figure has with physical city environments. If the contemporary figure is associated at all with movement, this is likely, Buck-Morss suggests, to be with the tourist taking in cities and exotic locales courtesy of pre-arranged packages. "The flâneur has become extinct", she concludes, "only by exploding into a myriad of forms, the phenomenological characteristics of which, no matter how new they may appear, continue to bear his traces, as ur-form. This is the "truth" of the flâneur, more visible in his afterlife than in his flourishing" (1995: 346).

Do traces confirm an ur-form or tell us there is none? The above examples of a postmodern *flâneur/se* would suggest the latter: that this explosion of the one into the many confirms a floating, metaphorical existence as the co-ordinates of the historical figure are dispersed into orbit. As I have suggested, it is the manner of this appropriation which acquires material reference, as the "*flâneur*" has become a name for the postmodern subject and in particular the cultural intellectual. In this respect, the term is deployed still to consider the relation of the individual to "the crowd" and its equivalents in the community or mass, or the forms of mass culture. Since, however, these latter terms are themselves problematic, the "*flâneur*" helps articulate a relationship with their correspondingly exploded and diversified expression in a de-massified, post-Fordist society where eclecticism, hybridity, mobility and migrancy have become the order of the day. If the plight of the postmodern subject is to be inescapably immersed in the mesh of advanced consumer society, the "*flâneur*" can signify an ambulatory perceptual mode, "metaphorically" or "in theory" distanced from it.

Clearly Benjamin and others, as we have seen, saw the role of the *flâneur* as ambivalent and unsustainable. Interestingly too, Benjamin's own view changed. After 1937, as the rise of fascism took the utopian lustre off his thinking, his writings communicate, Buck-Morss says, less a sense "of new political possibilities than of recurring political dangers" (1995: 304). His

comments on the *flâneur* she sees as indicative of this change of mood. In the late 1920s Benjamin had seen Baudelaire as instructing those of his own generation in realising the nature of their relation to the market place. Their role as intellectual producers argued that their interests (unlike Baudelaire's) converged with those of the proletariat (in Buck-Morss 1995: 304). But where, in an early note, Benjamin had seen the streets as "the dwelling place of the collective", this had been replaced in a similar passage from the late 1930s by a reference to "a background of despotism" (in Buck-Morss: 304-305). The *flâneur* of this later period appears as a salaried photo-journalist or reporter, himself a spectacle whose very trade is to loiter. The logic Benjamin warns against is one which produces "the "true salaried flâneur" and "sandwichman" Henri Beraud, protofascist journalist", who "peddled the fascist line" (1995: 307). In a further passage quoted by Buck-Morss, the ""crowd" on which the *flâneur* feeds his eyes is the mold into which, 70 years later, the "*Volksgemeinschaft*" was poured" (1995: 307). Nevertheless, Benjamin is able to identify a figure who escapes the "assimilation into a massified clientele" desired by the totalitarian state. Thus "the only unreconciled opponent [...] in this connection is the revolutionary proletariat". This "destroys the illusion of the crowd with the reality of the class" (in Buck-Morss 1995: 307).

The *flâneur* whose critical moment comes and goes in the 1860s is by the late 1930s compromised by the joint operations of commodity production and the totalitarian state. At the time of completing his "lasting (solid) materialist "Baudelaire"" (Broderson 1996: 238), Benjamin saw Bertolt Brecht as "probably the first important poet who has something to say about urban man" (in Gilloch 1996: 132). Present-day appropriations of the *flâneur* would seem to transpose the earlier high point across a century or more while ignoring its perceived logic, along with the history and historical sense which framed it. Benjamin's "solid" Baudelaire melts into air, and the historical *flâneur* disappears, as if abducted by a future intelligentsia to a time where commodification of the bourgeois subject, fascism, and the revolutionary proletariat are a bad memory, if not airbrushed out altogether. The discourse which spoke of such things belongs to a "modernist" political moment and analysis. If we believe this mode and vocabulary (production, revolution, class, Brecht) to be untenable, then the outcome is not surprising: a self-regarding nomadic discourse which prefers the magpie in Benjamin to the materialist.

In Benjamin's thought the comparison of the *flâneur* and proletarian is linked with the role of an anti-capitalist, anti-fascist social collective. Much of course has changed since the Europe of the 1930s. However, artists and

intellectuals seem not to have forsworn the role of critical or political opposition, nor ceased to think of this in terms of strategically mobilised collectivities. The adoption of the "*flâneur*", like the "nomad" and "migrant", is a sign that oppositional social constituencies do not present themselves so readily, and that intellectuals, writers and artists are both disengaged and too willing to romanticise this disengagement. Who are these collectivities: workers, women, blacks, gays, greens, road protesters, the unemployed, squatters, the homeless? From what position does the intellectual/ artist speak? What explains this gulf? Can it be crossed? This is the kind of question, I believe, Woolf glimpses and glides over. To ask it again we would need to circuit back through the project of modernity, realising that these shifting, possible collectivities are the *flâneur's* other, even his/ her opposite.

VI

I want to end with a reflection on this issue. The haunting question which flares up in a flash of fear for Virginia Woolf's *flâneuse* echoes two other moments: the flash of Baudelaire's encounter with the *passante* and the famous description, in Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History", of *Jetztzeit*, the "time of the now", when a moment in the past flares up in new constellation with the present. This produces a historical consciousness, full of revolutionary potential. A final illustration suggests how this aspect of Benjamin might yet redeem the *flâneur* for present times. Rosi Braidotti sees the nomad as the woman of ideas. She looks to Benjamin not for this notion, however, but for his conception of history. Her example is Laurie Anderson's song "The Dream Before (for Walter Benjamin)", which enacts Benjamin's eleventh thesis on the philosophy of history as a conversation between Hansel and Gretel:

> She said: what is history?
> And he said; history is an angel
> Being blown backwards into the future
> He said: history is a pile of debris
> And the angel wants to go back and fix things
> To repair things that have been broken

But there is a storm blowing from paradise
And the storm keeps blowing the angel
Backwards into the future
And this storm, this storm
is called
Progress. (in Braidotti 1994: 280)

Braidotti comments: "Walking backward toward the new, which is also the unknown, in order to be able to name a better and fairer present, feminists and other nomadic intellectuals are the strange angels of a failed system, stumbling to a new age" (1994: 279-280). This crosses the vestigial idea of the *flâneur* with Benjamin's materialist conception of history so as to produce a newly politicised, committed, critical but estranged (stumbling) intellectual. Braidotti calls the kind of reappropriation there is in Anderson's song "metabolic repossession" or "mimetic repetition". The *flâneur* needs some such strategy to walk away in a new guise (even backwards) from his later shadows.

NOTES

[1] Why or which Walter Benjamin walks the pages of contemporary commentary would be the subject of another essay. One general reason surely is that he has remained chic; that his unorthodox marxism, fragmentary, aphoristic writings, awareness of an emerging mass society mean he can be read less as a marxist modernist than already a postmarxist postmodernist and founder of Cultural Studies. None of this is "wrong". It may in fact suggest how a link with modernity necessarily depends on re-routing its more maverick and marginalised voices. At the same time, I suspect "this" Benjamin —when it produces the image of Benjamin as "exemplary flâneur", for example— has left some important body parts behind: not least Benjamin's materialist theory of history which suggests precisely how such links might be conceived. See the closing discussion below and see McRobbie (1994) for a discussionof Benjamin's place in Cultural Studies.

[2] Priscilla Ferguson (1994) shows how the *flâneur* was a conspicuous urban type in the first half of the century and had already drifted out of circulation at the time of Baudelaire's writings. Elizabeth Wilson (1995) draws attention to an anonymous pamphlet of 1806 in which all the features were already present.

[3] An allusion to Jack London, Arthur Morrison and turn of the century social explorers occurs in Chris Jenks's "Watching Your Step. The History and Practice

of the Flâneur" (in Jenks ed. 1995). In a, in some ways, quite singular attempt to "reconstitute the analytic force of the flâneur", Jenks argues that the figure has been the victim of a reductionist reading by materialist critics, including Benjamin, in the name of "a brand of social realism" (1995: 145, 147). "The original realisation of the flâneur by Baudelaire", he argues, harboured a celebration of "aesthetic excess, abstract expression and the aestheticisation of social life itself" (1995: 145). In the irony, "wry and sardonic potential" and "disinterested interest" marking Baudelaire's *flâneur* he finds the source still of a "resistance to the commodity form" (1995: 149). The assumption that the *flâneur* was original with Baudelaire, and Jenks's reading of Benjamin's reading are debatable, but his dehistoricising, aestheticising interpretation is internally consistent and consistent with other poststructuralist appropriations. What his argument produces, like these others, is "the flâneur as cultural critic [...] "out of step" with the late-modern rhythm of the city" (1995: 150). Why we should attribute this sardonic mode of critical enquiry to what is now an "analytic form, a narrative device, an attitude", and call this the *flâneur*, remains unclear.

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II. AUTHORS AND TEXTS

IS THERE A SWAN IN THIS POEM? YEATS AND SYMBOLIST POETICS

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At least since Arthur Symons dedicated *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899) to Yeats, calling him "the chief representative" of symbolism in England, critics have been at odds over the depth and breadth of the poet's connection to the European *fin de siècle*. Edmund Wilson (1991) famously included Yeats among the writers who stand at the culmination of French symbolism and mark its transition to the modernist mainstream. Readers such as Bruce Morris (1986) and Jean-Louis Backès (1981) have pointed to Yeats's assimilation of, respectively, symbolist rhetorical and theatrical techniques. The majority of critics, however, tends to resist attributing any of Yeats's poetic innovations to the direct influence of European writers. While acknowledging the undeniable impact of *fin-de-siècle* literary ideas on Yeats's poetry, they reject suggestions that Yeats should be unproblematically grouped among the symbolists. Thus A. J. Bate, for example, refers to Yeats's "affinity" with contemporary French writers, asserting that "he was "influenced" by —though may not have known— works which defined the late nineteenth century Symbolist aesthetic" (1983: 1214–1215). Haskell Block, similarly, insists that Yeats developed his notion of the symbol primarily from his reading of Blake and Swedenborg, and "was not dependent on contemporary French doctrine for his formulations" (1990: 9). Daphne Fullwood points to his "instinctive" understanding of Symbolist practice, but also minimizes the significance of any direct or programmatic borrowing (1970: 356). Denis Donoghue suggests that while Yeats may have "started out as a Symbolist, [he] ended up as something else" (1977: 104). And Gayatri Spivak argues that Yeats may have shared with the symbolists certain thematic tendencies but "did not practice *Symbolisme*" (1972: 101).

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Yeats himself notoriously both affirms and denies the possibility of direct influence. In a letter to Ernest Boyd in February of 1915, he declares that "I have never had any detailed or accurate knowledge" of the French symbolists (1955: 592). Elsewhere, he acknowledges that his French was "very bad", and that he had difficulty reading the works of current *avant-garde* writers (1959: 367). But in the important early essay "The Autumn of the Body" (1898), he acknowledges the work of writers such as Mallarmé and Villiers de l'Isle Adam as part of the vanguard in a "struggle" among philosophically inclined European poets against the "picturesque and declamatory way of writing" that marked the previous generation (1968: 189). And his close relationship with Arthur Symons, who translated many of Mallarmé's poems and had a detailed knowledge of other French poets, was based on a mutual admiration for developments on the continent. As Yeats writes in *The Trembling of the Veil* (1922), describing the sources of his early work: "I think that [Symons's translations] from Mallarmé may have given elaborate form to my verses of those years, to the later poems of *The Wind Among the Reeds*, to *The Shadowy Waters*, while Villiers de l'Isle Adam had shaped whatever in my *Rosa Alchemica* Pater had not shaped" (1927: 214).

Needless to say, the question of just how much Yeats's poetry owes to the influence of symbolism cannot —perhaps should not— be definitively answered. Yeats likely drew his idea of the symbol from *both* the French symbolists (or at the very least from Symons's account of them), *and* from Blake, Swedenborg, and other figures, much as his mythological references incorporate both Greek legends and Irish folk tales. The effort definitively to label his poetry must overlook its fundamentally, and often inconsistently, syncretic character. Similarly, such an effort gives to French symbolism a conceptual unity it did not hold for the writers who have since been associated with it.[1] This is not to argue, though, that *fin-de-siècle* literary ideas were of no real significance to Yeats. Indeed, Yeats returns to these ideas throughout his career, albeit chiefly in the role of retrospective critic rather than advocate.[2] Much of his early work —most notably *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), *The Shadowy Waters* (1906), and the early short fiction— similarly shows the clear impact of symbolist ideas and imagery. Yet the most significant effect of the European *fin de siècle* on Yeats's poetry comes not in the poet's short-lived fascination with the limited set of images and themes we have come to call "symbolist" (the doctrine of correspondences, the valorization of imagination over fact, an interest in mysticism and the occult, and so forth), and with which most evaluations of

Yeats's relationship to symbolism have been exclusively preoccupied. Rather, I shall argue in what follows, Yeats takes from the symbolists a poetic "strategy" and not a coherent theory or thematic constellation. This strategy is explicitly post-romantic, and seeks to challenge prevailing romantic conceptions of poetic language and subjectivity from within the romantic paradigm.[3] Despite his shifting theoretical allegiances, and his resistance to adumbrating a single poetic doctrine, Yeats continues to draw upon this poetic strategy, even as he explicitly rejects the thematic and rhetorical trappings of *fin-de-siècle* symbolism itself.

Much like the French symbolists, Yeats worked self-consciously within a romantic conception of lyric poetry. Scholars of romanticism have long noted that the specificity of this lyric derives from its claim to find the spiritual in the material, to assert a continuity between nature and imagination, the objective and the subjective realms. The chief aim of both British and continental romantic writers, M. H. Abrams notes, "was to join together the "subject" and "object" that modern intellection had put asunder, and thus to revivify a dead nature, restore its concreteness, significance, and human values, and re-domiciliate man in a world which had become alien to him" (1970: 218). In his classic article on romantic nature poetry, W. K. Wimsatt suggests, similarly, that "the common feat of the romantic nature poets was to read meanings into the landscape", to draw "the spirit or soul of things [...] out of the very surface of nature itself" (1970: 83). The poem thus stands not so much as an actual record of the poet's observation, nor as a mere solipsistic utterance of purely personal emotion, but as an embodiment of a dialectic between imagination and nature, self and non-self. Romantic poets find themselves in the landscape by investing that landscape with spiritual qualities, and asserting their own unity with the natural world. What Abrams calls the "greater romantic lyric" offers a paradigm for this kind of interaction. Such poems present a dramatized speaker in a specific and localized natural setting (often named in the title), whom the reader overhears pondering a memory or idea inspired by the setting. The poem often begins with a description of the setting, then turns inward to the speaker's meditation, and then returns to the outer scene, which is now described in terms of the insights or emotions the speaker has gained from the meditation (Abrams 1970: 201).

This poetic model was crucial to nineteenth-century poetry, and continues to underlie modern assumptions about imaginative writing. Yet it does not come without its problems. As Paul de Man argues, in his essay "The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image", the interaction between

subject and object that shapes romantic nature poetry attests to an estrangement between nature and the imagination, rather than the happy union that the major Romantics seem to depict. Indeed, the dream of such an interaction arises from a feeling of lack, and not, as readers habitually assume, from a new sense of closeness to nature. De Man notes, in this regard, that "The existence of the poetic image is itself a sign of divine absence, and the conscious use of poetic imagery an admission of this absence" (1984: 6). Poetry thus becomes a weak substitute for the immediate relation to nature romantic writers desire and feel they have lost, and poetic language stands as an always inadequate means of approximating this relation. For de Man, nineteenth-century poetry presents a procession of failed attempts to bring language closer to the ontological status of nature (1984: 7). The romantic writer imagines that words can rise, in Hölderlin's phrase, "wie Blumen" [like flowers]; but to the extent that words are not things —and only ambiguously "natural"— this ideal will always fall short. The confidence in the unifying power of language —in the ability of metaphor or prosopopoeia to join, if only conceptually, subject and object— thus both defines romanticism and also marks its limits and inherent contradictions.

For symbolist poets such as Yeats, I would argue, the estrangement between subject and object that de Man finds at the heart of the romantic project becomes an all-encompassing concern. The confident assertions of romantic lyric about the priority of nature and the power of language come to seem hollow. At the same time, however, these poets never reject the romantic model they question. Instead, their poetry records a sort of romantic crisis narrative concerning the presuppositions of romanticism itself. Romanticism is shown at once to be the only way and no way at all, both necessary and impossible. This wholly romantic questioning of romanticism accounts for what I would call the "romantic effect" in symbolist writing. This term points to the fact that in the poetry of Yeats and others there operates a simultaneous appearance of the romantic model and an undoing of that model by the very poetic medium that would guarantee its functioning. As a means of demonstrating the significance of this specifically symbolist problematic in Yeats's later poetry, I will compare two poems ostensibly about swans: Mallarmé's famous sonnet "Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui" (1885), and Yeats's "The Wild Swans at Coole" (1916). In each case, the swan in question seems to stand as a symbol for poetry, the poet, or the poet's relationship to his past. And in each case, the poem conforms in large part to the structure of romantic nature poetry. Yet, I will suggest, both

poems work to undermine the philosophical assumptions about nature and subjectivity that seem to produce them. Both the natural image and the lyric subject begin to break down under the ambiguities of poetic language.

Mallarmé's poetry consistently makes the tension between lyric consciousness and its objects a central concern. His poems generally follow a model similar to that Abrams describes in his account of the greater romantic lyric, but with a crucial twist. The poems are often "about" an object —a sunset, a swan, the sea, a head of hair— which is described and commented upon by a coherent, if diffuse, subject. But Mallarmé's persistent foregrounding of the material aspects of language (sound, etymology, even the shape of letters) works to break down this interaction. As he writes in a crucial passage from his essay "Crise de vers" [Crisis in Poetry] (1895) —an essay that Yeats knew in Symons's translation— the reciprocal interactions of words in a text pose a challenge to the coherence of both the subject and the object:

> L'œuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisés; ils s'allument de reflets réciproques comme une virtuelle traînée de feux sur des pierreries, remplaçant la respiration perceptible en l'ancien souffle lyrique ou la direction personnelle enthousiaste de la phrase. (1992: 276–277)
>
> [The pure work implies the elocutionary disappearance of the poet, who cedes the initiative to words, mobilized by the clash of their inequality; they light up with reciprocal reflections like a virtual trail of fires over precious stones, replacing the perceptible breathing in the lyric inspiration of old or the enthusiastic personal control of the sentence.] (my translation)

The "collision" of words with each other, Mallarmé suggests, suspends both the referential and the expressive powers of language. The brilliance of the object becomes obscured by the "traînée de feux sur des pierreries" [trail of fires over precious stones] generated by words; and the poet disappears in the linguistic chains his "souffle lyrique" [lyric inspiration] sets in motion. The "pure" work is thus purged no so much of extraneous images or ideas, but of those referential and expressive aspects of language that draw attention away from the play of words.

While retaining the structure of romantic lyric, Mallarmé's poems proceed by decomposing precisely that structure. Their vaunted "difficulty" arises from what I would describe as a double movement of affirmation and disavowal. The poem "suspends" reference in both senses of the word: at once holding it before us and rendering it inoperative.[4] We can take as a paradigmatic example of this suspension the sonnet "Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui":

> Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui
> Va–t–il nous déchirer avec un coup d'aile ivre
> Ce lac dur oublié que hante sous le givre
> Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!
>
> Un cygne d'autrefois se souvient que c'est lui
> Magnifique mais qui sans espoir se délivre
> Pour n'avoir pas chanté la région où vivre
>
> Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui.
> Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie
> Par l'espace infligée à l'oiseau qui le nie,
>
> Mais non l'horreur du sol où le plumage est pris.
> Fantôme qu'à ce lieu son pur éclat assigne,
> Il s'immobilise au songe froid de mépris
> Que vêt parmi l'exil inutile le Cygne. (1992: 68-69)
>
> [The virgin, the vivacious and the beautiful today/ Will it tear for us with a drunken wing–blow/ This hard forgotten lake that haunts under the frost/ The transparent glacier of flights never flown!/ A swan of another time remembers it is he/ Magnificent but who without hope frees himself/ For not having sung the region in which to live/ When the ennui of sterile winter shone./ All his neck will shake off that white agony/ Inflicted by space on the bird that denies it,/ But not the horror of the ground where the plumage is caught./ Phantom assigned to this place by his pure brilliance/ He immobilizes himself in the cold dream of contempt/ Which clothes amid the useless exile the Swan.] (my translation)

Critical opinion generally holds this text to be a statement about poetry and the place of the solitary poet in the quotidian world. In terms of its explicit imagery, the poem seems to depict an exiled swan trapped in ice. This scene

symbolizes at once the poet's exile in the barren winter ("stérile hiver") of modern life and his double existence (as poet and modern man) from which he seeks liberation but to which he is bound by his own brilliance ("pur éclat") and contempt for the world ("songe froid de mépris"). The swan is quite clearly personified. It can hope for freedom (stanza 1), remember its past ("se souvient"), recognize its plight as an exile. We are led, indeed, to understand its condition morally, to see its exile as a punishment for actions untaken ("des vols qui n'ont pas fui", "pour n'avoir pas chanté la région où vivre") or attitudes held ("mépris"). Bernard Weinberg (1966) adds to this scene a semi–dramatized narrator (the "nous" of line 2, grammatically a dative of interest rather than a subject) who observes the swan and reflects upon its plight. If we accept the notion that a dramatized narrator (and not the swan) describes the scene, we can read the poem as a greater romantic lyric, albeit an oblique example, and can treat the winter landscape as a stable natural image perceived by a coherent lyric subject. In support of this essentially romantic reading of the poem, which most commentators more or less accept, many critics point to the long tradition of romantic bird poems (Baudelaire's "Le Cygne" being an obvious example), as well as to the common romantic trope of the animal as a representation for the poet.[5]

All of this is, at least on one level, entirely correct. Mallarmé presents an image which can (and indeed must) be understood within a representational framework. One can construct the poem in terms of a subject/ object interaction, and discern a specifically romantic theme. But a number of details might leave us somewhat wary of stopping with a mimetic or schematically allegorical reading. Take, for example, the first stanza, which would seem to form the basis for the traditional reading of the poem. We can summarize as follows: a swan (depicted synecdochically here by a wing) trapped in a hard forgotten lake ("lac dur oublié"), which represents flights unflown, hopes (this hope could also be the narrator's, if we follow Weinberg) that the new day will allow it to break ("déchirer") the ice and escape its haunted and forgotten state. Although this stanza would seem to establish the scene as a winter landscape (references to a frozen lake, frost, a glacier, as well as the predominance of "icy" sounds such as "i" and "v"), the third stanza says that the swan (or, metonymically, his "plumage") is in fact trapped in soil ("sol"). Ice and soil are hardly to be equated, at least if we are concerned with a mimetic reading, but the text refuses to distinguish between them. One might respond that "sol" is a metaphor for ice, that in context it is merely a more general term for "ground". But such a metaphor would be difficult to assert, since the poem describes the swan as trapped in a frozen lake, not in

frozen ground. And if, moreover, we can read "sol" as a figure, what would prevent us from reading the entire winter landscape as itself merely allegorical rather than mimetic? The landscape is by no means specifically designated, and is in great part indicated by words ("stérile", "blanche", "froid") which need not refer only to a winter scene, or indeed to any natural scene.

Another word that interferes with the construction of a stable representation is "déchirer" [to tear]. In this context, it refers to the breaking of the ice, but generally it describes the tearing of paper or fabric. This sense of tearing would seem to be supported by the predominance of sibilants in the phonetic structure of the poem —always of significance for Mallarmé— which conspicuously "sound" like tearing rather than shattering. Here again, one might respond that Mallarmé uses the word figuratively and "really means" breaking, but allusions to paper or cloth in Mallarmé's later poems are never incidental, and given the whiteness of the poem's ostensibly natural landscape, we might just as well claim that "ice" really means "paper" or "textile", or any of the other associated images (veils, lace, or images associated with whiteness, such as foam) that inhabit Mallarmé's poems and necessarily bear upon the reading of each of them.[6]

If, then, we cannot establish a stable mimetic landscape, what of the swan? Its presence in the first stanza would seem to be deducible by its body parts (its wing, its neck, its "plumage") and its association with song ("chanté") and flight ("vols"). These synecdochal and metonymic connections are confirmed by the poem's explicit naming of the "cygne" [swan] in stanzas 2 and 4, and by the word "oiseau" [bird] in stanza 3. In terms of the poem's syntax, however, even these seemingly clear references become destabilized. The grammatical subject of the first stanza, for example, is not a bird, but "aujourd'hui": "Le [...] aujourd'hui [...] Va [...] déchirer [...] Ce lac dur" [the [...] today [...] will [...] tear [...] this hard lake] (my translation). This fact could, of course, be accounted for in terms of a kind of symbolist indirection, but it nevertheless destabilizes the image of the swan as the literal "protagonist" of the poem or as the object of a viewer's perception. Indeed, the homonymy between "cygne" and "signe" (linguistic sign as well as sign of the Zodiac —compare "le Cygne" in the final line) alludes to the swan's fundamental (and final) status in the poem as a "Fantôme". There is, in this respect, nothing to prevent us from seeing the entire poem as being not about a natural swan, but about the word "aujourd'hui", which, like the swan, is notably "winged" by the apostrophe which divides it. In support of such a non–mimetic reading we could also point to the predominance of the letters "i" and "v" in the poem as material traces of a neck and wings; or to

the vocabulary of the poem, in which these paired letters are "trapped" within many words (VIerge, VIvace, Va–t–Il, IVre, gIVre, souVIent, déllVre, VIvre, hIVer), much as the swan seems to be trapped in ice. On this level, the poem would be about the workings of language, about release of language from its bondage to reference, and not about a swan or the status of the modern poet.[7]

My point here is not to construct an alternative reading to that available on the thematic level of the poem, only to suggest that such a reading is conceivable. Mallarmé's poem by no means conclusively forecloses the dialectic of subject and object, and the romantic model of the natural image that underlies it. Yet by allowing both a mimetic and a non-mimetic reading, it foregrounds the conflicting claims and limitations of poetic language. The two readings, that is, are mutually exclusive. In order to sustain the thematic reading, we must foreclose the linguistic reading, which directs our attention from what language represents to its sounds and to the distribution of letters on the page: the swan in this reading is nothing but ink and paper. If we settle on the natural image of a swan trapped in ice we have to overlook several manifest inconsistencies in the language of the poem; and if we try to read the poem as non-representational, we nevertheless come up against the undeniable thematic presence of a swan and a winter landscape. The decomposition performed by the poem thus shifts attention from the lyric subject, who, as Mallarmé suggests in "Crise de vers", should "cede the initiative to words", and from the object of contemplation, which is shown to be ephemeral, to the work of language. Rather than providing a reliable medium of representation or a means of uniting subject and object, language shows itself, in the course of the poem, to be independent of such intentions, and hence to be a problematic means of ensuring the relation of subject and object, imagination and nature.

It would be misleading to suggest that Yeats's poems are comparable on this level to the poem we have just examined. Indeed, Yeats is far more invested in the romantic tradition than Mallarmé is. Like romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge, Yeats often names his poems after specific places and times (e.g. "Coole Park and Ballylee, 1931", or "At Algeciras —A Meditation on Death"), and regularly follows the chief conventions of the greater romantic lyric.[8] Many poems seem unambiguously autobiographical, speaking of scenes and events that Yeats knew or lived through. Nevertheless, I would argue that Yeats's writing is at least as thoroughgoing in its decomposition of romantic assumptions as that of Mallarmé. For alongside their romantic structure, Yeats's poems are also inevitably invested in a complex network of what Yeats tellingly calls "symbols". According to

Yeats, these symbols come from a variety of poetic, occult, and philosophical sources, and in many cases combine associations from several sources at once.[9] They form a sort of parallel realm independent of the quotidian world, a realm open to the sensitive poet in moments of contemplation. As Yeats writes in his important essay, "The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry" (1900):

> It is only by ancient symbols, by symbols that have numberless meanings besides the one or two the writer lays emphasis upon, or the half-score he knows of, that any highly subjective art can escape from the barrenness and shallowness of a too conscious arrangement, into the abundance and depth of Nature. The poet of essences and pure ideas must seek in the half-lights that glimmer from symbol to symbol as if to the ends of the earth, all that the epic and dramatic poet finds of mystery and shadow in the accidental circumstances of life. (1968: 87)

This passage bears a remarkable similarity to Mallarmé's account of the interaction of words within a poem. Here, however, it is a "glimmer" passing from symbol to symbol —rather than the reciprocal reflections of words— that replaces both the "accidental circumstances of life" and the subjectivity of the poet with the "half-light" of essences and ideas. While symbols may first arise for a poet as a result of some observation, they soon crystallize into entities that bear no necessary relation to their origin in the poet's life or the natural world from which they are drawn. "It may be", Yeats writes of the cave imagery in Shelley's poetry, "that his subconscious life seized upon some passing scene, and moulded it into an ancient symbol without help from anything but that great Memory" (1968: 81). As in Mallarmé's account of pure poetry, Yeats's account of symbolism suggests that both representation and expression must be subordinated to the internal logic of poetry. What poetic language achieves for Mallarmé, the system of poetic symbolism (as opposed to the individual symbol) achieves for Yeats.

As a consequence of Yeats's evocation of symbols, images in his poetry that initially come across as mere descriptions of nature regularly reveal themselves to be allegorical figures with no necessary relation to any observed or experienced moment or to the poet's own emotions. In "The Symbolism of Poetry" (1900), Yeats argues that modern poetry should cast out "descriptions of nature for the sake of nature" and reject any poetics that places expression or representation over "the hidden laws" and internal logic of symbolism: "we should come to understand that the beryl stone was

enchanted by our fathers that it might unfold the pictures in its heart, and not to mirror our own excited faces, or the boughs waving outside the window" (1968: 163). In the early poem "He hears the Cry of the Sedge" (1898), for example, Yeats evokes a natural scene, described by a first-person poetic subject, that in fact gains all of its significance from conventional rather than personal or representational criteria:

> I wander by the edge
> Of this desolate lake
> Where wind cries in the sedge:
> *Until the axle break*
> *That keeps the stars in their round,*
> *And hands hurl in the deep*
> *The banners of East and West,*
> *And the girdle of light is unbound,*
> *Your breast will not lie by the breast*
> *Of your beloved in sleep.* (1987: 165)

This poem conforms in its basic structure to the romantic model of an interaction between subject and object. The speaker walks by a lake and listens to nature (the wind in the sedge). Nature is personified (it cries) and spiritualized (it utters a truth unknown by the speaker). Despite this structure, Yeats glosses the poem's imagery in terms drawn from Biblical references and Irish mythology. The "axle", Yeats tells us in a note, refers to the biblical Tree of Life; and the "I" of the poem is in fact the Celtic figure Aedh rather than Yeats himself (1987: 811–812). The poem also incorporates all of the four elements —earth (the sedge), air (the wind), fire (the stars), and water (the lake)— upon which, Richard Ellmann notes, Yeats regularly drew in his compositional practice (1954: 29–38). Given these emblematic correspondences, knowledge of any autobiographical or representational context for the poem —why Yeats was by the lake, what lake he had in mind— adds nothing to our understanding of its imagery, and the imagery does not lead back to the autobiographical context.

It is, of course, received wisdom among Yeats's readers that the poet explicitly turned from the emblematic imagery of such early works to a more realistic and conventionally romantic poetic in the twentieth century. As Ellmann writes, casting Yeats's development in terms that recall Plato's allegory of the cave: "The poet emerges from his candle-lit room into the open air, and seems almost ready to stretch and rub his eyes in the light" (1954: 103). While it is doubtless true that Yeats rejects the symbolist

imagery of his early verse, he continues to share with writers such as Mallarmé a crucial skepticism regarding the underpinnings of romantic poetics. This skepticism comes across, I shall suggest, in a similar process of decomposition to that we noted in "Le vierge, le vivace". But whereas the process of decomposition in Mallarmé's poetry turns upon a suspension of reference and a disjunction between two linguistic registers (the representational and the phonetic or material), the process of decomposition in Yeats's mature poetry turns upon a subtle tension between observational fidelity to nature and the allegorical or traditional associations of a natural image.[10] In many cases, I will argue, this tension takes the form of a sharp distinction between a lyric subject that "thinks" it is romantic, and a poetic structure and imagery that seems to "think" something different. In the poem that will serve as my example here, "The Wild Swans at Coole", the lyric subject makes a claim to unity with the natural image that is belied both by the poem's diction and by associations with Yeats's emblematic system.

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamourous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold
Companionable streams or climb the air;

Their hearts have not grown old;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water,
Mysterious, beautiful;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes when I awake some day
To find that they have flown away. (1987: 322–323)

The argument of this poem, and its relation to the greater romantic lyric, is relatively easy to discern. The poet walks in an autumn landscape observing a group of swans he had counted nineteen years before. The swans, once a figure for desire, now allow the reflecting poet to understand the loss of a desire (ostensibly for Maud Gonne) that defined his youth: "*Their* hearts have not grown old;/ Passion or conquest, wander where they will,/ Attend upon *them* still" (emphasis mine). The implication of these lines is that, while the swans retain their youth and desire ("Unwearied still, lover by lover"), the poet has lost his; and whereas once the poet saw himself in the swans, now he stand apart from them but still relates them to his own condition. We could support such a reading with reference to a number of imagistic levels. For example, the entire autumnal context of the poem ("The trees are in their autumn beauty", "The nineteenth autumn has come upon me/ Since I first made my count") alludes to the common conceit comparing a life to the passage of the seasons: autumn would indicate the approach of winter and, metaphorically, of old age. The same conceit extends to the "October twilight", which compares a life to a day. In both instances, the natural imagery would metaphorically embody the poet's feeling of age and dejection.

We could also point to the many images of and figures for reflection in the poem. We find a literal reflection, for example, in the first stanza: "the water/ Mirrors a still sky". And we might read the many implicit and explicit doubles in the text (the swans paddling "lover by lover", the distinction between the poet now and the poet then, or even the past doubling of the poet and the swans implicit in the poet's comparison) as figures for reflection.[11] This notion of reflection was even more emphatic in the original publication of the poem, in which the final stanza of the definitive version was placed between stanzas 2 and 3. With this ordering, the central speculation about the future (stanza 5) was in the center of the poem, framed

by the two reflections on the relation between past and present (stanzas 2 and 3), and framed again by two more or less objective descriptions of the landscape and the swans (stanzas 1 and 4), which, in their "symbolic" resonances (autumn, twilight, pairs of swans) made the distinction between past and present, poet and swans, even more explicit. This "reflective" stanza structure, along with the literal and figurative reflections within the poem would seem to support the basic claim that the poem belongs within the romantic tradition. Despite the mood of dejection which pervades the poem, its imagery and its very structure could be said to enact a joining of the natural image with lyric consciousness by means of poetic language. Subject and object, in other words, would come together according to a model of reflection, of finding analogies for one's own dilemma or state of mind within the natural world. The subtle personification in stanza 4 of the swans as "lovers" who experience "passion", and of the streams as "companionable", would complete this chiastic relationship between poet and nature.

Some aspects of the poem and of its textual history, however, should give us pause before we unequivocally accept such a reading. Let me focus on the poetic landscape itself. Although the poet presents this landscape in apparently meticulous detail (noting the season, month, time of day, precise number of swans, geographical location), it comes across as being, in de Man's words, "oddly void of substance and texture" (1984: 204). The emphasis is primarily on quantifiable elements, and most of the adjectives are flat ("dry", "cold", "still") or abstract ("beautiful", "brilliant", "mysterious"). Moreover, the drafts of the poem show Yeats actually removing pertinent descriptions, and minimizing the speaker's presence as an observer, from later versions. Early drafts describe the lake as "narrow and bright", the swans as "white", the stones as "gray", and the path as "hard" as well as "dry". Some details are altered over time. The lake, for instance, is initially described as "low" rather than "brimming"; the number of swans changes twice; and one version suggests only nine autumns have passed.[12]

It is clear, to this extent, that observational fidelity cannot entirely account for Yeats's presentation of the landscape in this poem. The landscape does, however, conform with remarkable precision to an emblematic system of correspondences that Yeats developed out of his editing of Blake in the early 1890s, and supplemented with his readings in Theosophy as well as with traditional associations. This system, to which Yeats remained faithful throughout his career, and which informs the composition of many of his poems, brings together the seasons, times of day, ages, elements, and the

four compass directions in a series of equivalencies. Ellmann schematizes the system as such (1954: 26):

Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Morning	Noon	Evening	Night
Youth	Adolescence	Manhood	Decay
Fire	Air	Water	Earth
East	South	West	North

For our purposes, two series are especially pertinent: that joining Autumn to Evening to Manhood to Water to the West; and that joining Summer to Noon to Adolescence to Air to the South. In the first series, we have almost every element present in the landscape that begins the poem; every detail, in fact, corresponds in some way. It is an autumn evening (the sun going down in the west), there is a body of water, and the poet clearly represents age and manhood. The same kind of relation holds between the depiction of the swans and (at different points) both series. In the narrative present, the swans are depicted floating on the water (thus lining up with the other elements of the scene), while in the narrative past they are flying. From this we can deduce their relation to adolescence, noon and summer (pointing to the poet's youth). There are no images in the poem that evoke the first series; and the majority of the images that directly evoke the final series —the woodland path and the shore— allude to the poet's major metaphor for the passage of time: "All's changed since I [...]/ Trod with a lighter step". Every detail of the poem can be read in this way as an aspect of Yeats's emblematic system, and to this extent any actual observation of nature —either past or present— is wholly beside the point. Despite the poet's claim that "All's changed", this is mainly true, at least in the text of the poem, in terms of a shift in emblematic correspondences, and not of the reflective model the poem seems to privilege. As such, in reading the poem we might be led, like the narrator of "Coole and Ballylee, 1931" (1932) to say of the flying swans: "Another emblem there!" (1987: 490).

What can we conclude from this model of emblematic correspondences, and how does it relate to the model of reflective consciousness depicted and embodied in the poem (particularly in its original order)? Clearly, we are faced with a decision between competing and perhaps irreconcilable claims: on the one hand a model of poetry as observation and reflection, and on the other hand a model which takes its starting point in a conventional system derived from Yeats's reading. Both models are legible in the poem, and both

offer equally persuasive interpretations, although they can co-exist only uneasily, if at all. The two models tellingly come together in a crucial image from the first stanza: "the water/ Mirrors a still sky". As I suggested above, this image conforms to the romantic practice of reading emotions into nature. The water reflects the speaker by embodying his reflective mood. But in the context of Yeats's system of the elements, the image entirely excludes the speaker, and evokes what Yeats describe in his essay on Shelley as the "glimmer from symbol to symbol". In this reading, the water would reflect another element (the air) and not the narrator's state of consciousness. Whereas a mimetic reading of the image must insist that any symbolic resonances are secondary or supplementary to the observation, the symbolic reading treats the representation of nature as a mere pretext, and to a great extent can ignore it entirely. The same thing is true of the swans, which can be read as either actual birds or emblems for the air, or for that matter can be assimilated to the many literary (Leda, the story of Baile and Aillinn) and philosophical (Plato's image of the departing soul in the *Phaedo*) associations that swans regularly hold for Yeats.[13]

As with Mallarmé's swan, then, so here with Yeats's own: the natural image and a romantic model of the dialectic between subject and object are presented in a way that undoes their representational stability, but refuses to reject it entirely. For Yeats, as I have suggested, this undoing takes the form of a tension between the lyric subject and poetic form. In this respect, we could read Yeats's reordering of the stanzas in a manner that de-emphasizes the poem's reflectiveness as a gesture toward the emblem; but we could also see it, insofar as it gives the poem a more "realistic" time scheme (moving, roughly, from present to past to present and future), as a gesture toward the romantic model. What I would want to stress here, as with Mallarmé, is the fact that such models coexist, and that a thorough reading of the poem has to account not simply for the presence of such elements, but for their mutual undoing. In this instance, the undoing of a reflective model by an emblematic model emphasizes the lyric subject's false sense of identification with nature, and not, as in the conventional take on the poem, his mature resignation: what he takes for a swan, "we" can more plausibly read as an emblem.

I have been arguing that the poetry of Mallarmé and Yeats arises out of a conflicted relationship with the romantic tradition. Both poets produce their mature work within a specifically romantic problematic, but maintain an ambiguous stance toward that tradition. Although both poets make at least a pretense toward basing their imagery on natural objects, and toward engaging this object by means of a coherent lyric subjectivity, there coexists with this

pretense a resolve to undo the poem's claim to represent nature, as well as the subject's claims of unity with the natural world. For Mallarmé, this undoing works through the irreducible semantic and material richness of his images. The object "seems" to be present, but it is always being decomposed. For Yeats, by contrast, the undoing of the natural image proceeds with reference to the emblematic systems which guide his imagery. Whereas his lyric persona claims a romantic union with the natural world, the natural images this persona describes evoke a system of elements, the significance of which he seems unaware. In both cases, then, the force of the poem arises out of a tension, an undecidable vacillation between two approaches to poetry, to neither of which Mallarmé or Yeats is willing to commit.

Symbolism offered Yeats no easy solution to this dilemma. His eventual dissatisfaction with *fin-de-siècle* literary modes and his subsequent turn away from European movements to a more thoroughgoing concern with local people and places may well arise from this fact. But this turn, as I have argued, does not mark a turn away from the problem itself, only a continued effort to work through it in a different way. No thorough account of Yeats's poetry can wholly ignore the post-romantic legacy which constitutes it. Coole Park may be many miles from the Left Bank, but it does not lie beyond the shadow cast by symbolism.

NOTES

[1] As René Wellek points out (1969-1970), the notion of a symbolist movement is largely a retrospective creation of literary historians (beginning, perhaps, with Symons). None of the major figures usually grouped among the symbolists either accepted or acknowledged the title.

[2] James Longenbach suggests that "dissatisfaction with a symbolist aesthetic runs like a refrain through Yeats's work in the first decade of the twentieth century" (1990: 95). In a famous passage from his autobiographical account of the "Tragic Generation", Yeats goes so far as to depict himself as a survivor of the late nineteenth century, and rues the influence of *fin-de-siècle* writers (here Walter Pater) on his generation: "Three or four years ago I re-read *Marius the Epicurean*, expecting to find I cared for it no longer, but it still seemed to me, as I think it seemed to all of us, the only great prose in modern English, and yet I began to wonder if it, or the attitude of mind of which it was the noblest expression, had

not caused the disaster of my friends. It taught us to walk upon a rope, tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm" (1927: 372-373).

[3] Morris suggests that the similarities between Yeats and French poets such as Mallarmé are almost entirely attributable to their status as post-romantic, rather than strictly symbolyst, poets (1986: 111).

[4] According to Jackson, this resistance to the referential dimension of language in both Mallarmé and Yeats is grounded in a rejection of positivist assertions about the reality of things in the world. For both poets, Jackson notes, the "creative or liberative power of poetic language is directly grounded in a sense of non-referentiality" (1979: 520).

[5] For some versions of this basic account, see, in addition to Weinberg, the readings by Chisholm (1962), Cohn (1980: 124–132), Lawler (1958), and Richard (1961: 251–256).

[6] Jean–Pierre Richard's monumental study of Mallarmé's imagery, *L'Univers imaginaire de Mallarmé* (1961), remains the best compendium of these associative chains. Jacques Derrida, though, offers a persuasive critique of Richard's project by demonstrating the manner in which Mallarmé's central images and symbols represent at once all their various meanings, plus the very grounds of that representation as a praxis of spacing, blankness, material difference. The image, in other words, points not simply to an object, and to other objects associated with it, but also (and crucially) to the act of writing. A fan, for instance, is not only a fan, but also a book, a fold, a wing, etc., *and* the very model of reflexivity and differentiation by which such a series could be constituted (1981: 251–254). To assert that we see nothing but a fan is to say both too much and too little. In "Le vierge, le vivace" the word "déchirer", as we have noted, which includes an association with paper and cloth, would open the text up to the many images of veils, silks, and lace that arise in Mallarmé's poems. But in addition to both of these thematic associative chains, to the semantic sense of the images, we must add the non-sense of the "tear", the meaningless white space between letters that allows us to distinguish a theme to begin with. The same might be said about the wing (as fold, fan, hymen, book, but also the material possibility of reflection) or the plumage (pen, phallus, but also the material inscription as the condition for phenomenality) in the poem. Mallarmé's thematic chains, in other words, insofar as they thematize their own possibility, are irreducible to any one meaning, or even to any sum of meanings.

[7] Compare, in this regard, Spivak's reading of the poem (1972: 104). It is worth noting, moreover, that Mallarmé would make the placement of words and letters a crucial issue in "Un-coup-de-d_s" (1895).

[8] On Yeats and the greater romantic lyric, see Bornstein (1986: 27–93). Bornstein nicely labels Yeats's approach to this kind of poem as "last romanticism".

[9] On the backgrounds of Yeats's symbolism, and his knowledge of occult and philosophical sources, see Seiden (1962) and Wilson (1958).

[10] I draw my basic account of this tension between natural and allegorical images from de Man's "Image and Emblem in Yeats", reprinted in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (1984).

[11] On the significance of reflection and doubling in the poem, see Eaves (1992).

[12] For a discussion of Yeats's variants, see Bradford (1965: 43–63).

[13] On Yeats's swans, see Billigheimer (1986), Levine (1981), Melchiori (1960: 99-132), and Stauffer (1949: 48–79). See, also, Smith's astute reading of another of Yeats's famous swan poems, "Coole Park and Ballylee, 1931" (1994: 228–231), which finds in this poem many of the same tensions between world and text that I note in "Wild Swans at Coole".

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DANTE IN AMERICA: ELIOT AND THE POLITICS OF MODERNISM

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Dante and America seem to have had an elective affinity to each other. American culture, even more than the British, and in spite of its conflictual attitude towards European culture, has historically given a privileged place to readings of Dante, as though Dante in some ways looked forward to America. Indeed, Charles Olson, in concluding a discussion of Ahab and of *Moby-Dick*, which he regards as *the* American text, sees the quest in that novel as anticipated by Dante's Ulysses, the "Atlantic man". The American has continued with the transgressive flight of Ulysses (*Inferno* 26): he has no further boundary to cross (Olson 1947: 118). But Dante readings in America have not followed a single pattern, though they now have, it may be argued, a consistency of approach, the archaeology of which I want to investigate in this essay, by focusing on a moment of change in American readings of Dante —one which makes Dante a source for modernist appropriations. There is very little of what might be called postmodern readings of Dante, in part because of the power of the modernist "take" on the text. This, in America, has inscribed Dante with a conservatism and an internal consistency which resists plurality and any reading for what Barthes calls "the return of the different" (1974: 16) —the "different" being that which is repressed in any reading that seeks a unitary theme and unified subject-matter. Another sort of conservatism, it should be added, is at work in Britain.

It has not always been so. I would argue that some hints for a postmodern reading of Dante are to be located in the American nineteenth-century reception of Dante which was displaced by modernism, and particularly by a modernism inflected by the assertion of European values. I want here to concentrate on one American modernist: T. S. Eliot, though I

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shall also make subsidiary reference to George Santayana (1863-1952), who taught at Harvard and whose essay on Dante in *Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, Goethe* (1910) influenced Eliot. Discussion of Pound, equally important in mediating Dante for modernism, must wait for another occasion.

T. S. Eliot's relationship to Dante can be explored through his poetry or his criticism, but it is important to remember that it was not simply a product of his desire to attach himself to European tradition, but an inevitable result of being soaked in the New England culture of the nineteenth-century, especially at Harvard, which set up a Dante Society in 1881. F. R. Leavis, in an essay called "Eliot's Classical Standing", coincidentally first delivered at Harvard, says that Eliot "overvalued what Dante had to offer him" (1969: 49). Leavis contrasts Dante with Shakespeare in this; there was more that Eliot could have learned from Shakespeare. The question that needs to be asked is, beyond quoting Dante, what use does Eliot put him to, in both poetry and literary and cultural criticism? Is it a conventional use, or does it re-read the text of the *Commedia*, and ask the reader of Eliot to do the same? Is it interesting or does it assume a reading of Dante that cannot notice Dante's own difference from the accounts of him as the poet of order, catholicism, mysticism, and the synthesis of classicism and medieval christianity?

Leavis's comments on Eliot in relation to Dante and Shakespeare, which recall the vocabulary of Eliot's claim that "Dante and Shakespeare divide the modern world between them; there is no third" (Eliot 1951: 265),[1] have their own agenda. Leavis would want to assert the pre-eminence of Shakespeare over Dante in any case, and not just in relation to Eliot. Most of what Leavis has to say about Dante is in relation to Eliot. In the essay quoted above, Leavis observes that Eliot "can only contemplate the relations between men and women with revulsion or distaste —unless with the aid of Dante" (Leavis 1969: 42). Eliot's poetry can barely negotiate questions of sexuality; and can only come at the relations between men and women via Dante's relation to Beatrice. Leavis assumes the non-sexual nature of this relationship, and disapproves of the spiritualising of the woman that it implies. I assume that he is right as far as he goes, though only insofar as this judgment impacts on Eliot; but I also want to consider whether this diagnosis of Eliot is inadequate politically, and to suggest the relevance of thinking about Eliot and Dante in relation to the politics of modernism. While Eliot's dependence on Dante may reflect an American anxiety of influence about European culture, so that he never shows himself more American than in his use of Dante, he nevertheless negates the then dominant American tradition of Dante

readings. Eliot's use of Dante is a gestural refusal of that in favour of a notional European tradition and a Europe of what C. S. Lewis would call "the discarded image", in other words, a Europe of an imagined unified sensibility, in partial contrast to Shakespeare. The essay on Dante says that he "is first a European" (Eliot 1951: 239) as opposed to being "merely" an Italian. "The culture of Dante was not of one European country but of Europe" (Eliot 1951: 240). "In Dante's time Europe, with all its dissensions and dirtiness, was mentally more united than we can now conceive" (Eliot 1951: 240). Not by chance, Eliot's next sentence refers to the Treaty of Versailles for its separation of nation from nation, as part of a "process of disintegration".

American criticism of Dante before Eliot was associated with the nineteenth-century drive to translate Dante into English; after Cary, the most influential of these versions in Britain being J. A. Carlyle's prose *Inferno* (1849).[2] This was to become the basis of the Temple Classics version, for which P. H. Wicksteed translated *Paradiso* and Thomas Okey the *Purgatorio*; Hermann Oeslner edited the Italian text and the version which Eliot used appeared between 1899 and 1901. Carlyle had already influenced his more famous brother, Thomas —the results of that appear in *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841), discussing "The Hero as Poet"— and the effects of Carlyle's enthusiasm are discernible in Emerson (who translated the *Vita Nuova* in the 1840s) and Melville. Interest in Dante in America was fuelled by Longfellow (1807-1882), who had been Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard, where he was succeeded by James Russell Lowell. Longfellow's blank-verse in *terza rima* translation of the *Commedia*, worked at since 1839, appeared in 1867.[3] Lowell, Longfellow and Charles Eliot Norton (1827-1908), the Professor of the History of Art at Harvard, who produced a prose version of the *Commedia* (1891-1892), were instrumental in setting up the Dante Society in America. Further examples of the New England tradition of Dante translations may easily be found: in the versions by Henry Johnson (1855-1918) who rendered the whole into blank *terzine* in 1915, and Courtney Langdon (1861-1924) who did the same between 1918-1921. Norton was succeeded as Dante lecturer at Harvard by C. H. Grandgent (1862-1939), and with Grandgent we arrive at contemporary American Dante scholarship, for his edition of Dante (1909-1913) is one of the bases of the version of Charles Singleton (1909-1985), without question the most influential voice in current American thinking about Dante.

Singleton's work, beginning with *An Essay on the Vita Nuova* (1949), was from the first associated with new criticism. In 1952, he contributed to

an issue of the *Kenyon Review* edited by Francis Ferguson. Other contributors included Allen Tate, R. P. Blackmur, Robert Fitzgerald, Eliot himself, Jacques Maritain, and Erich Auerbach. I shall return to the differences between Auerbach and Singleton; for the moment I want to signal the differences between Singleton's post-Eliot readings and pre-Eliot readings via a quotation from the Yale critic Giuseppe Mazzotta, in an obituary for Singleton. Mazzotta draws attention to the myth of the puritan settlement of New England as a new Exodus, and to Singleton's reading of the *Commedia* as dominated by the image of the Exodus —the words "*In Exitu Israel de Aegypto*" ["When Israel went out of Egypt"], the title of one of Singleton's most famous essays, being the words cited by the new pilgrims arriving at the shores of the mountain of Purgatory (*Purgatorio* 2, 46).[4] However, Mazzotta contrasts Singleton with Emerson, saying that "unlike Emerson, who sees Dante's poetry as a place of transgressions of the imaginary, as a political project for the American future, Singleton restores the *Commedia* to the role of an idyllic simulacrum of the past as legitimized by the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas" (1986: 38).[5]

Having sketched out this history, Eliot's place within it and his changes to it can be assessed. He studied at Harvard between 1906 and 1914, taking a class with Irving Babbitt (1865-1933) in 1909 on literary criticism in France, and then spending the year 1910-1911 in Paris. Babbitt, like Santayana, whose courses on the "History of Modern Philosophy" and "Ideals of Society, Religion, Art and Science in their Historical Development" Eliot also took, was one of the figures opposed to the liberalisation of the courses and the system of electives that had been introduced at Harvard by Charles Eliot, president from 1869 to 1909. These views appeared in Babbitt's *Literature and the American College* (1908), a text calling for the cultivation of the "classical" spirit and for impersonality. Eliot left Harvard in 1914, and Charles Eliot, who was a distant relation, corresponded with him in 1919, urging him to return to America, where a post awaited him at Harvard. He said that America was the only place where Eliot's talent could be nourished, and cited the example of the expatriate Henry James, whose sojourn away from America, he said, had contributed neither to the happy development of his art nor to his personal happiness (Jain 1992: 29-30). Eliot took no notice; indeed, in 1927 he became a British subject.

In Paris in 1911, under the influence of Irving Babbitt, Eliot bought *L'Avenir de l'Intelligence* (1905) by Charles Maurras (1868-1952), founder of Action Francaise, anti-semite and nationalist (he hated Germany), supporter of the Catholic Church, and royalist (for only monarchy, in his opinion, was

compatible with catholicism). The book is described by Michael Sutton as the one that "best embodied the substance of Maurras's thought" in the years before the First World War (1982: 49). Eliot's response to Maurras was decisive. In 1928, two years after much of Maurras's work had been put on the Index —Pius XI not wishing for the alliance of nationalism and royalism in France— Eliot ran in *The Criterion* his own two-part translation of Maurras's *Prologue to an Essay on Criticism*. It has been convincingly shown that Eliot's description of himself that year, in the Preface to *For Lancelot Andrewes*, as "classicist in literature, royalist in politics and anglo-catholic in religion" parrotted Maurras's self-description in the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise* in 1913, as "classique, catholique, monarchique" (Jain 1992: 58). Certainly, the classicism is the point of most easy contact with Maurras. In the following September, 1929, Faber issued Eliot's short book on Dante, the second piece on Dante that Eliot had written —the first appeared in *The Sacred Wood* in 1920. The book (later reprinted as a section of his *Selected Essays*) was dedicated to Maurras, and its epigraph ran: "La sensibilité, sauvée d'elle-meme et conduite dans l'ordre, est devenue un principe de perfection" ["Sensibility, saved from itself and submitted to order, has become a principle of perfection"]. The words came from Maurras's own essay on Dante, which was an introduction to a translation of *Inferno* by Mme Espinasse-Mongenet of 1912. Maurras reissued the essay in book-form, as *Le Conseil de Dante* in 1920.

Before commenting on the epigraph, and noticing that in later reprints Eliot cut it and the dedication, one should note that Eliot never dissociated himself fully from Maurras's brand of fascism plus monarchism. A modernist, European reading of Dante seemed to involve the possibility that Dante should be read as a supporter of a proto-fascist position. In 1948, in an essay entitled "Hommage à Charles Maurras", Eliot wrote; "For some of us, Maurras was a kind of Virgil who led us to the doors of the temple" (Margolis 1972: 95). It is alarming to think what temple Eliot might have considered Maurras a fit escort to; but the point is that the reference to Virgil quotes, from *Purgatorio* 22, 64-73, the words of the Christian poet Statius to the pagan poet Virgil, in which Virgil is seen as the prefigurer of Christianity who led to Statius's conversion. The passage runs, in the Temple Classics translation:

> And he [Statius] to him: "Thou first didst send me towards Parnassus to drink in its caves, and then didst light me on to God. Thou didst like one who goes by night and carries the light behind him, and profits not himself, but maketh persons wise that follow him,
> When thou saidst: "The world is renewed, justice returns and the first age of man, and a new progeny descends from heaven."
> Through thee I was a poet, through thee a Christian [...]. (Dante 1901, 2: 275)

No higher praise of Maurras could really be given, or could even, perhaps, have been wanted. Even the association of the French fascist with the poet of empire seems not merely fortuitous. The temple Eliot refers to is classicism, which implies not only the importance of rank, and of the non-democratic, according to Albert Thibaudet, commenting on Maurras (Howarth 1965: 177), but also a commitment to theological pessimism, to non-protestant ideas of the power of the individual, and to non-Pelagianism. Eliot's definition is "*form* and *restraint* in art, *discipline* and *authority* in religion, *centralization* in government (either as socialism or monarchy). The classicist point of view has been defined as essentially a belief in Original Sin —the necessity for austere discipline [...]".[6] Dante becomes valuable to Eliot in that he leads away from a belief in "cheerfulness, optimism, and hopefulness [which] words stood for a great deal of what one hated in the nineteenth century" (Eliot 1951: 262). Original sin and a belief that poetry must originate from suffering replaces unitarian optimism. Eliot had rejected Charles Eliot's educational reforms which favoured electives, accounting for the changes he had made by his "optimistic faith in the natural goodness of the human will [...] which perhaps a sounder theology might have corrected" (Sigg 1989: 227).[7] Belief in original sin would never tolerate romanticism (that New England product of Emersonianism), or democracy, or protestantism.

In the quotation from Maurras used in the book on Dante, the context is Dante's meeting with Beatrice, and the new accession to feeling that Dante has in her presence. But sensibility has been corrected. Order has been accepted. Maurras's right-wing "take" on Dante has little to do with Dante's own politics as expressed in *Monarchia*, for instance (nor does Eliot even mention this text in his book on Dante). As Eugen Weber says, in his account of Action Française, Maurras came to politics by way of aesthetics (an interesting variant on Benjamin's famous claim that fascism aestheticises

politics), and nationalism was a lesson that could be learned from classicism. Weber quotes Maurice Barrès that

> [N]ationalism is more than merely politics: it is a discipline, a reasoned method to bind to all that is truly eternal, all that must develop in continued fashion in our country. Nationalism is a form of classicism; it is in every field the incarnation of French continuity. (1962: 77)

Submission to order on Dante's part is, then, both in the field of a sublimated love and nationalism; these are metaphors one for the other.

Eliot's Dante criticism is heavily compromised. In the essay called "Dante" which appeared in *The Sacred Wood*, he argued that in the *Commedia*,

> [T]he emotion of the person, or the emotion with which our attitude appropriately invests the person, is never lost or diminished, is always preserved entire, but is modified by the position assigned to the person in the eternal scheme, is coloured by the atmosphere of that person's residence in one of the three worlds. About none of Dante's character[s] is there that ambiguity that affects Milton's Lucifer. (1920: 167)

Here it should be noted that the attitude is the opposite of Auerbach's in *Mimesis* (chapter 8), in his account of the damned atheists Farinata and Cavalcante in *Inferno* canto 10. The chapter has the weight behind it of Auerbach's earlier studies of Dante, *Dante, Poet of the Secular World* (1929, the same year as Eliot's little book), and the essay "Figura" (1944). Both are referred to in the chapter in *Mimesis*. For Auerbach, the figural realism of the figures in the afterlife exceeds their reality in life, so that:

> In the very heart of the other world, [Dante] created a world of earthly beings and passions so powerful that it breaks bounds and proclaims its independence. Figure surpasses fulfilment, or more properly: the fulfilment serves to bring out the figure in still more impressive relief. We cannot but admire Farinata and weep with Cavalcante. What actually moves us is not that God has damned them, but that the one is unbroken and the other mourns so heart-rendingly for his son and the sweetness of the light. [...] All through the poem there are instances in which the effect of the

> earthly figure and its earthly destiny surpasses or is subserved by the effect produced by its eternal situation. (1957: 174-175)

This is an Hegelian reading, whereby the art negates the systematicity of the text. Eliot's position rejects Hegelianism as romanticism; he would have agreed with Santayana in finding in Hegel a "forced optimism" (Jain 1992: 67, see also Jain 1992: 96). The importance of Dante for Eliot is that the emotions in the *Commedia* are precisely calibrated so that we are made to feel exactly to the extent that is appropriate. The absence of ambiguity is the marker of Dante's absolute control and is the reason why Eliot sets such store by Dante as a philosophical poet, for the relation to philosophy enables an objectivity in Dante which prevents the emotions becoming slanted in favour of the damned —in favour of Francesca (*Inferno* 5), or Brunetto Latini (*Inferno* 15), or Ugolino (*Inferno* 33), for instance— figures which resonate within Eliot's own poetry. Ambiguity, present in Eliot, recalling Empson's commentaries in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, is denied to Dante. There is no room for the argument that Auerbach's figuralism sanctions: that the realism that produces the art of Farinata overbears the allegorical significance the character holds, so that the *Inferno* engenders a romantic humanism with which the thesis-led nature of the text can hardly cope. "The structure is an ordered scale of human emotions", Eliot assures the reader (1951: 168). This is of a piece with the famous statement of 1919, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent", that "poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality" (1951: 21).

Eliot's reading is, of course, conducted under the sign of belief in original sin, which, it may be noted, is a doctrine barely discussed in the *Commedia*, whose topic is so often free will. One of the cantos discussing free will is *Purgatorio* 16, the context being the meeting between Dante and Marco Lombardo. Eliot used line 85 from this canto to begin his poem "Animula" ("Issues from the hand of God the simple soul"), and the psychological themes of this poem about the child's growth do not suggest other than that the soul becomes, under "the hand of time", necessarily "Irresolute and selfish, misshapen, lame/ Unable to fare forward or retreat/ Fearing the warmed reality, the offered good". The text closes with references to violence, including self-destruction, and the pessimism of "Pray for us now and at the hour of our birth" (1963: 113-114). Birth and death are conflated, but the determinism corresponds to comparatively little in Dante.

Eliot's use of Dante in "Animula" is Augustinian, and is at one with American criticism of Dante, thinking of Charles Singleton and a critic much

in debt to Singleton, John Freccero, whose Augustinian argument says that a theme in Dante is the deficiency of the will, and therefore sees the humanism and energy of *Inferno* as needing to be re-read and corrected by a Platonic insight. In turn, this means reading allegorically, i.e., away from the letter (literally) to the spirit. An allegorical reading continually corrects what has gone before, so that as Singleton describes reading Dante, the process is one of finding misunderstandings being introduced for the sake of a correction of them later. Freccero, in a book-review comparing Auerbach with Singleton, said that

> [T]he unparalleled success which Singleton has had in his explication of the poem is due in large measure to his conviction that the *Divina Commedia* is *one* poem, with an autonomous structure coherent in itself in each of its parts [...]. The distinguished American Dantist has stressed the poet's use of Biblical allegory, not simply in order to situate the poem in time, but also to underscore the poet's uniqueness and his daring, while Auerbach elaborates the principle of *figura* as a general cultural phenomenon. (1965: 107-108)

When the *Commedia*, seen as one, not as three *cantiche*, is made its own interpreter, the allegorical method fits with new critical procedures. Freccero adopts the same attitude as Eliot's towards seeing a hierarchy of emotions structuring the *Commedia* when he says that it "tells of the development of a *pilgrim* who became a *poet* capable of writing the story we have just finished reading" and that Dante has been "exorcised of the demon of subjectivity" (1965: 108). The same anti-romanticism we can notice in Eliot's approach.

In reading Dante for this order and correction, Eliot's modernism —his anti-romanticism and his sense of the autonomy of the work of art— goes against the earlier New England mode. Emerson had said that Dante's "praise is, that he dared to write his autobiography in colossal cipher or into universality". He contrasted this with the situation that "we have yet had no genius in America" who would do the same (1983, 2: 21). Dante was one of the poets who would inspire America. Following on from Emerson, James Russell Lowell, in a review-essay of 1872, after summarising Dante's life and works, wrote, "The first remark to be made upon the writings of Dante is that they are all [...] autobiographic, and that all of them [...] are parts of a mutually related system, of which the central point is the individuality and experience of the poet" (1904, 3: 37). Later he says, "whatever subsidiary interpretations the poem is capable of, its great and primary value is as the

autobiography of a human soul, of yours and mine it may be, as well as Dante's" (1904, 3: 124). In opting for a view of Dante in which personality takes precedence over impersonality, and reading autobiographically suggests that the text is seen, like the life, as improvisatory, Lowell singles out the importance of Dante being "provincial" rather than universal, possessed by the theme of "liberty" —obviously a romantic stress— and by mysticism (1904, 3: 138, 148, 157), which leaves the text opaque rather than pellucidly open as it is for Eliot. Eliot's Dante by contrast is contemplative, rather than mystical, never caught up into oneness with the vision he beholds: impersonality goes that far.[8] Further, Lowell reads the episode of Ripheus in *Paradiso* 20, 67-72, where the pagan is declared to be saved, as an instance of Dante's own doubt, his uncertainty about his own system (1904, 3: 155-156). Dante as presented here becomes a poet of stops and starts, of hesitation and change, and if the poem comes out of himself, as Lowell insists (1904, 3: 163), there is no pretence that the text can be the inspired "allegory of theologians"—analogous to God's writing— which it becomes in Singleton. It makes no pretence to the absolute.

Coming back from this to Eliot, one should note that he also reads against Santayana, whose essay on Dante may be situated between those earlier New England readings and Eliot's own. Santayana stresses Dante as a philosophical poet, in which Eliot follows him (1951: 258); but he also contends for Dante's romanticism, his personal involvement in what he wrote. While Santayana thinks of Dante as "ahead of his time" in his readiness to project himself into the text (1953: 119), which is another way of casting Dante as a romantic, Santayana has few illusions, and his critiques may be read as part of his opposition to the "genteel tradition" of American letters. Thus Santayana faults Dante for his personal *vendettas* (1953: 117). Eliot briefly alludes to this critique, without naming him (1951: 248), but claims that the figures of damnation are "transformed" in Dante. They are not merely personal figures that Dante knew and hated. Secondly, Santayana takes exception to the doctrine that "the damned are damned to the glory of God":

> This doctrine [of eternal damnation] [...] is a great disgrace to human nature. It shows how desperate, at heart, is the folly of an egotistic or anthropocentric philosophy. [...] Because my instinct taboos something, the whole universe, with insane intensity, shall taboo it for ever. (1953: 106-107)

Nonetheless, he grants that Dante "saw beyond it at times". Thirdly, and here we can link Santayana's position with Leavis, he says that "love, as [Dante] feels and renders it, is not normal or healthy love" (1953: 118).

Eliot's response to Paul Elmer More will serve for a comment on Santayana's critique of the doctrine of hell. Elmer More did not like Eliot's implied justification of hell in the 1929 book. Eliot wrote back that

> I am perturbed by your comments on Hell. To me it is *giustizia, sapienza, amore.* [Justice, wisdom, love, a reference to *Inf.* 3, 4-6.] And I cannot help saying [...] that I am really shocked by your assertion that God did not make Hell. It seems to me that you have lapsed back into Humanitarianism. [...] Is your God Santa Claus? [...] To me the phrase "to be damned for the glory of God" is sense and not paradox. (Jain 1992: 227-228; see also Margolis 1972: 137-146).

The attitude that speaks here is violent rejection of individualism; and its classicism implies its refusal to recognise that there may be issues in Dante which the text itself cannot resolve. Here Eliot's aim would be to become more Dantean than Dante ever was. Yet it would be fair to say that the current state of Dante criticism, armed with the argument that Dante writes in imitation of God's way of writing, endorses Eliot's position, and not Santayana's, or the nineteenth-century view, and has foreclosed on the issue whether the doctrine of hell can ever be thought of as justified. But then, America has become the country whose authoritarianism of interpretation makes it choose to demonstrate its superior technology by its practice of capital punishment.

The objectivity that Eliot reads in Dante means that the emotions are subdued, as they are in Maurras, in obedience to Beatrice. Santayana's preemptive remarks about Dante's love being unhealthy act as a corrective to Maurras and the repression he stands for. Leavis's comments about Eliot's use of Dante will be recalled, but it will be seen too that Leavis's comments, while they may be aware of them, omit the politics that lies behind Eliot's subservience to Dante, as this demonstrates his adherence to a Maurrasian standpoint. I would like to draw towards a conclusion by considering Santayana's critiques of Dante in the light of what Eliot makes of them.

In "Dante", Eliot refers to the pageant-vision Dante witnesses in the Earthly Paradise, when Beatrice reappears (*Purgatorio* cantos 29 and 30) and he says it belongs to "the world of what I call the *high dream*, and the modern world seems capable only of the *low dream*" (1951: 262). He returns

to the theme in discussing the *Vita Nuova*, where he says Dante's attraction to Beatrice must be understood as leading to "attraction towards God". For Eliot, "the love of man and woman (or for that matter of man and man) is only explained and made reasonable by the higher love, or else is simply the coupling of animals" (1951: 274). Thus he writes that

> [T]he *Vita Nuova* [...] is, I believe, a very sound psychological treatise on something related to what is now called "sublimation." There is also a practical sense of realities behind it, which is antiromantic: not to expect more from *life* than it can give or more from *human* beings than they can give; to look to death for what life cannot give. The *Vita Nuova* belongs to "vision literature"; but its philosophy is the Catholic philosophy of disillusion. (1951: 275)

Eliot gingerly misnames psychoanalysis, which talks about sublimation, as "psychology", which does not, as if to occlude psychoanalysis from his thought. Eliot's antagonism to the New England culture of Emerson and of Lowell is apparent here in the downplaying of optimism and romanticism, and protestantism, and in the distaste for Rousseauism (Rousseau is mentioned dismissively earlier in the section on the *Vita Nuova*). But the key is sublimation —that and the transfiguring of the souls of the damned. Eliot's phraseology in "Dante" may be put alongside the almost contemporary writing of "Ash-Wednesday":

> Here are the years that walk between, bearing
> Away the fiddles and the flutes, restoring
> One who moves in the time between sleep and waking, wearing
> White light folded, sheathed about her, folded.
> The new years walk, restoring
> Through a bright cloud of tears, the years, restoring
> With a new verse the ancient rhyme. Redeem
> The time. Redeem
> The unread vision in the higher dream
> While jewelled unicorns draw by the gilded hearse. (1963: 100)

The section follows from the words "Sovegna vos" —which are Arnaut Daniel's words to Dante at the end of the cornice of the lustful (all of them are poets): "Remember [me]" (*Purgatorio* 26, 147). Dante's dream on the mountain of the two women, Rachel and Leah (*Purg.* 27, 94-108), which follows this encounter with the lustful, is remembered in the reference to the

time between sleep and waking", and the sequence continues with the reminder of the *Vita Nuova* title in "the new years" and "the new verse", and the sense that the vision of Beatrice in *Purgatorio* 30 corrects, or fulfils, the drive of that earlier poetry —restores with a new verse the ancient rhyme. The Eliotic dream is of a poetry with no entropy, where the point of closure is that of completion, or else correction of what had been misunderstood: the agenda of new criticism. It entails redemption, which is sought in the poem. Redemption suggests that what is restored reappears in a higher, sublimated form, and "sublimation" is associated with what Eliot calls the "high dream". The vision may be "unread" because the modern world is only capable of the low dream, not capable of sublimating its emotions. To "redeem/ the unread vision in the higher dream" entails becoming capable of reading against the background of death ("the gilded hearse") –looking to death for what life cannot give. Sublimation is renunciation of life; time must be redeemed, because it cannot be taken as it is, and neither can experience, evoked as "the fiddles and the flutes", be taken at face value. Materiality exists in the gorgeous deadness of "jewelled unicorns draw by the gilded hearse" (unless these strangely phallic unicorns, as animals remembered from medieval bestiaries, and perhaps associated with Dante's griffin (*Purg.* 29, 106-120), are to be seen as bearing away what speaks of death).

The beauty of the passage comes from its indirection, suggesting a certain evasion within the work, which fits with the desire for sublimation. Whatever may be said of Santayana's view of Dante on love, it seems that Eliot has deliberately opted to read against him, and to praise a view that Santayana dislikes. How Eliot's personal repression, which leads him him use the psychoanalytic term "sublimation", and the influence of Maurras intersect here, is a matter for speculation, begging questions about the psychoanalytic structure of quasi-fascist thought. Unlike Santayana, Eliot has opted to take Dante *in toto*. His essay on Dante constantly refers to the importance of the philosophy within the poetry and to the question of belief, which for him can be resolved into an issue of "poetic assent" (1951: 257), as though nothing of Dante's world-view need be lost. There has been no entropy, and no historical differences, or other marks of difference, are negated by the nostalgia expressed in the desire that the years should be restored. The "new verse" and the "ancient rhyme" suggest Eliot and Dante together, Dante's ancient rhyme being wholly available in Eliot's present. On this basis, the function of Eliot's poetry, or of modernist poetry itself, is not to re-read the texts of the past, but to repeat them. Older nineteenth-century readings of Dante had no such sense of the text being so commanding. It was

rather there as a form of inspiration, working from its own different standpoint.

Perhaps it is time for a postmodern reading of Dante, to get away from the politics of modernism, and so to do service to both Dante and to Eliot. To take two of Santayana's substantive points: objection to the doctrine of eternal damnation, and objection to Dante's sense of love. Eliot in his letter to Elmer More shows that he reads the Dantean text entirely referentially, as though the orthodox Christian hell and Dante's could be used to explain or justify each other. A reading of Dante which did not justify the text philosophically by reference to some outside scheme would start with the point that the textual nature of the *Commedia* separates it from being judged in a continuum with the schemes of theology or philosophy. Neither Santayana nor Eliot register this. Indeed the text, with Eliot, is in danger of becoming authoritative, just as its authority is elevated by Singleton's stress on the work as the "allegory of theologians", whereas Auerbach's method gives the text no such singularity or privilege.

A second point might be made with regard to gender-issues. To locate Dante's positions on love solely with regard to Beatrice is to miss the omnipresence of the question of sexual difference within the text. It is everywhere, especially when it is not referred to openly. The issue of Beatrice needs confronting, but it is not the necessary place to start in considering Dante in relation to sexuality, and this may be an instance of the margins of a text being more interesting than the ostensible centre. A famous article by John Peter assumed that Eliot could be read in terms of a suppressed homosexual interest in Jean Verdenal (1969: 140-175).[9] Certainly, Eliot's reference in "Dante" to "the relations between man and man" lends some weight to this possibility, and it would explain the place given to sublimation in his readings. John Peter recalled, in his article, the special place that Eliot gave in his poetry to Brunetto Latini in *Inferno* 15, source for the "familiar compound ghost" of "Little Gidding", and a sodomite; just as Dante gives a special place to the sodomites by assigning them two cantos (*Inf.* 15 and 16), and shows no sense of distantiation from them. Arnaut Daniel, similarly privileged within Eliot's text, and quoted constantly, also suggests the pathos and the joy of a sexuality which may also be homosexual, or which is called "hermaphrodite" (*Purg.* 26, 82). The sodomites certainly rush by in this particular canto, joyfully accusing themselves in carnival manner, and sodomy and poetry, or rather the hermaphrodite interest and poetry, are inextricably linked together. Lovers are poets and poets must be lovers.

But it is not necessary to read Eliot biographically to make the argument that sexuality in Eliot is never reducible to the symmetry of man and woman, that it evades such polarisation throughout, as, for instance, with Tiresias in *The Waste Land*, and that if Eliot learned anything from Dante, he certainly learned this. Peter's argument belongs to a system which works from the life to the text. His points could be better made by reference to Eliot's text, in particular, to its commitment to the fragmentary, where the fragment does not stand in for a whole that can be made up and completed, implying instead that sexual relations cannot be thought of in terms of completion, and that gender-distinctions cannot be firmly established. That point would lead to another, final, one: "Ash-Wednesday" may be an example of the wish for sublimation, but sublimation remains a desire and a source of anxiety, not an achieved state. The lines, for instance, which allude to awakening a state of desire remain evocatively sexual themselves. Maurras might have been used by Eliot to suggest that sublimation was possible as well as necessary, but the text denies it, even in its assertions of the spiritual. Eliot's poetry foregrounds the sexual in Dante, which elevates Dante beyond nineteenth-century, romanticist readings. But in attempting to close such down, Eliot attempts also to regulate the text and its reading. The hegemony of an Eliotic orthodoxy in contemporary readings of Dante might be relativised and put in its place, if the opening up of the text towards plurality and difference were recognised as a countervailing, and less orthodox, aspect of his use of Dante.

NOTES

[1] On the topic of Eliot and Dante, see generally Manganiello (1989); see also Suchard (1973) and Torrens (1974). In my discussions of Eliot, I do not refer to his third essay on Dante, "What Dante Means to Me" (1965).

[2] See, for instance, Margaret Fuller's review of Cary's translation, in Michael Caesar (1989: 561-564).

[3] On these translations of Dante, see Cunningham (1965).

[4] For Singleton's essay, see John Frecerro (1966: 102-121). I quote from the Temple Classics commentary on this line: "According to Dante (*Epistle ad Can Grande* sect. 7), the anagogical meaning of this Psalm (114) is "the exit of the

sanctified soul from the slavery of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory"". The Temple Classics edition, like Singleton, assumes Dante's authorship of this Epistle; the matter is by no means certain, and has implications for the way the poem is read as allegory —"allegory of theologians"— as Singleton insists it is; i.e. writing that claims for itself the same truth as God's writing.

[5] The same issue has other articles on Singleton, including a biography, by Richard Macksey (1986: 45-57). Other material relevant to this paragraph appears in De Vito (1982: 99-118). I discuss Singleton's work in detail in relation to Freccero, Mazzotta and Auerbach in Tambling (1988) and Tambling (1999: 1-16).

[6] Quoted, from "Syllabus of a Course of Six lectures on Modern French Literature" (1916), in Sigg (1989: 19).

[7] Eliot's essay, "The Christian Conception of Education" (1941) quoted in Sigg (1989: 277).

[8] The point is derived from Jain (1992: 221-227), partly based on a reading of Eliot's Clark lectures of 1926, on seventeenth-century poetry.

[9] The implications of Santayana's own homosexuality for his arguments, and the place given to masculinity in the Harvard that Charles Eliot presided over, need developing: a beginning may be made with Townsend (1996).

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VIRGINIA WOOLF AND POST-IMPRESSIONISM: FRENCH ART, ENGLISH THEORY, AND FEMINIST PRACTICE[1]

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When reactionary critics were not pouring scorn on the primitivism and insanity they saw represented on the walls of the Grafton, they were snorting in disbelief at the most obvious symptom to them of such degeneracy: the "barbaric" colours.[2] Most furore is aroused where women are depicted in exotic and "unnatural" colours:

> In a typical [Gauguin] hideous brown women, with purple hair and vitriolic faces, squat in the midst of a nightmare landscape of drunken palm trees, crude green grass, vermilion rocks, and numerous glaringly coloured excrescences impossible to identify. [...] A revolution to be successful must presumably revolve; but, undeniably clever as they often are, the catherine-wheel antics of the Post-Impressionists are not likely to wake many responsive chords in British breasts.[3]

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MacCarthy, summarily despatched to Europe by Fry for the paintings which were to fill the "stop-gap exhibition of modern foreign artists", witnessed on his return Fry's actual coining of the term post-impressionism for "a young journalist who was to help us with publicity": "Roger first suggested various terms like "expressionism", which aimed at distinguishing these artists from the impressionists; but the journalists wouldn't have that or any other of his alternatives. At last Roger, losing patience, said: "Oh, let's just call them post-impressionists; at any rate they came after the impressionists"" (1945: 124).

Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh, the most prominently represented in the exhibition, were all by 1910 "long since dead" (Bowness 1979: 9).[4] A smaller sample of work by Fauves and Cubists such as Matisse and Picasso was shown to indicate the continuation of this newly defined school, but "the whole emphasis was thrown on to the old masters", as Benedict Nicolson observes. The living were not represented by their most recent, *avant-garde*, achievements; cubism in fact "was the most serious omission" (Nicolson 1951: 13). The exhibition, nevertheless marks 1910 as a defining moment in *avant-garde* aesthetics. It is the moment of European modernism's revolutionary impact on the practices of British artists, but it is also the moment when British formalist theories first emerge and shape the critical apparatus for modernism. Fry's neologism, Alan Bowness remarks, "is unusual, not only because it was invented 25 years after the art it describes, but because it was the invention of an English critic arranging an exhibition of modern French art" (1979: 9). Fry's historic exhibition is often cited to explain Virginia Woolf's enigmatic statement, in "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" (1924): "on or about December 1910 human character changed" (Woolf 1986-1990, 3: 421). Andrew McNeillie, for example, glosses Woolf's date with reference to the post-impressionist exhibition and the death of Edward VII (in Woolf 1986-1990, 3: 437). 1910 and the formalist aesthetics of Roger Fry and Clive Bell with which this date has become linked are also invoked in readings of *To the Lighthouse* (1927) to explain the painting practice of Lily Briscoe. It is worth noting that Bell's theory of "Significant Form" emerged with the second post-impressionist exhibition in 1912, but in retrospect has sometimes been conflated with Fry's formalism, and anachronistically associated by many Woolf critics with the 1910 exhibition. In what follows I will consider how 1910 saw other events surrounding the exhibition that we might acknowledge as relevant to Lily Briscoe's and Woolf's post-impressionism.

Contemporary critical reception of post-impressionism and Woolf's literary engagement with it, I suggest, is influenced by the suffragette

activism occurring at the time of the 1910 exhibition, culminating in "Black Friday", when a demonstration ended in violent assault upon most of its participants at the hands of the police. On 18 November 1910 (the post-impressionist exhibition opened ten days earlier on 8 November), Suffragettes massed to demonstrate at Westminster against the loss of the Conciliation Bill (proposing the enfranchisement of a narrow category of women) due to the crisis in Parliament and the imminent fall of the Asquith government. Mass assault and arrest followed. Woolf did not participate in the demonstration, but she did attend the huge rally at the Albert Hall in preparation for it a few days earlier (Woolf 1975-1980, 1: 438). What is of interest in this discussion is a wider critical argument over the significance of text and context: 1910 is a critical moment in the interpenetration of these spheres when the art on gallery walls was brought into dialogue with the political events on the streets outside. I will argue that (what amounts to) Woolf's manifesto on 1910 seems to resonate both with the formulations by Fry and Bell on European art and with the formulations and practices of British suffragist artists —I will look at the work of Mary Lowndes in particular– and that these two combined influences may be at work in Woolf's *Künstlerroman* of 1927.

Rita Felski, in *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics*, takes up some of the issues concerning text and context to arise from Toril Moi's notorious intervention (in *Sexual/ Textual Politics*) into feminist criticism and Woolf studies:

> Feminist theories of "textual politics" grounded in a modernist aesthetics —for example, the celebration of the writings of Virginia Woolf as radically subversive of patriarchal ideology— are thus open to criticismon the grounds that they continue to draw upon static oppositions between realism and modernism without taking into account the changing social meanings of textual forms. The assumption that the political value of a text can be read off from its aesthetic value as defined by a modernist paradigm, and that a text which employs experimental techniques is therefore more radical in its effects than one which relies on established structures and conventional language, is too simple. Such an assumption takes for granted an equivalence between automatized language and dominant ideology and between experimentalism and oppositionality, an equation which is abstract and ultimately formalist in its failure to theorize the contingent functions of textual forms in relation to socially differentiated publics at particular historical moments. [...] It is thus increasingly implausible to claim that aesthetic radicalism equals political radicalism and to ground a feminist politics of the text in an

> assumption of the inherently subversive effects of stylistic innovation. (1989: 161)

I want here to consider the "historical moment" of the inception of Fry's English formalism in relation to the context of the feminist political sphere and how this may inform "the changing social meanings" of Woolf's post-impressionist "textual forms".

First, it is useful to remind ourselves of the differences between earlier formalist approaches to *To the Lighthouse* and recent, textually based, feminist approaches which argue that Woolf's "stylistic innovation" is somehow "inherently subversive" and feminist. David Daiches, for example, an early commentator on Woolf's novels, finds Lily Briscoe's vision, her completed painting at the close of *To the Lighthouse*, a unifying symbol that brings formal harmony to the novel:

> Symbolically, the past returns and shapes the present. Mrs Ramsay comes back into Lily Briscoe's picture, as she had been part of the original design ten years before, and out of this meeting of two very different personalities across the years the final insight results. Across the water at the same moment Mr Ramsay, by his praise of James's handling of the boat, is exorcising the ghost of James's early resentment, also ten years old, and all the threads of the story are finally coming together. It is a masterly piece of construction. (1945: 92)

Daiches also offers an interesting decoding of the novel's sophisticated language of colour. On the other hand, Makiko Minow-Pinkney, one of the first critics to rise to Moi's more recent challenge and offer a book length study of Woolf's work, based on the theories of Kristeva, Derrida, and Lacan, finds the same painting a celebration of the *loss* and *impossibility* of unifying symbolic meaning. Interestingly, Minow-Pinkney's sexual/ textual reading does gesture toward historical context too:

> Lily's line represents an unsurpassable bar between lived experience and the symbolic order, which always objectively exists but comes to subjective consciousness as the result of a historical "fall" from the plenitude of the Ramsays to the dearth suffered by the post-war generation. It is the necessary condition of the subject as such, and reacts back to interrogate the symbolic visions of the first half of the novel. The book's ambivalent attitude to this bar or gap is finally grounded in the daughter's fraught relation to the mother. Mrs Ramsay's death is the bleak

> loss of the possibility of total meaning, yet it also reveals an arbitrariness in the sign which reduces even her impressive symbols into fictional constructs with no compelling authority over the next generation. (1987: 116)

Whether interpreted as symbolically unifying or disruptive and deconstructive, Lily's picture is usually understood as a homologue for the novel in which it appears (Stevenson 1992: 165). Let us now look at one of the most cited passages in *To the Lighthouse*, where Lily Briscoe explains to William Bankes how to read her modernist painting. It is often argued that this is also a lesson in how to read modernist literature and *To the Lighthouse* itself. The novel describes Lily's erection of her easel while all around her people are reading and reciting literature. Mr Ramsay nearly knocks down Lily and her picture as he recites Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade"; Mrs Ramsay is reading aloud to her son a Grimms' fairy tale; later Mr and Mrs Ramsay read privately and silently from Scott and Shakespeare; later still Mr Carmichael's bedtime reading of Virgil is noted; and in Part Three he reads from a Yellow Period novel, while Mr Ramsay is busy reading a book as the boat reaches the lighthouse and as Lily finishes her (second) painting. All the works of literature named are by male authors. Like the many pictorial analogies, these elements feed into the self-consciously aesthetic quality of *To the Lighthouse*, but they also suggest a tension between Lily's creative activity and the other characters' readerly activities. Lily has to fight for the space to make her new text. Her visual art intervenes in the midst of all these (patriarchal) literary texts. Lily also distinguishes her aesthetics from the impressionistic art of the French-sounding Mr Paunceforte:

> The jacmanna was bright violet; the wall was staring white. She would not have considered it honest to tamper with the bright violet and staring white, since she saw them like that, fashionable though it was, since Mr Paunceforte's visit, to see everything pale, elegant, semi-transparent. (1927: 34)

She seems to find Mr Paunceforte's aesthetics as distasteful as she will later find those of Mrs Beckwith, "that kind old lady who sketched" whom she recalls for her repugnantly compliant domestic politics towards Mr Ramsay (1927: 236). Mrs Beckwith is precisely the kind of domesticated, patriarchal, woman artist that Lily wants to avoid being positioned as —or mistaken for— when she sets up her easel.

> Taking out a penknife, Mr Bankes tapped the canvas with the bone handle. What did she wish to indicate by the triangular purple shape, "just there?" he asked. It was Mrs Ramsay reading to James, she said. She knew his objection —that no one could tell it for a human shape. But she had made no attempt at likeness, she said. For what reason had she introduced them then? he asked. Why indeed? —except that if there, in that corner, it was bright, here, in this, she felt the need of darkness. Simple, obvious, commonplace, as it was, Mr Bankes was interested. Mother and child then —objects of universal veneration, and in this case the mother was famous for her beauty— might be reduced, he pondered, to a purple shadow without irreverence. But the picture was not of them, she said. Or, not in his sense. There were other senses, too, in which one might reverence them. By a shadow here and a light there, for instance. Her tribute took that form, if, as she vaguely supposed, a picture must be a tribute. A mother and child might be reduced to a shadow without irreverence. A light here required a shadow there. He considered. He was interested. He took it scientifically in complete good faith. The truth was that all his prejudices were on the other side, he explained. The largest picture in his drawing-room, which painters had praised, and valued at a higher price than he had given for it, was of the cherry trees in blossom on the banks of the Kennet. He had spent his honeymoon on the banks of the Kennet, he said. Lily must come and see that picture, he said. But now —he turned, with his glasses raised to the scientific examination of her canvas. The question being one of the relations of masses, of lights and shadows, which, to be honest, he had never considered before, he would like to have it explained —what then did she wish to make of it? And he indicated the scene before them. She looked. She could not show him what she wished to make of it, could not see it even herself, without a brush in her hand. She took up once more her old painting position with the dim eyes and the absent-minded manner, subduing all her impressions as a woman to something much more general [...]. It was a question, she remembered, how to connect this mass on the right hand with that on the left. [...] She stopped; she did not want to bore him; she took the canvas lightly off the easel. (1927: 84-85)

Significantly, when Lily is asked to explain her work —formulate a theory for how to read her text— she in fact stops painting (she does not pick up her brush again in the novel until Part Three after the passing of ten years of upheavals). Furthermore, in explaining to her male audience the "question" of "relations of masses, of lights and shadows" in terms of significant form, she

is described as "subduing" in the process, "all her impressions *as a woman* to something much more general" (my italics). This suggests she may be masking some feminist import to her visual aesthetic practice which is at odds with the abstract verbal explanation she offers to a man. It also seems that Lily's striking colourism becomes subdued as she offers her formalist interpretation (the purple triangle becomes a shadow in the above passage).

What is important for most critics about this exchange between Lily Briscoe and William Bankes, however, is that it seems to echo quite straightforwardly the aesthetic theories of Roger Fry and Clive Bell. In connection with this, close attention is often paid to Woolf's letter to Fry on how she imagines *To the Lighthouse* should be read:

> I meant *"nothing"* by The Lighthouse. One has to have a central line down the middle of the book to hold the design together. I saw that all sorts of feelings would accrue to this, but I refused to think them out, and trusted that people would make it the deposit for their own emotions —which they have done, one thinking it means one thing another another. I can't manage symbolism except in this vague, generalised way. Whether it's right or wrong I don't know, but directly I'm told what a thing means, it becomes hateful to me. (1975-1980, 3: 385)

Here Woolf seems to be courting Fry in his own aesthetic terms. But following the exchange between Briscoe and Bankes, perhaps Woolf too is "subduing all her impressions as a woman to something much more general". She does indeed often use vocabulary picked up from her painter friends to talk about her literary works as, for example, where she says in an earlier letter to Fry: "I'm not sure that a perverted plastic sense doesn't work itself out in words for me" (1975-1980, 2: 285). "Plastic" is a key term for Fry; and we can see how close Woolf's and Lily's apparently generalising vision is to his from the following extract from his *Vision and Design* (1920):

> The greatest object of art becomes of no more significance than any casual piece of matter; a man's head is no more and no less important than a pumpkin, or, rather, these things may be so or not according to the rhythm that obsesses the artist and crystallises his vision. Since it is the habitual practice of the artist to be on the lookout for these peculiar arrangements of objects that arouse the creative vision, and become material for creative contemplation, he is liable to look at all objects from this point of view. [...] It is irrelevant to ask him, while he is looking with this

> generalised and all-embracing vision, about the nature of the objects which compose it. (1920: 52)

The "objects of universal veneration" Bankes sees "reduced [...] to a purple shadow without irreverence" are close to the objects arousing Fry's "creative vision". It may well be that the "something much more general" which subdues Lily's feminism, then, is Fry's "generalised and all-embracing vision".

The 1910 post-impressionist exhibition catalogue was not in fact written by Fry. MacCarthy, ventriloquising Fry, anonymously performed "the ticklish job of writing the preface" (MacCarthy 1945: 124), according to which the post-impressionist artist's individual expression is at odds with the naturalistic project of the impressionists. The latter "were interested in analysing the play of light and shadow into a multiplicity of distinct colours; they refined upon what was already illusive in nature" (MacCarthy 1910: 8). Impressionism, then, is concerned with pushing analysis of the object world to the limits. The post-impressionists use larger, flatter areas of colour in departing from their technique and their naturalism. Lily Briscoe's famous preoccupation with the centrality of a tree in her composition perhaps signals a nod to MacCarthy's preface:

> Impressionism encouraged an artist to paint a tree as it appeared to him at the moment under particular circumstances. It insisted so much upon the importance of rendering this exact impression that his work often completely failed to express a tree at all; as transferred to canvas it was just so much shimmer and colour. The "treeness" of the tree was not rendered at all; all the emotion and associations such as trees may be made to convey in poetry were omitted[...]. And there is no denying that the work of the post-impressionists is sufficiently disconcerting. It may even appear ridiculous to those who do not recall the fact that a good rocking-horse often has more of the true horse about it than an instantaneous photograph of a Derby winner. (1910: 8)

This distinction between impressionism and post-impressionism is sometimes lost to critics who confuse the two when reading Woolf, and refer to her work as impressionist, particularly when invoking the famous "luminous halo" passage from "Modern Fiction" (1919). Bankes' prized picture of "cherry trees in blossom on the banks of the Kennet" seems close to MacCarthy's definition of impressionism, whereas Lily's purple triangle and final central line are more in keeping with his post-impressionism.

Interestingly MacCarthy associates the latter with the achievements of poetry.

Clive Bell's theory of "Significant Form" is not the same as Roger Fry's formalism, but these theories evolved in close proximity, sometimes converging but sometimes diverging. Bell first used his famous term "Significant Form" in the 1912 exhibition catalogue to introduce the work of English artists converted to post-impressionism by the European masters on show in the 1910 exhibition. Like MacCarthy, he too finds literary analogy helpful:

> For the second post-impressionist Exhibition I have been asked to choose a few English pictures, and to say something about them. Happily, there is no need to be defensive. The battle is won. We all agree, now, that any form in which an artist can express himself is legitimate, and the more sensitive perceive that there are things worth expressing that could never have been expressed in traditional forms. We have ceased to ask "What does this picture represent?" and ask instead, "What does it make us feel?" We expect a work of plastic art to have more in common with a piece of music than with a coloured photograph. [...] What I mean by "simplification" is obvious. A literary artist who wishes to express what he feels for a forest thinks himself under no obligation to give an account of its flora and fauna. The post-impressionist claims similar privileges: those facts that any one can discern for himself or discover in a text book he leaves to the makers of Christmas-cards and diagrams. He simplifies, omits details, that is to say, to concentrate on something more important –on the significance of form. (1912: 9)

Bell distinguishes the high art of post-impressionism from mundanities such as greeting card illustration or diagram making; and in his highly influential book, *Art*, two years later, he extends his theory of "significant form" to account not just for post-impressionist art, but for "*all*" art:

> There must be some one quality without which a work of art cannot exist; possessing which, in the least degree, no work is altogether worthless. What is this quality? What quality is shared by all objects that provoke our aesthetic emotions? What quality is common to Sta. Sophia and the windows at Chartres, Mexican sculpture, a Persian bowl, Chinese carpets, Giotto's frescoes at Padua, and the masterpieces of Poussin, Piero della Francesca, and Cézanne? Only one answer seems possible —significant form. In each, lines and colours combined in a particular way, certain forms

> and relations of forms, stir our aesthetic emotions. These relations and combinations of lines and colours, these aesthetically moving forms, I call "significant form"; and "significant form" is the one quality common to all works of visual art. (1914: 7-8)

The qualities of post-impressionism as first defined by English theorists to describe French art of the turn of the century are now extended to embrace a universal aesthetic theory. Bell also comments on colour in relation to significant form, suggesting "the distinction between form and colour" to be "unreal": you cannot conceive a colourless line or a colourless space; neither can you conceive a formless relation of colours. [...] When I speak of significant form, I mean a combination of lines and colours (counting white and black as colours) that moves me aesthetically" (1914: 7-8). For Bell colour is in fact form, and therefore presumably structural. Yet he persists in maintaining the distinction between "lines and colours" while claiming their congruity. The power of colour is subsumed in the abstract notion of significant form. As an aspect of pure form, colour is deprived of all meaning except the mystically emotional. Bell develops the notion of the spiritual dimension of significant form into a full blown religion of art. He closes *Art* with a vision of "aesthetic rapture":

> the religion of art will serve a man better than the religion of humanity. [...] What he loses in philanthropy he may gain in magnanimity; and because his religion does not begin with an injunction to love all men, it will not end, perhaps, in persuading him to hate most of them. (1914: 292-293)

This is the source of the transcendent aesthetic often attributed to Woolf's Bloomsbury-based modernism.

Allen McLaurin's excellent and influential study of Woolf and the visual arts examines Lily Briscoe's painting technique with close reference to the theories of Roger Fry, but Clive Bell's theories also influence his discussion, and are evident in such terms as "formal significance" and "emotionally significant" employed in his discussion of the exchange between Bankes and Briscoe. Citing the passage given above from Fry's *Vision and Design*, McLaurin finds that "in [their] discussion Lily speaks for precisely this habitual vision of the artist" whereas

> William Bankes is one of those people who, in Fry's terms, would say of a landscape "What a nice place" instead of "What a good picture". William's other criteria, the unaesthetic ones of size and monetary value, are also very much those which Roger Fry constantly rejected [...]. William also brings into the discussion irrelevant private emotional associations: "He had spent his honeymoon on the banks of the Kennet, he said. Lily must come and see that picture, he said." The kind of abstraction that Lily is concerned with is very different from the scientific examination which he is used to. Her abstraction can only be conveyed in paint, it can only be expressed with her paintbrush [...]. It is only in the actual making of the work of art that she realises what she wants to "say". Mrs Ramsay's distinguished presence and Lily's affection for her are very important in the novel, but Lily as painter must select only the formal visual aspects of her experience, and so Mrs Ramsay becomes a purple triangle. The equivalent problem for Virginia Woolf herself was the transmutation of her knowledge of her mother and father into the characters of Mr and Mrs Ramsay. The careful balancing which we can see in their portrayal gives them a *formal significance* which is more generally valid than a straight autobiography or biography would be. There is a careful selection and abstraction here which is *emotionally significant*. (1973: 192; my italics)

McLaurin looks closely at Woolf's colour references and also examines her infamous use of framing brackets with reference to the visual arts. His is the standard, orthodox reading of Woolf's post-impressionism. It concentrates on the influence of the male theorists closest to Woolf and ignores that of women colleagues in Bloomsbury and the issue of feminism altogether. More recently, scholars such as Diane Filby Gillespie have turned attention to Woolf's artist sister, Vanessa Bell, but the aesthetic influence of Woolf's feminist sisters in the suffrage movement has still to be more fully explored.

"On or about" *September* 1910 the suffrage artist Mary Lowndes published a manifesto-style essay, "On Banners and Banner Making". Lowndes was the chief suffragist artist, responsible for organising the banners and colours and floats in the suffragist demonstrations which dominated the political sphere in the years before the Great War:

> Great numbers of banners have been seen of late in the streets of London: some beautiful in themselves, many picturesque in effect, and some indifferently ugly and dreary. Banners, however, of one sort and another have evidently become associated with the appearance of women in public life, and it seems likely that they

> will continue to be associated, to the great gain of our colourless streets and hitherto sober political gatherings. (1910a: 172-173)

Although "political colours" are not new, Lowndes says, "now with the new century has come to fruition a new thing, and colour has a fresh significance. What is the new thing? Political societies started by women, managed by women and sustained by women" (1910a: 172-173). Significantly, by 1910, then, feminism and colourism are powerfully connected.

"The best known suffrage colours are the purple, white and green of the WSPU [the Women's Social and Political Union]", as Lisa Tickner observes. "White was for purity, green for hope and purple for dignity. [...] Purple was sometimes given as "loyalty" or "courage" and green as "youth" or "regeneration" (1987: 265).[5] These colours were linked with the militant Women's Social and Political Union in particular and "the cause" in general. By no means the only colours of feminism, they were by far the most famous.[6] The suffrage colours were often displayed in opposition to the Union Jack: the purple, white and green became an alternative rallying point to the red white and blue. In keeping with this pseudo-militarism, Joan of Arc, armour-clad and sporting the purple white and green, was adopted as the patron saint of the suffragettes. "In all ages it has been woman's part to make the banners, if not to carry them", Lowndes explains. But this traditionally feminine art, "the divers colours of needle work", once woven "in honour and support of [woman's] favourite fighting hero", has been revived, not to sanction male warfare, but

> for the first time in history to illumine woman's own adventure. The oriflammes she made, the silken pennons of the knights, the gorgeous embroidery for the tourneys, the quaintly wrought histories of adventure —such as the Bayeux tapestry— were all in honour and support of her favourite fighting hero. [...] And now into public life comes trooping the feminine; and with the feminine creature come the banners of past times, as well as many other things which people had almost forgotten they were without. (1910a: 172, 173)

The meaning of the suffrage colours was not fixed, and shifted according to context, as Tickner observes: "So long as the concepts were positive the exact niceties of the symbolism were less important than the decorative impact of the colours and their effect in unifying the cause" (1987: 294). Tickner rightly stresses the general sense of the positive and unifying effects of these colours. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, describing in 1909 the intended impact and particular symbolism of the suffrage tricolour, emphasised its symbolic sense of "regeneration" (in Tickner 1987: 294). Feminists were repainting, reinventing, and restructuring the world anew. It may not be unreasonable to suppose that when *To the Lighthouse* appeared in 1927, the year before the full enfranchisement of women, the suffragette colours would not have been forgotten. The colours were established, as Pethick-Lawrence earlier proclaimed of the purple, white and green, as "a new language of which the words are so simple that their meaning can be understood by the most uninstructed and most idle of passers-by in the street" (in Tickner 1987: 94). It is precisely this "new language" of feminist colours that Woolf seems to take up in her work; and this feminist language of colours, I am suggesting, she locks onto a literary sense of post-impressionist colourism. The language of Lowndes' manifesto in particular may be discerned in Woolf's later feminist and aesthetic manifestos. For example, Lowndes' declaration that the feminist colours will "illumine woman's own adventure" seems to anticipate some of Woolf's phrasing in *A Room of One's Own* (1929): Mary Beton instructs Mary Carmichael, the aspiring novelist, "above all, you must illumine your own soul"; and *Life's Adventure* is the title of Mary Carmichael's novel (Woolf 1929: 135, 142). I will discuss possible similarities with "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" below.

In 1910 Lowndes describes the art of suffrage banner-making in terms uncannily similar to those of later post-impressionist theories: "A banner is not a literary affair, it is not a placard: leave such to boards and sandwichmen" (1910a: 174). Anticipating the flavour of Bell's 1912 observations on "the makers of Christmas-cards and diagrams", she identifies the non-verbal political significance of feminist colourism, while at the same time drawing on a discourse of aestheticism:

> A banner is a thing to float in the wind, to flicker in the breeze, to flirt its colours for your pleasure, to half show and half conceal a device you long to unravel; you do not want to read it, you want to worship it. Choose purple and gold for ambition, red for courage, green for long-cherished hopes. If above these glories of colour you write in great letters "Troy Town", that is not now a placard, it is a dedication. [...] Let us go, then, and make banners as required, and let them all be beautiful. (1910a: 174, 178)

Like Bell's (post-impressionist) art, these political banners are not to be decoded so much as worshipped, a point Lowndes interestingly emphasises with allusion to classical myth. "Troy Town" is Lowndes' fictional example of a patriarchal town in need of suffragist banners: "Imagine to yourself, my

reader, Miss Blank, the active Secretary of the newly-formed Branch Society of Troy Town" (1910a: 173). This allusion suggests the set of (patriarchal) myths associated with the Trojan war; and is in keeping with suffragist tastes for the reappropriation and refiguring of imagery from the powerful cultural sources of classical myth. Suffragist demonstrators not only employed mythic emblems but often dressed for parades and pageants as (in)famous heroines and goddesses from history and mythology (Tickner 1987: 125-126).

In another essay, "Modern Stained Glass", which appeared in *The Englishwoman* in *November* 1910, Mary Lowndes extols the colours in the east window of Cologne Cathedral, in terms that seem to anticipate Clive Bell's aesthetic raptures over "significant form":

> It is colour, wonderful colour, fraught with meaning and intent. It is intelligible, but cannot be explained; it is devotional, and yet you can discern no form. It is no more capable of literary description than the voice of the organ would be were Beethoven seated at the organ. Approach it closely, and the wonder fades; look at it as it was intended to be looked at as crowning and finishing that wondrous choir, and you feel that imperfect indeed would be the great church without the glory and the mystery of its east windows. (1910b 57-58)

Lowndes' own aesthetic raptures over colour resonate with the rhetoric of her earlier essay, in the same journal, on suffragist colours. Very soon after, again in the pages of *The Englishwoman*, Lowndes published one of the few positive reviews of "Manet and the post-impressionists". She singles out Gauguin for her focus. His colourism, so offensive to post-impressionism's detractors (Dunlop 1972: 146), meets with her warm approval:

> His glowing patches of colour have a marvellous quality of subdued light, as though, indeed, the rays of the sun were truly veiled and controlled by them as they are by passing through the semi-transparent glass of a thirteenth-century church window. [...] In certain ancient glass a deep flesh-tone of a brown or pinkish brown is used, and this low tone [...] has a marvellous effect in harmonising and subduing colours that might in different company have been violent and even offensive. [...] Gauguin has found the secret in the isles of the Pacific, and, with his wonderful bronze flesh-tones, we find him also in full possession of the glorious glass colours which the old glass-blowers of eight hundred years ago began to make, and which Nature has finished in her own laboratory with water, wind, and the dust of the earth. (1911: 183-184)

Perhaps it is not only her interest in stained glass, but also her experience as organiser of suffrage colours, that makes Lowndes sympathetic to Gauguin's palette.

Woolf's elaboration on her choice of 1910 as a significant date is worth careful consideration in the light of British suffragist as well as European-inspired post-impressionist aesthetics. 1910's shift in human relations, represented in the work of Samuel Butler and Bernard Shaw, Woolf sees symbolised in the figure of "one's cook": "The Victorian cook lived like a leviathan in the lower depths, formidable, silent, obscure, inscrutable; the Georgian cook is a creature of sunshine and fresh air; in and out of the drawing room, now to borrow the *Daily Herald*, now to ask advice about a hat" (1986-1990, 3: 422). The imagery of a woman servant emerging leviathan-like from the dark depths of the kitchen into sunlight may suggest a shift from women's dark, subliminal, creaturely existence to luminous, colourful liberation. Compare Mrs. McNab's depiction as "a tropical fish, oaring its way through sun-lanced rocks" (Woolf 1927: 206). Woolf's vocabulary is similar to that of Mary Lowndes's 1910 essay on suffrage colourist banner-making: "now into public life comes trooping the feminine; and with the feminine creature come the banners of past time" (Lowndes 1910a: 173). Incidentally, in 1913, in the *Daily Herald*, the newspaper Woolf, as an index of change since 1910, finds the cook borrowing, Christina Walshe declares of the second post-impressionist exhibition: "The post-impressionists are in the company of the great rebels of the world. In politics the only movements worth considering are woman suffrage and socialism. They are both post-impressionist in their desire to scrap old decaying forms and find for themselves a new working ideal" (in Spalding 1980: 139).

December 1910 may mean for Woolf, then, material improvement for women workers, and the emergence of women from intellectual darkness into prismatic enlightenment, from obscurity into public life. After the creaturely cook, Woolf gives a "more solemn instance [...] of the power of the human race to change" (1986-1990, 3: 422): a revised reading of the *Agamemnon*, in which "sympathies" (usually reserved for the patriarchal order sanctioned by Athena) may now be "almost entirely with Clytemnestra" (422), who avenged her daughter's death by murdering her husband Agamemnon on his return from the Trojan War. This classical allusion becomes more potently feminist when considered in relation to suffragist use of such imagery and Lowndes's references to "Troy Town" in 1910.

In asking us to consider the married life of the Carlyles, Woolf returns to the theme of women's servitude, perhaps mindful of the suffragette scorn for Thomas Carlyle (resulting in a cleaver attack on his portrait in the National Gallery) (Atkinson 1996: 163). He personifies "the horrible domestic tradition which made it seemly for a woman of genius to spend her time chasing beetles, scouring saucepans, instead of writing books" (Woolf 1986-1990, 3: 422). Woolf spells out this tradition's hierarchized, gendered, relations as she announces its demise: "All human relations have shifted —those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature. Let us agree to place one of these changes about the year 1910" (1986-1990, 3: 422). The dramatic suffrage events of 1910 and the post-impressionist exhibition, "a shock to most people", according to Woolf (Woolf 1986-1990, 1: 379), provide political and artistic contexts for such change.

Woolf, of course, was aware of possible literary analogies to post-impressionism, something Fry himself encouraged (Woolf 1940: 180, 183). Arnold Bennett makes such a challenge in his (like Lowndes's) unusually favourable review of "Manet and the post-impressionists" (1917: 284-285), which Woolf in turn reviewed: "These new pictures, he says, have wearied him of other pictures; is it not possible that some writer will come along and do in words what these men have done in paint?" (Woolf 1986-1990, 2: 130). Woolf takes up Bennett's gauntlet, I suggest, and effects some feminist literary innovations, analogous to post-impressionism, and based primarily on the use of colour. Her review of Bennett, as McNeillie notes, "appeared in the same month as that in which Woolf published her experimental story "The Mark on the Wall" and, probably, shortly before she began to write *Kew Gardens*" (1986-1990, 2: 132), but her particular kind of feminist literary post-impressionism comes to fruition —after her meditations on 1910 in "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown"— some years later in *To the Lighthouse*.

The range of colours in Lily's palette as she attempts her picture of Mrs Ramsay suggests a post-impressionist mosaic of prismatic oppositional planes but also allows a flickering glimpse of suffragist colours. Consider the "bright violet" of the jacmanna and the "staring white" of the wall (Woolf 1927: 34), "the grass still a soft deep green, the house starred in its greenery with purple passion flowers" (35), as well as Mrs Ramsay's depiction as purple triangle and her much discussed green shawl (47). Compare Charles Tansley's earlier view of Mrs Ramsay "against a picture of Queen Victoria wearing the blue ribbon of the Garter"; she has "stars in her eyes and veils in her hair, with cyclamen and wild violets" (27). In departing from the Victorian pre-Raphaelite version of ethereal femininity that Mrs Ramsay seems to present to Tansley who insists "women can't write, women can't paint" (134-135), Lily offers a feminist transfiguration of this patriarchal image which is in keeping with both post-impressionist and suffrage aesthetics. "Use the old symbols always when they will serve", Lowndes advises, "but try and use them in a new way; for it is a new thing we are doing" (1910a: 177).

NOTES

[1] This essay expands on material taken from my book, *The Feminist Aesthetics of Virginia Woolf: Modernism, Post-Impressionism and the Politics of the Visual*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. P. 1998.

[2] Robert Ross's "The Post-Impressionists at the Grafton: The Twilight of the Idols". In *Morning Post*, 7 (November 1910). In Bullen, J. B. (ed.).: 102.

[3] Unsigned review, "Paint Run Mad: Post-Impressionism at the Grafton Galleries". In *Daily Express*, 9 (November 1910). In Bullen, J. B. (ed.).: 105-106.

[4] Bowness also points out the instability of the term, post-impressionism, which has since come to describe a much broader (and contradictory) range of art: "Almost 60 years later we have agreed that "post-impressionism" can now be meaningfully applied to the later work of other great Impressionists —notably Degas, Monet, Renoir and Pissarro— who were all specifically excluded by Fry; and more widely still to painting in France and western Europe which reflects an awareness of Impressionism and seeks to move away from and beyond it" (1979: 9).

[5] Tickner quotes from Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, "The Purple, White and Green". In Programme, Prince's Skating Rink Exhibition (London, 1909).

[6] The colours were first thought of by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence in preparation for the "Woman's Sunday" rally of 21 June 1908. They "were not selected until the middle of May, but according to Sylvia Pankhurst had "achieved a nation-wide familiarity before the month was out". By the 21st they were marked indelibly and politically on the public mind: to see them was to be reminded of the WSPU and its campaign; they were its tricolour, its regimental colours" (Tickner 1987: 265).

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FLAUBERT, SCHLEGEL, NIETZSCHE: JOYCE AND SOME EUROPEAN PRECURSORS

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Georg Lukács argued as far back as 1920, in *The Theory of the Novel*, that irony is "the normative mentality" not just of modern literature but of that uniquely "modern" genre, the novel, which, as "the epic of a world abandoned by God", came into being with Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. Recognising as a consequence man's subjective alienation from a "world of immanent meaninglessness", Cervantes, according to Lukács, arrives at the further perception that "reality does not have to correspond to subjective evidence, however genuine and heroic". It is in that gap between objective fact and subjective desire that irony may thrive. Irony, then, is the inevitable and appropriate response when "idea" (or, a little tendentiously, we might say "ideal") is no longer validated by "reality", the imaginable is strikingly incommensurate with the actual, and the aspirations of "interiority" come into conflict with "the prosaic vulgarity of outward life" (1971: 84, 88, 103-104).

In Joyce's *Ulysses*, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza reappear, though in significantly altered guise, as Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom. There is an additional redistribution of emphasis, in which Bloom's Sancho-like engagement with "the prosaic vulgarity of outward life" (accepted in all its immediacy and neutrality under the rubric of "phenomenon") is further valorised at the expense of Stephen's quixotic inability to escape from his own "interiority", and from the insoluble subjective obsessions which now threaten to generate not creative fantasy but crippling neurosis.[1]

Yet rather than dwell upon this somewhat banal connection between Joyce and the father of the European novel, I want rather to highlight Lukács's contention that irony is the "normative mentality" of modern fiction, and, further, to pose this question: from what perspectives, and with

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the help of which European predecessors, are we to attempt to understand the authorial irony of that protypical modern novel, *Ulysses*?

Lukács's further argument is that irony is not only a revelation of the problematic disjunction between subjective aspiration and recalcitrant fact, but is equally, in the form of willed authorial detachment, the counter-strategy initiated by the novelist against the perceived problem of "immanent meaninglessness", which threatens to render the world uninterpretable. In this view, irony, with its preservation of formal control in the face of radical uncertainty, is related, one might say, to stoicism; and in effecting a distance from the problem, it aims to provide a manageable perspective, or, more correctly, perspectives, upon it. Irony, as Lukács has it, is the "self-surmounting" of subjectivity: it is

> a refusal to comprehend more than the mere fact [...] and in it there is the deep certainty, expressible only by form-giving, that through not-desiring-to-know and not-being-able-to-know [the writer] has truly encountered and grasped the ultimate, true substance. (Lukács 84-85, 90)

Such an emphasis upon non-judgemental objectivity, and on the arrival at an evaluation of experience through "form-giving", recalls the aims and practice of Gustave Flaubert. Yet we need to remind ourselves that it was not in fact Flaubert who first formulated the ideal of authorial objectivity, with its concomitant ironic detachment. Flaubert's *impassibilité*, indeed, can be regarded as an individual, perhaps unique and extreme manifestation of an already conceptualised norm. As D. C. Muecke points out, the "concept of irony as objectivity" is one of the many new connotations of the word "irony" to be credited to German romanticism (1982: 26). Both Friedrich and A. W. Schlegel, and subsequently Karl Solger and others, used the term irony in speaking of "the objectivity, "indifference", and freedom of the artist in relation to his work" (1970: 19). Of those named, the most significant is Friedrich Schlegel who, in René Wellek's large claim, "introduced the term irony into modern literary discussion" (1955: 16). It is, in addition, worth noting that Lukács's understanding of the term "irony" is in part conditioned by his familiarity with "the young Friedrich Schlegel's and Solger's aesthetic theories" (1971: 15).

The importance of the German romantic theorists is not simply that historically they anticipate Flaubert's formulations. It is also that, in treating of what is essentially the same topic, that is, ironic detachment and authorial

objectivity, they should provide perspectives and emphases significantly different from Flaubert's. At this early stage we might distinguish such differences in emphasis as follows: that Flaubert valued objectivity primarily as a mode of detachment, which might preserve him from facile or sentimental evaluation (empowerment of the author), while a theorist such as Friedrich Schlegel tended to prioritise the totality of perception that such authorial freedom seems to guarantee (orientation towards the problematic "world", in the form of a continual and generous alertness to the contradictory whole of human experience). Or, to put this in different terms: irony in Flaubert may imply a withholding of the authorial self from problematic contingency, whereas Schlegel's irony advocates, in more positive terms, lively engagement with such contingency. I begin, in violation of chronology, with Flaubertian detachment, if only because the influence of Flaubert on Joyce has been well-documented.

"I never pose as a man of experience", Flaubert wrote on September 27, 1846, "that would be too foolish; but I observe a great deal and never conclude —an infallible way of avoiding error" (1926-1933, vol. 1: 337).[2] Flaubert's habitual stance, and its implications for his art, are here clearly indicated. He is to be a spectator rather than a participant in experience; he is to be strictly objective —indeed, scientific— in his observation; and, by never concluding, will deny his reader the satisfaction of simplistic evaluation, keeping his text open to the possibilities of polyvalence. Such detachment is the divine (which may be to say "inhuman") prerogative of the author as ironist. Hovering "above the world" in his "ironical gratification" (Kierkegaard's formula in 1967-1978, vol. 2: 251), the author in a sublime stoicism transcends the problematic world of experience, thereby negating its negation. Or —to extrapolate from Lukács— the author hastens to model himself on the divinity which has abandoned the world, even as he involves himself in that world just sufficiently to expose its lack of satisfactory immanent meaning.

Flaubert's identification of the author with God is well-established; and if such an author-god achieves immanence, his invisibility suggests absence rather than presence. As Flaubert informs Louise Colet, in a context where, against *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, he is making a plea for authorial reticence and impartiality:

> An author in his book must be like God in the universe, present everywhere and visible nowhere. Art being a second Nature, the creator of that Nature must behave similarly. In all its atoms, in all its aspects, let there be sensed a hidden infinite indifference [*impassibilité*]. (1926-1933, vol. 3: 61-62)

We should recall at this point that the comparison of the author to a God invisibly present in his work is by no means original to Flaubert, but was well-established by the end of the eighteenth century in German romanticism. So Schiller, characterising the naive (or impersonal) poet as one wholly possessed by the objective reality of his artistic creation, comments: "Like the Deity behind this universe, he stands behind his work; he is himself the work, and the work is himself".[3] When a Romantic theorist such as Friedrich Schlegel considers the stance of the ironic author, the analogy between author and God is implicit in the idea of the author's transcendence of, or detachment from, the creation which nonetheless paradoxically manifests him.

Schlegel can, in fact, advocate authorial detachment in a way that seems to anticipate Flaubert's *impassibilité*. "In order to be able to describe an object well, one must have ceased to be interested in it". That, perhaps surprisingly, is Schlegel (in Wellek 1955: 14). But in spite of this apparent identity of intention, it is essential to the general thrust of my argument (in the light of Schlegel's advocacy of a lively and generous authorial response) to emphasise the differences between the two. "Homer, Rabelais, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Goethe", Flaubert informs Louise Colet, "seem to me *pitiless*" (August 26, 1853, in 1926-1933, vol. 3: 322). In striking contrast, Schlegel typically envisages a more humane author-god behind the works of Cervantes, Shakespeare, or Goethe. Thus the author of *Wilhelm Meister* is one who seems "to smile down from the heights of his spirit upon his masterwork" (in Wellek 1955: 15); and in general the authorial irony which "surveys everything that is limited" is to be referred to a spirit of "transcendental buffoonery" ("*Lyceums-Fragmente*").[4]

This awareness of art as play, and of the artist's playful freedom, marks one essential distinction between Schlegel's ironic author and Flaubert's. Schlegel's ironist is free to indulge his sense of humour in a way quite alien it seems, to Flaubert's "pitiless" and impassive creator. It is not then surprising, that, writing in 1893, Henry James felt that the reader of Flaubert is obliged to ponder the lack of "ultimate good humour". How, James wondered, "can art be so genuine yet so unconsoled, so unhumorous, so unsociable"? Flaubert, in his "extraordinary singleness of aim", presents us

with "the artist not only disinterested but absolutely dishumanized" (James 1964: 148, 141, 140). Schlegel invites no such criticism.

The influence of Flaubert on Joyce is well-known, and Ezra Pound was one of the first to emphasise the affinity. When *Dubliners* appeared, Pound commended Joyce in *The Egoist* (July 15, 1914) for his "imitation of Flaubert's definiteness", and subsequently in *The Dial* (June 1922), glancing primarily at *Ulysses*, he asserted that Joyce "has taken up the art of writing where Flaubert left it".[5] In keeping with the Flaubertian ideal of *impassibilité*, Joyce, throughout his writings, honours the ideals of authorial detachment and scientistic objectivity. Thus the young Joyce was quick to endorse the authorial detachment of the much-admired Ibsen in his essay of 1900, "Ibsen's New Drama", which praised Ibsen for his ability to see things "as from a great height, with perfect vision and an angelic dispassionateness" (1959: 65). The most Flaubertian image of the detached author in Joyce, however, is that notoriously provided by Stephen Dedalus in the *Portrait* when he considers how the personality of the artist gradually "impersonalises itself":

> The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails. (1968a: 215)

Clearly, this can be read as a straight "crib" from those passages in the letters where Flaubert ponders the invisible author-god.

Inevitably, however, Flaubert was aware that the kind of ironic objectivity indicated in the ideal of *impassibilité* might serve as the precondition of a more inclusive perception, a less partial view of the contradictory totality of experience (the orientation towards the problematic "world" of which I spoke earlier). This would seem to provide the rationale for the notorious agricultural show sequence in *Madame Bovary* (1950, vol. 2: 8), with its juxtaposition of the romantic dalliance of Emma and Rodolphe with the cries of "Manure!" and "Pigs!" outside the windows of the Council Chamber. Flaubert's attraction to this kind of contradictoriness, however, perhaps derives from that temperamental conflict within himself between the romantic and the realist, the *deux bonshommes distincts* referred to in the letter of January 16, 1852 (1926-1933, vol. 2: 343). In any case, when German romanticism, prior to Flaubert, addressed this question of contradictory totality, it was more successful —primarily through Friedrich Schlegel— in articulating and elaborating an aesthetic theory which was

grounded in something like a genuine metaphysic, and substantiated by that metaphysic. What I shall further argue is that beyond Schlegel lies Nietzsche, whose formulation of the notion of "perspectivism" can be read as an extrapolation of Schlegel's ambition to come to terms with the contradictory totality of experience, or, in the terms used earlier, to engage with contingency.

The precise implications of Schlegel's concept of irony have been much debated, and there remains a question as to how systematically he was able to formulate that concept. There is, nonetheless, general agreement that such irony can be interpreted, in the first instance, as a means of expressing the paradoxical nature of the world and of human experience. In Schlegel's view, the universe is infinite and apparently chaotic. It presents itself to us as infinite plenitude (*unendliche Fülle*), and cannot be reduced to rational order. To our limited perception, which cannot grasp its absolute reality, the world appears as a chaos, "a complex of contradiction and incongruity" (Immerwahr 1951: 177). Such an apparent chaos, however, can be viewed as a source not of anxiety but rather of exhilaration: in its infinite abundance and unpredictable change, the world manifests a fertile creativity. We are encouraged to view more optimistically a reality which, while still problematic, is far removed from the world abandoned by God to immanent meaninglessness —the world, as Lukács interprets it, of *Don Quixote*.

Faced with the world's bewildering plenitude and the recurrent contradictions of our experience, we require a flexibility of response to match such multiplicity. This flexibility is provided by irony, which, in one of Schlegel's notebooks, is characterised as the "form of the paradoxical" (in Eichner 1970: 74). Irony is the response that the world in its bewildering infinitude demands: irony can thus be defined as "consciousness of the [...] infinitely full chaos" (in Eichner 1970: 73).

When he shifts to the realm of aesthetics proper, Schlegel is consistent in his requirement that the work of literature should reflect this paradoxical world. Here one must insist that, whatever role is played in Schlegel's theory by the detachment of the author, the major prescription for the literary work itself is that it should openly and generously engage with the problematic real. So it is that in one of his literary notebooks Schlegel claims that modern literature of the kind he is advocating should be "chaotic", appropriately reflecting the chaos of the world (1970: 62). Yet this is not to deny altogether the principle of aesthetic ordering in the literary work. The universe in its infinite plenitude may strike us as a chaos, but it is also an "infinite unity" (*unendliche Einheit*), an organic whole, however impossible

it is for human reason to comprehend that absolute order. Ideally, then, the work of literature in reflecting that reality must somehow reconcile chaos with order. In his *Dialogue on Poetry*, therefore, Schlegel paradoxically describes his ideal as as an "artfully ordered confusion", a "charming symmetry of contradictions" (in Mellor 1980: 18).

There is much in this that may make us think of Joyce, in particular *Ulysses*. That "allincluding [...] chronicle" (the text's self-description towards the end of the "Oxen of the Sun" episode, *Ulysses*, 1993: 402) cheerfully resists all critical attempts to reduce it to univocal statement. It is *Finnegans Wake* (1968: 118) which refers to "the chaosmos of Alle", but this conflation of "cosmos" and "chaos" may be just as legitimately applied to the orderly disorder of *Ulysses*, which, for all its innumerable and teasing intimations of unity in the obsessive use of recurrent motifs, remains, as text, finally irreducible to coherence. According to Richard Ellmann, Samuel Beckett stated in a 1953 interview that "to Joyce reality was a paradigm, an illustration of a possibly unstatable rule" (1982: 551). This, too, is close to Schlegel's sense of the world as possessing an ultimate coherence which is not available to reason. Moreover, when Schlegel intimates that the literary artist, faced with the bewildering multiplicity of the world, cannot hope to seize any absolute truth, he anticipates the non-absolutist or relativist world of *Ulysses*, wherein no code is binding.

When Schlegel acknowledges that each creative insight yields only a limited perception, so that the literary artist must be ever ready to abandon any one stance, however attractive or compelling it might appear, in order to assume a different, perhaps opposed position, he provides in advance the rationale for Joyce's deliberate programmatic commitment to the employment of a new and distinctive narrative technique for each succeeding episode in *Ulysses*. It is from this recognition in Schlegel of the author's requisite flexibility that he derives, by extension, his further crucial endorsement of authorial caprice, or *Willkür*, for which one of Schlegel's exemplars was Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, relevant, again, to *Ulysses*, with its apparently capricious shifts, sometimes within one episode —as in "Cyclops", for example— from one narrative mode to another. The most devastating instance of this procedure in "Cyclops" is the treatment of Bloom's tentatively introduced ideal of "love": see the notorious sequence in *Ulysses* (1993: 319).[6]

In comparison with Flaubert, Schlegel appears to some advantage. Not only does Schlegel provide a more adequate rationale for the "totalising"

aspirations of irony, its espousal of the most inclusive view; his entire concept of irony is more acceptably, more creatively and less negatively formulated. Romantic irony, in fact, offers important specific correctives to the Flaubertian view. Schlegel's emphasis on the artist's caprice (*Willkür*), for instance, allows more room for creative inspiration than the deliberate artistry of Flaubert seems ready to admit. What Flaubert thought of instinctive creativity is expressed with an almost ascetic distaste in a letter of February 27-28, 1853 to Louise Colet:

> One must write more *coldly*. Let us be on our guard against that feverish state called inspiration, which often involves more nervous emotion than muscular activity [...]. Instead of one idea I have six, and where the most simple exposition is called for, I am tempted to elaborate [...]. But I know these masked balls of the imagination, whence you come away depressed and exhausted, having seen nothing but falsity and spouted nonsense. Everything should be done coldly, with poise. (1926-1933, vol. 3: 104-105)

One is struck here by the absolutist, exclusivist tone of such dedication. Schlegel by comparison seems more flexible, more accommodating, more subtle. "It's equally fatal for the mind to have a system and to have none", he remarks nonchalantly in *Athenäums-Fragmente* (1971: 53). "It will simply have to decide to combine the two" (in Mellor 1980: 16).

Moreover, Flaubert's equally absolutist sense of "Art", and his ascetic dedication to that ideal, appear extravagant and misplaced if we recall Schlegel's ironist who can make no exclusive and irrevocable commitment, least of all to the fictional projections of his own mind.[7] Schlegel's typical comment in *Lyceums-Fragmente* (1971: 87) might be read as an anticipative criticism of Flaubert: "There are artists who —though they do not think too highly of art, this being impossible— are not free enough to rise above their own highest ideal" (in Eichner 1970: 71). Art for Schlegel is certainly a serious matter; but its ends are not always best served by seriousness.

It is at this point that we must attempt to refer much of the preceding argument specifically to Joyce. How seriously committed to a Flaubertian ideal of "Art" was Joyce? And how central was Flaubert as an influence on Joyce's own writing practice? One answer might be found in the well-known anecdote related by Frank Budgen, who one day enquired of Joyce how *Ulysses* was progressing:

> "I have been working hard on it all day," said Joyce.
> "Does that mean that you have written a great deal?" I said.
> "Two sentences," said Joyce.
> I looked sideways but Joyce was not smiling. I thought of Flaubert.
> "You have been seeking the *mot juste*?" I said.
> "No," said Joyce. "I have the words already. What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentence. There is an order in every way appropriate. I think I have it." (1972: 20)

Not surprisingly, Joyce's artistic perfectionism here brings Flaubert to mind. Yet whatever the degree of affinity between Joyce and Flaubert in their artistic dedication, there was an unbridgeable gulf between the two men and their respective temperaments. For even if Joyce (and Stephen) are dedicated to the secular "priesthood" of art, it is a priesthood entailing no ascetic withdrawal from life, but rather an acceptance, as in one of Stephen's climactic epiphanic experiences, of the summons (from woman) to engage with reality (through woman): "Her eyes had called him and his soul had leaped at the call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life!" (*Portrait* 1968a: 172).

Flaubert, "thoroughly anchoretic" in the view of James (1964: 215), appears to live out his artistic ideal of detachment by a further disengagement from the *Lebenswelt* itself, remaining, in James's words (1964: 149), an "incorruptible celibate and *dédaigneux des femmes*". Joyce in his life embraced experience in the life-long commitment to Nora Barnacle and in the subsequent immersion in familial responsibilities.

More to the point, however, is the centrality of humour in Joyce. We can best indicate the radical difference between Joyce and Flaubert by recalling Henry James's complaint that Flaubert lacked "ultimate good humour". No such complaint could be levelled against the author of *Ulysses* or of *Finnegans Wake*.[8] The invisible author-god envisaged by Stephen in the *Portrait* (in the passage cited earlier) may seem inhuman in his indifference; but the last word is given, in that context, to the subversive jester, Lynch. To Stephen's suggestion that the artist is "refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails", Lynch immediately responds with the deflationary remark: "Trying to refine them also out of existence" (1968a: 215). It is one of many indicators of the ironic distance between Joyce and Stephen; and in this instance Stephen's unacknowledged parroting of Flaubert is exposed as the pretentiousness of a young man who is both too serious for his own good and too limited in his aesthetic theorising. The author-god of

Stephen, indifferent and unsmiling, is indeed Flaubertian; but beyond that ideal lies the smiling author Joyce, who in his flexibility and humorous awareness of incongruities, may, finally, have more in common with the author as envisaged by Schlegel.

My final argument concerns the way in which Schlegel's emphasis on the bewildering complexity of experience, and our need to devise strategies which will do justice to such complexity, achieves a later and more cogent articulation in Nietzsche. In a well-known passage in *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1996, Third Essay: Section 12), Nietzsche endeavours to expose the folly of any ultimately "objective" view of the world, and encourages us instead to exploit the "*diversity* of perspectives" at our disposal. For, as he goes on to argue:

> Perspectival seeing is the *only* kind of seeing there is, perspectival "knowing" the *only* kind of "knowing"; and the *more* feelings about a matter which we allow to come to expression, the *more* eyes, different eyes through which we are able to view this same matter, the more complete our "conception" of it, our "objectivity" will be. (1996: 98)

Schlegel would surely have been in sympathy with the spirit of Nietzsche's proceeding here; while, from another point of view, once Nietzsche's perspectivism finds its stylistic correlative in Bakhtin's idea of plurality of discourse, we are closer than ever to Joyce's artistic practice in a work like *Ulysses*.[9]

Nietzsche's influence on the early Joyce is well-established, and there is a further crucial way in which he can be read as a mediating term between Schlegel and Joyce. Schlegel's recognition of the creative artist's playfulness, his "transcendental buffoonery" (*Lyceums-Fragmente* 1971: 42), and, in contradistinction to Flaubert, his generous accommodation of good humour and the comedic, is close to Nietzsche's recurrent emphasis on liberating gaiety; and it is highly significant that Joyce should have approved of an early review by Gilbert Seldes (1922: 211-212), in which the reviewer noted the Nietzschean "tragic gaiety" in Ulysses.[10] Relevant here is the typically Nietzschean observation, which, again, Schlegel might well have approved, that:

> a great tragedian [...] like all artists, only reaches the peak of his greatness once he is capable of looking *down* on himself and his art —once he is capable of *laughing* at himself. (1996: 79)

That observation occurs in a context in which Nietzsche expresses his dismay at Wagner's apparent regression, in the late work *Parsifal*, to what for Nietzsche are the utterly abhorrent ascetic values of Christianity. Nietzsche further notes that even where a real opposition arises between "chastity and sensuality", it "need no longer be a tragic one" (1996: 78); for, as he has already stated in the "Preface", "our old morality is part of the *comedy* too!" (1996: 9).

I introduce these comments by Nietzsche in order to make a final point about a radical similarity between Joyce and this European philosophical predecessor. Much of Nietzsche's work (including *Genealogy*) is an attack on asceticism; and he includes in his denunciation not just Christians, but the "hard, severe, abstemious" scientists who are equally fettered by an ascetic "ideal", and who, "in their belief in truth [...] are more inflexible and absolute than anyone else" (1996: 126). One may ask at this point whether the absolutely dedicated Flaubert ("incorruptible celibate", in James's phrase) might not equally fall under Nietzsche's strictures on asceticism. But the major point concerns Joyce's similar distaste not just for the absolute or dogmatic, but for the ascetic ideal in all its forms. What we find at the heart of *Ulysses*, as at the centre of much of Nietzsche's writing, is a rejection of any idealism which, whether as asceticism or misplaced romantic sentiment, deflects us from the persistent acknowledgement of the human realities which are indefeasibly "there". What we seem to have reached at this point is a kind of "endgame" phase in that conflict between heroic ideal and the "prosaic vulgarity" of life identified by Lukács —the conflict in effect being resolved by the collapse of one of its increasingly untenable terms, the "ideal". How well Joyce would have understood Nietzsche's statement in the Foreword to *Ecce Homo* that "Reality has been deprived of its value, its meaning, its veracity to the same degree as an ideal world has been *fabricated*" (1979: 4).

In a similar vein, in the second essay of *Genealogy* (section 24), Nietzsche laments the fact that for far too long "man has looked askance at his animal inclinations", in his absurd "aspirations to the beyond [...] the anti-instinctual, the anti-animal" —aspirations, in short, "to what have up to now been regarded as ideals, ideals which are all hostile to life, which defame the world" (1996: 75). Who, he wonders (1996: 75-76), will be strong enough to "redeem us as much from the previous ideal as from *what was bound to grow out of it*, from the great disgust [...]?" Such a spirit would "require a kind of sublime wickedness, a last, self-assured intellectual malice

which belongs to great health". Yet "this Antichristian and Antichrist, this conqueror of God and of nothingness —*he must come one day*".

Joyce's determination to reinscribe the body in all its imperfection in the text of *Ulysses* can be read as an attempt to save us from "the great disgust"; and, whether he deserves the title of "antichristian" or not, he at least creates, in the figure of Molly Bloom, an unforgettable "anti-Virgin". We know how fond Joyce was of depicting in his fiction (particularly in *Portrait*) the artist as messiah, complete with his Johannine precursor. Is it altogether fanciful to suggest that Nietzsche in the passage cited foretells the coming of one who, in the figure of the comic liberator Joyce, is to fulfill his prophecy? The full truth is, though, that Joyce had more than one European precursor.

NOTES

[1] Wilde (1981: 118) sees Stephen as one of those figures in modern fiction who "simultaneously desire and shrink from confrontation with a world they find too ironically disjunct to face or grasp directly".

[2] The English quotations from Flaubert's *Correspondance* are the author's own translations.

[3] *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795, in Abrams 1958: 238).

[4] In Mellor (1980: 17). In my knowledge of and citations from Schlegel throughout, I am indebted to a number of commentators, especially Eichner (1970), Immerwahr (1951), Mellor (1980).

[5] See Pound 1968: 27-28, 89, 248, 252.

[6] Such capriciousness operates, in what we may regard as a sophistication of the adage about *ars celare artem*, in the service of an overall artistic purposefulness. Influenced by Goethe's essay on *Die Arabesken* (1789), Schlegel came to feel that such a reconciliation of caprice and purposefulness could ideally be discerned in the form of the arabesque, the profuse, elaborate and freely composed mural decoration frequently exploited by Italian Renaissance painters. Apparently capricious and irrational, such arabesques nevertheless imply their own intrinsic patterning, though such an implicit ordering in no way inhibits the artist's creative freedom. The analogue for Joyce's artistic procedure is to be found in the similarly creative "doodling" evident in the decorations or illustrations in

the *Book of Kells*: on which see Joyce's own statement, including the suggestion that one can "compare much of my work to the intricate illuminations" therein (Ellmann 1982: 545).

[7] Because the artist can invest no absolute value in his imperfect art —necessarily imperfect in the face of an elusive and many-faceted reality— irony for Schlegel becomes "constant self-parody" (*Lyceums-Fragmente* 1971: 108; in Eichner 1970: 73), as the author anticipates possible criticisms of his limitations by implying such criticisms within the work itself.

[8] One anecdote may stand for many. Richard Ellmann tells how, at a late stage in his life while he was engaged in the writing of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce amended, for the benefit of a drinking companion, *In vino veritas* to *In risu veritas* (1982: 703).

[9] See, for example, Bakhtin (1988: 125-156). Bakhtin begins with a brief analysis of Pushkin's verse-novel *Evgenij Onegin*, the linguistic structure of which he regards as "typical of all authentic novels" (1988: 131), arguing that the "language of the novel is a *system* of languages that mutually and ideologically interanimate each other. It is impossible to describe and analyze it as a single unitary language" (1988: 130). Many of Bakhtin's comments, including his remarks on parody (1988: 132-135), the "corrective of laughter" (1988: 136), and the "seriolaughing word" (1988: 153), may remind the reader of *Ulysses*.

[10] See Rice (1982: 211). While I argue here that Nietzsche may have served as a mediating term between Schlegel and Joyce, I have so far not been able to establish whether or not Joyce was acquainted with Schlegel.

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"FAMILIAR MATERIALS": JOYCE AMONG EUROPEANS

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Reminiscing in 1941 about James Joyce, Eugene Jolas described his friend as "a man of the megapolis" and, by way of illustration, recounted "a sort of ritual" which Joyce conducted in the summer of 1931, in a "little frontier town in the mountains of Austria":

> At half past seven, he would race suddenly for the railroad station, where the Paris-Vienna Express was due to stop for ten minutes each day. He would quietly walk up and down the platform [...]. When the train finally came in, he rushed to the nearest car in order to examine the French, German and Yugo-Slav inscriptions, palped the letters with the sensitive fingers of defective vision. Then he would ask me questions about the persons getting on or off the train. He would try to listen to their conversations. [...] When the train continued on its way into the usually foggy night, he stood on the platform waving his hat, as if he had just bid godspeed to a dear friend. (1941: 88)

This ritual acquired greater significance on the evening that Joyce pointed across the railway platform and said to Jolas, "Over on those tracks there [...] the fate of *Ulysses* was decided in 1915" (1941: 87-88). The fate to which he referred was effectively that of himself and his own family. In 1915, after a long bureaucratic struggle with the Austrian authorities to secure a permit to leave Trieste for neutral Zurich, the Joyces were detained at Innsbruck (the small border town featured in the Jolas anecdote), when the train on which they were travelling was obliged to stop to allow the Emperor's train to pass.[1]

He never forgot that lucky escape, nor the fact that he had to defer to blue blood. Joyce's deference was usually reserved for the spoken word. "He

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seemed constantly *à l'affut*, always to be listening rather than talking. "Really, it is not I who am writing this crazy book", he said in his whimsical way one evening. "It is you, and you, and you, and that man over there, and that girl at the next table"" (1941: 90). The "crazy book" was *Finnegans Wake* (known during its composition as "Work in Progress" to everyone but Joyce and Nora), into which he worked fragments of languages known and of languages studied, scraps of conversation, slips of the tongue, foreign pronunciations of familiar words, mangled and mimicked.[2] Joyce, prone equally to self-dramatisation and to melancholy reflection, occasionally spoke about his art in demystificatory terms, as in this exclamation to Jacques Mercanton from 1938:[3]

> "Why should I regret my talent? I haven't any. I write with such difficulty, so slowly. Chance furnishes me with what I need. I am like a man who stumbles along; my foot strikes something, I bend over, and it is exactly what I want." He mimed what he said to make it sound funny. (Potts 1979: 213)

The statement echoes the point made to Jolas about the collective writing of the "crazy book". The motif of chance as substitute for authorial intention, as a disembodied, or rather, multi-bodied muse and amanuensis in one, suggests a very different authorial persona from the one normally associated with Joyce.[4] Led by fate rather than faith, the author as "a man who stumbles along" is deprived of intention or even invention. More Baudelairean *flâneur* than supreme artificer, he writes as he lives, or, as Paul Léon put it,

> [H]e seeks to do away with writing that merely aims at covering the blank page, to do away with conventional self-expression, to do away with the very body which intervenes between the most secret "I" [...] and the exterior world. He also seeks to do away with the writing hand, the listening ear, the seeing eye. (Jolas 1949: 118)[5]

Living one's life precariously, because of the belief in the ultimate wisdom of chance, may sometimes mean that writing amounts to a confrontation with the contingent, a taking of risk. In one of the conversations recorded by Arthur Power, Joyce seems to have suggested as much:

> In writing one must create an endlessly changing surface, dictated by the mood and current impulse in contrast to the fixed mood of the classical style. This is "Work in Progress". The important thing is not what we write, but how we write, and in my opinion the modern writer must be an adventurer above all, willing to take every risk, and be prepared to founder in his effort if need be. In other words we must write dangerously [...]. A book, in my opinion, should not be planned out beforehand, but as one writes it will form itself, subject, as I say, to the constant emotional promptings of one's personality. (1974: 95)

This collaboration between chance and "constant emotional promptings" may emerge in the Joycean ritual reported by Jolas earlier. In what may be considered an emblematic scene, Joyce directs himself in a pursuit of chance recognitions, amid strangers, and at the same time (perhaps responding to an emotional prompting), he acts on the desire to invoke and reinforce the good fortune that "the fate of *Ulysses* was decided here". Hence, on revisiting the scene of his lucky escape, Joyce once more places his faith in the arbitrariness of chance —an essential act, since, as a man of superstition, he needs no reminder that benevolent powers might not always be in attendance. There seems to be an added *frisson* to this ritual, however: the reliving of the precarious moment of the family's exodus sweetly coincides with the necessary retuning of the ear to the sound of many languages spoken simultaneously in transit. Joyce's regular visit to the Innsbruck railway station thus acknowledges the debt owed to that little Babel.

Arguably, however, this very same scenario might be understood simply as the acquired behavioural tic of the exile. According to Edward Said's interpretation of this condition, for example,

> The exile [...] exists in a median state, neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old, beset with half-involvements and half-detachments, nostalgic and sentimental on one level, an adept mimic or a secret outcast on another. (1994: 36)

Even more fittingly for Joyce, Said cites one of Theodor Adorno's *adagia* as a further insight into the psychology of the deracinated: "For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live" (1994: 43). These are eloquent accounts, poignant in their melancholy evocation of their authors' own "emotional promptings", but perhaps they overstate the case for the work of compensation. Lines attesting to the ambiguous predicament to which Adorno refers are to be found in *Giacomo Joyce*, that "expatriated [...]

so little impersonalized" of Joyce's texts, as Richard Ellmann puts it: "Youth has an end: the end is here. It will never be. You know that well. What then? Write it, damn you, write it! What else are you good for?" (1983: 16). One could argue, however, that it is the "voice" of Stephen Dedalus that articulates such a double anxiety of homelessness and loss of youth, and as such, it is to be worked through and alleviated later, in *Ulysses*.[6]

If "exile is one of the saddest fates" (Said 1994: 35), Joyce's displacement was unorthodox. His life in Europe, from its uncertain beginnings to its untimely end, was mostly lived in bustling cosmopolitan cities —"Trieste-Zurich-Paris, 1914-1921"— in which he was awakened to the joys of multilingual communication, the simple magic of the simultaneity of spoken languages. Carola Giedion-Welcker observes:

> James Joyce stood in a personal and direct relationship to the structure and the myth of cities. They seemed to him like a collective individual, a story in space-dimension, a great coalescence of life. He embraced them from their past to their present as growing organisms, edifices of history built brick by brick. Even when on a temporary visit, he sought to penetrate into the nature and laws of a city's complex substance, and to listen to its eternal rhythms. To be lord of a city, to hold the threads of its being in his hands, seemed to him direct vitality, and he considered it "more organic" to be mayor of a town than king of a nation. Just as he could master countless tongues and dialects of the world, so he also knew its wines, dishes and sweetmeats. His interest ranged down to the special cakes of a provincial town, which he carefully fitted, as a regional characteristic apparently due to chance, into the general and coherent unity of landscape and history. (1948: 207-208)

As well as tongues, cultures, customs and cuisine all feature as distinct, though meaningfully connected, entities in this urban scene. So far as Joyce was concerned, however, not all of these interconnections favoured the making of literature. As he reportedly argued to Power, "to produce literature a country must first be vintaged, have an odour in other words. What is the first thing you notice about a country when you arrive in it? Its odour, which is the gauge of its civilization, and it is that odour which percolates into its literature" (1974: 93). It seems that Ireland fulfilled that olfactory criterion and Joyce duly captured in his work some of the smells of Dublin, still potent in his memory.[7] As he put it in 1906 in one of his ultimately defiant but exasperated letters to Grant Richards, the reluctant publisher of *Dubliners*:

> It is not my fault that the odour of ashpits and old weeds and offal hangs round my stories. I seriously believe that you will retard the course of civilisation in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking glass. (1957: 63-64)

To pursue and mix the metaphor further, however, one could argue that it was to the prolonged exposure to a variety of such collective human and cultural "odours" that Joyce owed the maturity of his palate and the resulting vintage of his style.[8] As he himself defined it, "a living style should be like a river which takes the colour and texture of the different regions through which it flows" (Power 1974: 79),[9] and sure enough the fluent colours and textures of that style were deposited alluvially in Joyce's book of rivers, *Finnegans Wake*.

In the course of his life in Europe, Joyce was both a teacher and a student of languages, and both vocations informed his writing. Hugh Kenner famously describes *Ulysses* as "a Berlitz classroom between covers: a book from which we are systematically taught the skills we require to read it" (1984: 198). Kenner traces the smooth progress from pupil to pedagogue in terms of geography: "From Trieste, from Zurich, finally from Paris the Irish Jesuits' most cunning pupil had silently made the literate world his classroom. The subject of study was the English Dean of Studies' native tongue" (1984: 198). In Kenner's terms, however, this role reversal, of erstwhile "pupil" into teacher, is only a metaphor of that agonistic relationship with the English language in which the Irish Joyce was always involved. The "practice" of tutoring English as a foreign language, which was Joyce's livelihood for most of the *Ulysses* years, is thus subtly elided. Still, by mentioning the Berlitz school, Kenner's formulation does at least imply that Joyce's professional situation would have sharpened his sense of irreverence and detachment, although, arguably, it achieved much more. Living and working among language students, or non-native English speakers (of whom, in a sense, he was one), or polyglots (many of whom were his closest friends), Joyce added layers of foreignness to the "English Dean's native tongue", so as to nullify the cultural arrogance it represented. If his early experience of such cultural and linguistic domination provided Joyce with the motive for a fight, his life in exile held in store rewards which far surpassed that initial plan of vindication. Transposed into *Ulysses*, this lived experience, and the knowledge it afforded, contributed to the formation of Leopold Bloom, a character whose maturity, in contradistinction to that of Stephen Dedalus, lay beyond "the classroom" and the struggle over the command of English. As Declan Kiberd argues,

> Finding himself nowhere, Stephen attempts to fabricate an environment [...]. But the problem is that his learning is more dense than his setting [...]. His world, like that of his colleagues later in the National Library, is a parade of second-hand quotations, of gestures copied from books, of life usurped by art. Joyce may have used English with a lethal precision impossible to most of his English rivals, but he was well aware of the humiliation felt by the *assimilé* who speaks the language with a degrading, learned correctness: and he had a corresponding sense of the ways in which such persons softened raw realities by the euphemisms of art. (1996: 346)

By the time Bloom's character was complete, Joyce had moved out of the library and begun a new life, which demanded a different kind of learning. More than could have ever been possible in Dublin, in cities like Trieste and Zurich Joyce discovered that there were other worlds and other battles, as well as other ways for cultures and languages to co-exist.

"Strangers are contemporary posterity". Joyce recorded in his Pola notebook this aphorism by the eighteenth-century philosopher Chamfort, which encapsulated the ambiguous value of displacement (Gorman 1941: 136). A displaced person himself, Joyce learned from strangers. To reinforce a point made in most of the accounts and recollections of the author in Europe, Fritz Senn offers the following observation:

> Foreigners are underprivileged, but they have one advantage: they know that the language is strange and has to be looked at very closely [...]. Anything watched from a distance, from outside can be exotically fascinating. Joyce felt this fascination himself and made others feel it. He profited from it. He fared better, on the whole, with friends in Trieste, international refugees in Zurich, or a mixed clique in Paris than with his compatriots. (1983: 82)

Directly or indirectly, most of these friendships would provide material for Joyce's work, often confirming his views on the organic relationship between language, race and culture. Based on linguistic competence and social observation, with equal measures of irrational fixation and *cliché*, his opinions were strongly held. "The history of people is the history of language", Mercanton reports him as proclaiming (Potts 1979: 207). He also notes Joyce's "general antipathy to the Germans and their language, the confusion of which he considered insufferable", not to mention its "absurd and barbarous syntax" (Potts 1979: 224). Conversely, Italian was for Joyce the most musical of languages, commended also for "its wealth of profanity:

evidence of a devout, civilized, and ancient people" (Potts 1979: 229). Italian was also the Joyces' adopted family language. It was spoken in the home and, retaining its Triestine inflection, was the affectionate idiom in which Joyce wrote to his children.[10] Furthermore, Joyce's political views were partly shaped by direct involvement with Italian debates, both in Rome and in Trieste.[11]

There were other languages and types, too. Joyce wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver on 24 June 1921:

> I forgot to tell you another thing. I don't even know Greek though I am spoken of as erudite. My father wanted me to take Greek as third language, my mother German and my friends Irish. Result, I took Italian. I spoke or used to speak modern Greek not too badly (I speak four or five languages fluently enough) and have spent a great deal of time with Greeks of all kinds from noblemen down to onionsellers, chiefly the latter. I am superstitious about them. They bring me luck. (1957: 167)

His sentimental attachment to Greeks and their language manifested itself in various ways; best-known is his choice of the colours of the Greek flag for the cover of *Ulysses*, but that was unusually deliberate.[12] More typically that attachment was dependent on coincidence and chance. Herbert Gorman offers this account of Joyce's flight from Austria in 1914:

> It was then that two of his students, both Greeks and both of noble birth, Baron Ambroglio Ralli and Count Francesco Sordina, came to his aid. Through their influence, and after giving his Parole not to take part in the conflict, the Austrian military authorities gave him and his family permission to leave Trieste and go to the neutral country of Switzerland. (1941: 227-228)

Ellmann confirms (1983: 386) that it was Joyce who, in the following footnote, elaborated on Gorman's statement of fact:

> Sordina was one of the greatest swordsmen in Europe and during the brief transition period of Triestine severance from Austria before its attachment to Italy was first and last Chief Magistrate of the once Immediate City. Both Ralli and Sordina are now dead but till the times of their deaths, which took place in the last few years, they regularly received (and replied) at Christmas and the New Year messages of grateful remembrance from the writer whose life they had possibly saved. (Gorman 1941: 227)

As the Jolas anecdote establishes, Joyce never forgot the debt he owed to the two Greeks of the diaspora, and subsequently he was to consider the presence of Greeks around him a sign of good fortune. His life in Zurich offered a host of opportunities for such encounters, and in the most colourful and complete account of Joyce's Zurich period, Frank Budgen names some of Joyce's Greek friends (1937: 174-175). These were: Nicolas Santos, known to Joyce already from Trieste, the "ignorant Corfiote", as Joyce called him in a footnote to the Gorman biography, who could, nevertheless, recite by heart long passages of the *Odyssey* and whose buxom wife served as a part model for Molly Bloom;[13] Pavlos Phokas, the clerk who "bore the name of a Byzantine emperor";[14] Antonios Chalas, the cosmopolitan and polyglot author of numerous treatises on theosophy, the occult, Pythagorean philosophy, science and modern Greek poetry;[15] and finally Paulo Ruggiero, a "resourceful and amiable" bank employee, whose culinary skills were so invaluable on Joyce's birthday celebrations, and who yearned to return one day to his native land.[16]

Joyce "attached greater weight to race, nation, and to some real yet indefinite thing one might call type". More specifically, he believed that "the best gate of entry to the spirit of ancient Greece was the modern Greek" (Budgen 1937: 175, 174). The fact would not have been lost on Joyce that, in his personal experience, "the modern Greek" man was (to use the Homeric epithet) "polytropic", ranging from the nobleman and the *dilettante* sage to the clerk and the onionseller. Individually and collectively, privately and professionally, they were all invaluable to him; as Budgen puts it, "Joyce associated a good deal with such Greeks as were available in war-time Zurich, for he thought they all had a streak of Ulysses in them" (1955: 10). Furthermore, the collective "type" formed by this varied group of individuals was associated in Joyce's mind with another race. Budgen, bemused at the mighty noise a "table full of Greeks" was making, records Joyce's reaction to his observation:

> "Aren't they strangely like Jews?", I said. "They look like Jews, and they all talk at once and nobody listens".
> "Not so strangely," said Joyce. "Anyway, they are Greeks. And there's a lot to be said for the theory that the *Odyssey* is a Semitic poem". (1937: 174)

At first sight, this is not far from the sentiment revealed in that well-glossed line from *Ulysses*: "Jewgreek is greekjew" (1993: 474),[17] a key hybridic formulation which Richard Ellmann has contextualised in the following terms:

> In Stephen Dedalus he had invented a Greek-Irishman, in Bloom he could invent another, who would also be a "jewgreek". The comparison of the Irish to the Israelites was a familiar one in Irish rhetoric, and even Gladstone compared Parnell to Moses. For adding a Greek component Joyce might have claimed that the Jews, probably unlike modern Greeks, can trace themselves back to Homeric times. He was more interested in a theory he encountered in Victor Bérard's *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée* (1902) that the *Odyssey* had Semitic origins. It was a scholarly confirmation for what he had already determined to do.[18] (1972: 3)

Yet the implications of Budgen's anecdote, the insight it offers into Joyce's mind, are curiously elided by Ellmann; and, furthermore, the connections made here are prefaced by a misapprehension:

> Why then did Joyce not make his Ulysses a modern Greek? For someone who relied heavily on familiar materials, the fact that he did not have a modern Greek at hand was a deterrent. But even if he had one, the parallel was to be sought elsewhere than in racial continuity. (1972: 3)

Indeed, even in his revised edition of the biography, and despite Budgen's eloquent testimony, Ellmann does not fully explore the possibility that Joyce's personal acquaintance with expatriate Greeks could have influenced the creation of Bloom, or that the "familiar materials" of Joyce, the Irishman making his life in Europe, were open to chance and drawn from the living.[19] "I prefer people who are alive", he wrote to his brother Stanislaus in 1906 (1966: 193), hinting at a conviction which would sustain him later, during the war years and the changing fortunes of *Ulysses*. With his firm belief in auspicious detail and an ear trained to decode the sounds strangers make, Joyce made sense of his own and others' displacement, and created a world whose familiarity may still be underestimated.

NOTES

[1] Richard Ellmann mentions the episode in his biography of Joyce (1983: 386).

[2] When the book was finished Joyce told Jolas, "I felt so completely exhausted [...] as if all the blood had run out of my brain. I sat for a long while on a street bench, unable to move" (1941: 93).

[3] An associated meditation concerned the status of his art: according to Jolas, "He read Coleridge and was interested in the distinction he made between imagination and fancy. He wondered if he himself had imagination" (1941: 90-91).

[4] One of the commonplaces of recent Joyce criticism assumes the undisputed "paternal" authority controlling his work. For discussions of this supposition, see Vicki Mahaffey, "The Myth of a Mastermind" (1988: 23-50); Jean-Michel Rabaté, "A Portrait of the Author as a Bogeyman" (1991: 150-184). These are distinct from analyses of the theme of paternity and the construction of identity in Joyce's work, such as, for example, Maud Ellmann's essay "Polytropic Man: Paternity, Identity and Naming in *The Odyssey* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*" (in MacCabe 1982: 73-104).

[5] Léon's observation in the same piece that Joyce "made no distinction between actual life and literary creation" (Jolas 1949: 117) is corroborated by Philippe Soupault, another of Joyce's closest friends and collaborators: "Every act, everything he read or studied, every moment of enjoyment or sorrow, became part of his work [...]. Indeed, the reader is obliged to take this life into account" (Jolas 1949: 129).

[6] See, for example, Declan Kiberd's reading of the emotional significance conveyed by the difference between Bloom's "oral" and Stephen's "writerly" language: as a corrective to "the tragedy of the interior monologue", which exists in "the counterpoint between the richness of a person's thoughts and the slender opportunities for sharing those thoughts in conversation", "like all adepts of an oral culture, [Bloom] uses balanced, rhythmic language and cites proverbs and old saws as an aid to memory and adjudication" (1996: 347-348).

[7] An instance of the powerful association between memory and smell occurs in the "Telemachus" episode of *Ulysses*, when Stephen remembers his mother: "Silently, in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown grave-clothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes" (1993: 28).

[8] So much so that, as in the case of Homer's birthplace, the provenance of his style is a matter of polite dispute among various cities and settings which lay claim to his formation. See, for example, Giani Stuparich's description of Trieste as the city where "European and universal spirits" such as Joyce "italianised" (*s'italianizzavano*). According to Stuparich, Joyce absorbed the multilingual and hybridic merchant port atmosphere of the city, in other words, became a "*triestinizzato*" (1948: 9). See also Italo Svevo's recollection of his Triestine friend (1994: 15-20).

[9] Rivers feature with analogous importance in the life and the work. Paul Léon noted that "Joyce's feeling for all bodies of water amounted almost to nostalgia [...]. Wherever he went on holiday, he immediately looked for a river, a stream, or even a brook" (Jolas 1949: 121). See also Joyce's comment about the *Wake* to Harriet Shaw Weaver in a letter dated 28 October 1927: "Hundreds of river names are woven into the text. I think it moves" (1957: 259).

[10] The anglicisation of their names was forbidden by Joyce and they were always known as Giorgio and Lucia.

[11] As Giorgio Melchiori notes, "for at least five years of his life Joyce was exclusively an Italian writer. From 1907 to 1912 all his public pronouncements (lectures and articles) were in Italian [...]. For Joyce English is the language of creation while Italian is the language of everyday life and of his production in the fields of history, politics and literary criticism, three fields strictly interconnected: his lectures at the Universit` Popolare of Trieste, though ostensibly on literary subjects, are permeated with a sense of history and of the political debate" (1995: 109).

[12] Carola Giedion-Welcker stated that Joyce's next project was to be "a drama on the "revolution of the modern Greeks"" as their struggle against the Italians in 1940 had impressed him deeply (Potts 1979: 279-280). According to Giedion-Welcker, at the time of his death, on his desk lay a Greek dictionary "marked with fresh notes" (1948: 211-212).

[13] See Joyce's *Ulysses* notesheets (Herring 1972: 494) and the Ellmann biography (1983: 375-376).

[14] Phokas was also Joyce's tutor in modern Greek. The "Zürich Notebooks" in the collection of the Lockwood Library at the University of Buffalo (see Spielberg 1962) are the record of these lessons. For discussions of their content and for indications as to how Joyce may have made use of them, see Aravantin (1977) and Schork (1998).

[15] As Budgen reports, "Antonio [*sic*] Chalas had written a book proving that the centre of gravity of the earth passed through Athens, and that therefore the

great powers should guarantee the perpetual immunity of Greece". Joyce sent a copy of this book to President Wilson, "but whether his opus played any great part in subsequent international councils is not recorded" (1937: 174). In 1919, Joyce also wrote to B. W. Huebsch, his publisher in New York, on behalf of Chalas, though, again, the outcome of this favour is not known (1957: 124).

[16] More than an indispensable part of the Joyce's birthday festivities, Ruggiero remained a friend in less happy times, notably when, as guarantor, he interviewed with the Swiss authorities to allow Joyce and his family to enter the neutral country in 1940.

[17] See, for example, Ira Nadel's contention that "Joyce increasingly found the division between Jew and Gentile artificial and consciously sought to Hellenise Judaism and Judaise Hellenism" (Nadel 1989: 1). See also Cheyette (1992: 32-56), and Connor (1995: 219-237).

[18] For the most thorough discussion of the Berardian provenance of Joyce's text, see Seidel (1976). See also Ellmann's further comments on the subject of Semitic connections (1977: 34-39).

[19] In the New and Revised Edition of *James Joyce*, Ellmann offers more detailed accounts of Joyce's encounters and friendships with Greeks (1983: 395, 407-408), yet in his discussion of the prototypes for Bloom (373-375), he curiously neglects to cite the appropriate footnote from the Gorman biography: "Mr. Hunter of Dublin was only one of the living models who served for the character of Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*. There were two others, one in Trieste and the other in Zurich, the former a Greek and the latter a Hungarian" (Gorman 1941: 176).

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THE ODYSSEY OF D. H. LAWRENCE: MODERNISM, EUROPE AND THE NEW WORLD

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On February 2, 1922, in an Italian restaurant in Paris, an Irish writer was delivered of a son, *Ulysses*. Swaddled in Greece's national colours, the prodigious infant bore on its rump the birthmark "Trieste-Zurich-Paris", a record of James Joyce's travels during the seven year gestation period. On that same day, in Taormina, Sicily, D. H. Lawrence was planning a journey: "I'm tired of here", he wrote to S. S. Koteliansky, "You know that I must go away, away, away" (Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield 1987: 185). While the multinational cluster of associations situated *Ulysses* firmly within Europe, Lawrence's proposed travels involved leaving that continent. He had recently completed *Aaron's Rod*, proclaiming it to Thomas Seltzer as "the last of my serious English novels —the end of *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* line" (Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield 1987: 92). But *Aaron's Rod* also signalled for Lawrence his own estrangement from the Europe in which he had spent several years after the end of the First World War. "I am tired of Europe", he told Seltzer, "it is somehow finished for me —finished with *Aaron's Rod*" (Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield 1987: 93). "Away" in the first instance meant Ceylon, and later in February Lawrence and Frieda set sail, appropriately enough, on the "Osterley". The odyssey begun would not see them return permanently to Europe for four years.

Expatriates function as something akin to modernist identikit figures, so that one might easily imagine the docks and railway terminals of Europe permanently seething with writers, painters, musicians, and *poseurs*. Even if the reality was more humdrum, Europe nevertheless enjoyed an unprecedented intermingling of global talent in the early years of this century. Travel broadened individual and collective minds: cubism might begin in Paris,

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Expatriates function as something akin to modernist identikit figures, so that one might easily imagine the docks and railway terminals of Europe permanently seething with writers, painters, musicians, and *poseurs*. Even if the reality was more humdrum, Europe nevertheless enjoyed an unprecedented intermingling of global talent in the early years of this century. Travel broadened individual and collective minds: cubism might begin in Paris,

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vorticism in London, and dadaism in Zurich, but the cross-pollination of "isms" and groups quickly generated new hybrids. Nor was the interaction limited to the arts. William Everdell cites the example of the physicist Niels Bohr, writing a "classic paper on the atom in English while teaching in his native Denmark, publishing it in a [British] journal [...] under the guidance of a New Zealander who had made his scientific reputation in Ontario, Canada, by extending the work of a Polish woman living in Paris" (Everdell 1997: 2-3). Given this fecund intellectual environment, Lawrence's departure from Europe appears puzzling; certainly it goes against the modernist trend. Yet, though he left Europe, it remained a central source and focus for his work, if only as a sign of what he rejected. Where Joyce, in *Ulysses*, reincorporates Ireland into the European context (and vice versa), Lawrence, in such provocative works as *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, interrogates Europe's self-assured claim to cultural centrality.

Lawrence and Joyce saw themselves as exiles, and both imagine writers who explicitly reject their homeland; yet the difference between their fictional exiles warrants attention. Stephen Dedalus famously promises, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, to express himself "using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use —silence, exile, and cunning" (Joyce 1992a: 259), while Richard Lovatt Somers, in *Kangaroo*, "had made up his mind that everything [in Europe] was done for, played out, finished, and he must go to a new country. The newest country: young Australia!" (Lawrence 1997a: 13). Joyce's young artist, at the beginning of the century, opts for the vigour and cultural sophistication of a dominant Europe. Twenty years later, Lawrence's older writer escapes a continent eviscerated by war. Intriguingly, *Ulysses* records that the young Stephen will be 38 by 1920 (Joyce 1992b: 663), making him an exact contemporary of Somers in the world of *Kangaroo*; but the contrast between the urgent confidence of Stephen and the traumatised questing of Somers marks the passage from innocence to experience played out across the teenage years of the century. Though *Ulysses* was written between 1914 and 1921, its geographic and temporal co-ordinates preclude any consideration of the First World War. Joyce in a sense evades the calamity that dictates the mood, content and structure of *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, a war for Lawrence which "smashed the growing tip of European civilisation" (Lawrence 1971a: 307).

Both writers were exiles in a loose sense, though Lawrence's claims are the more robust. As Richard Ellmann notes, Joyce "was neither bidden to leave nor forbidden to return, and after [his] first departure he was in fact to go back five times". Ellmann subtly suggests that "exile" might be a useful ploy, for "like other revolutionaries, [Joyce] fattened on opposition and grew

thin and pale when treated with indulgence" (Ellmann 1982: 109). Lawrence's flight from England in 1919 followed disastrous war years in which he was subjected to police surveillance and the possibility of military call-up, attempted unsuccessfully to emigrate to America, endured the suppression of *The Rainbow* and the rejection of *Women in Love*. After 1919, he rarely returned to England. Both writers rate inclusion in Terry Eagleton's *Exiles and Emigrés*, Eagleton seeing Lawrence as a paradigmatic figure, "the archetypal modern exile" (Eagleton 1970: 191). Eagleton considers the "odd paradox" that the dominant writers in modern English literature are "foreigners and emigrés: Conrad, James, Eliot, Pound, Yeats, Joyce" (Eagleton 1970: 9). The exception is Lawrence, an exile for Eagleton by dint of his working-class background, "a culture which [...] belonged and yet was excluded, both foreign and familiar" (Eagleton 1970: 17). The consequent tensions afford Lawrence the objectivity of the outsider, but one enhanced by the intimate perspective of the insider. Lawrence's class upbringing, Eagleton argues, provides "a continuous, often unconscious critique of [England's] dominative middle-class mode" (Eagleton 1970: 192), his exile remaining in its essence one from England. For Eagleton, the problems of Lawrence's life "lay in his own society, and while Australia and New Mexico could provide momentary release and experiment, they could offer no enduring solution" (Eagleton 1970: 218). Suggestive though it is, this argument ignores works such as *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, which develop critiques of class and culture well beyond English and even European shores. The dismissal of Lawrence's travels as "rootless, frustrated wanderings" (Eagleton 1970: 191) belittles journeying of Homeric scope and crucial significance. Ulysses spent ten years returning home; Lawrence took longer and travelled further, and he never returned.

Lawrence does adopt the perspectives of insider and outsider, but applies these beyond England. Even his early novels, set predominantly in England, gesture to a larger world. Tom Brangwen marries a Polish woman in *The Rainbow*, one who comes to think in English, but whose "long blanks and darknesses of abstraction were Polish" (Lawrence 1997b: 50). And significantly, as Kate Flint argues, Lydia brings a European consciousness of the social history of women, which she passes on to Ursula Brangwen, "thus tacitly placing English social change in a broader European context" (Lawrence 1997b: xv). Ursula palpably feels the interplay of contexts in the "Continental" chapter of *Women in Love*, the sight of a farmhand near Ghent station reminding her of "how far she was projected from her childhood, how far was she still to go! In one life-time one travelled through aeons" (Lawrence 1987: 390). Nor is she alone in recognising the transformative

effect of Europe, Gudrun later enthusing, "I am so transported, the moment I set foot on a foreign shore. I say to myself "here steps a new creature into life"". Gerald opposes this egocentric critique, but Birkin counters that any love for England is "a damnably uncomfortable love: like a love for an aged parent who suffers horribly from a complication of diseases, for which there is no hope" (Lawrence 1987: 395). This portrait of England as the terminally sick man of Europe differs fundamentally from Lawrence's next novel, *Aaron's Rod*, by virtue of the dislocating impact of continental war, and a resulting "violence of the nightmare released now into the general air" (Lawrence 1995: 5). In *Aaron's Rod* that general air smothers the whole of Europe.

Kate Flint's observation that *The Rainbow* draws in part from Lawrence's interest in futurism (Lawrence 1997b: xiii), suggests the international traffic in ideas which was such a signal feature of European modernism. But this interest of itself does not allow Lawrence to be classified unproblematically as a modernist. One barrier lies in the ambiguity and complexity of the term itself, features which account for some of its critical utility. A loose, baggy monster of twentieth-century criticism, modernism roamed primarily in the cosmopolitan centres of Europe and America, but it came, as one might expect from such a creature, without a philosophy. This allows "modernism" both to include and to be distinguished from such related, though much smaller beasts as vorticism, imagism, surrealism, futurism and dadaism. Lawrence's connections to various of these "isms" have been traced by critics: Mark Kinkead-Weekes confirms Lawrence's temporary interest in futurist ideas (Kinkead-Weekes 1996: 121-124), and Michael Wilding argues that, in *Kangaroo*, Lawrence draws on "the resources of dada and surrealism, on the modernist commitments to spontaneity" (Wilding 1980: 176). Lawrence's inclusion in imagist anthologies, and his initial championing by Ezra Pound, would seem to assure his "modernist" credentials. Especially in his writing before *Aaron's Rod*, however, he might more easily be termed a "modern", for, though he was included in imagist anthologies, he was the only writer also to appear in volumes of Georgian poetry —a form of guilt by association. And, while Ezra Pound rated him in the forefront of new writers in 1913, he later dismissed Lawrence as an "Amygist", and transferred his prose allegiances to Joyce (Kinkead-Weeks 1996: 134-135). Nor was he considered by Wyndham Lewis one of the "men of 1914", that wonderful testament to modernist myth-making which included Lewis himself, Eliot, Pound and Joyce.

Excluded from this select band, Lawrence often remains a liminal figure in modernist studies, Bonnie Kime Scott arguing that "D. H. Lawrence

departs from the "men of 1914"" (Scott 1995: 162). She classifies him instead as a "Male Modernist Other". Mark Levenson, though he amends the *dramatis personae*, also places Lawrence in the wings, arguing that modernism "is associated with Pound, Hulme, Ford, Lewis and Eliot; Joyce, Woolf and Lawrence loom on the periphery" (Levenson 1984: vii). Levenson's study closes at 1922, the year of *Ulysses*, *Aaron's Rod*, and *The Waste Land*, and Levenson includes a detailed examination of Eliot's masterpiece. But the parameters of his analysis preclude lengthy discussion of Joyce or Lawrence, for in addition to a foreshortened historical perspective, Levenson restricts himself geographically to English modernism. Or, more accurately, to London modernism: "Hulme, Pound, Lewis, Ford and Eliot did not just inhabit London within the same few years; they engaged in active debate and frequent interchange; they formulated positions with one another and then against one another; they quarrelled and were reconciled" (Levenson 1984: x-xi). Levenson correctly identifies the dynamic, combative field of London modernism, one occasionally fought in by Lawrence himself. But by 1922, as Eliot figuratively gazes over the deadened English capital and the shards of European civilisation, Lawrence literally is nowhere to be seen. He had written his last "English" novel in Italy, and was working in Australia on a "queer sort of quite different novel" (Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield: 1987: 259). Whereas Eliot's diagnosis of Europe's cultural maladies was fashioned in and focused on the continent's economic centre, Lawrence's judgements were transmitted from the far-flung New World, the unreal city of Sydney.

Peter Nicholls in fact casts doubt on the importance of the London-based "men of 1914" to European modernism. For Nicholls, although it "became temporarily a metropolitan "vortex" for Pound, Lewis and Eliot [...] London's contributions to the history of the avant-garde —imagism and vorticism— proved to be moments rather than movements, short-lived phases in a more complex history" (Nicholls 1995: 166). He adds that such modernism "issued a call to order in the name of values that were strictly anti-modern, though it did so by developing literary forms which were overtly modernist" (Nicholls 1995: 167). Nicholls fashions a contentious argument; Levenson clearly feels that London's contribution was considerable, and Malcolm Bradbury argues for its centrality to English language modernism (Bradbury 1991: 172). Whatever the truth, Bradbury suggests at least a linguistic limit to modernist hybridity. Mapping on to Europe the antagonisms and divisions Levenson detects in London modernism would unsettle the sense of unfettered, unproblematic cultural exchange within European modernism. Nicholls suggests that this might

indeed be significant; making a point similar to Eagleton, he notes that none of the "men of 1914" was born in England, and that consequently "their various contributions to a common modernism were [...] highly sensitive to questions of exile and cultural displacement" (Nicholls 1995: 166). Such concerns lie at the heart of *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, novels that deal in distinct ways with exile and displacement. Beyond the level of content, both works illustrate Lawrence's attempts to experiment with the novel form, make it new, to use Pound's slogan/ mantra. McDonald Daly argues that Lawrence succeeds to the extent that *Kangaroo* enjoys a relationship to postmodernist fiction (Lawrence 1997a: xiv).

Aaron's Rod begins in the familiar Lawrentian territory of a Midlands coal mining community, following Aaron Sissons' journey of self-discovery and refashioning through London, to Italy. In London his gnomic acquaintance Rawdon Lilly spurs him on, declaring that a "new place brings out a new thing in a man" (Lawrence 1995: 103). Lilly departs for Europe, and Aaron follows, experiencing the apparent truth of that philosophy. Though feelings of displacement pepper his journey through London and Europe, in Florence he divines "a new self, a new life-urge rising inside himself" (Lawrence 1995: 212). The new place offers a degree of completion, Aaron sensing that in Florence he had "arrived", that he had "reached a perfect centre of the human world" (Lawrence 1995: 212). Within the crushing masculine metaphysic of the novel, "human" accords almost exclusively with "male", but even this patriarchal paradise is lost by novel's end. *Aaron's Rod* closes amidst political, sexual, and psychological uncertainty; the perfect European centre cannot hold, and the belief in a conclusive arrival is exposed as naive. With the breaking of Aaron's totemic flute, the embodiment of independent, masculine creativity, "there was nothing ahead: no plan, no prospect [...]. The only thing he felt was a thread of destiny attaching him to Lilly" (Lawrence 1995: 288). Uncompromising guru that he is, Lilly snaps that dependent thread, opting for a potential new self in a new place outside Europe: "I would very much like to try life in another continent, among another race. I feel Europe becoming like a cage to me" (Lawrence 1995: 291). Within the confines of *Aaron's Rod*, this remains only a prospect, one not fulfilled until Lawrence's first major "post-English" work, *Kangaroo*.

That Lilly rather than Aaron envisages transformation through exile speaks to their different levels of self-awareness. Aaron appropriately flowers in Florence, while Lilly (as his name signals, the finished article) denounces Europe and "this whole little gang of Europeans". Yet Lilly's rejection comes with the understanding that the little gang has "exterminated all the people worth knowing" (Lawrence 1995: 97). This brief critique of genocidal

European action prefaces Lilly's extended, racist classification of the earth's peoples into "vermin" ("the Chinese and Japs and orientals altogether") and "higher types" ("Aztecs and the Red Indians"). The hierarchy has a crucial temporal dimension, the higher types largely having been exterminated. Lilly declares, "they hold the element I am looking for —They had living pride [...]. All the rest are craven— Europeans, Asiatics, Africans" (Lawrence 1995: 97). Certain Africans are later granted status above the craven by Lilly, who is discovered "reading the fantasies of a certain Leo Frobenius", a German ethnologist who posited a pre-Hellenic African civilisation linked to Atlantis. Fantasies they may be, but they remain intensely alluring for Lilly, profound in their contrast to present-day Europe: "In silence, the strange dim noise of London sounding below, Lilly read on about [...]. [t]he old Africans! And Atlantis! Strange, strange wisdom of the Kabyles! Old, old dark Africa, and the world before the flood!" (Lawrence 1995: 110). The rapt tone does not diminish Lilly's racism, his critique of Europe depending on championing exterminated or extinct groups. But it echoes *Women in Love*, where Birkin's memory of the statuette of an African woman (Lawrence 1987: 252-254) prompts the belief that the figure "knew what he himself did not know. She had thousands of years of purely sensual, purely unspiritual knowledge behind her" (Lawrence 1987: 253). Lawrence repeats the manoeuvre in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, where Frobenius makes another appearance (Lawrence 1961: 6), and a lost pagan world is conjured in which "men lived and taught and knew, and were in complete correspondence over all the earth" (Lawrence 1961: 7).

The appropriation of non-European culture regularly acts as a modernist marker. The authors of *The Empire Writes Back* argue that "Modernism and the sudden experiment with the artistic forms of the dominant bourgeois ideology [...] [are], in part, products of the discovery of cultures whose aesthetic practices and cultural models were radically disruptive of the prevailing European assumptions" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989: 156), citing the example of Lawrence's inclusion of African art in *The Rainbow* (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989: 156-157). Mark Kinkead-Weekes contends that African sculptures influenced the imaginative structure of *Women in Love* (Kinkead-Weekes 1996: 437). Less benevolently, Edward Said includes "the audacious scholarship of Leo Frobenius" as one contribution to the formation of European "conceptions of primitivism [...] tribalism, vitalism, originality" as regards Africa and Africans (Said 1993: 233). Said's view better accounts for *Women in Love* and *Aaron's Rod*, in which Lilly's contempt for twentieth-century Europe depends on a fantasised ancient Africa. In terms of the whole novel, however, Lilly's ideas are

interludes; they do not effect, and certainly do not radically disrupt, European aesthetic practices. That disruption comes not from outside, but from within, Lawrence employing the relatively ancient European form of the picaresque.

Critics attack the aimlessness of *Aaron's Rod*'s structure, Terry Eagleton for example suggesting that, along with *Kangaroo*, it is "signally incapable of evolving a narrative, ripped between fragmentary plot, spiritual autobiography and febrile didacticism" (Eagleton 1978: 160). This view too readily conflates novels that adopt distinct aesthetic devices, but also damns both works in terms they seem designed to reject. Evolving a narrative underpins Eagleton's assumption that Lawrence is essentially an "organicist", and should be assessed against organicist criteria. On these terms, almost necessarily, both novels fail. But Janet Ruderman argues that Lawrence consciously chooses the picaresque in frustration at the limitations of organic form. She cites *Women in Love* as prefiguring this formal development: "Why strive for a coherent satisfied life?" thinks Birkin, "Why not drift in a series of accidents —like a picaresque novel? Why not?" (Lawrence 1987: 302). Ruderman takes Lawrence's next work, *Aaron's Rod*, as the enactment of this desire, the formal looseness functioning deliberately, as an analogue for "the chaos of Europe and the disintegration of human relationships" in a postwar world (Ruderman 1984: 92). One of modernism's signature tactics, the redeployment of old forms in the deracinated context of postwar Europe, allows Lawrence simultaneously to test the boundaries and resilience of the novel while offering a critique of European culture. As Steven Vine argues, "The critical power of Lawrence's writing [...] conspires with the annihilating force of the War by undermining the foundations of the old world —and generating the possibility of the new" (Lawrence 1995: xx). Lawrence's next novel, *Kangaroo*, situates itself literally in the New World, investigating the possibility of renewal outside Europe, while continuing to undermine Europe's cultural foundations. The title of Lawrence's contemporaneous essay, "Surgery for the Novel —or a Bomb" signals that, in the case of Europe and the novel, he metaphorically opts for the bomb.

Lawrence's incendiary blast lacerates the "serious" novels of Proust, Richardson and Joyce for their self-conscious obsession with self-consciousness: "One has to be self-conscious at seventeen [...]. [but] if it is still continuing at forty-seven, it is obvious senile precocity" (Lawrence 1971b: 190). Against this, Lawrence argues the need for the novel "to have the courage to tackle new propositions without using abstractions" (Lawrence 1971b: 193). *Kangaroo* certainly tackles propositions bravely, directly confronting the expectation and complacency of its readers: "If you don't like the novel, don't read it". Since the reader instinctively guesses what is

happening to characters not being described, *Kangaroo* challenges: "what more do you want to know", while admitting that "Chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing". And all this on the same page (Lawrence 1997a: 284). More aggressively than *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo* consciously rejects organicism. John Worthen classifies it as a modernist work (Worthen 1979: 143), while MacDonald Daly argues that Lawrence "goes further than the word "modernist" suffices to describe". For Daly, the novel's "metafictional asides" are "more usually associated with the postmodern novel", and he plausibly compares *Kangaroo* with John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (Daly in Lawrence 1997a: xx). Lawrence clearly was aware of *Kangaroo's* subversive novelty, describing it to friends as "weird" and "rum" (Roberts, Bouton and Mansfield 1987: 255, 257). But though he was writing *Kangaroo* in Australia, Lawrence's critical eye was still trained on Europe. He expected little acceptance for his "quite different novel", guessing that "Even the Ulysseans will spit at it" (Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield 1987: 275). Lawrence had not in fact read *Ulysses* when he made the comment. Worthen suggests that he heard of its renown nonetheless, and though "he took *Ulysses* to be the epitome of the advanced and sophisticated modern novel", Lawrence felt that *Kangaroo* "was modern in a way that would inevitably provoke resistance" (Worthen 1979: 141). Lawrence clearly felt that he was doing something necessary and different, more vital than Joyce's extended adventure into self-consciousness. One might see this difference expressed even in the manner of their composition: Lawrence wrote *Kangaroo* in fewer weeks than Joyce took years to complete *Ulysses*.

As Peter Nicholls suggests, modernist texts often explore exile and displacement. But this exploration can take very different routes and arrive at different destinations: the fringes of Europe in *Ulysses*, the antipodes in *Kangaroo*. Such locational differences modify the degree and effect of the displacement. For while, in distinct ways, Stephen and Bloom are outsiders in Dublin, that city still functions as a kind of "home" for each. From the opening pages of *Kangaroo*, Harriet and Somers, as Europeans, are obviously, and perhaps irretrievably, alien. In Sydney, Richard is instantly marked out as "foreign looking"; Harriet might be "Russian"; both are seen as possibly German. Whatever their nationality, they are recognised, and come to recognise themselves, as "different from other people" (Lawrence 1997a: 7-8). But the sense of displacement is not regenerative, as it is in *Aaron's Rod*. Where Aaron Sissons had felt in Florence the sense "of having reached a perfect centre of the human world", Somers in *Kangaroo* repeatedly reels from the shock of displacement, exploding in tirades against Sydney's

"Englishness", "all crumbled out into formlessness and chaos", its people enjoying "[n]o inner life, no high command, no interest in anything, finally" (Lawrence 1997a: 27). In such passages, the cultural and spiritual dislocation Somers experiences refigure life in Australia as a "new crucifixion"; Europe, by contrast, seems a paradise. In these terms Somers functions as a repentant sinner: "Oh God, to be in Europe, lovely, lovely Europe that he had hated so thoroughly and abused so vehemently, saying that it was moribund and stale and finished. The fool was himself' (Lawrence 1997a: 20). By the time they prepare to leave the country, Harriett "*loathed* Australia, with wet, dark repulsion" [original emphasis] (Lawrence 1997a: 351). But these bouts of hatred for Australia and its people are leavened by wildly positive judgements, such as Harriett's claim five pages after the previous outburst that "if I had *three* lives, I'd wish to stay. It's the loveliest thing I've *ever* known" [original emphasis], after which she and Richard sit silently, contemplating "wonderful Australia" (Lawrence 1997a: 356).

These at times almost psychotic, alternating displays of love and loathing register the exile's acute if sporadic sense of displacement. But they must be judged in relation to the Somers' more virulent rejection of Europe. Much of the attack upon Australia depends on an acute sense of disappointment, Harriett's "[u]ndying hostility to old Europe" contrasted with her "undying hope of the new, free lands. Especially this far Australia" (Lawrence 1997a: 352). The extended flashback chapter, "The Nightmare", provides the explanation for this hatred, one signalling a central difference between the Englishmen Richard Somers and Aaron Sissons. Aaron had not been through the war (Lawrence 1995: 57), and that innocence in part allows his meandering journey through Europe. Somers, on the other hand, while not a combatant, has experienced in war-time England the knowledge "of what it was to live in a perpetual state of semi-fear: the fear of the criminal public and the criminal government" (Lawrence 1997a: 212). Somers' acute sense of terror is all the more menacing for occurring in England itself: "It was in 1915 the old world ended. In the winter of 1915-1916 the spirit of the old London collapsed, the city, in some way, perished, perished from being a heart of the world, and became a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears and horrors" (Lawrence 1997a: 216).

By a bitter though important irony, Somers' feelings of internal displacement in England are heightened by the suspicion (based in part it seems on the fact that he wears a beard) that he is a foreigner. The wound inflicted by this case of mistaken national identity is all the more brutal since Somers sees himself as "One of the most intensely English little men England ever produced, with a passion for his country, even if it were often a

passion of hatred" (Lawrence 1997a: 223). Branded a foreigner, he renounces England, singing German folksongs to himself, and cursing "the military *canaille*. *Canaille*! *Canaglia*! *Schweinerei*! He loathed them in all the languages he could lay his tongue to" (Lawrence 1997a: 233). Yet Europe, though its languages provide temporary relief and release from oppressive England, has also been permanently traumatised by the nightmare. Australia offers the promise of escape and renewal precisely because Europe as a whole is "done for, played out, finished". And though Australia fails to live up to that promise, no return to Europe is contemplated. Richard and Harriett Somers embark for another new place, the Americas. *Kangaroo*, which begins with the completion of the voyage to Australia, itself a rejection of Europe, ends with the beginning of a new voyage further into the New World. The odyssey refigured in Joyce's epic ends with an emphatic "yes"; but neither Richard nor Harriett Somers experiences such a climax, instead being draped by symbolic markers of displacement, the last streamers of the ship on which they sail into exile "blowing away, like broken attachments, broken" (Lawrence 1997a: 358).

Kangaroo offers not culminating arrival, but further exploration. Lawrence's next novel, *The Plumed Serpent*, would be set in Mexico, itself a site of exile and displacement for Kate Leslie. One could locate these three novels as milestones on a longer journey of aesthetic and cultural discovery, adding *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to the itinerary so as to suggest the inevitability of Lawrence's return "home" to England. But this imposes an overarching teleology that the novels as separate entities resist. And it undervalues the individual significance of work such as *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*. Both are modernist experiments in form, and both mount interrogations of European culture in itself and in relation to the large and enigmatic New World. *Kangaroo* and *Aaron's Rod* end perplexingly, their characters preparing for physical and spiritual journeys away from Europe that are exhilarating precisely because their outcomes are largely unknown and unknowable. These novels challenge confidence in the centrality of European culture while they explore the limits of the novel as a viable form in a modernist world. In "Surgery for the Novel —or a Bomb" Lawrence writes: "*What next*? That's what interests me. "What now?" is no fun any more"[original emphasis] (Lawrence 1971b: 193). In plotting this course Lawrence opts for active exploration over static contemplation, the challenging sea over the comforting port, and the likelihood that such a literary odyssey would never be completed.

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D. H. LAWRENCE, GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM, AND WEBERIAN FORMAL RATIONALITY

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I

"The book frightens me", wrote D. H. Lawrence on 7 November 1916 about *Women in Love* (1920), "it is so end of the world. But it is, it must be, the beginning of a new world, too" (Coombes 1973: 109). This mode of interpretation, mythical as it is and based on the history of apocalyptic thinking, is more than simply a sign of Lawrence's desperate situation during the First World War and of his growing interest in religious and occult ideas. It points towards a significant relationship between his work and the thought and art of the expressionist decade between 1910 and 1920. It was during this time that *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920), both written under strong German influence, were conceived. "The model of the two phases", says Christoph Eykman, "the end of the world and the birth of a new, purified humanity, can almost be seen as a topos of expressionist poetic art" (1974: 48).

The expressionist revolt looked towards the overthrow of bourgeois technological civilisation. Its ideal, free-floating artist placed his faith not in any institution or political movement, but rather in the inner "transformation" and "transcendence" of the individual. The artist's task was to penetrate the dissembling surface to the inner, substantial "core" of life. He must be both critic of the actual and evangelist of the potential —a mission which Lawrence's own work espoused.[1] Throughout Lawrence's writings we can detect that "aura of corruption" spoken of by Kurt Pinthus in the preface to his anthology *The Twilight of Humanity*, "the presentiment that the order of humanity built solely on the mechanical and the conventional is about to collapse" (in Rötzer 1976: 436). Absent from his

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first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), the concepts of "corruption" and "mechanic" delineate the central experience of the new novel which Lawrence consciously and deliberately sought to create in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*.

Lawrence's position within conventional literary history still vexes the critics.[2] Since, unlike Joyce and Woolf, he introduces no obvious narrative innovations, Lawrence seems to warrant the description of modernist only on the basis of his "modern" themes: criticism of an over-civilised social order, the "unchaining of the self" in a (mostly sexual) "Aufbruch" ["new direction"]. If, however, Lawrence is, as Frank Kermode maintains, a "master of the modern", one central aspect of his modernity lies, I would argue, in his deployment of a set of preoccupations characteristic of the expressionists. This is not to say that Lawrence is simply an "expressionist" *tout court*. The urgent, nervous striving forward, the abrupt transitions and the urgent dialogue and plot construction of expressionist prose are very different from the "organic" continuities of his narratives. Nevertheless, to think of Lawrence in the context of contemporary expressionist art is to open up some interesting opportunities of comparison and interpretation.

II

The genesis of these two key novels from a single narrative impulse is "expressionist" in a centrally aesthetic sense: "All the time, underneath, there is something deep evolving itself out in me. And it is hard to express a new thing, in sincerity [...]. In the *Sisters* was the germ of this novel: woman becoming individual, self-responsible, taking her own initiative" (Moore 1962: 273). The *novum* of the novel must reveal itself with the necessity and inner logic of an organic natural process. This is the reason for the continual discarding of drafts, continual fresh starts in order to ensure the appropriate form which is, so to speak, "true to nature", "true to life". German expressionist art, according to the philosopher Georg Simmel, posits that the "inner emotion of the artist" will find its immediate expression not through or "*in* the work (of art)" but "*as* the work (of art)" (1968: 156). Or, as Lawrence wrote, "The novels and poems *are* pure passionate experience" (1975: 15).

Lawrence's ideas about art share many assumptions with the expressionist position, and arguably derive from a common problematic. In the first case, Lawrence is emphatic that intense striving after artistry is quite different from the cult of art for art's sake: art must always act in the service of life. "Art for my sake"[3] is the motto Lawrence set provocatively over his

work. This is not to proclaim the egocentric self-centredness of artistic creation, but rather to characterise a literature which aims at a spiritual renewal and awakening in its readers by putting them in touch with the quick of life in the author. The inability to love and reach out to fellow human beings which manifests itself in the narcissistic self-reflexion of aestheticism should give way, as both Lawrence and the German expressionists demanded, to a new religious pathos, a new ethical disposition. This involves overcoming the "solely aesthetic disposition" (in Rötzer 1976: 245) of contemporary art, and the recovery of that "sense of joy, *joie d'être, joie de vivre*" (Rogers 1977: 104) lost in the nihilism and melancholy of the *fin-de-siècle* aesthetes. "We are Expressionists", is how Kurt Hiller put it in 1911: "Content, intention, ethos are important again" (in Rötzer 1976: 244).

Lawrence expressed similar sentiments when he wrote of "the depth of my religious experience" (Moore 1962: 243). Renouncing Christian dogmatism, while remaining firmly rooted in the Christian experience, the religious energy in Lawrence and numerous expressionists led to a cult of "life" and "nature", a *Lebensphilosophie* dedicated to a kind of religion of the flesh wholly opposed to the shallow scientistic positivism of contemporary thought. Sexual union in Lawrence's texts assumes, as in the work of his Expressionist contemporaries, the aspect of a mystery in which lovers are transformed into ecstatic gods, to suggest a cosmic significance to something essentially ineffable and transformative. "The frenzy of sexual intercourse is holy", wrote Georg Groddeck in his novel *Der Seelensucher* [The Soul Seeker] (1921), "and it would do our times good to show them the phallus so that they can worship it" (in Hamann and Hermand 1977: 102). As the great "book of life" (Inglis 1971: 185) the novel in particular should, in Lawrence's opinion, break through the reader's carapace and transform his coldness into warmth by linking him, through language, with the energies and currents of the whole, unmutilated life of the archaic unconscious. According to Lawrence, art becomes a therapeutic act for writer and reader at the moment that it opens itself to a life which cannot be expressed at all in the language of science.

This programme of redemption, of what might be called a detached irrational activism, explains why Lawrence could simultaneously accept and reject futurism. He appreciated, as letters of 2nd and 5th June 1914 demonstrate (Coombes 1973: 89-91), the futurist's impatience with linguistic and moral models of interpretation and evaluation. In his critique of futurism, however, characteristic expressionist reservations become apparent. The futurist's glorification of the machine and of the mechanical principle is rejected equally by Lawrence and the expressionists. Both alike argue that

futurism reduces reality to abstract intellectual and mechanical relations and thus miss precisely what constitutes the essence of the human being, which is his living, natural power. The object *and* the formal principle of the new novel is for Lawrence just this living power of the human being, his supposedly "natural" self, which unfolds itself in its own rhythmically organised temporality. The bifurcation of the self into a "social" and a "natural" identity, reminiscent of Rousseau, takes a specifically modern form in its assumption of a "black", threatening nature, as depicted by by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.[4]

In his critique of futurism, Lawrence sets up an antithesis of "rhythmic form" and "naivety". The longing for the "naivety" and "simplicity" of a supposed "natural state" or of primitive cultures is a symptom of a "*malaise* in our culture" encountered everywhere in the expressionist movement. The young Gottfried Benn, for example, urges the redemptive return to evolutionary origins to escape the torments of consciousness: "Oh, that we were our forefathers/ A little lump of mud in a warm swamp" (Benn 1978: 25). Lawrence's admiration for the physical power and mystery of the "non-human" in nature is axiomatic, and links the aesthetic primitivism of painters such as Max Pechstein and Schmidt-Rottluff to the artistic debates of *Women in Love*, with its idea of a creative regression to recover the archaic strata of experience in art and consciousness alike. In *The Rainbow* and in *Women in Love* Lawrence's characteristic oscillation between abstract and logical discussion and ritualised, lyrical and magical evocation[5] reveals, much more than the African statuette,[6] the central tension in the expressionist critique of a self-conscious civilisation. Insisting on the organic unity of the human being, Lawrence finds the nexus of spirit and thought anything but incidental. The irrationalist Lawrence who preaches, under the influence of Nietzsche, the wisdom of the body, and, like any Expressionist exotic, visits places far removed from modern society,[7] drags the reader of *Women in Love* through long, complexly argued theoretical debates about such matters as real and decadent sensuality, productivity for its own sake in a market economy, intellectuality and spontaneity, and, most centrally, the authentic relations between man and woman.

The basic expressionist pattern in Lawrence's writings is most clearly revealed in his conflict with the mimetic method of the realist novel. He criticises H. G. Wells for writing "books of manners", reproducing shallow, socially-determined models of behaviour and identity: "He is like Dickens. None of his characters has a real *being* —*Wesen*— *is* a real being —something never localised into a passionate individuality" (Moore 1962: 128). The fact that Lawrence uses the expressionist slogan *Wesen* to clarify

his meaning is not gratuitous. The idea of a reality hidden behind the simulacra of convention, which the novel has to expose, is referred to in another letter as "vision or being" (Moore 1962: 291), reproducing the typically expressionist phrase "*Vision oder Wesen*" to speak of a reality which evades the usual sociological, individual, psychological and moral categories. Paul Kornfeld's cry, "On no account realism! On no account psychology" (Hamann and Hermand 1977: 12) finds its echo in Lawrence's condemnation of the "certain moral scheme" in fiction.[8] The visionary reduction employed by Lawrence and the expressionists transforms the ordinary citizen into an elementary natural being.

This "natural" aspect is, however, an abstraction, the artificial and intellectual construction of a supposedly "original Self" in a specific cultural nexus. This "original Self" seems to consist of two components, the libido and the will-to-destroy, rejecting traditional concepts of man as a social being. The expressionists' "primitive" nature leads in painting —including Lawrence's— to a preference for exotic and erotic motifs and, in form and the aesthetics of production, a peculiar dialectic of regression and abstraction. For instance, in a self-portrait, Schmidt-Rottluff stylizes his features in a crudely geometrical negro mask, while, in his lyrics, Georg Trakl compulsively disrupts with discordant image sequences the normal continuities of the form. The novel, since it requires a certain amount of depth and fullness of reality, blocks this tendency towards abstraction much sooner than poetry or painting. Even so, critics quite rightly point out that *Women in Love* is substantially more abstract and schematic than Lawrence's earlier novels.

At least since *The Rainbow*, the dialogues and the deliberate direction of the reader's feelings in Lawrence's fiction implicate the reader in a fundamental cultural conflict. In *Women in Love*, the assault on the reader is made explicit by the introduction of a preacher figure (Birkin), who proclaims the new philosophy of salvation. This, too, is a figure which finds numerous correspondences in the missionary stereotypes of expressionist texts, and the immature and questionable fantasies of power and leadership of the later Lawrence find their equivalent in the nebulous radicalism which characterizes the political thought of the expressionist writers. The expressionist René Schickele observed in his 1933 study of Lawrence that "[I]f Lawrence did not possess the genius of a poet, he would be a fool, and one could leave it to the fools to deal with him" (Schickele 1959: 709). Nevertheless, Schickele was impressed by Lawrence as moralist and thinker, and praised his "relentlessness in the fight for the free conscience, responsible only to itself", and his "final truthfulness" (Schickele 1959: 744). For Schickele, it was Lawrence's "expressionist turn" in 1912 which set free those artistic and

intellectual powers which enabled him to write *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*.

III

In line with the expressionist model (particularly apparent in the texts of Ernst Stadler discussed below), stagnation and *Aufbruch* are the key motifs in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Ursula's and Birkin's actions are prompted by their conflict with the social and cultural limits of their situation, which obstruct the full realisation of identity. But it is their self-consciousness of their disjunctive relation to their social environment, and the recognition of how deeply nevertheless they are emotionally and intellectually implicated in it, which makes for the essential modernity of these characters, and distinguishes them from the older generation represented by Tom Brangwen or Anna. This disjunctive relation between subjective and objective being represented by Ursula and Birkin has a specifically expressionist quality, indicated, for example, at the beginning of *Women in Love*, by Ursula's reaction to the parental home: "Ursula was aware of the house, of her home round about her. And she loathed it, the sordid, too-familiar place! She was afraid of the depth of her feeling against the home, the milieu, the whole atmosphere of this obsolete life. Her feeling frightened her" (1960: 11). If the bourgeois home in Victorian literature was an oasis of refuge from an inhospitable external reality, for the rebellious heroine of *Women in Love* it is a place frozen in senseless routine, "dirty" in both an aesthetic and moral sense, locked in the predictable and habitual patterns of everyday life.

Lawrence's hostility is not so much towards particular individuals, social groups or grievances, but towards the idea and practices of modern civilisation itself: an aversion to the unengaged, mindless routine of social and professional life, towards industry, the cultural drive, state institutions, and, finally, to the ideologies which dissimulate individual or social selfishness. Such undifferentiated criticism levels out all historically specific social forms, practices, ideas and organisations to an undifferentiated uniformity, and excludes the possibility of any solution from within the given order. Both novels progress towards a utopian vision of apocalyptic renewal after the death of the old world, which they can neither sustain nor even depict in concrete form. This visionary order is implicit in the eschatological symbolism[9] at the end of *Women in Love*, and extremely explicit in *The Rainbow*:

> And the rainbow stood on the earth. She knew that the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the face of the world's corruption were living still, that the rainbow was arched in their blood and would quiver to life in their spirit, that they would cast off their horny covering disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven. She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of truth, fitting to the overarching heaven. (1968: 495)

Jost Hermand has pointed out that "expressionism repeatedly [tends] to see the salvation of humanity merely in the total overthrow of all existing orders" (Hamann and Hermand 1977: 261). Lawrence's individual and social rebirth, steeped in religious pathos ("rainbow", "clean rain of heaven") leads at the end of Melchior Vischer's novel *Sekunde durch Hirn* [Second through brain] (1920) to the Promised Land of "nature", "purity" and "freedom":

> On the sun-moon-day, on which culture crashes with the shameless bastard civilization, then I will kneel down on sea plain desert, stretch (my) hands out in pure wide air, shout wildly strongly loudly: WE ARE YOUNG AGAIN! (Hamann and Hermand 1977: 261)

The distinction between "culture" and "civilization" indicates that Vischer derived his conceptual model from Oswald Spengler's enormously influential *Untergang des Abendlandes* [*Decline of the West*] (1918-22). *Dies Irae*, the Biblical "Day of Wrath", was a title Lawrence considered for *Women in Love*, where too, as in Spengler, organic nature provides the context for the unfolding of a mythic vision of history in which, out of "corruption" and "disintegration", a "new life" may emerge.

"Simply that which the critical and the constructive, the apocalyptical and the utopian have in common, constitutes the totality and essence of German Expressionism".[10] Klaus Ziegler's formula describes the basic thematic opposition of Lawrence's novels, stirring memories of Blakean apocalypse and Rousseauist evocations of the natural man, certainly, but drawing its essential leitmotifs from "extreme intensifications of traditions almost as old as bourgeois society itself" (in Rötzer 1976: 309).

The generational movement of *The Rainbow* can be represented as three concentric circles, corresponding to the generations Tom/ Lydia, Will/ Anna, and Skrebensky/ Ursula. The radial expansion of the circles, like the image of expanding ripples from a stone thrown at the moon's reflection in a pond,

reflects the expansion of their successive lives, the unending formation and transcendence of limits. The progenitors Tom and Lydia find a partial fulfillment and the foreigner Lydia is integrated within the almost pre-industrial innocence of the family circle. The impulse which takes Anna and Will, the second generation, out of the security and closeness of Marsh Farm itself finds its limits in the monotony of a lower-middle-class existence. Ursula's trajectory, which takes up the final and longest section of the novel, consists of a series of deliberate new departures, in which one conventional mode after another of stabilising and fulfilling her life is rejected: first the parental home, then the teaching profession, university studies, and finally the bourgeois marriage to Skrebensky. Nor does the combination of enlightenment and cynicism of the "new woman" Winifred Inger any better withstand Ursula's critical gaze. The "unchaining of the Self" about which the expressionists enthuse is the central feature of her story. The novel discharges into the symbol of the rainbow, the promise of a new covenant between heaven and earth, after the apocalyptic end of this world, prefigured in the scene of the horses. The book's final transcendence (*Aufbruch*) envisages a utopian no-man's-land where the new self has shed the carapace of the old civilisation in a painful process of rebirth.

That this *Aufbruch* of individual striving for fulfillment is brought about by education and intellectual development distinguishes Lawrence's protagonists from the amoral assertions of strength of Kurt Edschmid's heroes in such short stories as "Der Lasso" ["The Lasso"]. Lawrence's characters grow beyond traditional forms of feeling and social being into a quasi-religious form of non-estranged communication which encompasses both the other person and the circumambient natural world. By keeping the bohemian milieu of many expressionists at a determined distance Lawrence maintains a continuity with the puritan moral traditions which shaped him.[11]

Ursula's aloofness from the "corrupt" forms of a "mechanical" system protects the self from corrupting relationships. But such a self is difficult to grasp. At its most determined, it finds expression largely through acts of negation. The more determinedly Ursula rejects the social roles offered to her, the less she seems a traditional character of the realist novel, and the more she reveals her true identity as an expressionist representative of authentic life, above all of authentic natural, sexual being. But for the same reason, she becomes progressively more abstract as a character towards the end of the novel. When, for example, she declares the brightly-lit town, the symbol of civilization, to be a mere pretext, a mere nothing even, and the dark, unlimited flow of life to be the true reality, she becomes the mouthpiece of an abstract, radicalized, undifferentiated criticism of civilized society such as

is offered by the expressionists: "The stupid, artificial, exaggerated town, fuming its lights. It does not exist really. It rests upon the unlimited darkness [...] but what is it? —nothing, just nothing".[12] Ursula's self is seen as simultaneously an insatiable sexual drive and a continually fluid and vulnerable sensibility, which suffers under the torpidity of middle-class life: "She was not afraid nor ashamed before trees, and birds, and the sky. But she shrank violently from people, ashamed she was not as they were, fixed emphatic, but a wavering, undefined sensibility only, without form or being" (1968: 335). Her repeated crossing of (social) borders is a rejection of form for the sake of the vitality of life. Her transcendence of the old life is presented in the end with rhetorical intensity as the creation of a "living God", the emergence of the "kernel" of the "true" natural life from the shell of a "false" civilization, and as the discovery (in almost Blakean terms) of "Eternity in the flux of Time". However, since this purpose can be thought only as life continually reproducing itself, its destination is never an idyllic stasis, but the perpetual movement of transcendence itself, *Aufbruch* for its own sake.[13]

Ursula's acts of perpetual negating correspond to the expressionist sense of "*Aufbruch*" described by Gunter Martens in his book *Vitalismus und Expressionismus* (1971). In 1918 Georg Simmel, referring to expressionism, analysed the refusal to give a final form to life, and the striving to maintain, in both life and art, the dynamic and unshaped character of reality. Modern life, he said, had no generally meaningful cultural forms. Consequently one confronts the "conflict of modern culture", the "fight of life against form itself" (1968: 150) —a formula with clear application to Lawrence. In place of obsolete moral, political or social forms, Lawrence's novel is posited on the relativity of all Being and the commanding power of the dialectic of life and death, death in life (mechanized, instrumentalized being) set against life in death (rebirth, upheaval).

In Ursula's case, the "conflict of modern culture" requires that the narrator always signals an unmistakable betrayal of "life" when Ursula resorts to socially accepted modes of speech and behaviour. This applies just as much to the "authoritarian" style which, for reasons of self-preservation, she adopts as a school teacher as to the language of subjection and self-accusation she resorts to, accepting the role conventionally ascribed to women, in her letter to Skrebensky: "since you left me I have suffered a great deal, and so have come to myself. I cannot tell you the remorse I feel for my wicked perverse behaviour. It was given to me to love you [...]. But instead of thankfully, on my knees, taking what God had given [...]. I must insist on having the moon for my own [...]. I do not know if you can ever forgive me"

(1968: 485). In expressionist fashion, Ursula's apparently sober self-recognition is a mere momentary triumph of her false "bourgeois" self over the true "dark vital self" (1968: 449). This explains the self-parody of such phrases as "my wicked perverse behaviour", "thankfully on my knees" or "you are natural and decent all through".

At the level of linguistic construction, this determined reaching for a "natural" as opposed to a "social" self, issues in a rhetoric of abstractions. Words like "reality", "unreality", "being", "perfection", "life", "self", "ecstasy", "light", "darkness", "organic", "mechanic", "corruption" form the significant semantic nexus of the text. The attempt to translate the non-intellectual substrates of life into articulate language leads on the one hand to intellectual abstraction, and on the other to organic and biological metaphors, expressed in such words as "sterility", "root", "barren". As a result, the battle of the sexes between Anny and Will Brangwen —this, too, an expressionist motif— is set at a remove from the historical context, as an abstract situation in which a conflict between elemental powers is expressed in the metaphor of fighting birds (1968: 163). The linguistic repertoire of the traditional novel, capable of differentiating real social situations, is unsuitable for the new task. The organicist metaphors of a contemporary *Lebensphilosophie* —blossoming, spring, wind, giving birth, flame, blood, earth, animals and the moon— are common to both Lawrence and the German expressionists. Seen from this perspective, the well-known scene in *The Rainbow* where Tom Brangwen proposes marriage to Lydia, offers a vital renewal, transcending emotional and spiritual stagnation like that identified by Ernst Stadler in poems such as "Resurrectio", "*Aufbruch*", or "Liberation". Stadler's "Early Spring" is a characteristic instance:

> In this March night I left my house late.
> The streets were upset with the smell of Spring and of the rain of green seeds.
> Winds struck up. Through the disturbed incline of houses I went far out
> As far as an uncovered wall and felt: my heart swelled towards a new beat.
>
> In each waft of air a young new Being was stretched out.
> I listened to the strong whirls rolling in my blood.

> Already prepared fields stretched themselves out. Already burnt into the horizons
> Was the blue of early dawn hours, which were to lead out into the distance.
>
> The lock-gates creaked. Adventure broke in from all the far sides.
> Over the canal, waved by young sailing winds, clear tracks grew,
> In whose light I moved. Fate stood waiting in wind-blown stars.
> In my heart lay a turmoil as if from unfurled flags.
> (*Dichtungen* [Poems] 1974: 124) (See introduction to Notes)

In The Rainbow Tom Brangwen answers "nature's call" when he visits Lydia at the Vicarage on a stormy night in March after a wintry period of stagnation and indecision. As in Stadler, the wind is a sign of returning vitality, orchestrating (in phrases such as "the wind was moaning" (1968: 42), "the wind boomed" (1968: 45) an event that unfolds with the deliberation of ritual. The dialectic of stasis and redemptive action dominates the proposal scene. Lydia, at first dazed by the proposal of marriage, still undecided in the conflict between habit behaviour and novelty, turns to her suitor with a "sudden flow", and awakes from the "lap" of the unconscious's "fecund darkness" as if "newly-born". Whilst the speaker in Stadler's poem strides towards the light in the transit from night to day, Lawrence inscribes the new beginning as "the dawn" of the "new life", whose "light" blazes in the eyes of the lovers (1968: 45-46). In Lawrence the episode is much more subdued (and psychologically more differentiated) than in Stadler, and lacks the latter's verbal dynamics ("adventure broke", "streets were upset"); whereas for Stadler the point of rest is merely an impediment, for Lawrence it implies not only the link of formal restriction and stagnation, but also that creative pause which precedes decisive action. While Stadler's writings, like Lawrence's, represent the powers hostile to life in images of death, barrenness, cold, monotony, ice and dissolution, the latter's conception of a marriage which enables individual freedom and self-fulfilment is not something found in the expressionist writers.[14] In Lawrence, such semantically charged vocabulary tends to dissipate its impact in rhythmical repetition, beginning to revolve around itself, as in much expressionist and modernist writing. But whereas in Joyce's Ulysses, for example, the "real" primarily affords opportunities for the parodic and associative wordplay, Lawrence's writing, like that of the expressionist novelist, aims to engage with the reality the language reveals.

IV

Expressionist criticism of the industrial system plays a predominant role in the "form"/ "life" conflict described above. According to the expressionists, no civilization has failed to understand the reality of human existence more drastically than that unleashed by industrial mass-production. Certainly the expressionist critique of industrialism reveals much aesthetic snobbism of the kind which characterised the Romantic movement and its nineteenth-century heirs, and the alternative therapies of a "return to nature" and sexual emancipation have their comic aspect, from which Lawrence is not entirely free. But his pastoral counter-images have to be viewed, not simply as practical alternative life-styles but as polemic antitheses to conventional bourgeois moralisms. In *Women in Love* he explores not only the effects but also the preconditions of industrialism in the structure of the supposedly private individual, particularly through the figure of the mine owner, Gerald Crich.

This exploration is accomplished as discursive narrative (in the chapter entitled "The Industrial Magnate"), through abstract, authorial disquisitions, and symbolically through the external and psychological behaviour of Crich. The Nordic hero stereotype, distinguished by his apparent rationality and will-power, Crich attempts to compensate for his emotional and spiritual emptiness in a liaison with the artist Gudrun Brangwen. The relationship unleashes latent aggressions, and finally ends with Gerald's death in the eternal ice of the Alps, an expressionist vision of horror and final things *par excellence*. With Gerald's end in an environment inimical to life Lawrence signals nothing more nor less than the end of Western civilization. The *fiasco* of the personal relationship reveals both the professional identities and the public achievements of the couple to be forms of corruption hostile to life, doomed to destruction. The characteristically expressionist schematic configuration of Gerald/ Gudrun and Birkin/ Ursula underwrites that allegory in which the will-to-power of the instrumental reason drives towards death, in contrast to the life-affirming, organicist mysticism represented by Rupert Birkin.

Gerald, as a symbol of rationality and the will-to-power embodied in the industrial exploitation of nature, reproduces a *cliché* of expressionist vitalism which was ubiquitous in pre-Great War Germany, expressed most forthrightly, perhaps, in the writings of Ludwig Klages,[15] and its subsequent role in Nazi ideology has rendered Lawrence's own deployment of the *topos* a little suspect. What has largely been ignored up to now is the extent to which he draws, in his chapter "The Industrial Magnate", on the respectable critique of capitalism made by contemporary German sociologists. Certainly,

the academic and objective analysis offered by Max Weber in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* [*Economics and Society*] (1922) and *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* [*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*] (1920), is given a demonic inflexion by Lawrence, who, in expressionist mode, turns Weber's insights against their originator. In this he resembles, surprisingly, Georg Lukács, whose *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* [*History and Class Consciousness*] starts from a Weberian proposition to develop his communist critique of alienation in a capitalist society (1971: 187ff.). It also links Lawrence with that scion of the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse, who in a remarkable confrontation with Talcott Parsons at the Heidelberg Sociologist Conference in 1964 accused Weber, Parsons's model and ideal, of having "irrationally" sanctioned the existing industrial system by ignoring the question of the significance and purpose of industrial societies. Lawrence summarizes Gerald's activities, in contrast to the traditional paternalism of Crich senior's practice, as "Modern Capitalism". The term occurs in a letter Lawrence wrote to Lady Asquith from Upper Bavaria in August 1913: "It's Frieda's brother-in-law's home. He's staying here now and then. He's a professor of Political Economy among other things. Outside the rain continues. We sit by lamplight and drink beer, and hear Edgar [Jaffé] on Modern Capitalism" (Aldington 1954: 57).

Gerald reorganizes the inefficient business which his father had run on paternalist lines by applying Weber's principle of formal rationality. What, according to Max Weber, is specific to "modern capitalism as opposed to [that] ancient kind of capitalist business is: the strictly rational organisation of work on the basis of rational technology" (Weber 1971: 323). It is this recipe to which Gerald adheres. The teachings of the Professor for Political Economy, Edgar Jaffé, apparently fell on fruitful ground. Thomas Crich fails to overcome the unsolved contradiction between paternalist Christian love for one's fellow men and the interests of the factory owner. His successful son Gerald, on the other hand, organizes a well-functioning system of production in which means and ends are carefully calculated according to the principles of efficiency and profitability. This system is both mechanical and is itself like a machine because it can be expressed in terms of quantifiable equations, in pounds sterling and in tons. Equally calculable, on this reckoning, is the human activity embodied in labour and the relations of production. The factory's relations of command and subordination are functional and intrinsic to production, and are guaranteed, in Weber's analysis, by the authoritative leadership of the factory or (in this case) mine owner: "In function and process, one man, one part, must of necessity be subordinate to another"

(1971: 254); "[Gerald] knew that position and authority were the right thing in the world [...]. They were the right thing for the simple reason that they were functionally necessary [...]. It was like being part of a machine [...]. What mattered was the great social productive machine" (1971: 255); "It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos [...]. [The colliers] were not important to him, save as instruments, nor he to them, save as a supreme instrument of control" (1971: 260).

Because, according to Weber, these new conditions correspond to the internalized work ethic of the workers, they are able to adapt themselves in a way that supposedly causes little friction. The more perfect the instrumentalisation and functionalisation of the workers, the more perfect is the system of, to quote Weber, "congealed spirit" (Israel 1972: 412). Weber's analyses correspond in many points —at least at a descriptive level— to those of Werner Sombart, whose large-scale work *Der moderne Kapitalismus: Historisch-systematische Darstellung des gesamteuropäischen Wirtschaftslebens von seinen Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* [*Modern Capitalism: an historical and systematic representation of European economic life from its beginnings up to the present day*] (1902) had a sustained contemporary impact. John A. Hobson's study *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism: A Study of Machine Production* (1894) provided a further source. Gerald Crich embodies the principles which, according to Sombart and Hobson (who emphasize machine production), characterize the period of "capitalism at its peak". An historically unique phenomenon, explained in the end in terms of the "Faustian" character of the European bourgeoisie, this "peak" of capitalism depends, according to Sombart, on the well-calculated policies of the factory owner, who subjugates everything to the pursuit of money. For efficient production, it is necessary to reduce all the commercial and personal relationships involved in the process to a level where they are quantifiable and based only on material values. Only money, an abstract measure, makes this reduction possible. According to Sombart, the spirit of the employer/factory owner unites the "striving for power and profit" (1902: I, 1, 329). The exploitation and subjection of nature are as much expressions of this striving for power as the unlimited accumulation of goods and the establishment of a production line. The kind of person this requires is described by Sombart in terms which, unlike Weber's, allow for criticism of the system:

> What capitalism needed for its purposes was a "new race" of men. Men who were able to fit themselves into a large unit —a capitalist undertaking or even a factory, these miracles of relationships between those in command, the subordinates and those of equal standing, these ingenious constructions of part-people. The economic constitution needs such part-people: lifeless, depersonalized, dispirited beings capable of being parts, or rather cogs in a complex mechanism [...]. The individual is slotted into a system of work, in which he is obliged to carry out the part-task allotted to him punctually, regularly and smoothly, so that the whole mechanism does not stop running. (1902: III, 1, 424)

Gerald Crich's ideas and methods originated in no small measure from Germany, at that time the world's most highly developed industrial rival to Britain after the USA.[16] Gerald expressly avoided Oxford to study mining engineering at German universities (1960: 249). In Germany, he learned the ethos of stringent, objective scientific method appplied to industry: "There, a curiosity had been aroused in his mind. He wanted to see and know, in a curious objective fashion, as if it were an amusement to him" (1960: 249). In this perspective, *Women in Love* reads like a critique of Weberian ideas in a vocabulary derived from Expressionist cultural critique. Contemporary with Lawrence, Georg Kaiser was reducing the principle of empty productivity *ad absurdum* in the *Gas* dramas. Here the chaos, which Lawrence only envisages metaphorically as a consequence of Gerald's system, actually breaks out: a gas explosion blows up the factory. Gerald's personal catastrophe, failing to find a purpose to life beyond mere response to consumer demand, is of a similar order. Efficiency and productivity for their own sake, or "the plausible ethics of productivity" (1960: 62), as Birkin, Lawrence's mouthpiece, ironically calls them, are incapable of providing an answer to the larger issues of meaningfulness. In Gerald's "consumerist" model, personal relationships are reduced to the connection between "idea and prostitution" (Vietta and Kemper 1975: 170), which the expressionist Carl Einstein declared to be the essence of modern, estranged sensuality. Gerald's reflexive sexuality (1960: 48), issuing from the will and related to pornography, does not liberate but corrupts, because each party uses the other merely as an object. After the strain of running the mine, Gerald seeks relaxation in sexual encounters with easy women. But "He felt that his mind needed accute stimulation before he could be physically roused" (1960: 262). Finally, Gerald and Gudrun come together in a cynical and aggressive encounter, which the book repeatedly calls "obscene" (1960: 273). The strict separation assumed by Weber between public, functional roles and the realm of private morality betrays for Lawrence the idea of wholeness of being. As the symptom of a specifically modern schizophrenia and alienation, it is something to which Gerald's bosom returns an echo:

> The great social idea, said Sir Joshua, was the *social* equality of man. No, said Gerald, the idea was, that every man was fit for his own little bit of task —let him do that, and then please himself. The unifying principle was the work in hand. Only work, the business of production, held men together. It was mechanical, but then society *was* a mechanism. Apart from work, they were isolated, free to do as they liked.
> "Oh!" cried Gudrun. "Then we shan't have names any more —we shall be like the Germans, nothing but Herr Obermeister and Herr Untermeister [...]".
> "Things would work very much better, Miss Art-Teacher Brangwen", said Gerald [...].
> "You don't admit that a woman is a social being?" asked Ursula of Gerald.
> "She is both", said Gerald. "She is a social being, as far as society is concerned. But for her own private self, she is a free agent, it is her own affair, what she does".
> "But won't it be rather difficult to arrange the two halves?" asked Ursula. (1960: 114-115)

Birkin accompanies Gerald's "sociological" concepts with sarcastic deprecation. For Birkin, corruption begins precisely here, in the fragmentation of society and the individual into unrelated functions and parts, preventing the wholesome integration of intellect and sensuality. Both Western civilized culture, founded in the principle of rationality, and primitive cultures, rooted in sensuality, fail to unite the sundered parts. Birkin comments on Gerald's lack of cohesion: "part of you wants Minette, and nothing but Minette, part of you wants the mines, the business and nothing but the business —and there you are— all in bits" (1960: 108). From this it follows that neither expressionist neo-primitivism nor a mechanistic functionalism inspired by industry could satisfy the author of *Women in Love* (cf. note 16). Although Lawrence was clearly influenced by the cultural milieu of German Expressionism he encountered through his aristocratic-bohemian German wife,[17] his criticisms of the new-style pictures from the Munich art scene before the First World War are symptomatic. For him ("Christs in Tirol"), they express a loud, strained, provocative intellectuality, "shrill and restless" (1967: 82) which betrays the basic intuitions of the expressionist revolt. Lawrence's own aesthetic practice, however, by no means closes the gulf between sensuality and intellect.

It is, in conclusion, important to recall the dialectic character of Lawrence's own definition of life. The antithesis of death (Gerald/ Gudrun) and life (Ursula/ Birkin) is only ostensibly unequivocal in moral terms.

Gerald is anything but a mere carved figure of negativity. In fact, the socialist Sir Joshua, a caricature of Bertrand Russell, comes off much worse. Birkin feels the loss of his friend deeply, and the fact that the role of intimate (potentially homosexual) friend was given to Gerald is a further indication of the ambivalent intimacies and mutual entanglements of a "decadent" culture which for Lawrence and his expressionist contemporaries was incompatible with the demands of "authentic life". In the expressionist decade, the "stumbling-block of D. H. Lawrence" as René Schickele has rightly called it (1959: 703), proves to be the stumbling-block of a whole historical epoch. If we define an epoch with René Wellek, as a "time section dominated by a system of norms whose introduction, spread and diversification, integration and disappearance can be traced", (Wellek and Warren 1973: 265) then with regard to expressionism the main problem lies in defining the moment of its disappearance. The Laurentian critique of a fragmented labour process, of functionalism, bureaucratization, technology, the bourgeois code of behaviour and modern "reflexive culture" (Arnold Gehlen), in the name of a myth of "authentic life" or the "natural human being" is currently enjoying a revival in an increasingly global culture. Embedding Lawrence's texts in their original contexts both historicises them and suggests their importance to a continuing and contemporary debate.

The preceding analysis has sought to throw light on what connects Lawrence with "expressionism" and what separates and distinguishes him from it, possibly deliberately on his part. Lawrence shares in no small part the strengths and weaknesses of expressionism. Those weaknesses lie not least in the expressionist refusal to acknowledge the social character of human existence, and its inevitable "externalisation" in automated actions and institutions, as demonstrated by Max Weber.[18] What I hope to have shown, however, is that the authority with which Lawrence writes of social forms in *Women in Love* is reinforced by his acquaintance with the "sociological ideas" (1960: 249) of Weber and cognate German thinkers, adding a depth and continuing relevance to his work which is missing from comparable expressionist texts.

NOTES

An earlier version of this paper was given as an Inaugural Lecture at the University of Bochum in 1978. It was published in 1982 in *Sprachkunst* in German. The translations from the German, including the poetic texts, are largely

by John Fowler, who teaches at the University of Stuttgart. I wish to thank him for his cooperation. I also wish to thank Jennifer Birkett and Stan Smith for their generous help.

[1] Lawrence's relationship to expressionism has been treated in two contributions from the thirties (Reichwagen 1935; Wildi, 1937). Reichwagen's remarks on the expressionist view of man and its reflexion in Lawrence's novels are useful only in their general tendency. Both studies suffer from the fact that they cannot build upon any properly analytical tradition of research into expressionism. Wildi's concept of expressionism remains vague: "a term here used in its widest sense to cover all anti-realist as well as anti-idealist movements, irrespective of national and personal origin, from Strindberg in the North to Marinetti in the South and covering many '"isms", of which the original "expressionism" (applied in 1901 to groups of painters both in Paris and Germany) is but one of many forms" (1937: 241). Given such vagueness, it is not surprising that research since 1945 has abandoned this explanatory framework. Nevertheless the concept has reappeared in more recent marginal studies, with predominently negative results (Furness 1973: 94; Mitchell 1973: 180). Long after the publication of this paper in German (1982) I discovered an article by Visnja Sepcic entitled "*Women in Love* and Expressionism" published in two parts in *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagrabiensia* in 1981 and 1982.

[2] The hesitantly groping remarks of Peter Faulkner are typical. He rightly distinguishes between Lawrence and the modernists (e.g. Joyce and Eliot), yet cannot conceptualize the distinction or place it in a literary-historical context. See Faulkner (1977: 60-65).

[3] Coombes (1973: 69). Letter dated December 24, 1912.

[4] For this concept, see Marquard (1973: 85-106).

[5] The scene of Tom Brangwen's wooing of Lydia in *The Rainbow* should be considered in this context. Tom, in harmony with the springtime awakening of Nature, asks for Lydia's hand in marriage. Another relevant scene is the dance of the naked and pregnant Anna before the Lord. See in this connection Bell (1972: 20): "In rendering the emotional density of the Brangwens' inner lives, particularly at moments of crisis, Lawrence has an apparently spontaneous recourse to those modes of feeling and thought by which many anthropologists have believed primitive man to have ordered his experience, the prominent features of which are animism, natural piety and ritual."

[6] *Women in Love*, (1960: 87, chap. "Totem"). All references to *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* are to the Penguin edition. We have here to do with a favourite motif of expressionist (but also in some cases surrealist) artists. Max Pechstein periodically withdrew among the Polynesians to be able to work in a congenial

environment. Hermand writes: "the archaic African tribal sex-cults, the world of the negro fetishes were especially popular. They were interpreted as symbols of uninhibited sexuality" (Hamann 1977: 100). Birkin defends, against Gerald, the aesthetic quality of the carved wooden representation of a woman giving birth: "It is an awful pitch of culture, of a definite sort [...]. Pure culture in sensation, culture in the physical consciousness, really ultimate *physical* consciousness mindless, utterly sensual [...]. But Gerald resented it. He wanted to keep certain illusions, certain ideals like clothing" (1960: 87). The narrator takes Birkin's side of the argument ("illusions"). The concept here presented of an unreflective, purely sensual culture is a typical paradox of expressionistic wish-fulfilment projected back in time. On *Women in Love*, see the essays of J. M. Murry, G. Ford, F. Kermode and C. Clarke (Clarke, 1969). In *Women in Love*, Lawrence subordinates the historical content of the novel, that is, the spiritual-intellectual condition of European society at that time, to the typological schema of the Apocalypse. Through this interpretation, Kermode and Clarke make a decisive advance in the understanding of the novel. But their observations remain isolated and fragmentary until brought into the context of the basic expressionist dialectic of destruction and renewal, death and rebirth, Hell and Paradise. Because these concepts stand, for the expressionist artist, not merely in an antithetical but a dialectic relationship, the phenomena of decline, decadence, paralysis, death and disintegration in the psychic, social and cultural domains are evaluated not only negatively but also positively, as necessary preliminary stages of renewal. Ambivalence of this sort, which can easily be seen as contradictions, thread their way through *Women in Love* in particular. Birkin, in the chapter "Moony", rejects the unreflective, non-phallic sensuality of the "awful African process" (1960: 286) as "knowledge in dissolution and corruption" —all this incorporated in the fetish-object. Yet it is precisely the practical exercise of this "corruption" with Ursula in the chapter "Excurse" that helps him to his new identity as "son of God" (1960: 353). Gudrun on the other hand, who, following the example of Expressionist artists, creates "African" carvings ("I thought it was savage carving again." "—No, hers [...]" 1960: 105) is not favoured with such a saving rebirth. This opens up new ambiguities. As Lawrence also shows the German sculptor Loerke (to whom Gudrun feels herself attracted) in a negative light, one receives the strong impression that he includes modern autonomous art (1960: 504) in its neo-primitivist (Gudrun) and abstract-constructivist (Loerke) forms, among the sickly blooms of modern industrial society. Loerke favours a form of art geared to the example of mechanical-industrial labour, yet which should only be evaluated on criteria derived from its immanent aesthetic principles. By means of Birkin, a self-portrait, Lawrence seems to be exploring the problem of "true" expressionism. For such an expressionism, the quest for autonomous form must always be subordinate to the quest for "organic" life: "You think we ought to break up this life, just start and let fly?", he asked. "—This life. Yes, I do. We've got to bust it completely, or shrivel inside it, as in a tight skin. For it won't expand any more [...]. When we really want to go for something better, we shall

smash the old" (1960: 60 ff.). One should compare this plea of Birkin's for the blowing-up of traditional cultural structures in order to set life free to objectify itself in new forms with the argument of Stadler's poem "Form ist Wollust" (Stadler 1974: 127).

[7] On the relationship between expressionism and exoticism see Reiff (1975: 128).

[8] Clarke (1969: 28). Letter dated June 15, 1914. Traditional typifications and schematisations of character are presumably meant. On the other hand a consideration of character in the light of modern psychological-genetic concepts has been attempted in Lawrence research (Cavitch, 1969 and others), yielding valuable new insights.

[9] See on the apocalyptic element Frank Kermode (in Clarke 1969: 203-218).

[10] Klaus Ziegler, "Dichtung und Gesellschaft im deutschen Expressionismus", in Rötzer (1976: 311).

[11] This conclusion is obvious from the way our sympathies are steered in *Women in Love*. Birkin maintains contact with London's Bohemia (1960: 65) and introduces Gerald (in the chapter entitled "Crème de Menthe") to this marginal group which is held together by its contempt for the bourgeois world. But however much Birkin may sympathise with that contempt, he cannot (in contrast to the expressionist coffee-house *literati* of Hasenclever's type) reconcile himself to the generous, yet superficial conversational and social conventions of the artistic circle. Lawrence is known to have rejected promiscuity, and his hero finds his way out of Bohemia. Birkin's ambiguous attitude to Bohemia and modern art seems to correspond to the author's own. "I hate Munich art", writes Lawrence (Boulton 1979: 548). However, compared with English art, he still perceives "Munich art" as liberating.

[12] *The Rainbow* (1968: 449). The metaphor of light and darkness combined with water-imagery representing the boundary between conscousness and life is also found in Ludwig Klages "Bewußtsein und Leben" (1956: 30): "Meanwhile, we do not even need to look outside ourselves for confirmation, that consciousness resembles nothing so much as lightning, which flames again and again above the waters of life, illuminating each time a narrow circle, yet leaving the whole distant horizon in the obscurity of unconsciousness. This we know from our own daily experience". See also *The Rainbow*, (1967: 437).

[13] Neither can Birkin in *Women in Love* set any goal for the journey. "" But where can one go?" she asked anxiously. "After all, there is only this world, and none of it is very distant." "Still", he said, "I should like to go with you —nowhere. It would rather be wandering just to nowhere. That's the place to get

to —nowhere. One wants to wander away from the world's somewheres, into our own nowhere"" (1960: 355).

[14] See *Women in Love* (1960: 65, 67 [Birkin]). Modern civilization, including London, is understood as a Sodom condemned to destruction. Gudrun and Loerke play cynically with the thought of mankind's self-destruction (1960: 510). On the motif "end of the world in expressionist literature", see Eykman (1974: 44).

[15] "Mensch und Erde" (1920), *Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1910-20; Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele* (1929-32) where Klages develops, among other themes, the hypothesis of a pre-rational, Pelasgian man. The lecture (held on the mountain *Hoher Meissner* in 1913) on "Man and Earth" is particularly rich in implication. It attracted much attention and developed, discursively and in detail, what is basically the ideology of *Women in Love*. It ends one year before the outbreak of the war with an apocalyptic vision of an unprecedented battle, from which, in the end, the earth will be resurrected in her unspoilt original condition. Klages emphasizes the aggressive, destructive character of Western civilization, sees in ""progress", "civilization", "capitalism", merely different aspects of a single volition" (1956: 19), and comes to the conclusion that "man, as bearer of the calculating will to appropriate" (1956: 20), intends, "in reality, the destruction of life" (1956: 12).

[16] See Hobsbawm (1968), chapter "The Beginning of Decline".

[17] Lawrence read Nietzsche, knew the Bohemian sub-culture in Munich shortly before the First World War, and very probably saw up-to-date publications in the library of the art-patron Jaffé.

[18] See on this point Helmuth Plessner's admittedly uncompromising conclusion in "Das Problem der Öffentlichkeit und die Idee der Entfremdung": "The distance which role-playing produces —whether in family or in professional life, in the workaday world or in official functions, is the specifically human way of making contact. Anyone who sees, in role-play, self-alienation, has mistaken the essential nature of man, and attributes to him as a possibility, a mode of life that is available to beasts on the earthly level, and to angels on the spiritual level. Angels play no roles, but neither do animals [...]. Only man appears as his own double, outwardly visible in the figure of the role he plays, and inwardly conscious of himself as self" (1974: 20).

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HEMINGWAY AND MALRAUX: THE UNMANNED VIRILE FRATERNITY[1]

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In 1919 Paul Valéry proclaimed the death of modernism. Having produced a melting pot of "the most disparate ideas —ingredients from the Russian ballet, —a trace of Pascal's sombre style [...] —something from Nietzsche, —something from Rimbaud, —certain effects gleaned from among painters [...] —the whole thing fragrant with a fastidiously measured British *je ne sais quoi!*" modernism, he said, had generated "the quintessential *disorder*".[2] Valéry argued that "the Europe of 1914 had perhaps gone as far as it could with this modernism".[3] In the vast graveyard of post-war Europe, he casts the intellectual in the role of a "European Hamlet" (1919: 326-328). Confronted by what Stan Smith calls, with reference to *The Waste Land*, a "vision of falling empires" (1994: 144), this "intellectual Hamlet [...] meditates on the life and death of truths", torn between "order and disorder", in other words between an inherited authoritative world-view and the ambiguities of an individual consciousness.[4]

This valedictory for modernism was, of course, premature and Valéry's Hamlet too classical. For modernism, and particularly for a new generation of modernists who began writing in the aftermath of the Great War, there were no "truths". "There are no ideals for which we can lay down our lives since we know the lies which they conceal even if we do not know what truth is", wrote Malraux in 1926 (1989a: 110-111).[5] For his part, Hemingway was preparing the ironically titled *In Our Time* (1925), having understood, "like many other modernists", as Thomas Strychacz points out, that the post-war landscape "demanded new narrative strategies (1996: 56-57). On both sides of the Atlantic intellectuals shared an aversion for what Paul Fussell calls the "self-destructive stalemate" of the war (1975: 3). They condemned President Harding's espousal of a return to "normalcy" and France's return to law and

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order under the leadership of Raymond Poincaré, dubbed by J. F. V. Keiger "the hero of normalcy" (1997: 344). The poignant optimism expressed in *Le Feu*, Henri Barbusse's devastating novelistic indictment of the First World War —"The future is in the hands of the slaves, and it is clear that the old order will be changed" (1916: 5)[6]— had been betrayed, and the intellectual backlash was inevitable. Ezra Pound wrote of the United States as "that country in distress" (1927: 89) and Louis Aragon angrily evoked a European landscape strewn with "mental carrion" (1928: 78).[7]

The First World War and its aftermath gave added relevance to the ambiguity, the multi-dimensionality and the anti-authoritarianism which underpinned modernism. What Lyn Pykett describes as the "disruption of "natural" gender boundaries and hierarchies" (1995: 37) had, however, been at its most assertive at the turn of the century and in the pre-war years. The post-war landscape, in all its confusion, merely served to ratify an anti-patriarchal shift that had already begun. Certainly the Great War, which Elaine Showalter describes as "the most masculine of exercises" (1987: 173), had done little to validate or recommend a male-dominated order. Whether or not, as a consequence of what Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar call "female self-possession", men themselves began to feel "as assaulted on the home front as they were on the military front itself", there is no doubt, as Gilbert and Gubar go on to point out, that the theme of male inadequacy becomes a *leitmotif* "in the most canonical male modernist novels" of the early twentieth century (1988: 34-35). While Wyndham Lewis felt the need to defend masculinity against what he saw as the creeping feminine aestheticisation of modernism, Hemingway and Malraux, two of the most "masculine" of modernist novelists, both writing in post-war Europe, were already cultivating what Robert W. Lewis terms the "Warrior-Writer" image (1992: 58), which they would eventually be locked into after the Spanish Civil War.

In the case of both these writers it is difficult to distinguish between their lives and their fiction, especially since each of them shamelessly cultivated his own legend. Hemingway had been a Red Cross ambulance driver in the last months of the First World War in Italy and had been badly wounded. From 1921 to 1928 he had worked in Paris, initially as a journalist. Malraux, whose formal education, like Hemingway's, did not extend beyond high school level, was arrested in Cambodia in 1923 while on an archaeological expedition which was a barely disguised attempt to pillage poorly-charted Khmer temples in the Cambodian jungle. In 1925 he became co-editor of a French language newspaper in Saigon for some six months. From June of that year, southern China was in the throes of a nationalist-communist

insurrection which would provide Malraux with the historical setting of his first novel, *Les Conquérants* (1928), which would rapidly become the basis of the legend of his participation in the Chinese revolution. The masculinity of the image cultivated by these two novelists is equalled by the apparently stereotypical male activities which inspire their writing. From the beginning of Hemingway's career, notes Rena Sanderson, "critics made an issue of the "masculinity" in his writings" (1996: 170); and, indeed, the First World War, boxing, fishing, bullfighting and heavy drinking are among the principal themes in his early work. Malraux's early novels, from which female characters are all but excluded, deal with the Chinese revolution and an expedition into the uncharted hinterland of Cambodia. Both *Les Conquérants* and *La Voie royale* (1930) focus on the virile fraternity in extreme situations and exemplify what Dominica Radulescu calls Malraux's "glorification of male power and creativity" (1994: 4). The early novelistic universe of these two modernists is profoundly, and in Malraux's case almost exclusively, androcentric. And later, when the first French translation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* appeared in London in 1944, critics were quick to underline the preoccupation with the virile hero common to both Malraux and Hemingway. They were, wrote Claude Mauriac, "brothers [...] on account of that restrained toughness so much part of virile decency" (1946: 133-134).[8] Malraux is still viewed as the eulogist of the "virile fraternity" (Dao 1991: 11),[9] and until Mark Spilka's work and the publication of Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* in 1986, the American novelist's "hypermasculinity" had rarely been challenged (see Beegel 1996: 289).

Both novelists distanced themselves, for different reasons, from the self-consciously literary circles around them (see Benson 1975: 274; Larrat 1996: 78), and they adopted an individualised camera-eye narrative perspective on the world which is quite alien to the stream-of-consciousness technique prevalent among writers associated with modernism. Malraux and Hemingway eschew recourse to the interiority of the human consciousness as a response to the dislocation of the world outside. Hemingway's "distaste" for Freudianism and his scepticism about the validity of any psychoanalytical approach is well known (Hovey 1975: 180-181), and Malraux, who asserted "I consider what we call the subconscious to be the very essence of confusion" (in Picon 1953: 60),[10] consistently ignores the influence of the psychological throughout his work (see Harris 1996a: 77-94). Nevertheless, these novelists both participate in what Trudi Tate presents as modernism's attempt to make the war and its repercussions on the social and cultural order "readable" and to write them "into history" (1998: 4). Equally both writers use distinctively modernist textual structures in their work, often fragmentary, potentially

incoherent, and as elliptical as that associated with the stream-of-consciousness technique.

Hemingway's ellipses mirror his distrust of the psychological: ""There isn't any place", [Catherine] said. She came back from wherever she had been. [...] "I had a very fine show and I'm all right now"", we read in the closing paragraphs of Chapter 6 in *A Farewell to Arms* (1963: 28). The reader must supply a meaning here by inferring the psychologically-loaded sub-text, concurring with the projection of Catherine as someone damaged by the war, a victim of what Tate calls "non-combatant war neurosis" (1998: 12). Benson notes that the essence of Hemingway's discourse lies in "what is suggested or left unsaid" (1975: 272). Indeed, in "Big Two-Hearted River", published in *In Our Time*, the reader has to deduce the hidden mainspring of the story: the extent and origin of the psychological damage to Nick Adams, the sole character. The process of externalisation and concretisation in Hemingway's prose no doubt owes something to his experience of journalism and certainly he, like Malraux, quickly rejected what Hans-Robert Jauss calls the provocative and "classic opposition of *res fictae, res factae*" (1987: 117).[11]

Malraux's narrative technique, particularly in his early work, involves a disjointed presentation of material which, in *Les Conquérants* for example, incorporates eye-witness accounts, reports of interviews, and the camera-eye narrator's reading of radio despatches and police records. The absence of relative pronouns and the simple juxtaposition of clipped sentences produce a fragmented, *staccato* prose: "Seven Chinese entered, in a line —buttoned up jackets and white trousers,— without a word. Some young, some old. They stood in front of the table, in a semi-circle. One of the eldest half sat on the desk: the interpreter" (1989b: 177).[12] So telegraphic is the discourse in *Les Conquérants* that to many readers it seemed more a documentary than a novel. In his preface to Andrée Viollis' *Indochine S.O.S*, Malraux recognised that "reporting continues [...] to be one of the strongest strands of the French novel" (1935: VII),[13] and his own camera-eye narrator, although individualised, minimally, as a character in the novel, automatically conveys an externalised vision. In *La Voie royale*, the narrative point of view is restricted almost exclusively to that of either main character.

While Hemingway partly externalises the psychological through dialogue, Malraux's use of an identified, non-omniscient, externalised narrative perspective allows him to objectify it. His synecdochic presentation serves to imply a psychological subtext. "The novelist", he wrote, "has at his disposal another major means of expression: he can link a decisive moment for his character to the atmosphere around him or the cosmos" (1946: n.p.).[14] Just as the swamp represents Nick Adams' subconscious fears in

Hemingway's "Big Two-Hearted River", so the hostile jungle in *La Voie royale* is a transposition of the turmoil in Claude's subconscious: "Claude was sinking into a kind of sickness in this fermentation where shapes became distorted, elongated, as they rotted away in a world where man did not matter" (1989c: 416).[15] At times Malraux's technique becomes frankly behaviourist. In *Esquisse d'une psychologie du cinéma*, he wrote:

> The novel seems, however, to retain a certain advantage over the film: the possibility of moving *inside* the characters. But, on the one hand, the modern novel apparently analyses its characters less and less in their critical moments; and, on the other hand, a dramatic form of psychology —used by Shakespeare and, to a large degree, by Dostoievsky— which allows inner secrets to be suggested [...] through actions [...], is perhaps no less powerful artistically, and no less revealing than analysis. (n.p.)[16]

In *Les Conquérants*, written some twenty years before *Esquisse*, Garine's exposure of Nicolaïeff's incompetence leads to Malraux's use of this "dramatic form of psychology" to render the police chief's embarrassment: "Nicolaïeff, who has not answered, slowly brushed away with his hand the mayflies which continued to fall onto the desk, as though he were smoothing out his sheet of paper like a well-behaved child" (1989b: 265).[17]

Sustained, as Malraux's European correspondent in *La Tentation de l'Occident* observes, less by any system of thought than by "a flimsy edifice of negations" (1989a: 91),[18] the central characters in the early novels of Hemingway and Malraux articulate a predominantly negative world-view. Confronted by a morally bankrupt society and the absence of any truth, these characters move in the world conveyed by Kurtz's exclamation at the end of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "The horror! The horror!" (1989: 111). It is the same world which haunts Virginia Woolf's Septimus Warren Smith, the shell-shocked First World War veteran in *Mrs Dalloway*: "this gradual drawing together of everything to one centre before his eyes, as if some horror had come almost to the surface" (1964: 18). In Malraux's *Les Conquérants*, Garine, the principal protagonist, is the propaganda *commissar* for the Nationalist government of southern China and, reads his Hong-Kong police file, he is "*seriously ill*" (1989b: 162).[19] Driven by a reductionist and negatively formulated precept —"All the same, there is one thing which counts in life: not becoming a victim [...]" (1989b: 247)[20]— Malraux's hero is ontologically dysfunctional. He is also unable to define himself socio-politically other than in negative terms. He admits to "the impossibility of devoting [himself] to any form of society whatsoever"(1989b: 154).[21] Despite

his role as revolutionary cadre, he feels that the revolution is an end (the suspension of all socio-political reality) and not a means: "If I found it so easy to get involved in the revolution, it's because its results are in the distant future and forever evolving" (1989b: 250).[22] The rapid deterioration of Garine's health allegorically maps out his progressive distancing from the revolution throughout the novel, and the success of the revolutionary action effectively condemns him to death.

No less distanced from the society he frequents is Hemingway's Jake Barnes. The central character and narrator of *The Sun Also Rises* (1927), Hemingway's first novel, he too is, as the prostitute deduces, "sick" or, rather, as he subsequently explains: "I got hurt in the war" (1970: 13-14). This war injury (he has been emasculated) prevents him from consummating his passionate relationship with Lady Brett Ashley. "We'd better keep away from each other", he tells her in the opening chapters, and the closing lines of the novel convey the same frustrated discourse of unfulfilment, this time permeated with heavily allegorical —and ironic?— evocations linking the military with virility: "Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me" (1970: 186).

With the exception of his conversations with Bill during their fishing trip and his explanations about the art of bull-fighting, Jake's interventions in the numerous dialogue scenes in *The Sun Also Rises* are minimal. Used by Hemingway as a camera-eye narrator, Jake's narrative function is essentially passive. It not only mirrors his *persona* in the novel but also strangely resembles the "feminine state of powerlessness, frustration and dependency" which, according to Showalter, was associated with shell-shocked soldiers in the First World War (1987: 175). "We were a little detached", says the American volunteer injured on the Italian front and who narrates Hemingway's significantly entitled "In Another Country", published in 1927 in *Men Without Women* (1965: 46). Despite his own volunteer status in the Italian army, Frederic Henry, the hero of *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), is portrayed as being strangely "detached" from his adopted cause and views the war as if it were a film: "Well, I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It did not have anything to do with me. It seemed no more dangerous to me myself than war in the movies" (1963: 33). Caught up in the chaotic retreat from Caporetto, he decides that he is "out of it" and that, like Nick Adams and Rinaldi in the vignette which precedes "A Very Short Story" in *In Our Time* (1974a: 81), he has "made a separate peace" (1963: 188). Certainly Jake Barnes is "detached", so much so that he is accused of being the ultimate unaccountable intermediary, a "damned pimp" (1970: 145). Ironically, it is

Brett who verbally locks Jake into this at best, spectatorial role, as she asks him to sanction her affair with the young bull fighter, the ultimate symbol of masculinity: "Please stay by me and see me through this" (1970: 140). Just as he surveys the Spanish landscape from the top of the bus, Jake, the only *aficionado* in the group, surveys the running of the bulls through the town centre from the balcony of his hotel room before returning to bed. His role as spectator and the concomitant distantiation from this most masculine of actions are further underscored in the bullfight scene, which he follows through binoculars in a text laden with verbs of visual perception: "I looked through the glasses and saw the three matadors [...] I saw the picadors. Romero was wearing a black suit [...]. I could not see his face clearly [...] but it looked badly marked" (1970: 161-162). Like Malraux's Garine, Jake moves in "another country", not only in that he is an American in Europe —as Garine is a European in China— but also in the sense that in his enthusiasm for the *fiesta* he too achieves that suspension of reality which Garine seeks in revolutionary action, the favoured arena of the Malrucian virile fraternity. Having just glimpsed a banner proclaiming "Hurray for Wine! Hurray for the Foreigners!", Jake reflects that during the *fiesta* "everything became quite unreal finally and it seemed as though nothing could have any consequences [...]. It was the same feeling for any action" (1970: 117).

Arguably, in *Les Conquérants*, Malraux's use of a minimally diagetic, camera-eye narrator situates Garine, although he is the principal focus of the novel, at a further remove from the reader than Hemingway's hero. Garine's remoteness is evoked throughout the novel. Marginalised to the extent of feeling like a supernumerary during his own trial in Switzerland —"an unreal spectacle" (1989b: 152)[23]— he is depicted as being multi-dimensionally separate (Harris 1996b: 57-60). He is isolated by his illness, by his anti-social world-view, and by his ideological alienation even within the revolution. He is detached from revolutionary action and from those around him by his status as a cadre. The use of a cinematographic perspective technically reinforces this isolation, emphasising the hierarchical, ideological and psychological distance established between Garine and the revolution by constituting it spatially. When he first arrives at Garine's headquarters in Canton, the narrator must negotiate a veritable obstacle course of gates, doors and sentries before gaining access to the propaganda *commissar*'s office. Garine is protectively screened by his guards, his nurses and by the geographical location of his office which overlooks the streets of Canton. In narrative terms, he is also screened by the narrator.

This multi-faceted isolation which characterises Malraux's and Hemingway's early heroes is also stressed in varying degrees by a form of

linguistic alienation. Garine's reliance on the narrator as an interpreter automatically posits a distance between himself and his role in the revolution, but already during his trial in Switzerland, language, this time in the form of the establishment's discourse, had underlined his fundamental estrangement from society: "The text of the oath on which the jurors were sworn in, read in a tired schoolmaster's voice by the presiding judge, surprised him because of its effect on those twelve placid tradesmen" (1989b: 152).[24] In *Modernist Fiction* (1992), Randall Stevenson observes that "for most of the modernists" the war, rather than opening up new linguistic frontiers "simply diminished confidence in language's reliability" (1992: 185). In *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederic Henry is unable to relate to the rhetoric driving the war effort:

> I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain [...], now for a long time I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done to the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear [...]. Abstract words such as glory, honour, courage or hallow were obscene. (1963: 143-144)

The Italian officer arrested by the *carabinieri* for retreating is nonplussed by his interrogators: "It is you and such as you that have let the barbarians on to the sacred soil of the fatherland", says one of the *carabinieri*. "I beg your pardon", says the lieutenant-colonel (1963: 175). In *The Sun Also Rises*, language is consistently devalued, through the drunken dialogue, through Jake's playful relativisation of language (he introduces his "fiancée" as "Mademoiselle Georgette Leblanc" although her name is Hobin [1970: 15]), and through Brett's ultimate dismissal of language: "Let's not talk. Talking's all bilge" (1970: 43). In Malraux's second novel, *La Voie royale*, one of the two central characters, the young adventurer, Claude Vannec, recalls his father's dismissal of the vocabulary used to encourage the war effort, the most extravagant of the "unleashings of imbecility" he had ever witnessed: "Now [...] they are mobilising justice, civilisation and the severed hands of children" (1989c: 375).[25] In his turn, Claude too is at odds with what he sees as the dominant discourse of his time ("No desire to sell cars, shares or speeches" [1989c: 394])[26] and with the concepts which inspire commitment: "What was to be done with the carcass of ideas which controlled the way men acted when they believed their existence served some *useful* cause; what was to be done with the words, these other carcasses, used by those who want to live according to a model?" (1989c: 394).[27]

Threatened by the disintegration of the world outside, the characters in these novels are also at risk from the impact of this process on their subconscious. Frequently conveyed allegorically, as we have noted, the threat of the subconscious is also formulated by the characters themselves. In *Les Conquérants*, Garine fears being left alone in the isolation of his hospital room, and the fear of the dark and of sleeping, often triggered by wartime experiences, is a *leitmotif* in Hemingway's short stories and in his early novels. In *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederic Henry admits to himself that "the night can be a dreadful time" (1963: 193), and in *The Sun Also Rises*, Jake Barnes, who cries at night, confesses that because of his fear of the dark "for six months [he] never slept with the light off" (1970: 112). With its cast of socially dysfunctional, physically —and psychologically— damaged characters, Malraux's and Hemingway's early work reflects the painfully dislocated human landscape left by the First World War. As Trudi Tate writes:

> Like modernist fiction of the 1920s and 1930s, the war narratives are troubled by the question of how one is placed in relation to the vast, often incomprehensible events of early twentieth-century history. [...] There is also concern in all these writings as to where the war is located. Is it inside or outside; in the world or in your mind; inscribed upon your body or upon the bodies you have seen? (1998: 95)

Like Ad Francis, the punch-drunk boxer in Hemingway's short story "The Battler", the main characters in these early novels seem to have taken "too many beatings" (1974b: 78). Psychologically fragile and often physically injured or debilitated they all are, or become, victims. Garine ignores medical advice, outlasts his usefulness to the revolution and, like Perken, who virtually sabotages his own imperialist project, he is condemned to die prematurely. Both are victims of what could arguably be termed self-inflicted wounds. Those central protagonists in Malraux's novels who escape death —the narrator in *Les Conquérants* and Claude in *La Voie royale*— are hardly presented as masculine role models. Neophytes, their principal role is to witness the downfall of the virile hero. "I don't know anything: I've only just arrived", says the narrator in the opening pages of *Les Conquérants* (1989b: 122), only to be told in the closing pages: "You don't understand anything. [...] You're speaking like a kid" (1989b: 257).[28] Claude, whose project to ship Khmer carvings back to Europe is abandoned, is immediately dismissed by Grabot as "obviously a young kid" (1989c: 460).[29] Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry are both physical casualties of the war. Jake's wound debars him from a normal social life and condemns him to the role of spectator. The

fiesta ends in a drunken fiasco as the Anglo-Saxons, and particularly Brett—with Jake's help— play havoc with the rituals of bullfighting. Jake is snubbed by the *aficionados* and loses all credibility. He is, as Michael S. Reynolds notes, "a most ineffectual man in a most unpromising place" (1987: 64). For his part, Frederic Henry, having shot an Italian soldier in the back, lost one of his own men and abandoned the ambulances in his command, deserts and makes a "separate peace". Subsequently he is further destabilised by the death in childbirth of his partner Catherine Barkley and the loss of his new-born son. It is however Grabot, the larger-than-life white adventurer, the Malrucian Mr Kurtz and a constant reference in Perken's belligerent discourse, who becomes the ultimate symbol of male decline in these novels. The two heroes of *La Voie royale* are stunned to find him blinded and harnessed to a millstone, the slave of the tribesmen on the Siamese-Cambodian border. The "white chief", as Perken had imagined him, eventually manages to articulate his own truth: "Nothing" (1989c: 457).[30] A paradigm of the physical and psychological dislocation of post-First World War society, Grabot signifies the fall of the modernist hero.

While the thematic emphasis in these early novels is on what Wendy Martin describes as "the loss of conviction of masculine invincibility" (1987: 66), it is tempting to read them as Poundian models of "masculine" writing. The unfailingly elliptical, usually unanalytical prose seems consciously "non-literary" and sometimes quasi-documentary, all of which may be interpreted —as indeed Sanderson does in the case of Hemingway— as a "stoic, understated masculine style" (1996: 170). In other words, compensation for the novel's graphic depiction of the dislocation of the masculine ideal may be discovered in a prose which reasserts masculinity through the imposition of a surface, quasi-behaviourist novelistic reality. However, this disjointed discourse is essentially a further reflection of the problems of non-communication, of the loss of confidence in logic and the absence of truth in a dislocated post-war Europe. In this context, it is interesting to note that in her perceptive assessment of Malraux's work, first published in 1948 and recently republished, Claude-Edmonde Magny writes of "the dislocation [...] in the sentences and the style of Malraux's novels" (1995: 36).[31] This stylistic dislocation, which underscores alienation as a central theme, is in turn reinforced by the cinematographic structure of Malraux's novels —particularly *Les Conquérants* (and later *La Condition humaine* and *L'Espoir*)— which are divided not into chapters but into scenes juxtaposed with little or no hint of transition. The highly-stylised discourse developed by Hemingway and Malraux, perfectly adapted to the transposition of action and to the elimination of introspection, is in reality a vehicle for the reaffirmation of a thematic which exposes the dislocation of the masculine ethos of physical prowess and psychological self-control.

Wagner-Martin observes that the war had created "a culture without heroes" (1987: 9); but equally in these novels it posited a culture without heroines. Whilst female characters are almost entirely absent in *Les Conquérants* and *La Voie royale*, except as supernumerary sex objects (although Klein's female partner appears briefly in *Les Conquérants* in the passive role of a grief-stricken witness of his mutilated corpse), in Hemingway's first novels, where they are very much present, they are no less damaged than their male counterparts. Although, as Elaine Showalter points out, the Great War had been the "apocalypse of masculinism" (1987: 173), and although a major *leitmotif* in these novels is the loss of patriarchal control, the female characters appear as disorientated as the male characters in the aftermath. If, in *The Sun Also Rises*, Miss Ferguson tries to lay blame for Catherine's pregnancy entirely on Henry, for the "mess (he'd) gotten (the) girl into", Catherine protests that the "mess" is also of her making: "No one got me in a mess, Fergy. I get in my own messes" (1963: 190). The recognition of a shared dislocation underpins Hemingway's texts. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Georgette's response to Jake's revelation that he has been wounded is: "Everybody's sick. I'm sick too" (1970: 13) and in *A Farewell to Arms*, when Catherine says, "I'm all broken. They've broken me", Frederic Henry replies, "Everybody is that way" (1963: 248). While in Malraux's early novels the focus on the loss of patriarchal authority is very male-specific —indeed, women barely figure— in Hemingway's novels the collapse of male dominance is conveyed more subtly through an erosion of gender boundaries. Brett Ashley, with "her hair brushed back like a boy's" (1970: 18), who later balks when Romero wants her to grow her hair long, is in love with a man who has been emasculated in the war and who inverts the gender cliché by opting out of a social event with the excuse: "I've got a rotten headache" (1970: 23). As Rena Sanderson observes, "Brett resembles a traditional man in her sexual expectations, and Jake resembles a traditional woman in his sexual unavailability and his uncomplaining tolerance of others' inconsiderations" (1996: 179). In *A Farewell to Arms*, Catherine asks Frederic, "Darling, why don't you let your hair grow? [...] Let it grow a little longer and I could cut mine and we'd be just alike" (1963: 230). Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry constitute the antithesis of what Showalter terms "the masculinist fantasies" which had initially driven the public image of the war (1987: 169). The First World War, she suggests, "feminized its conscripts" by depriving them of their ability to control (1987: 172). But if, arguably,

Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry are "feminized", to what degree can their female counterparts be said to be masculinised?

In her analysis of "non-combatant war neurosis" (1998: 12), Tate concludes that "not all transgressions of boundaries are liberating, for man or for woman" (1998: 32), and indeed, in *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* the female characters are as confused as the men by the experience of war. As Wagner-Martin suggests, Brett Ashley is "a product of war-ravaged Europe" and, like Jake Barnes, "is maimed by her experiences of World War I" (1987: 5). In Hemingway's first novel, Brett's "own true love" died of dysentery during the war (1970: 31), and in *A Farewell to Arms* Catherine Barkley's fiancé "was killed on the Somme" where "they blew him all to bits" (1963: 2). The psychological impact of the war on Catherine is stressed throughout the novel: "I haven't been happy for a long time and when I met you perhaps I was nearly crazy", she tells Frederic (1963: 92).

In the aftermath of a war which had invalidated the notion of the noble warrior, the virile hero is caught up in the process of shifting gender boundaries. The evolution of women's social and cultural identity inevitably involves the reassessment of a certain concept of masculinity which had become irrelevant. Hemingway's novels demonstrate an awareness of these changes but they do not offer any compensatory empowering of female characters. By becoming men, women must assume men's vulnerability. Brett is as much of an alcoholic as her male companions and, despite her "new woman" dimension (Wagner-Martin 1987: 4), she has to appeal to Jake for psychological and financial support after her affair with the bullfighter. Catherine may assume responsibility for her "mess" but eventually it kills her. Her death becomes the last in a series of manifestations of man's ineffectualness, a process now so extensive that Frederic is deprived of the ultimate proof of virility: the fathering of a son. In *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* female characters seek to become men and in the process, rather than becoming more powerful, they become accomplices in the evolution of a frailty which encompasses both sexes. As Virginia Woolf's Lily Brisco reflects in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), "the war had drawn the sting of her femininity. Poor devils, one thought, poor devils of both sexes, getting into such messes" (1966: 181).

Pykett refers to "women's empowerment" through the war (1995: 48), and Showalter claims that women "benefitted from the social upheaval of the war" (1987: 195). Although this may be true, particularly of intellectual circles in Europe and the United States in the 1920s as women asserted themselves as professional writers (see Scott 1995: 209-224; Gilbert and Gubar 1988: 143), historians have recently tended to minimise the role of the

Great War in the liberation of women. In *Dismembering the Male* (1996), Joanna Bourke maintains that "the wartime economy did not challenge the relative position of the two sexes" as dramatically as some critics have suggested (1996: 23). Siân Reynolds claims that "the replacement of mobilised men by women typists" during the war in France reflected a "gradual femininization" which had been in train since the turn of the century (1996: 93), and, according to James McMillan, a similar situation obtained in the USA (1981: 122). In the industrial sector in France, there were, Keiger points out, fewer women employed in 1921, after demobilisation, than in 1906. Moreover the effect of the war on France's demography "strengthened the pro-natalist lobby and weakened the campaign for women's suffrage" (1997: 27).

The focus on the unmanned hero in the early novels of Hemingway and Malraux does not promote any concept of the "new woman". Certainly, there is no suggestion that women are stepping into any power vacuum and assuming the authoritarian stance once assumed by the now beleaguered male hero. There is no hint of a power struggle, neither is there any implication that women are responsible for the demise of the male hero. Indeed, these two novelists, traditionally perceived as unconditional purveyors of the masculine ideal, provide little evidence to suggest that the damage done to the virile hero has been done by anyone other than the virile hero. While some modernist novelists, not least Virginia Woolf —in *Orlando*, for example— take pleasure in breaking through conventional gender boundaries, Hemingway, although clearly aware of the process, focuses almost entirely on the new ineffectiveness of traditional masculinity. For his part, Malraux virtually ignores the role of women altogether in his rendering of the dislocation of the virile fraternity.

NOTES

[1] I am indebted to Avril Horner in the European Studies Research Institute at the University of Salford for her invaluable help and advice in the writing of this article. Having said that, all errors of judgement are my own.

[2] "[...] des idées les plus dissemblables"; "[...] une influences des ballets russes, —un peu du style sombre de Pascal [...], quelque chose de Nietzsche, —quelque chose de Rimbaud, —certains effets dûs à la fréquentation des peintres

[...], —le tout parfumé d'un je ne sais quoi de britannique difficile à doser!" All translations are my own.

[3] "[...] l'Europe de 1914 était peut-être arrivée à la limite de ce modernisme".

[4] "[...] l'Hamlet européen [...] Hamlet intellectuel [...] médite sur la vie et la mort des vérités"; "[...] l'ordre et le désordre".

[5] "Il n'est pas d'idéal auquel nous puissions nous sacrifier, car de tous nous connaissons les mensonges, nous qui ne savons point ce qu'est la vérité".

[6] "L'avenir est dans les mains des esclaves, et on voit bien que le vieux monde sera changé [...]".

[7] "[...] les charognes mentales".

[8] "[...] des frères [...] par cette rude sobriété qui est un aspect de la pudeur virile".

[9] "[...] la fraternité virile".

[10] "Je tiens ce que nous appelons inconscient pour la confusion même".

[11] "[...] l'opposition classique *res fictae, res factae*".

[12] "Sept chinois entrent, l'un derrière l'autre —veste au col fermé et pantalon de toile blanche— en silence. Des jeunes, des vieux. Ils se placent devant la table, en demi-cercle. L'un des plus âgés s'assied à demi sur le bureau: l'interprète".

[13] "[...] le reportage continue pourtant une des lignes les plus fortes du roman français".

[14] "Le romancier dispose d'un autre grand moyen d'expression: c'est de lier un moment décisif de son personnage à l'atmosphère ou au cosmos qui l'entoure".

[15] "Claude sombrait comme dans une maladie dans cette fermentation où les formes se gonflaient, s'allongeaient, pourrissaient hors du monde dans lequel l'homme compte [...]".

[16] "Le roman semble pourtant conserver sur le film un certain avantage: la possibilité de passer à *l'intérieur* des personnages. Mais, d'une part, le roman moderne semble de moins en moins analyser ses personnages dans leurs instants de crise; d'autre part, une psychologie dramatique —celle de Shakespeare, et, dans une bonne mesure, de Dostoïevski— où les secrets sont suggérés [...] par les actes [...], n'est peut-être ni moins puissante artistiquement, ni moins révelatrice que l'analyse".

[17] "Nicolaïeff, qui n'a pas répondu, écarte doucement de la main les éphémères qui tombent toujours sur le bureau, comme s'il lissait son papier, avec un geste d'enfant sage".

[18] "[...] une fine structure de négations".

[19] "[...] *gravement malade*".

[20] "—Il y a tout de même une chose qui compte, dans la vie: c'est de ne pas être vaincu [...]".

[21] "[...] l'impossibilité de donner à une forme sociale, quelle qu'elle soit, [son] adhésion".

[22] "Si je me suis lié si facilement à la révolution, c'est que ses résultats sont lointains et toujours en changement".

[23] "[...] un spectacle irréel [...]".

[24] "Le texte du serment exigé des jurés, lu d'une voix de maître d'école las par le président, le surprit par son effet sur ces douze commerçants placides [...]".

[25] "Maintenant [...] on mobilise le droit, la civilisation et les mains coupées des enfants".

[26] "Aucune envie de vendre des autos, des valeurs ou des discours [...]".

[27] "Que faire du cadavre des idées qui dominaient la conduite des hommes lorsqu'ils croyaient leur existence *utile* à quelque salut, que faire des paroles de ceux qui veulent soumettre leur vie à un modèle, ces autres cadavres?"

[28] "—Je ne connais rien: j'arrive"; "—Tu n'y comprends rien. [...] Tu parles comme un gosse".

[29] "[...] sûrement un petit jeune [...]".

[30] "[...] chef blanc"; "[...] Rien [...]".

[31] "[...] la dislocation [...] au plan de la phrase et dans le style [...]".

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JEAN RHYS: THE FRENCH CONNECTION?

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One of the most striking scenes in Jean Rhys's literary corpus, one to which she obsessively returns, involves a young white girl watching a West Indian carnival parade —an event experienced by Rhys herself as a child in Dominica. The blind, or *jalousie*, through which the girl looks can be considered as a metaphor uniting and illuminating Rhys's thematic and aesthetic concerns. On one level the blind is a physical barrier representing the divisions between people of different colour, faith, station and race. However, rather than privileging the position of the bourgeois, white, Protestant colonials, Rhys, ever the non-conformist, reverses traditional expectations in her provision of a first-person narrator who, although physically on the inside of the window, is nonetheless figuratively ascribed the instantly recognisable role of "outsider", observing events from a position of vulnerability, dislocation and marginality. The reader is invited to participate vicariously in the girl's chronic experience of emotional and corporeal isolation and difference, together with her equally acute desire for connection, acceptance and a sense of community. Throughout the scene the protagonist remains passive and silent, unable to give utterance to her feelings of thwarted desire. Rhys's repeated retelling acknowledges this primary absence of verbal articulation and constitutes a *post hoc* attempt to provide a voice for the vulnerable child. This is paradigmatic of Rhys's corpus as a whole, although the specific nature of alienation does vary, encompassing age, creed, colour, class, financial status and, most frequently, gender.[1]

The second aspect of the *jalousie* reference underlines Rhys's aesthetic concerns and in particular the importance she attaches to perspective in all her works. Just as the slats of the blinds dissect and blot out parts of the overall picture as viewed by the girl, the text itself becomes lacunary and highly fragmented. Rhys's choice of *jalousie* as opposed to some other form of blind

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or shutter (*store*, *persienne*, *contrevent*, or *volet*, for example), is significant as in addition to its primary meaning, it also denotes jealousy, thus alerting the reader to the fact that the narrative is deeply subjective, coloured by an emotional or psychological filter. In this there is a definite marked shift away from nineteenth-century preoccupations with objective recording and verisimilitude towards a more modernist notion of what constitutes realism. So the *jalousie* blinds, then, serve as a metaphor for both separation, isolation and linguistic suppression on the one hand, and, on the other, the innovative narrative process which will provide the means and method of connection.

Given Rhys's reputation for meticulous attention to detail in her work, her decision to employ a French term to express this key image of the *jalousie* is significant. It raises the question of the role played by France in Rhys's fictional corpus. This essay, focusing principally on Rhys's early continental novels, will assess the ways in which France is constructed in Rhys's *oeuvre* to provide a potential route away from alienation towards assimilation, enabling her characters to explore and perhaps reify the possibility of connection. It will additionally interrogate her aesthetic principles to assess the way in which her quest for a radical new form of writing, more apposite to expressing the concerns of the disempowered, draws on the intellectual and creative ambience of inter-war France and intersects with feminist and modernist discourses. As Rhys once said in a letter written to her daughter Maryvonne Moerman on 15 October 1953: "I will always put France the first though. It is my best love and heaven knows why" (Rhys 1984: 112).

Rhys's autobiography,[2] her first four novels[3] and a number of her Paris-based short stories[4] provide some clues to the enigma of her love of France. In her first novel, *Quartet*, Paris is seen to exert two quite distinctive forces of attraction. Both are symbolically foregrounded early in the novel in a discussion of a series of pictures. The first reason posited for Paris's magnetic appeal is the notion of the metropolis as a cultural and cerebral Mecca. The content of the pictures, described as "Groups of women. Masses of flesh arranged to form intricate and absorbing patterns" (1929: 8), is reminiscent of Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907) with its naked, female bodies transformed into geometrical triangles and lozenges, a work described by Alan Bullock (1991: 58) as the first truly twentieth-century painting to herald in the modernist aesthetic vision. Moreover, the pictures have been newly purchased by a certain Miss De Solla, an English, expatriate, female painter living on the Parisian Left Bank. This underlines

the popular image of Paris as a major seat of modernism, and as the artistic and intellectual heart of Europe in the inter-war years.

However, Rhys evokes this widely held utopian notion of Paris as an alternative aesthetic homeland precisely in order to show that such a belief is illusory. Almost immediately Miss De Solla deflates the image of Paris as an empowering refuge for writers, painters and musicians alike when she comments: "It's pretty awful to think of the hundreds of women round here, painting away and all that" (1929: 10). This ironic, detached attitude has much in common with the equally dismissive views adopted by Rhys in her autobiographical works. While Paris may have afforded her privacy, tolerance and the necessary freedom to exercise her chosen profession as a writer —a freedom difficult, if not impossible, to secure in England[5], it did not promote sustained physical connection with any literary group, least of all the *avant-garde* Anglo-American "lost generation". She did not, for example, see Nathalie Barney's renowned separatist coterie of Sapphic novelists and poets as a potential source of sisterhood and support, nor did she form an allegiance with any of the "forgotten generation" of French women writers such as Anna de Noailles, Rachilde, Colette, Marguerite Audoux, Irène Némirovsky, Louise de Vilmorin, Josette Clotis, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, Jeanne Galzy, Myriam Harry and Catherine Pozzi.[6] There is no mention in her works of the network of powerful and influential French *salonnières* under whose auspices as yet unknown writers were given patronage and encouragement, or of the Anglo-American women of the Left Bank —Stein, Wharton, Nin, Loy, Doolittle, Barnes, Flanner, Beach, Wilde, Anderson, Brookes, Hall and Solano, far less their male counterparts.

As Lorna Sage argues, Rhys was "far more radically displaced than any of the literary figures imagination now obligingly supplies to surround her" (1992: 48). Her situation on the periphery is well illustrated in the diagram entitled "A Tangled Mesh of Modernists" (Scott 1990: 10). Here the names of forty-nine authors are placed in a circle, with twenty-six of these including Rhys printed in bold. Lines are drawn between authors to show relationships of a personal or professional nature. Reading alphabetically, we see that Ezra Pound, who precedes Rhys, has fifteen attachments, and Dorothy Richardson, who follows her, has ten, while Rhys herself has only two. Even Shari Benstock admits, "she moved like a ghost among the expatriates. Whether by choice or by chance she remained at the furthest fringes of intellectual and literary activity during her Paris residence" (1987: 449). Benstock's analysis stops too short, as this issue of choice or circumstance lies at the crux of Rhys's position vis-à-vis modernism.

Certainly Rhys's financial situation directly contributed to her physical isolation and feeling of difference from the majority of Paris-based modernists. She lived, after all, not in the fashionable Latin Quarter, but in the thirteenth district where she led a painfully deracinated, vagabond existence, drifting from one dismal, anonymous hotel to the next. However, the authorial persona generated in Rhys's correspondence and *Smile Please* would seem to suggest that her artistic isolation should be read quite differently: not as a biographical given, but as something self-conscious, as something self-imposed. She chooses to express no sense of solidarity or connection whatsoever with the "lost generation" whom she explicitly dismisses on several grounds, and this despite the fact that Ford Madox Ford considered her of their camp. For example, she expresses resentment over what she saw as the modernists' phoney bohemianism which sat so at odds with their privileged, financially secure backgrounds.[7] In addition, she attacks their failure to integrate properly with the French. Rhys writes in a letter to Diana Athill:

> The "Paris" all these people write about, Henry Miller, even Hemingway etc was not "Paris" at all —it was "America in Paris" or "England in Paris". The real Paris had nothing to do with that lot.—As soon as the tourists came the *Montparnos* packed up and left. (1984: 280)

Her own, quite different experience of "the other Paris" is fêted as being not only less cloistered, but also more genuine. Again, as with the *jalousie*, we see a challenge to conventional expectations and a celebration of marginality and difference.

Although Rhys explodes the myth of Paris as a unifying cultural haven, drawing her self-portrait as an isolated literary figure, she does not do so naively. However, critics have not always recognised that her self-imposed decision to limit contact with other *avant-garde* writers of the day and to relinquish the comforts and the consolations of a shared group identity in favour of artistic marginality is a self-conscious writing strategy. Judith Kegan Gardiner notes that Rhys's situation as a female outsider has all too often resulted in critics reductively classifying her work as narrowly autobiographical, while the reception accorded to male modernists who adopt a similar position of marginality is markedly different. Their affected alienation and assumed persona of the *flâneur* viewing life from societal margins is read as a metaphor for their ironic interrogation of "the diminishing possibility of human existence in a modern metropolitan society" (1982: 242). Rhys also knowingly exploits her doubly alienated

authorial position to explore the self-same thematic and aesthetic issues which preoccupied so many of her *avant-garde* peers.

The second set of associations linked to the collection of pictures with which *Quartet* opens, which might go some way to explaining Rhys's attachment to France, is related to their actual subject matter. The image of entwined, naked female bodies suggests women liberated from repressive social taboos, freely exploring their own sexuality. This is very much in accordance with the popular conception of inter-war Paris as a centre for progressive moral attitudes.[8] Christopher Robinson argues that although the Civil Code was still severe in the period, especially for male homosexuals, and while the public at large remained hostile to overt sexual experimentation, there was indeed a general relaxation of morality in post-1918 France. He also stresses that the expatriate women of the Left Bank were not subject to, nor indeed even susceptible to, the same type of constraints placed on their French peers (1995: 1-39). It is this very image of social and sexual emancipation associated with Paris in the *"années folles"* which first attracts Marya Zelli in *Quartet*. There is a decided element of sexual curiosity and voyeuristic excitement in her constant, vagabond wanderings past scenes as sharply focused as any Brassaï photograph —the haunts of "gaily painted ladies", the so-called "midwives' premises", the restaurant with the transvestite proprietor, the clubs and cafés frequented by working-class homosexuals, and the labyrinthine, "redly lit" streets (1929: 9, 29). She is entranced by what she considers the thrilling, authentic, hidden Paris, this underworld community of mistresses, models, call-girls and courtesans.

Once more Rhys sets up this romanticised concept of erotic freedom in order to show that it is ill-advised and fallacious. To reinforce the point that Marya's beliefs are fuelled more by fiction than reality, she simultaneously undermines several of the key tenets of the realist novel of education. In terms of the overall form, *Quartet* follows some conventions, opening with Marya's move to the capital and ending with her ingenuous illusions being stripped away. However, her enlightenment is not accompanied by the achievement of familial or social integration as would be the case in, say, a Fielding novel. Instead, following a series of rites of passage, she is led on an increasingly solitary downward spiral into the world of male violence and sexual exploitation. The author accentuates the grim inevitability of this *denouement* through several linguistic correlations in the opening and closing scenes: Marya's husband initially objected verbally "with violence" to her walking through "sordid streets" (1929: 9); he finally objects with physical

violence when Marya's endless walks take on a different set of connotations of actual street-walking.

Rhys also eradicates the traditional *Bildungsroman*'s series of mentor figures. None of the characters, least of all Lois with her mask of amiability and benevolence, acts as a guide to help the heroine in her journey to enlightenment. So Marya's primary lesson is that in the realm of romantic and carnal love there is a glaring absence of any spirit of solidarity and mutual support between women. Instead she experiences first-hand acute rivalry and competition on a psycho-sexual and an ontological level. Rhys depicts an existential dystopia in which all four principal characters seek to affirm their own sovereignty by quashing the threat of the others' equally autonomous consciousnesses. This is seen too in terms of the use of narrative voices articulating the key themes and *leitmotifs* within the novel, as there is considerable rivalry and tension in the four perspectives which constitute the fugal aspect of the titular quartet. Marya, whose voice is silenced at the end of the novel, comes to realize that in Paris, this so-called woman's paradise, concepts of selfhood are designated by hostile external agents and that the process of definition for all women involves the establishment of an arbitrary market value. She comes to understand the true nature of the balance of power between the sexes. Women's lives are determined by economic strictures and the ongoing daily quest for subsistence and shelter. In a novel where the principal male characters are art dealers and collectors, vulnerable women ultimately become like the physical paintings with which the novel opened: mere commodities to be bought, possessed and sold. Ultimately in this city governed by a market economy, driven by acquisitiveness, as elsewhere, money is all that really counts. As Bernadet says: "My God, Paris. Paris. Well, and then? Without money Paris is as rotten as anywhere else" (1929: 130). The reader, now enlightened, reinterprets the earliest image feminizing Paris in *Quartet*. The lights on the Seine no longer suggest a row of diamonds across an erotic, seductive woman's throat. With references to suicide and with the ambiguous ending in which Marya is perhaps herself murdered, the necklace of jewels, and the market economy it now symbolises, comes to resemble a noose. Rhys, then, refuses to endorse the popular myth of a sexually liberal Paris in which communities of women contentedly explore their own eroticism. In subverting key aspects of the traditional novel of education in the process, she destabilises our reading position, so that we are encouraged to re-examine the prescriptive, essentialist female roles, constructed in accordance with images of male desire, which are promoted by so much realist fiction.

Given the highly deceptive nature of inter-war Paris as a utopian literary Parnassus or an enabling, sexually liberated metropolis, and given Rhys's and her characters' related lack of assimilation, one might imagine that Paris affords no opportunities for connection whatsoever. But this is not so. We need to look at the roots of Rhys's francophilia to discover Paris's true potential. According to Rhys's autobiography, the origin of her love of France can be found in her early childhood. As a direct result of the near-total withdrawal of actual maternal affection in her infancy, Rhys transfers her filial need for nurturing onto a surrogate mother figure and, significantly, the language she speaks. In the first instance this is Ann Tewitt, the obeah cook, who would chat to her in French patois in the secure, female environment of the kitchen.[9] As an older child she experiences a second emotional shift in allegiance in her adoration of the convent Superior, Mother Mount Calvary, who taught her the French language. The immediate effect of this infatuation is an aspiration to live cloistered in the protective enclave of the convent, in a segregated, all-female, French-speaking realm beyond the jurisdiction of the patriarchal world. As she writes in *Smile Please*, it is viewed as "a safe place —there I would be happy" (1979: 79). Later still, in a further transfer of desire, it is Paris itself which comes to offer this utopian vision of a special maternal, protective and empowering domain.

This scenario has a fictional corollary in *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*. While the emotional gulf between Julia Morgan and her estranged mother is never spanned, some connection occurs through textual correlations, chiefly through the associations attributed to a Modigliani painting and through Rhys's disruptive chronology. Modigliani's naked model is explicitly equated with Julia, who exercises the same profession (1931: 40), and implicitly likened to Mrs Morgan, who has the same dark, frightening and fascinating mask-like face and proud, beautiful, animal body as the model (1931: 40, 70, 90). This similarity between Julia and her mother is reinforced when we are shown parallels in their lives. We see the mother regressing to a childlike condition and advancing through the final stages of old age, sickness and death. Similarly, through Julia's interior monologue recollections we observe her as an infant and a mother, and through her imagined projections we see her as a woman past her prime. But actual identification with the real mother is highly problematic, because it prefigures isolation, which accompanies female maturity. On Mrs Morgan's demise, Julia's ageing process accelerates alarmingly, a point made unambiguously in the ironic parallels and reversals in the chapters entitled "The First Unknown" and "The Second Unknown". Her physical change is succinctly captured in her attitude to her older neighbour with the badly dyed hair and black dress. Initially she holds her in

disdain; in the final scenes she is attired identically even down to adopting the "cringing" attitude attributed earlier to the older woman (1931: 11, 130). However, Mrs Morgan's death is also a potential liberation. This maternal erasure and the resultant definitive rupture of the mother-daughter bond plays a pivotal part in motivating, re-launching and structuring Julia's voyage of self-discovery, propelling her back to Paris for a second time in search of a matrilinear tradition or matriarchal community. Despite the fact that her first transfer of filial desire in Paris was unsuccessful, the cyclic nature of the novel and its lack of closure still leaves open the possibility of establishing valid emotional symbiotic connection in Paris.[10]

Rhys's next novel, *Good Morning, Midnight*, the most stylistically innovative of her works, forms an interesting pair with *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* as it too explores a young girl's attempt to develop a pseudo-symbiotic union in Paris. It treats the subject in a much more positive fashion, and this is underlined by the way in which it reverses the structure of the earlier novel. In *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* the action of the central section —the ultimate rupture of the mother daughter relationship— occurs during a ten-day break back in London, where Julia formerly lived. Paris, the seat of potential nurturing, is only present in the framework. In total contrast, in *Good Morning, Midnight*, the framework is London and the core of the novel comprises Sasha Jensen's ten-day visit to Paris during which she successfully establishes two supportive emotional attachments.

The novel is set precisely in October 1937 against an oppressive masculinized landscape overcast by the vying political threats of fascism and communism, symbolically present in the Trocadero International Exhibition scenes. Psychologically, it is a dystopic nightmare world fostered in no mean part by the male protagonists whose words and actions confuse and verbally suppress Sasha. In almost every dialogue, they wilfully deceive her with false or lacunary information concerning their names, ages, nationalities or pasts. Of these characters, one of the most damaging is Sasha's pompous English employer, Mr Blank, viewed by Rosalind Miles as an "individual bully" as well as a representative of "institutional masculine hostility" (1987: 135). With his very name suggesting his own uncomprehending nature, it is he, and not Sasha, who is uniquely responsible for the breakdown in their communications. His mastery of French is poor, he is unable to express himself clearly, and he brutally terrorises his female interlocutor into silence. The impact of this atmosphere and the result of such episodes is a breakdown in Sasha's sense of who she is, which in terms of the plot culminates in her descent into chronic alienation, oblivion, drunkenness and madness.

Identity is based on continuity of experience, and Rhys textually demonstrates its disintegration in several ways. She shows the acting/speaking self becoming split and multiple in the interior monologues when Sasha addresses herself arbitrarily in the first, second and third person (1939: 144, 153-7). In addition to this, there is an almost total absence of coherent linearity and progression in the narrative. Actual chronological time is replaced by subjective psychological notions of time, such that, for example, tomorrow sometimes is a few hours away, sometimes it is "A long time till tomorrow. A hundred years perhaps, till tomorrow..." (1939: 152), sometimes "tomorrow never comes" (1939: 133). Moreover, Sasha constructs a plurality of imagined, on occasion mutually exclusive, pasts, and is ambiguous in her use of future and future conditional tenses. An unreliable narrative in which fact and fantasy compete is generated, a point highlighted when Sasha comments: "the truth is improbable, the truth is fantastic; it's in a distorting mirror that you see the truth" (1939: 63). The text itself, mirroring Sasha's divided personalities, and her disorientating experiences of temporal dislocation and discontinuity, becomes splintered with streams of unanswered rhetorical questions and unfinished sentences tailing off in an abundant use of aposiopesis. Rhys's purpose seems clear. The collapse of Sasha's sense of selfhood makes her quest for supportive, symbiotic emotional attachment all the more pressing, just as the aggressively masculinized nature of Paris emphasises the need for a special, intimate space (both physical and textual) in which women may more freely bond and communicate.

The first constructive connection made by Sasha is with a milliner. The impetus for much of the plot is an early scene in which Sasha is publicly belittled in impeccable colloquial French by a younger English girl who correctly identifies her age, nationality and social status, from her appearance alone.[11] In order to soothe her pain of being doubly ostracised and to abate her acute sense of difference, Sasha attempts to suppress all signs of her status as a foreigner, including her native linguistic patterns. Using a French noun and an inverted phrasal structure common in French, she appraises her situation thus: "It shouts "Anglaise" my hat" (1939: 14). She dreams of clothing as a type of "protective armour" (1939: 84), which could hide her true identity as an outsider and so promote assimilation into the dominant group. The milliner does more than just supply Sasha with a new persona: she provides a moment of genuine meaningful connection. Her reassuring, intimate words and gestures are viewed as a celebration of an extraordinary exclusively female ritual, which stands in stark contrast to the failed dialogue with Mr Blank.[12] The second woman with whom Sasha establishes a meaningful relationship

in Paris is the midwife who delivers her baby. Just as her actions, like the milliner's, have an almost sacramental, ceremonial quality consecrating a unique female experience, the language of the midwife generates a special bond: "She speaks to me in a language that is no language. But I understand it". "Speaking her old, old language of words that are not words" (1939: 50). Like French to the ears of the native English-speaking child, like the non-verbal intercourse between the mother and new-born baby, the midwife's utterances and Sasha's response as her baby is delivered constitute a special female means of communication.

As with the *jalousie*, Rhys now challenges and reverses the reader's value systems. The highly disrupted texture of *Good Morning, Midnight* shifts from being an expression of a single woman's experience of alienation and loss of selfhood to being a celebration of womanhood, a re-appraisal of the concept of marginality. Working within a binary system, Rhys venerates all that is traditionally inscribed as negative, from labour pains to the titular midnight. In her new hierarchy, Mr Blank's domineering verbosity, which originally seemed more commanding than Sasha's silence, in hindsight is superseded by her superior, ironic, subversive laughter. Authoritarian rational prose, associated with masculine perspectives in the novel, is subordinated to rich free-flowing associative interior monologues with all their syntactical disruption (verbs without agents, shifting use of persons, accumulations of words performing the same grammatical function in the sentence). Even the novel's severe chronological disturbance —the blurring of past, present and future— takes on new meaning as Sasha and the midwife become part of a greater continuum of women stretching out through time. They are joined in a quasi-religious experience, united through a shared non-patriarchal language, a linguistic system whose primary attachment is to the natural rhythms of the female body. This is reflected in the novel's plot and structure, where cyclic repetition replaces a more conventional rigidly linear progression forwards. Just as Sasha's original fixed programme gives way to impulsive return visits to old haunts, so the narrative doubles up on itself repeatedly, a point underlined by the opening setting of the *impasse*, which acts as a physical barrier to onward movement. This circularity is mirrored too in the *leitmotif* of the return which features prominently in both the *in medias res* opening scene with its nostalgia for the past, and the forward-looking open-ended *dénouement*. So, Sasha succeeds in finding true assimilation in Paris and Rhys succeeds in privileging woman-centred themes within a stylistically innovative, subversive, narrative framework, producing a prototypal form of what Hélène Cixous and Annie Leclerc will much later describe as an *écriture féminine*.

In addition to this special female bonding process Rhys proposes a further, more general form of connection through literature itself. This requires some qualification as numerous aspects in the production and reception of literature, she notes, are divisive. For instance, the content of many works may be imperialist, homophobic, xenophobic or misogynistic, in short alienating for certain groups of readers, as is made evident in Audrey's reading experience in "The Insect World" in *Sleep It Off Lady*. Even books as physical artefacts can be used unjustly to assert the primacy and power of the owner: in "The Day They Burned the Books" in *Tigers are Better-Looking* Mr Sawyer's assumed supremacy over his wife is stressed symbolically through his possession of a fine library. Despite such problem areas, Rhys has a very positive view of the potential of literature, ending the opening section of her autobiography with the buoyant line: "now I was alone except for books" (1979: 26). Helen Carr argues that far from being "an inward-looking chronicler of private pathos, ignorant of literary culture, untutored even if intuiting the tone of her times", as some critics have described her, Rhys was indeed as much a reader as a writer (1996: 9). Her letters reveal her to have been a voracious one at that. Just as Woolf considers literature to be a "common ground", Rhys also understands it as a shared inheritance, there to be reappraised and adapted by each new generation of writers. This awareness of other authors, a keystone in modernist writing, is systematically translated into rigorously self-conscious works which interact with canonical texts in such a way as to constitute a form of vibrant, ongoing dialectic process.

One result is that in her own fiction, as Ellen Friedman puts it, she attempts to rewrite earlier authors into modernity (1989: 127), challenging their use of traditional narrative techniques and perspectives. This is patently the case of her most celebrated novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*. It draws on Elizabeth Jenkins's novel *Harriet* (1934), which treats the same theme of domestic sequestration, and also on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1848), rejecting and reversing traditional value systems, retelling the first wife's story from a more articulate, feminist and anti-imperialist viewpoint, and, despite Antoinette's self-immolation, declaring cultural negativity a source of power and strength worthy of celebration.[13] This, her last novel, is not an anomaly, as a number of her earlier works also employ a subversive process of literary appropriation and modernisation, enabling her to connect with other writers' ideas. Nor is this interaction in any way restricted to an exclusively English tradition. Rhys draws attention to this when in a letter to Francis Wyndham she relates her love of reading: "For years I have escaped

from an exclusively Anglo-Saxon influence and have never returned to it" (1984: 281).

Throughout her diverse correspondence there are references to a number of French authors including Guy de Maupassant and Gustave Flaubert (both viewed as exemplary models for Anglo-Saxon modernist fiction), Prosper Mérimée, Émile Zola, Georges Bernanos, Francis Carco (whose work she translated), Mallarmé, Léon Daudet, Colette, Genet, Cocteau and Jean-Paul Sartre. So, it should come as no surprise, then, that French literature plays an important part in her fiction, and extensive inter-textual references abound. Judith Kegan notes her allusions to Rimbaud, Verlaine, Anatole France and again Colette in *Good Morning, Midnight*. Helen Carr, exploring the influence of Maupassant's short stories on Rhys, notes that she chooses to align herself with a French tradition, and she astutely adds that it is an anti-bourgeois, anti-establishment tradition which was a dissident one in France itself.[14] But Rhys, I feel, goes further still. Not just content to associate herself with this nonconformist canon, she actively sought to rework some of its most stalwart mainstays.[15]

Voyage in the Dark is her most fully developed reinterpretation of a French classic. In its opening chapter the heroine, Anna Morgan, is reading Zola's *Nana* (1880), the ninth novel of his twenty-volume Naturalist Rougon-Macquart series, which tells of the rise and fall of an actress-courtesan in Second Empire Paris. Rhys alerts the reader to the fact that she will provide a very different perspective when Anna's friend Maudie comments: "I bet you a man writing a book about a tart tells a lot of lies one way and another" (1934: 9). There are three crucial areas of difference. First, Rhys spurns Zola's baroque theatricality. This is signalled by the antithetical opening scenes. *Voyage in the Dark* begins quietly with the heroine alone, imagining darkness and the fall of a curtain, while in total contrast *Nana* starts amid the excitement and animation of Bordenave's theatre/ brothel with a protracted, anticipatory wait for the rise of the curtain and the naked heroine's first public performance. All the atmosphere of what David Baguley describes as a "prolonged striptease", a long voyeuristic orgy, "a peepshow" (1993: 67-68) is absent in Rhys's work. Quite the reverse of Zola's heroine, Anna does not take pride in the power of her own sexuality or exude total self-confidence. She shows none of Nana's innate uninhibited erotic sensuality or obsessive self-absorption. Rhys, in *Voyage in the Dark*, then, paints a very different picture of the bohemian world of the theatre, stressing that while chorus girls and actresses, like Anna, may well serve as stimuli for male voyeuristic titillation, this does not mean that they are sexually insatiable, inclined to sapphism and involved in prostitution. Secondly, Rhys

rejects Zola's determinist theories, when she examines what motivates women to become prostitutes. It is no mere accident that in these two novels the protagonists have names which are anagrams. Nana in French is both a personal name and a colloquial noun for "girl". The implication, on Rhys's part, is that Anna could represent Everywoman. She rejects Zola's emphasis on the largely inescapable effects of heredity and milieu. In a more modernist vein, she highlights the randomness of Anna's fate, putting the case polemically that any respectable woman could be reduced to living on the largesse of others in a world driven by commercial enterprise.

Furthermore, Rhys questions Zola's presentation of the balance of power between the sexes. Throughout *Nana*, the heroine's sexuality is portrayed as a threat to patriarchal social norms. Her sexual preference for narcissist solipsism and lesbianism is construed as a refusal of traditional dependency on men, an aggressive transgression of the natural order. Her disdain for the masculine realm of power and finance is presented as a radical attack on the fundamental tenets of bourgeois mercantile society. There can be little doubt that Anna Morgan is aware of the way in which Nana's actions and attitudes alter the hegemony of power in both the class struggle and sex war. As Anna reads Zola, her vision becomes distorted —in her garden the tree is metamorphosed into "a man with stumps instead of arms and legs" and "the washing hangs limp" on the line (1934: 9). The striking images of emasculation and flaccid detumescence reflect Zola's depiction of middle-class and upper-class men, who considered themselves to be the helpless victims of intentionally alluring working-class prostitutes. The fact that Anna's vision is out of focus implies that Zola's viewpoint is similarly erroneous: it is women, not men, who are the true victims in the sex industry. Underpinning Rhys's rewriting of both *Jane Eyre* and *Nana*, then, is an innovative reappraisal of nineteenth-century literary constructions of female sexuality, with Rhys shifting the narrative perspective to give a new voice to a traditionally muted group.

Rhys's feminist revisionary stance, so evident in her treatment of *Nana*, together with her frank exploration of a woman's sexual life from the menarche to the menopause and beyond, enables her to do more than remodel nineteenth-century novels. It allows her to forge new, dynamic links with a substantial corpus of contemporaneous, French, female-authored works. Parallels can be seen in her open presentation of menstruation and the loss of virginity and Marthe de Bibesco's *Catherine Paris* (1927). Her depiction of adultery finds echoes in a range of works by Josette Clotis and Lucie Delarue-Mardrus. Her picture of the anxieties and desires of the mature woman is mirrored in Colette's *La Naissance du jour* (1928). Even her description of

women in old age has much in common with Christine and Minna in Irène Némirovsky's "Les Fumées du vin" (1934). Such correspondences are important for Rhys, who does not see literature as a single monolithic scheme, an exclusively linear progression, but rather as something altogether more rhizomatic and progressive, which draws on a wide range of sources and, in turn, exerts many varied influences.[16] One can only imagine her response to the ways in which her thematic and aesthetic concerns have continued to fascinate current French women writers —her attitudes, for example, to Simone de Beauvoir's *L'Invitée*, which draws heavily on the plot, characterisation and the existential dimension of *Quartet*; or indeed to Marguerite Duras's work, which shares with Rhys's corpus not just its innovative narrative experimentation, but its equally obsessive reworking of transmuted autobiographical material and its radical exploration of colonialism, female sexuality and power relations.

In explicitly resisting full assimilation into the "lost generation" of Anglo-Americans, in choosing to privilege women-centred themes within the context of modernist discourse, and in drawing on French culture and literature, Rhys effectively demonstrates that modernism, as Bonnie Kime Scott puts it, can be something other than a "directed, monological phenomenon" (1990: 4). Rhys's tangential alignment with an already dissident French tradition and her adoption of a revisionary attitude towards it provides her with a writing strategy which enables her to connect with other authors and schools of thought, while still producing formally and linguistically innovative fiction well suited to expressing the concerns of the disempowered outsider. It allows her to produce rich, thought-provoking extensively inter-textual works, while simultaneously maintaining the unique and very special quality of her own dissentient voice.

NOTES

[1] In the version of events which constitutes the original, suppressed ending of *Voyage in the Dark* (printed in full in Scott 1990: 381-389) it is gender which is foregrounded as the key thematic issue. Here Rhys uses a double narrative perspective to stress that women of all ages are exploited. The principal viewpoint is that of a call-girl dying from a botched abortion. As Anna slips in and out of consciousness her elliptical, at times almost hallucinatory, first-person interior monologue juxtaposes and interweaves piecemeal details of her present condition and childhood recollections of the carnival. In this way a striking parallel is set up between Anna's suffering as a girl and adult woman. The

girl's fascination with the parade is presented as a complex desire to understand the world of adult sexuality, which the festivities celebrate in the suggestive dancing of the semi-naked men and the ambiguous playful/ erotic gestures of the women who stick their tongues through slits in the heart-shaped lips of the masks they wear. The image is grotesquely mirrored in an oblique reference to the child being sexually abused. Anna at both ages is cast as silent/ silenced victim, and this role is one which Rhys interrogates and challenges relentlessly throughout her fiction.

[2] Jean Rhys's autobiography, *Smile Please*, covers her life story from the age of six to her marriage to Jean Lenglet, their taking up residence in Paris and her initial contact with Ford Madox Ford, who supported so many emerging modernist writers, that is to say the period 1896-1923.

[3] Rhys lived in Paris for much of the twenties and she started writing the first four of her novels there. Paris is the setting for *Quartet*, parts I and III of *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*, and *Good Morning, Midnight*.

[4] Paris forms the backdrop for many of *The Left Bank* stories, "Outside the Machine" in *Tigers are Better-Looking*, and "Night Out" and "The Chevalier of the Place Blanche" in *Sleep It Off Lady*.

[5] The difficulties experienced by women writers in England are depicted in "The Lotus" in *Tigers Are Better-Looking*.

[6] For further information on these authors see Milligan (1997).

[7] Mr Horsfield *in After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* is a highly parodic example of the pseudo-bohemian observer/ writer, who returns to the security of the dominant bourgeois group at the end of the novel. His supposed preoccupation and empathy with the displaced and dispossessed on the economic periphery is little more than a transient, vicarious experience, just another aspect of his nomadic tourism.

[8] Rhys ironically reflects Paris's reputation for moral laxity in a number of her early works. In *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*, for example, the London cinema shows a French film entitled "Hot Stuff from Paris". A similar metaphor is used in "Heat" in *Sleep It Off Lady*. The Domincans interpret the pyroclastic eruption of the Mont Peleé volcano in St. Pierre Martinique in 1902, which killed some forty thousand people, as a form of divine retribution for the corruption of the female islanders by a visiting troupe of wanton, "hot", Parisian actresses.

[9] Dominica had been a French colony until 1865.

[10] Julia is not Rhys's only fictional character to turn to Paris in search of nurturing, nor is she the most successful. The short story "Mannequin" in *The Left Bank*, set against the separatist ultra-feminine backdrop of an haute couture fashion house, provides an interesting example of a rewarding pseudo-symbiotic mother/ daughter bond between the maternal proprietor and the *jeune fille* mannequin.

[11] Most of Rhys's characters, like Sasha, are unable or unwilling to allow their clothes to express their own personalities. Miss Bruce in "Illusion", the first short story in *The Left Bank*, for example, wears sensible shoes, serge dresses and neat, tweed suits. These contrast with her world of desire, which is firmly repressed. Her perpetual longing for erotic love is transferred onto exotic cosmetics and brightly-coloured and richly textured designer gowns and dresses, which remain locked in her wardrobe. Only Antoinette Cosway, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, succeeds in reclaiming her true identity. She does so through the associations of her red dress. The colour of the dress recalls the deadly Dominican red ant which has colonised the secret bathing pool where Rochester first discovered his wife's freely expressed sexuality. In laying claim to her dress and all it symbolises, the heroine is able to halt the systematic erosion of her personality, to resume her true name (ant/ Antoinette), and rediscover her repressed nature. She casts off Rochester's false view of her and reasserts her power and passion in an apocalyptic scene where her inner nature and outer appearance merge as one, and where her red dress becomes synonymous with the crimson flames which destroy her attic prison.

[12] In "Heat", Rhys shows a certain solidarity among the Martiniquan women. Like Sasha and the milliner, they too have a secret language related to their head scarves and the particular method of knotting them. The literary representation of such traditions, with particular reference to Mme de Graffigny and Mme de Lafayette, is discussed in Miller (1988: 125-161).

[13] See the interpretation given in Spaull (1989: 83-121, 97).

[14] For an examination of the significance of Maupassant's "Fort comme la mort", "La Mason Tellier", "Mme Fifi", "Boule de Suif" and "La Horla", see Carr (1996: 31, 40-46, 90, 96).

[15] There is some movement towards acknowledging this in Coral Ann Howells's suggestion that "Temps perdu" is a re-examination of Proustian involuntary memory (Howells 1991: 38).

[16] In her letters Rhys repeatedly acknowledges the pleasure she finds in her own works being opened up to re-interpretation and reappraisal. She appreciated Selma Vaz Dias adapting her novels and short stories for radio performances, she expressed interest in the project of one of her readers to rework *Good Morning, Midnight* from the viewpoint of the gigolo, and, of course, she was actively involved in the translation and publication of her first husband's reinterpretation of *Quartet* (Jean Lenglet, who wrote under the pseudonym Edward de Nève).

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CRYING FIRE IN A THEATRE: AUDEN'S HARLEQUINADES

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> It so happened in a theatre that there was a fire behind the curtain. A harlequin stepped out in front of the curtain to inform the audience about what was going on. The news was received as a joke and applauded. The harlequin repeated it again only to greater enjoyment of the audience. This is how I think the end of the world will happen —to the laughter and clapping of wits who will think it a joke.
>
> Kierkegaard

In the chapter on "The Humorous Element in Modernist Poetry" in their *Survey of Modernist Poetry*, first published in 1927, Laura Riding and Robert Graves argued that modernist writing, for all its high intellectual seriousness, had a propensity for the comic mode and was distinguished by a sort of "wilful cheerfulness". The modernist poet, they argued, oscillates between "formal clownishness" and "unrestrained burlesque". He is original in that he is able to "make fun of himself when he is at his most serious" (1969: 226-229). Such playfulness was not however just there for its own sake. Frivolity is one of the strategies embraced by modernist writers to come to terms with the very condition of modernity:

> [M]odernist poetry retains the clown's privilege of having irrational prejudices in favour of a few things as well as against a few things. It assumes, indeed, the humorous championship of things that the last centuries have either hated, neglected or mishandled (1969: 242-243).

The presence of a frivolous theme, always a dynamic subversion, can be personified by Dionysus, who presides over the theoretical assumptions of

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the godfathers of modernism: Nietzsche, who restored Dionysus to central significance, Freud, who realized fully the power of the dark chthonic forces, Frazer, who connected the mythic imagination to the collective unconscious, and who reminded us of the many masks under which Dionysus manifests his presence. Marx's revolutionary carnival, too, voiced the need for alternatives to Apollonian logic.

According to Monroe K. Spears, the transgressive character of W. H. Auden's writing derives from a specifically modernist impulse toward the Dionysian, which more than any other symbol suggests the "dynamic energy and profound disruptive force of revolution" (Spears 1970: 40). Dionysus, Spears suggests, "represents the claims of the collective, the irrational, the emotional and abnormal; of the feminine or androgynous or perverse" (Spears 1970: 40-44). Auden, like his precursor T. S. Eliot, dared to be childish, lyrical, and frivolous in a destitute time. Before his leap into Christian commitment, Auden experimented with the idea of the Dionysian man, who, like the Nietzschean musician, shared the "morbid traits of the century", and who, nevertheless, was ready to "balance them by means of overflowing, plastic, and rejuvenating power" (Nietzsche 1964: 1014). Sharing in "this wordly frivolity", he is also tempted to the "wrong kind of seriousness" (Auden 1973: 14), which again he is ready to subvert by "fixing a little tail of jokes even to the most holy thing" (Nietzsche 1964: 1039). Overtly playful or only profoundly frivolous, the Dionysian attitude is largely a life-enhancing principle "which declares even the most terrible and questionable qualities of existence good, and sanctifies them" (Nietzsche 1964: 1050).

In his Inaugural Lecture as a Professor of Poetry at Oxford, "Making, Knowing and Judging", Auden asserted that poetry "must praise all it can for being and for happening" (1989: 60). Unlike the ancient Greeks who were in a position to attain the happy and joyful affirmation of life, as Nietzsche reminds us, modern man's predicament is such that he cannot possibly cherish it. Nietzsche's prescription, to rediscover the South inside oneself, to "stretch a clear, glittering, and mysterious southern sky above one, to reconquer the southern healthiness and concealed power of the soul once more for oneself, to increase the compass of one's soul step by step" (Nietzsche 1964: 1051), is an imperative which returns to the origins of European consciousness, and explains, perhaps, Auden's mysterious reference to "southern gestures", modified by the "intricate ways of guilt", in the 1930s poem "Our hunting fathers".

Auden's early poem, "Sir, no man's enemy", which ends with a call for "new styles of architecture, a change of heart" for modern man, observes

Anthony Hecht, develops the metaphor of "a rebirth of the spirit, which will of necessity express itself in all of mankind's arts" (1993: 29). This is Nietzsche's rebirth of the Dionysian through the instinct of play which, as Gilles Deleuze says in his remarks on Nietzsche, affirms the primacy of becoming over being, and, through the "power of transmutation, transvaluation, reflection, development", seeks not to bear, carry, to harness oneself to that which exists, but on the contrary, to unburden, unharness, and set free that which lives. It is not to burden life with the weight of higher or even heroic values, but to create new values that would be those of life, values that make life light or affirmative (1997: 100).

Dionysus is thus not a destructive but a liberating force. Ubiquitous, he is the perfect cosmopolitan who achieves lightness through transmutation, passing over to territories "where the structures collapse, where the ethoses get mixed up" (1997: 104). As Robin Skelton suggests in his Introduction to *The Poetry of the Thirties*, Auden was one of those who operated amongst "blurred borderlands between real and unreal, boyhood and manhood, game and ritual, vision and fantasy, fable and history" (1964: 33), his generic transgressions linking the world of popular culture with the realm of the private association, in the spirit of Dionysian play.

Such playfulness involves an exploration of the subjunctive and conditional, the realm of "as-if". Michai Spariosu, in his *Literature, Mimesis and Play*, links this to a Greek tradition represented by Hesiod's utopian model of playful gods and Plato's reluctant concession to the utility of poetic play, which can propagate a "useful lie", by way of pleasure making the truth more accessible. The "as-if" of play, Spariosu argues, thus "becomes good mimesis and good mimesis becomes play and the two concepts will become inextricably bound together" (1982: 19). Transgressive play involves a transition from the everyday, commonsensical world to a ludic one which can transform, in perception at least, established hierarchies of power and authority.

For the Mediterranean-loving *Sonnenkinder* of the interwar years described in Martin Green's *Children of the Sun*, such ludic transvaluations became a whole way of life. The oppositional character of their "decadent narrative", Green argues, challenged the high seriousness of the British literary tradition. Green characterizes this post-Baudelairean life-style, whether as dandy, rogue or naïf, as one in which "ornament and brilliancy, playfulness and youthfulness" took precedence over power, authority and seriousness (1976: 14). Perhaps the most significant element the Auden group derived from the playful narcissism and "self-stylization" (1976: 283) of these "children of the sun" is the parodic rejection of the burdensome

seriousness of the fathers' generation, the heroes of war and men of power. Auden's 1930 charade, *Paid on Both Sides,* with its pantomime figures, and the musical comedy and harlequinade motifs of *The Dance of Death* (1933), brought the mocking spirit of the *commedia dell'arte* into the more sombre ethos of the 1930s.

Against the Leavisian canons of high seriousness, the Auden group privileged the discourse of the Baudelairean dandy, what Auden in a letter to Stephen Spender wrote of as assuming the "drunken prophetic" mode (Bucknell and Jenkins 1992, 1: 60). "Le dandy," said Cocteau, "est tête froide et main froide" (1957: 96), attributes which a supreme joker uses as a "refus à s'exposer en quoi que ce soit" (Cocteau 1957: 92). In a late poem, Auden made the analogy directly between his generation and the make-believe of the *commedia*, observing in "To Professor Neville Coghill Upon His Retirement" (in Green 1976: 281), that

> For a columbine season
> we were free to play
> swains of a pasture
> where neither love nor money
> nor clocks are cogent
> a time to wear odd clothing
> behave with panache
> and talk nonsense, as I did.

According to Malcolm Bradbury, Baudelaire's dandyism is a symptom of the presence of a "necessary ethic of control and exercise of the will" rather than an arrogant or refined predilection (Bradbury 1991: 214). The dandy's essential self is concealed by the gesture and the pose of artifice, mask and costume, an Eliotic "wardrobe of excuses". When, however, the pose is stripped away, Auden suggests, we suspect the sinister duplicity of "someone who likes to play God behind the scenes" (Auden 1989: 156), whose detachment is a form of manipulative superiority.

Auden's ludic humour operates on the borderline between the aesthetic and ethical, with a rationale he found in Søren Kierkegaard. Humour for Kierkegaard was a crucial stage of existential awareness preceding faith, "the last *terminus a quo* in relation to the Christian type of the religious" (Ziolkowski 1992: 113). The ironic individual comprehends the extremity of his situation but does not find it worth attempting a justification. The "great translucency" of his existential humour differs from "the loud laughter of indeterminacy and sensuous irritability" which arises from misplaced seriousness or reckless frivolity (Kierkegaard 1976: 89). For the ethical

individual the comic offers a protective barrier between self and world, a distancing which for Kierkegaard is devoid of superiority or pride. Yet the move towards the ethical may subsume the aesthetic. The Kierkegaardian ethical voice can criticize the aesthete for the excessive use of sarcasm and mockery, but he does not deny their "intellectual intoxication".

Julia Kristeva can help elucidate what Kierkegaard signifies for Auden here, when she writes of laughter as a pursuit in which an artist is "called upon to pursue the doubling process in which he (as subject) posits himself as sovereign at the very moment he shatters within the process encompassing this position" (1984: 222). The ludic is characterised by a duality in which power and its subversion coexist, for, as Spariosu says, "power can be experienced both as ecstatic, exuberant, and violent play and as a pleasurable welling up and gushing forth of strong emotion" (1982: 12). Play as the irrational principle of being, as *paidia, ein Spiel ohne Spieler*, "the spontaneous ecstatic movement of the world itself" (Spariosu 1982: 28), subordinates reason and defines true being, just as a game expresses nothing but itself and abides simply by the rules of its own performance. Dandyism in this light can be viewed as a style without message, or, more precisely, as a style which constitutes its own message.

Writing in 1938 in *Modern Poetry*, Louis MacNeice drew attention to the proliferation of light verse in a decade supposedly characterised by sombreness and sonority. Whether offering merely "a grain of salt" to these more serious preoccupations, or fostering an "urge to nonsense", light verse assumed a new aspect in Auden's work, he argued. Auden went beyond what Eliot called "intense levity" to explore the comic possibilities of popular verse and dramatic forms, contemporary jazz, dance and music hall, and the language of gossip and contemporary slang. Auden's "sympathy with the popular world" thus opened up the realm of buffoonery for modernist poetry.

A variety of "light" literary forms deployed by Auden in the 1930s privilege carnivalesque play over the ethical, breaking down the boundaries between faith and pretence, seriousness and frivolity. While their purpose is to amuse, their inversion of established hierarchies also disrupts. Auden's interest in light, trivial or frivolous forms arises from a wish to recreate the poet's long defunct intimacy with his linguistic and cultural community, without which his work "dwindles in quantity and importance", so that, "instead of regarding himself an entertainer", he assumes the mantle of the outcast prophet, "the unacknowledged legislator of the world", or of the dandy who sits in the cafe, "proud that he is less base than the passers-by, saying to himself as he contemplates the smoke of his cigar: What does it matter to me what becomes of my perceptions?" (Auden 1980: 434).

The ludic and the frivolous constitute a zone where intimacy is still possible, where the gap may be bridged. In the 1930s, Auden situated his verse deliberately at the intersection of high and low linguistic registers. Lucy McDiarmid has pointed out, for example, that in his 1935 anthology *The Poet's Tongue*, "the alphabetical, anonymous order of its poems creates a community rather than a hierarchy or a tyranny of the old over the new, the famous over the unknown, the "literary" over the "folk " or "naive"" (1990: 66). In this, Auden was reproducing, in a practical pedagogic context, the kind of verbal community Eliot envisaged as a utopian ideal in his 1933 Harvard Lectures, speaking of the wish "to be something of a popular entertainer, to convey the pleasures of poetry [...] to larger groups collectively" (in McDiarmid 1990: 84).

The modernist poet, according to Riding and Graves, offers a 'border-sense, a well-poised mental hysteria, a direct exposure to time: there is [...] the far driven boundary line of humour [...] the callous haughtiness of indifference to danger" (1969: 255). The imagery of the border would have had an immediate appeal to Auden. The bourgeois society mocked in *The Dance of Death* (1933) stands on a border between its own impending death and the new life of a communism (represented at the end by a buffoonish Karl Marx) it refuses to embrace. Like a Renaissance masque (one of the many forms the play burlesques, along with the *commedia dell'arte* and contemporary musical comedy) it exposes in its very triviality the "sources and conditions of power" (*Princeton Encyclopedia* 1993: 739). The action unfolds through the uninterrupted gyrations of a male dancer personifying successively the Sun-God, the Demagogue, the Pilot, and so on, all manifestations of a historical patriarchal power revealed gradually to be powerless either to stop his purposeless dancing or to dance to a real conclusion. This dance diverts the (internal and actual) audiences in their unsuccessful quest for a fulfilling Ideal. Variously designated as master, leader, instructor, the unspeaking dancer communicates through the kinetic language of the body. He is idolized for his "splendid physique", "Grecian figure", and physical charm. He is the embodiment of what the bankrupt middle classes would wish to identify with ("We who are weak want a splendid physique"). Their desire for such bodily perfection conceals a death wish. The dancer is dancing the dance of death. The internal audience expect the dancer as Pilot to discover for them "the very heart of Reality". Instead he finally sinks into a "falling fit", dying from exhaustion, but still wishing everyone a jolly good time. At the end Marx enters to announce the dissolution of the means of production. The dancer as Demagogue represents, in fact, the latest manifestation of the *Führerprinzip*, at once entertainer,

leader and seducer, "our gallant captain for ever/ Our dandy, our dancer, our deep sea diver", like the clownish demagogue Hitler whose clones Auden expected shortly to see springing up throughout the western world.

Auden's masque, which he was later to disown as "rubbish", remains an important experiment with the use of the ludic to explore issues of serious contemporary concern. Deploying dance and the pastiche of popular songs, it sustains its theatricality by means of a play-within-the-play device, frequent and flamboyant changes of costume, the comic caricatures of Box and Cox, and direct Brechtian invitations to the audience to join in the fun (while at the same time ironically distancing itself from the increasingly desperate whirl), while a small jazz orchestra adds the lightness of European cabaret to the proceedings. The play both articulates and dispels contemporary anxieties by the very flimsiness of its forms and allusions, almost as if through dancing it out, the musical comedy devices could dissolve the uncertainty and anxiety of a low dishonest decade. Yet as the play openly admits, the wilful cheerfulness of this ludic indulgence is, in the end, a self-defeating intoxication, from which one will wake disenchanted: "Tasting, I place myself once more within the circle of Another, and there enchanted, perish". Acting the clown, according to Isherwood, Auden wore variously a panama hat, an opera hat, workman's cap, and a schoolmaster's mortar-board (Green 1976: 287). MacNeice similarly writes of "Maisie" looking almost ridiculous in her bright yellow sou'wester, black oil skin coat and huge gumboots (Auden and MacNeice 1985: 171). Seriously to cry fire in a crowded theatre, Harlequin would need to don a fireman's helmet.

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AUDEN'S JEREMIAD: *ANOTHER TIME* AND EXILE FROM THE JUST CITY

MICHAEL MURPHY
THE NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

1

> "An old ghost's thoughts are lightning,
> To follow is to die".
> "The Spirit Medium", W. B. Yeats.

That there were points of contact between Auden and Yeats was not unrecognised by contemporary writers. In November 1937, a double-issue of *New Verse* was published dedicated to a discussion of the work and influence of the then thirty-year-old Auden. Among the shorter contributions were those from Dylan Thomas and Graham Greene. In their enthusiasm for Auden they both make comparisons with Yeats, though the purpose is markedly different. While Greene is eager to show how highly he rates Auden's achievements —"[W]ith the exception of *The Tower*, no volume of poetry has given me more excitement than *Look, Stranger*" (*New Verse* 1937: 30)— Thomas means to condemn Yeats, whose poetry is, he says, in comparison to Auden's, "guilty as a trance" (*New Verse* 1937: 25). Thomas elides two aspects of Yeats's personality: his interest in spiritualism, and his flirtation with fascism and political isolationism. While the former marks him out as a poet of the 1890s, the latter echoes the deep sense of disappointment poets of Thomas's generation must have felt with a number of artistic father-figures, amongst them Yeats, Eliot and Pound, whose right-wing sympathies were becoming every day more apparent.[1]

Yet even while Thomas is drawing these distinctions, his mischievous "P.S. Congratulations on Auden's seventieth birthday" blurs and complicates the perceived differences between the two poets. At the time of its

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I

> "An old ghost's thoughts are lightning,
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That there were points of contact between Auden and Yeats was not unrecognised by contemporary writers. In November 1937, a double-issue of *New Verse* was published dedicated to a discussion of the work and influence of the then thirty-year-old Auden. Among the shorter contributions were those from Dylan Thomas and Graham Greene. In their enthusiasm for Auden they both make comparisons with Yeats, though the purpose is markedly different. While Greene is eager to show how highly he rates Auden's achievements —"[W]ith the exception of *The Tower*, no volume of poetry has given me more excitement than *Look, Stranger*" (*New Verse* 1937: 30)— Thomas means to condemn Yeats, whose poetry is, he says, in comparison to Auden's, "guilty as a trance" (*New Verse* 1937: 25). Thomas elides two aspects of Yeats's personality: his interest in spiritualism, and his flirtation with fascism and political isolationism. While the former marks him out as a poet of the 1890s, the latter echoes the deep sense of disappointment poets of Thomas's generation must have felt with a number of artistic father-figures, amongst them Yeats, Eliot and Pound, whose right-wing sympathies were becoming every day more apparent.[1]

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publication, Yeats was seventy-two years old. Perhaps Thomas, seven years Auden's junior, is firing a warning shot from a still younger generation of poets across Auden's bows, suggesting that, given the accolades now being heaped upon him, his three-score years and ten must be drawing to a close, with the gathered acolytes come not to praise but to bury him.

Central to an understanding of Auden's poetic relationship with Yeats are the intertextual borrowings from, and references to, Yeats's work which sustain the structure and argument of Auden's great elegy "In Memory of W. B. Yeats". Written in the immediate weeks after Auden's arrival in the United States, the poem is an implicit response to Yeats's doubts and self-questioning in "[The] Man and the Echo": "Did that play of mine send out/ Certain men the English shot?" (Yeats 1992: 392). Yeats is referring, of course, to events in Ireland during Easter 1916, and the possibility that his nationalistic drama, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, had played some part in determining the actions and subsequent deaths of the leaders of the uprising. But Auden's poem can only have been read in the context of more immediate political upheavals and the imminent threat of another European conflagration.

Like Yeats, Auden was a public figure. His poems and plays were read by his contemporaries as voicing their own thoughts and experience, while the Establishment showed its recognition of his importance by awarding him the King's Gold Medal in 1937. Auden was, therefore, in a unique position to understand the anxieties Yeats voiced about the tensions between a poet's duty to speak out and the possible repercussions and responsibilities of his or her so doing.

Stan Smith has provided arguably the clearest and most detailed account of the nature of these textual exchanges (Smith 1994), charting their advent with the publication of Yeats's "[The] Man and the Echo" in *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The London Mercury* in January 1939, the month of Yeats's death, through to Auden's elegy written the following month and first published, without what we now know as the middle section of the poem's triptych, in the *New Republic* on 8 March (with the revised version appearing in *The London Mercury* in April), and culminating in Auden's prose obituary "The Public v. the Late Mr William Butler Yeats", which appeared in the Spring edition of *Partisan Review*. Smith begins his essay by quoting an extract of a letter Auden wrote to Stephen Spender in 1964, a letter which clearly shows Auden's acknowledgement of Yeats as a poetic father-figure while at the same time demonising him, in Smith's words, as the "devil of rhetoric and political propaganda":

> I am incapable of saying a word about W. B. Yeats because through no fault of his, he has become for me a symbol of my own devil of unauthenticity, of everything which I must try to eliminate from my own poetry, false emotions, inflated rhetoric, empty sonorities[...] (Smith 1994)

What Smith does not comment on, however, is the significance of the word "symbol" in this paragraph. Not only is Auden admitting the fact that he still feels it necessary to struggle with aspects of Yeats's influence, but the very terms in which this struggle is described are, to all intents and purposes, themselves an implicit acknowledgment of the importance he attached to aspects of Yeats's art. Consciously or not, Auden is admitting that he has used the figure of Yeats as a symbolic foil for his own *daemons*, just as Yeats used figures such as Maud Gonne, Lady Gregory and James Connolly in the symbolic drama of his poetry. This is clearly the case in "In Memory of W. B. Yeats", where Auden uses the occasion of Yeats's death to voice those anxieties which so powerfully animated his own poetry at this time.

The elegy is not an isolated example of this process. While it clearly integrates themes and images from Yeats's poetry, it also points the reader back in the direction of Auden's "Spain", written in early 1937, to the group of poems Auden wrote prior to arriving in the United States in January 1939, and to those written in the immediate months after his arrival. If, as Stan Smith suggests, the relationship between Auden and Yeats is oedipal, with Auden playing the role of Oedipus to Yeats's Laius, then Spain and fascism is the crossroads at which they meet, with "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" functioning as a signpost. Published in 1940, *Another Time* can therefore be read as Auden's cohesive and imaginative response to the political crisis in Europe, the artistic crisis prompted by Yeats's death, and the crisis of his own exile to the United States. Central to all three concerns was Auden's developing fascination with how human beings determine the ways in which they live in relation to one another. And his symbol for this, as it was for Sophocles, is that of the "Just City".

II

"He'd done his share of weeping for Jerusalem".

"Voltaire at Ferney", W. H. Auden.

The only new poem of Auden's to be included in the double-issue *New Verse* was "Dover". Written in August 1937, the town becomes in the poem a locus for ambivalent feelings, a watery crossroads of arrivals and departures, of idealistic hopes and the onset of harsher realities. The town also serves to remind us of historical intersections between England and continental Europe as evidenced by "the dominant Norman castle" and "Georgian houses". In one sense Dover is only the latest incarnation of those troubled and troubling landscapes that haunted Auden's poetic imagination a decade earlier. What is different is that these earlier locations —mine shafts and dams, "washing-floors" and tramlines— though they might be man-made, were either abandoned or uninhabitable. Auden is now more specifically focused on the urban and how we construct an environment in which to live moral and ethical lives. He has come down from the valleys and entered the *polis*. Or almost.

The opening stanzas of "Dover" provide a view of the town not as it would be experienced from the ground but as it would be seen from the air. The eye of the poet moves at a tremendous pace, first showing us the approaches to the town —"Steep roads, a tunnel through the downs"— before hurrying on to a "ruined pharos", a "constructed bay" and an "almost elegant" seafront. The tone of voice —cool, detached, descriptive— might have come from one of the documentary films Auden had worked on during the thirties, as might the camera-like movement of the poet's eye. Like most documentaries of the time it works hard to build up an illusion of objectivity, an objectivity that convinces us of the authority of the speaker not just because of the tone of voice but the fact that s/he seems to be speaking at a clear remove from the events described. Countering this realism, however, are details alerting us to the fact that Auden is concerned with exposing a reality which, like the town itself, has "a vague and dirty root".

Throughout the poetry Auden wrote in the 1930s he provides insights into the economic realities of a contemporary England in steep economic decline and about to become the world's first post-industrial nation. Dover, though a "constructed bay", now manufactures nothing. It is a place of faded elegance and diminishing economic importance. Any short-term use it may have is to help shore-up a British empire already in retreat:

> Here live the experts on what the soldiers want
> And who the travellers are,
>
> Whom the ships carry in and out between the lighthouses
> That guard forever the made privacy of this bay
> Like twin stone dogs opposed on a gentleman's gate:
> Within these breakwaters English is spoken; without
> Is the immense improbable Atlas. (Auden 1986: 222)

The vision of England granted to Auden is, like Gloucester's in *King Lear*, one of preparedness for war, of spies and civilian informers, of disputed inherited wealth, and fear and ignorance of the world "without". Only at the beginning of the fifth stanza does the poet show us the view from ground level:

> The eyes of the departing migrants are fixed on the sea,
> To conjure their special fates from the impersonal water;
> . . . . . .
> And filled with the tears of the beaten or calm with fame,
> The eyes of the returning thank the historical cliffs:
> "The heart has at last ceased to lie, and the clock to accuse[."]

The images and the point of view are significant. The roll-call of foreign countries Auden visited between 1934 and 1939 provides us with a list of the world's political hot-spots: Belgium and Czechoslovakia in 1934, Spain and France in 1937, and, in 1938, Hong Kong and China. A pattern emerges in Auden's travels, one that sees him gravitating to places where the political map was being redrawn by the re-emergence of repressed historical grievances, and this at a time when he was looking to redefine the boundaries between his personal and public self, and to negotiate for himself as a poet a course between the two. "Dover" can therefore be read as charting the decline of England as a world power, figured in the image of the aeroplane superseding the ship ("Above them, expensive and lovely as a rich child's toy,/ The aeroplanes fly in the new European air,/ On the edge of that air that makes England of minor importance"), an image which I will return to later. The poem also functions as a symbolic arena for the struggle between Auden's idealism and his awareness of pragmatic reality: between, as Auden portrays it, the migrant convinced that his or her fate will be special, and the wiser tears or thanks of the returning traveller, only grateful that "The heart has at last ceased to lie, and the clock to accuse".

Auden's personal experience of these two contrary states was a recent and a painful one. Other than a brief visit to Paris in April 1937, his previous journey abroad had been to Spain to join the International Movement against right-wing opposition to the democratically-elected government. What exactly Auden did while in Spain is subject to conjecture. Throughout his life he himself remained reluctant to discuss the experience,[2] but the effect it had upon his poetry was to become more and more clearly defined.

In a letter to E. R. Dodds on 8 December 1936, Auden wrote: "I so dislike everyday political activities that I won't do them, but here is something I can do as a citizen and now as a writer, and as I have no dependants, I feel I ought to go". "Please", he added, "don't tell anyone about this". Dodds wrote back asking for further explanation, to which Auden replied:

> I am not one of those who believe that poetry need or even should be directly political, but in a critical period such as ours, I do believe that the poet must have direct knowledge of the major political events. It is possible that in some periods, the poet can absorb and feel all in the ordinary everyday life, perhaps the supreme masters always can, but for the second order and particularly today, what he can write about is what he has experienced in his own person. Academic knowledge is not enough. (Carpenter 1983: 206-207)

Auden's reply can have left Dodds in little doubt that the primary reasons for his going to Spain were less to do with supporting the Republic than with his needing an opportunity to test himself against the "supreme masters" and to discover a social justification for his role as a writer.

Yeats's response to the deepening European crisis was, to say the least, capricious. In his infamous introduction to *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* in 1936, as well as dismissing the poets of the First World War ("[P]assive suffering is not a theme for poetry"), he made slighting reference to the politics, and by extension the poetry, of Auden and his followers: "communism is their *Deus ex Machina*, their Santa Claus, their happy ending, but speaking as a poet I prefer tragedy to tragi-comedy" (Coote 1998: 548). The anthology did little to endear Yeats to those looking for reasons to marginalise him and his poetry, amongst them writers whose primary influences were the First World War poets and a political situation in which any criticism of communism could be read as tacit support for fascism. Yeats's stewardship of the anthology would seem, therefore, a critical point in marking him out as the antithesis of everything the Auden Generation stood for. However, Louis MacNeice in his important 1941 study of Yeats's poetry, while prepared to acknowledge these differences, argues that there were deep affinities between writers of the younger generation and the Yeats of this period:

> The earlier Yeats had been too remote from [the younger English poets of the Thirties], subsisting on *fin de siècle* fantasies. But now he had broken into the twentieth century; *he had been through the fire*.
>
> It must be admitted that there was a certain snobbery in our new admiration, a snobbery paralleled in Yeats's own remark: "I too have tried to be modern." The word "modern" is always relative. What did Yeats's modernity —a quality which in his youth he had violently repudiated— consist in? As far as content goes [...] Yeats was "modern" in the following respects. He had widened his range [...], was now dealing fairly directly with contemporary experience, some of it historical, some of it casual and personal. As well as admitting contemporary matter into his poetry, he was also admitting moral or philosophical problems. And he was expressing many more moods, not only the "poetic" ones. He was writing at one moment as a cynic, at another as an orator, at another as a sensualist, at another as a speculative thinker. [...] But on the whole it was Yeats's *dryness* and *hardness* that excited us. T. E. Hulme, in an essay on Romanticism and Classicism written some time before the Great War, prophesied an era of dry hard verse in reaction against the Romantic habit of "flying up into the eternal gases." Yeats, who had flown up there himself, had managed —on occasions, at least— to come down again. Therefore, we admired him. (MacNeice 1967: 156)

"Dryness and Hardness": the mixing of poetic registers and modes of discourse, the admittance of the personal and the political, the contemporary and the historical, and a willingness to try to keep his poetic feet on the ground. Interestingly, MacNeice's summary of Yeats "the Modern" also serves as a description of Auden's techniques in a poem like "Dover". Where the two men fundamentally differ, however, is in their reading of and response to historical events. According to Yeats's apocalyptic vision, war in Europe could only bring about "Heaven blazing into the head:/ Tragedy wrought to its uppermost", with history a stage on which all "perform their tragic play" (Yeats 1992: 341). It is the artist's role, Yeats believed, to pick up the pieces and begin again from scratch, and to do so joyfully: "Out of Cavern comes a voice/ And all it knows is that one word "Rejoice"" (Yeats

1992: 340). Though not without its ambiguities, Auden's response was much less "lofty". Along with the tens of thousands of other men and women who made the journey, Spain offered him the opportunity to intervene personally, and to do something not only as a writer but as a citizen.

III

> "He seeks the hostile unfamiliar place,
> It is the strangeness that he tries to see".
> "The Traveller", W. H. Auden.

"FAMOUS POET TO DRIVE AMBULANCE IN SPAIN". Readers might have been forgiven for wondering whether the editor of the *Daily Worker* had not decided to move the situations vacant column onto the front page, so ambiguous was the morning headline of 12 January 1937. What it now alerts us to, however, is the banality of Auden's first-hand experience of the "Theatre of War". Perhaps the nearest he came to describing these banalities in verse is contained in "Musée des Beaux Arts", where Yeats's tragic vision of human suffering becomes tragi-comic in "the dreadful martyrdom must run its course/ Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot/ Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse/ Scratches its innocent behind on a tree" (Auden 1986: 237). Not only are human actions not endowed with the redemptive power of Yeats's "tragic joy",[3] but they are removed from the scene completely. This technique is similar to Tolstoy's in his short story "Kholstomer",[4] where the narrator is a horse, from whose point of view events such as the senseless and cruel whipping of a serf are described and (mis-)understood. MacNeice's insistence that poetry be willing to take its head out of the clouds is fully realised in "Musée des Beaux Arts", literally so when we remember that the painting which is the subject of the second stanza is Brueghel's "The Fall of Icarus".

If "Musée des Beaux Arts", written in Paris and Brussels during the winter of 1938/39, can be read as Auden's considered reflections on the realities of war, his more immediate response was "Spain". Begun almost immediately after returning to England in March 1937, the poem was first published in pamphlet form by Faber on 20 May, with its royalties donated to the work of Medical Aid in Spain.

There are some interesting parallels to be drawn between the response to Auden's poem and those which met Picasso's painting of the bombing of Guernica when it was exhibited in England at the New Burlington Gallery in

October 1938. Both poem and painting divided their critics and caused some who had previously admired both artists to question these latest developments in their work. One of the acutest of those who responded positively was Stephen Spender. Replying to André Gide's criticisms of Picasso, Spender picked up on the fact that Gide saw the failure of "Guernica" in terms of its having become "*excentric*, it breaks away from its centre, or has no centre" (Cunningham 1986: 220). Spender had isolated a similar eccentricity in Auden's work a year earlier when, in "Oxford to Communism", his contribution to the Auden issue of *New Verse*, he offered a quizzical reading of Auden's work based, as the essay's title suggests, on the tensions between Auden's middle-class, High-Church Anglican background and his intellectual and political convictions. The energy of Auden's poetry, Spender claims, is fuelled by these opposing tensions, with his great gift being the ability to find a vantage point that allows him to see and judge both clearly:

> The subject of his poetry is the struggle, but the struggle seen, as it were, by someone who whilst living in one camp, sympathises with the other; a struggle in fact which while existing externally is also taking place within the mind of the poet himself[.] (*New Verse* 1937: 10)

The one poem above all others which most clearly articulates this position, says Spender, is "Spain".

Like Spender's description of "Guernica", the poem is "certainly not realistic [and] is in no sense reportage". It begins, as Humphrey Carpenter notes, with one of Auden's "hawk-like" views, the subject being not a place, as it was to be in "Dover", but time or, more properly, history. Carpenter also states that one stimulus to Auden's writing the poem was his having read *Illusion and Reality: A Study of the Sources of Poetry* by the young critic Christopher Caudwell, killed in Madrid in February 1937. Caudwell discusses in the book the radical changes affecting the modern world as a result of economic forces. "These changes", he wrote, "do not happen "automatically", for history is made by men's actions, although their actions by no means always have the effect they are intended to have. The results of history are by no means willed by any men" (Carpenter 1983: 217). Caudwell clearly pre-empts the central concern of Auden's elegy for Yeats, that "poetry makes nothing happen", but in March 1937 Auden, like Yeats, was still concerned with the belief that poetry could and should effect change. There were, however, hard choices to be made —"The conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder", as Auden bluntly put it in "Spain". Though this line was later changed to "The conscious acceptance of guilt in

the *fact* of murder" (my italics) and, in 1965, the poem was omitted altogether from *Collected Poems*, the fact remains that on his return to England Auden saw the war in Spain as a decisive point in Western history, one which would determine how the past could be read and the future shaped, and saw too that the decisive influence in this "struggle" would not be the appearance of some *Deus ex Machina* but active human involvement:

> The stars are dead; the animals will not look:
> We are left alone with our day, and the time is short and
> History to the defeated
> May say Alas but cannot help or pardon. (Auden 1986: 212)

The problem lay in determining what exactly was being fought for. The ideals of the young were easily manipulated, and reports of events in Spain were not exempt from being economical with the truth. Indeed, as Valentine Cunningham says in relation to Auden's poem, Spain became "all things to all men (and women), it respond[ed] to whatever subjective needs the observer [brought] to bear on it [becoming] very like Hamlet's cloud formations, in fact, very like a whale" (Cunningham 1986: xxxi).

> To you I'm the
>
> Yes-man, the bar-companion, the easily-duped:
> I am whatever you do; I am your vow to be
> Good, your humorous story;
> I am your business voice; I am your marriage.
>
> "What's your proposal? To build the Just City? I will.
> I agree. Or is it the suicide pact, the romantic
> Death? Very well, I accept, for
> I am your choice, your decision: yes, I am Spain".

As these lines unfold, one motivating force predominates. Just as "Dover" shows a town that is the focus for all manner of repressed emotions ("the trains that fume", "the vows, the tears, the slight emotional signals", and the "Soldiers [...] in their pretty clothes,/ As fresh and silly as girls"), so Spain becomes a focus of frustrated sexuality.[5] The image Auden uses to gather these disparate emotional threads together is that of the "Just City". Cunninghan writes:

> [I]f Spain's necessities, tested thirties writers in their lives, it also provided tests for their writing. Bluntly put, thirties writing's preoccupation with questions of war, action, pacifism and the possibility of heroism [...] came suddenly very sharply and nastily to life in Spain. [...] Auden, for example, found it difficult to go on praising bombing planes and helmeted airman after his Spanish experiences. (Cunningham 1986: xxv)

There is every chance that as a "FAMOUS POET", Auden was protected from seeing much real front-line action. His experiences in Spain, therefore, might not have been such to cause the change in his poetry Cunningham suggests. What must undoubtedly have shaken him, and made him re-evaluate his use of the kind of imagery mentioned by Cunningham, was the aerial bombing of Guernica on 20 April 1937 by German Junker 52s and Heinkel 111s. Used, as Goering admitted in 1946, as a "testing ground" (Thomas 1964: 419), Guernica proclaimed the future of modern warfare: the systematic terrorisation and destruction of civilian populations. If the "Just City" remained an ideal, Guernica, a small market town with a population of some 7,000 people swelled by upwards of 3,000 refugees, demonstrated the latest threat to its fragile existence.

Auden's poetry continued to show a fascination for towns and cities. Between finishing "Spain" and writing "In Memory of W. B. Yeats", he was to write poems about Dover, Oxford, Hong Kong, and Brussels. Images of the city also appear in other poems, and always associated with the figure of the artist. Rimbaud is located in a landscape of "railway-arches", A. E. Housman linked to both Cambridge and North London, and Voltaire with Ferney. In "Matthew Arnold", it is the poetic "gift" itself that is "a dark disordered city". This relationship between the poet and the community in which he or she lives, works and writes, was analysed by Auden in "The Poet and The City". Some of his conclusions are amongst the most iconoclastic he ever wrote:

> A society which was really like a good poem, embodying the aesthetic virtues of beauty, order, economy and subordination of detail to the whole, would be a nightmare of horror for, given the historical reality of actual men, such a society could only come into being through selective breeding, extermination of the physically and mentally unfit, absolute obedience to its Director, and a large slave class kept out of sight in the cellars. (Auden 1975: 85)

In the light of what we know about his interest in eugenics, it is difficult not to read this passage as an implicit reference to Yeats, for whom aesthetic considerations were wont to become confused with procreational. An example of this is found in his foreword to *Essays and Introductions* (1961). "A poet", Yeats claims, "is justified not by the expression of himself, but by the public he finds or creates". He goes on to apply this rather Frankenstein's-monsterish argument to G. F. Watts and Dante Gabriel Rossetti and their choice of unconventional female models: "Two painters created their public; two types of beauty decided what strains of blood would most prevail" (Yeats 1961: 4). Yeats's thinking may have been influenced by Darwin's discussion in *Descent of Man* of the role played by aesthetics during the mating season for animals and birds. But as the thirties progressed and he further developed his conception of tragic joy, one aspect of which was physical perfection and the full exercise of all one's faculties, his continued interest in and active support of eugenics, most fully articulated in *On The Boiler* (1939), played into the hands of the Fascists. That he also associated eugenics with the need for a world war only further problematises the relationship between Yeats's ideal of the "Just City" (or "Just Ireland") and Auden's.

Auden's distrust of artists and their Utopian dreams also occurs in one of the aphoristic paragraphs that make up *The Prolific and the Devourer*, written in the spring or summer of 1939, and which marks Auden's first attempt at working out the ideas that were to be later developed in "New Year Letter" and, to some extent, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats". The book, unfinished, is another example of what Spender meant by Auden's ability to live in one camp while simultaneously sympathising with the other.

The title, taken from Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, is used by Auden to explore the relationship between artist and politician in the modern world, and the contribution both make to the building of a "Just City". Rather than resolving the conflict between the two, Auden, like Blake, sees the necessity of their opposing views existing in a kind of creative tension or friction. The proper function of both the artist and the politician, he proposes, is to "seek to extend their experience beyond the immediately given". (Auden 1986: 396). Later that year, Auden was to do this in a literal way by emigrating from England to the United States. He arrived in New York, via Paris and Brussels, on 26 January 1939 and was greeted by heavy snow and ice blocks floating on the Hudson. The afternoon of his arrival brought the news that Barcelona had fallen to Franco. Two days later, Yeats died in the South of France.

IV

> "Tears fall in all the rivers. Again the driver
> Pulls on his gloves and in a blinding
> snowstorm starts
> Upon his deadly journey; and again the writer
> Runs howling to his art".
> "Journey to Iceland", W. H. Auden.

With its stark vision of a city in the grip of winter, the opening section of Auden's elegy for Yeats immediately alerts the reader to the fact that, like "Spain", the poem means to be neither realistic nor simple reportage. What is striking about the opening stanzas, as with "Spain", "Dover" and, to a lesser extent, "Musée des Beaux Arts", is the poet's physical detachment from what is being described. Where exactly is the poet speaking from, we might ask, able to command this sweeping view of brooks and airports, public statues and evergreen forests, rivers and "fashionable quays"? This aloofness can in part be seen as dramatising an objectivity on Auden's part, one that withdraws from an emotional response to Yeats's death and therefore allows him to consider the event in the light of its wider significance.

The effect of these opening stanzas is remarkably similar to the experience described by Auden in his essay "American Poetry", where, analysing the differences between European and American writers, he focuses on the changed relationship between the individual and landscape, a change, he suggests, which can best be judged from the air:

> It is an unforgettable experience for anyone born on the other side of the Atlantic to take a plane journey by night across the United States. Looking down he will see the lights of some town like a last outpost in a darkness stretching for hours ahead, and realize that, even if there is no longer an actual frontier, this is still a continent [...] where human activity seems a tiny thing in comparison to the magnitude of the earth[.] (Auden 1975: 358)

The city with its surrounding countryside described in the opening section of "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" is a strange amalgam of primeval forests and the contemporary world of airports and suburbs. Like the figure encountered by the poet in Eliot's "Little Gidding", Auden's vision of the city and its surroundings is "a familiar compound ghost/ Both intimate and unidentifiable" (Eliot 1969: 193). The city has become a necropolis, and the poem, in its movements through, over and around that city/ body, assumes the clinical air of an autopsy. The disinterestedness of the poet is also similar

to the poise of the airman in Yeats's elegy for Robert Gregory, who, "Somewhere among the clouds above", looks down and declares: "Those that I fight I do not hate,/ Those that I guard I do not love" (Yeats 1992: 184). It is not difficult to imagine Auden sympathising with the airman's stated reason for taking part in the war: "A lonely impulse of delight/ Drove me to this tumult in the clouds", and that this image from Yeats may have prompted the images of helmeted airman that occur in his own poetry.

News of Yeats's death and the fall of Barcelona seem to have fused in Auden's imagination. The vision of the dying man's stricken body as a city beset by rumours, by the failure of electrical supplies, by emptying squares and silent suburbs, had a very real correlative in the experience of Barcelona, Guernica and other Spanish towns and cities. While what is most often remembered about the elegy is the phrase "poetry makes nothing happen", the significance of this is only fully understandable if we recognise the fact that many of the writers who fought in Spain believed the exact opposite, that their being in Spain would indeed make something happen by helping secure the elected power of the left-wing government. Though Auden's political ideals may have been irrevocably shaken by his experience, Spain remained, as he had written in his letter to Dodds, an opportunity for him to do something as a citizen and a poet. The Fascist victory may have confirmed Auden's growing doubts of ever successfully resolving the tensions between the two, in which case "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" becomes a record of his determination to continue writing but also to be free of the illusion that the activity of itself could make any significant political or social changes. Spain had also shown that the youthful dream of "poets exploding like bombs" could happen all too literally and still fail to make the desired thing happen; while Lorca's murder in July 1936, only two days after the outbreak of the Civil War, was a brutal warning that the poet could no longer take it for granted that he or she had any part to play in the constitution of the "Just City".

Three times within the ten-lined second section of the elegy, the word "survive" appears in connection not with Yeats, who has yet to be mentioned by name, but with poetry in general. Threatened by "physical decay", "hurt", "madness", "isolation" and "grief", poetry retreats "to the valley of its saying" and becomes "A way of happening, a mouth". While Auden offers us the example of a poet alienated within a landscape that contains the possibility of tragic suffering, it is also one he firmly locates within an economic, and therefore political, climate. The poet's experience of "the parish of rich women" is balanced by the wider world of the first section of the elegy, where "the poor have the suffering to which they are fairly

accustomed,/ And each in the cell of himself is almost convinced of his freedom".

In his biography of Auden, Richard Davenport-Hines describes the poet's mood during the early months after his arrival in the States as "a mixture of apprehension and zest" (Davenport-Hines 1996: 182). The elegy for Yeats would seem to confirm this. Balanced between affirmation and disavowal of the poet's role, Auden knows he has escaped the stifling, negative influences England had come to represent for him but, like the free man at the close of "In Memory of W. B. Yeats", he is still at the stage of needing to learn "how to praise".

It is possible that Federico García Lorca's "Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías", his elegy for the death of a bullfighter friend, may also have played a part in influencing Auden's elegy. It seems highly likely that Auden was familiar with Lorca's work by early 1939. Both poets had been published in *New Writing*,[6] and Stephen Spender had translated several of Lorca's lyrics, amongst them "Adam" from *Poet in New York*. We can imagine Auden being interested not only in Lorca's treatment of homosexuality in this poem but in hearing of the formative influence New York played in shaping his political and artistic sympathies. Auden may also have borne in mind the deep sense of unease and alienation that pervades *Poet in New York* while he was himself deciding to leave England.

This is a matter for conjecture. If we compare the two elegies, however, some interesting parallels do emerge. "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" begins with specific mention of the time of Yeats's death —"the dead of winter", where "dead" might also mean "dead-centre", the exact middle— while Lorca's opening stanza insists that the reader be aware of the exact time of the bullfighter's death:

> At five in the afternoon.
> Exactly five in the afternoon.
> A boy fetched the white sheet
> *at five in the afternoon.*
> A basket of lime made ready
> *at five in the afternoon.*
> The rest was death and death alone
> *at five in the afternoon.* (García Lorca 1992: 189)

"At five in the afternoon" continues as a refrain throughout the opening section of the poem, just as "O all the instruments agree/ The day of his death was a dark cold day" is repeated at the end of Auden's first and last stanzas. There are other incidental similarities between the opening sections,

specifically the images both poets use to build up a picture of a city: Auden's suburbs invaded by silence become, in Lorca's elegy, "Silent groups on corners"; and Auden's "the importance and noise of tomorrow/ When the brokers are roaring like beasts" has its possible equivalent in Lorca's "the crowd was breaking windows".

Admittedly, Auden's poem is in three sections and Lorca's in four. Both, however, are governed by a structure which moves from the urban to the rural, a movement which signals a return to the classical topos of elegy with its traditional setting of a pastoral landscape. What is also striking is that both poems end with the poet contemplating the absence of the dead person or, more properly, the nature of what it is about them that is now missing. For Lorca's devout Catholicism, the answer is simple: it is the soul that is absent. For Auden, it is more complicated: Yeats is no longer even regarded as a body, becoming instead a vessel "Emptied of its poetry".

The ambiguous nature of the "vessel" Yeats's body has, in death, become, suggests ritual funerary rites and the burying of amphora stocked with grain and wine, or a ship to help the departed on their journey across to the New Life on the Other Side. Read in this context, the emptied vessel can be seen as referring to the painted sarcophagi in which Yeats admitted a youthful interest, while the poet's grave becomes the Cavern out of which "Old Rocky Face" speaks in "The Gyres":

> For painted forms or boxes of make-up
> In ancient tombs I sighed, but not again;
> What matter? Out of Cavern comes a voice
> And all it knows is that one word "Rejoice".

Auden's imaginative sympathy with the dead poet is now such that he echoes Yeats's use of the "voice/ rejoice" rhyme used in both "[The] Man and the Echo" and "The Gyres":

> Follow, poet, follow right
> To the bottom of the night,
> With your unconstraining voice
> Still persuade us to rejoice.

The significant difference in the two poems in which Yeats uses this particular rhyme is that while "The Gyres" shows the poet greeting the destruction of civilisation with shouts of encouragement, "[The] Man and the Echo" is full of doubts and hesitations which show the poet, as Daniel Albright has commented, in a mood of "dismal self-interrogation" (Yeats 1992: 838). In his use of this rhyme and its implicit acknowledgement of both of Yeats's poems, Auden is highlighting the thin line separating exuberance and despair. Though the poet's voice has the capacity to free us, doubts remain and we are in constant need of being persuaded to rejoice. Just such ambiguities are acknowledged by Lorca in his essay on the *duende*. Great art, Lorca forcibly argues, is only possible when the artist is acutely aware of the presence of death:

> The *duende* does not come at all unless he sees that death is possible. The *duende* must know beforehand that he can serenade death's house and rock those branches we all wear, branches that do not have, will never have, any consolation. [...] With idea, sound, or gesture, the *duende* enjoys fighting the creator on the very rim of the well. Angel and muse escape with violin and compass; the *duende* wounds. In the healing of that wound, which never closes, lie the invented, strangest qualities of a man's work. (García Lorca 1980: 49-50)

These parallels should not lead us to conclude that Auden was in any way simply rewriting Lorca's masterpiece. He may well have used it as a model; he may well have recognised similarities between his own present situation in New York and Lorca's a decade earlier; he may even have begun the process of reassessing Lorca's brutal assassination in the light of subsequent events in Spain, culminating in the fall of Barcelona, and Yeats's refusal to engage in any significant defence of the Spanish government or rebuttal of fascism. What is indisputable is that for almost two decades Yeats's poetry had provided, in Rilke's words, a "practised distance, as the other"[7] for Auden in a way that parallels Lorca's association of himself, the poet, and his friend, the bullfighter.[8] By physically removing himself from the Old World to the New, Auden may have hoped to discover a distance which would enable him to slough off Yeats's influence. But to do so meant immersion in Yeats's poetic personality to such an extent that, as Joseph Brodsky has commented, the elegy's very structure became "designed to pay tribute to the dead poet [by] imitating in reverse order the great Irishman's own modes of stylistic development" (Brodsky 1986: 361-362).

As Brodsky says, the intertextual references that litter the elegy are not limited to individual lines alone. With its structure like a time-lapse film run backwards, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" can be seen as a reconstruction of Yeats's *corpus* through the re-integration of isolated examples of his poetic style. Having become his admirers and been "scattered", like the pieces of Orpheus's dismembered body, "among a hundred cities", Yeats's poetry is

reassembled by Auden to create a modified form of meaning, one which allows the poet, again like Orpheus, to continue singing even after death. And in this assimilation of what Ian Gibson calls "the mythical view", Auden is once again imitating, or modifying, an aspect of Yeats's art. Even in death, it must have seemed to Auden, Yeats was dogging his footsteps.

V

> "They sang, but had no human tunes nor words,
> Though all was done in common as before,
>
> They had changed their throats and had the throats of birds".
> "Cuchulain Comforted", W. B. Yeats.

Auden wrote in "Yeats As An Example":

> A poem such as "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" is something new and important in the history of English poetry. It never loses the personal note of a man speaking about his personal friends in a particular setting [...] and at the same time the occasion and character acquire a symbolic and public significance. (Callan 1983: 163)

One of the things Auden admired about Yeats's verse was that it restored *gravitas* to the occasional poem, and in doing so re-enabled the poet to speak about public people and social events. He developed this theme in "The Poet and the City":

> All attempts to write about persons or events, however important, to which the poet is not intimately related in some way are now doomed to failure. Yeats could write great poetry about the Troubles in Ireland, because most of the protagonists were known to him personally and the places where the events occurred had been familiar to him since childhood. (Auden 1975: 81)

The third and concluding section of *Another Time* is called "Occasional Poems" and contains, as well as the Yeats elegy, a re-written "Spain" (now entitled "Spain 1937", as though to highlight the provisional nature of the original), elegies for Ernst Toller and Sigmund Freud, "September 1, 1939" and "Epithalamion". It is, to say the least, a remarkable grouping of poems, and shows Auden fully engaged with the issue of the poet's right to speak

out on behalf of fellow citizens in times not only of personal grief and celebration but of political and cultural crisis.

Though the structure of *Another Time* shows Auden acknowledging his debts to Yeats, it also contains a measure of rebuke. Yeats's *Last Poems* were published posthumously in 1939 and the collection ends with "Politics", prefaced by an epigraph from Thomas Mann: "In our time the destiny of man presents its meanings in political terms". Yeats includes the quote only to dispute Mann's belief, arguing that: "How can I, that girl standing there,/ My attention fix/ On Roman or on Spanish politics". It seems highly unlikely that Auden would not have read Yeats's poem without some wry amusement. Mann was of course Auden's father-in-law, Auden having married his daughter, Erika, in 1935 so as to enable her to gain a British passport and to escape Nazi Germany. The Manns were also among Auden's closest friends when he arrived in the States and they introduced him to a wide range of other European exiles and immigrants.

In November 1939 Erika's sister, Elizabeth, married Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, an event Auden celebrated by writing "Epithalamion". Just as "Spain" makes connections between sexual frustration and war, so "Epithalamion" draws a parallel between Elizabeth Mann's marriage to her Italian husband and the altogether less peaceful concord drawn up between Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Individual lives, Auden seems to be saying, are related to, if not coterminous with, wider political events, with marriage acting as a microcosm for all social relations, including those between neighbouring states. There is a sense, therefore, in which "Epithalamion" is a direct refutation of the emphasis Yeats places on human behaviour in "Politics", where the sexual and political must be kept apart. "In Memory of Ernst Toller" sustains and extends the critique.

Toller was a German dramatist and poet who Auden first met in Portugal in 1936, and whose work he admired enough to agree to help translate the lyrics to Toller's satirical play *No More Peace!* From 1919 to 1924, he had been imprisoned for his part in the Communist uprising in Bavaria and was eventually forced to leave Nazi Germany in 1933. Finally emigrating to the States, Toller suffered a brief unhappy stint as a scriptwriter in Hollywood, before moving to New York. Convinced that his plays were now *passé*, he hanged himself in his Manhattan hotel in May 1939.

Desperately unsure of how he would himself be received in the States, Auden must have been particularly struck by Toller's death. He may also have known of Toller's meeting with Yeats in London in October 1935, when Toller tried to persuade Yeats, then Nobel Laureate, to support the movement to have the imprisoned German writer, Carl von Ossietsky,

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The award would almost certainly have meant that Ossietsky would have been released by the Nazi authorities. Yeats refused, saying that he knew nothing about Ossietsky as a writer and that "it was no part of an artist's business to become involved in affairs of this kind" (Coote 1998: 544). If Auden knew of this meeting and Yeats's refusal to add his considerable influence to those trying to release the imprisoned man, his use of the "voice/ rejoice" rhyme in the elegy for the disillusioned Toller becomes a damning indictment of Yeats's concern, in "[The] Man and the Echo", that certain of his actions as a poet may have lead to the murder of Irish Nationalists.

Auden's response to Yeats's doubts in "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" is to affirm the poet's role, however circumscribed. This "affirming flame", however, is all but extinguished in the opening lines of the elegy for Toller:

> The shining neutral summer has no voice
> To judge America, or ask how a man dies;
> And the friends who are sad and the enemies who rejoice
>
> Are chased by their shadows lightly away from the grave
> Of one who was egotistical and brave,
> Lest they should learn without suffering how to forgive.

Whispering to Toller that, dead, he could enjoy a world where there was no evil and therefore "no need to write", Death intervenes. Only this time there is no voice straining from the tomb. The poet is silent. It is his enemies who now rejoice.

Weather, so sympathetic to the poet in the Yeats elegy, is here "neutral", perhaps satirising Yeats's professed neutrality in the case of Ossietsky. In this context, it is difficult not to read the sixth stanza as another side-swipe at Yeats:

> Dear Ernst, lie shadowless at last among
> The other war-horses who existed till they'd done
> Something that was an example to the young.

Yeats's example, Auden must have believed, was riddled with contradictions: that while he was admitting moral or philosophical problems into his poetry he was, in his private life, unwilling to take a decisive stand on an issue of exactly this kind. And while Auden was willing to imitate Yeats's example artistically, morally and philosophically he had to turn his back on him.

The figure of the exile and migrant dominates *Another Time*. Voltaire, Rimbaud and Edward Lear find parallels in the contemporary world: Yeats dying in France, Toller in New York and Freud, "an important Jew who died in exile", in London. Amongst their number sits Auden, exiled like Thucydides from the *demos*, "Uncertain and afraid/ As the clever hopes expire/ Of a low dishonest decade". It is therefore not surprising that his thoughts return to the ideal of the "Just City", a place where all men and women can live in creative sympathy, a place where, as he says in "Epithalamion":

> Though the kingdoms are at war,
> All the peoples see the sun,
> All the dwellings stand in light,
> All the unconquered worlds revolve,
> Life must live.

It is a vision he goes on to associate with art and artists:

> Vowing to redeem the State,
> Now let every girl and boy
> To the heaven of the Great
> All their prayers and praises lift:
> Mozart with ironic breath
> Turning poverty to song,
> Goethe ignorant of sin
> Placing every human wrong,
> Blake the industrious visionary,
> Tolstoi the great animal,
> Hellas-loving Hölderlin,
> Wagner who obeyed his gift
> Organised his wish for death
> Into a tremendous cry,
> Looking down upon us, all
> Wish us joy.

In *The Prolific and the Devourer* Auden wrote, more than a little tongue-in-cheek, that one of the reasons why he knew fascism was bogus was that it was "much too like the kinds of Utopias artists plan over café tables very late at night" (Auden 1986: 405). The disparity between these Utopian dreams and the vision with which "Epithalamion" concludes allows Auden to hand responsibility for the creation of the "Just City" not to artists but to ordinary "girls and boys" who, inspired less by the actions of artists than by the products

of their art, will build the "City" for themselves. "Life must live// [...] Wish us joy". Gathered like fairy godmothers invited to bless Elizabeth Mann's wedding, the litany of musicians, poets and novelists look down from the clouds and provide a counterpoint to the hawk-like airmen who haunted Auden's imagination throughout the thirties, terrorised the skies above Spain, and were even then preparing for war "in the new European air".

There is a famous anecdote about Picasso handing out postcards of "Guernica" to German officers who visited him in his studio during the occupation of Paris. Asked by one bemused officer "Did you do this?", Picasso is reported to have answered "No, you did". True or not, the story neatly summarises the complex issues involved in the relationship between art, political action, and history. John Berger, in his influential study of Picasso's art, *Success and Failure of Picasso*, argues that "Guernica" is less a representation of modern warfare and "the specific kind of desolation to which it leads" than an allegorical painting which protests not against a specific historical event with specific historical causes and effects but against "a massacre of the innocents at any time". The problem, argues Berger, is that "Picasso abstracts pain and fear from history" (Berger 1965: 167-169).

Throughout the poems collected in *Another Time*, Auden worked to strike a balance between exactly these tensions. If he observed events from too subjective a position, the historical causes would become blurred and ill-defined; assume too lofty a perspective, and he would become the author of vague abstractions. One of the ways Yeats handled this same problem was to balance figures such as Cuchulain and Pearse, the mythical and the historical, not only within the same poem but often within the same line: "When Pearse summoned Cuchulain to his side,/ What stalked through the Post Office?" (Yeats 1992: 384). The significance of contemporary events is therefore given meaning in their juxtaposition to the mythical.

Though Auden's practice is rarely so stark, *Another Time* is a clear example of the lessons he learnt from, and the debt he owed, to Yeats's influence. As he himself said in relation to poems included in the final section of the collection: "These elegies of mine are not poems of personal grief. Freud I never met, and Yeats I only met casually and didn't particularly like him. Sometimes a man stands for certain things, which is quite different from what one feels in personal grief" (Callan 1983: 164). Though hardly unique in recognising the limited claims subjective experience has to being called Truth, Auden stood alone amongst his generation of English writers in the lengths he was prepared to go to gain a vantage point from which history and human actions might be recognised, read and interpreted. The effort was not without its cost. Ultimately, we might say that Auden was condemned to

a position where all he could do was to look back and, like the prophet Jeremiah, lament the loss and destruction of Jerusalem without being physically able to do anything to remedy it.

NOTES

[1] Cunningham 1986: 56-57. Asked, in 1937, to "take sides on the Spanish War", Eliot responded by saying: "While I am naturally sympathetic, I still feel convinced that it is best that at least a few men of letters should remain isolated, and take no part in these collective activities". Though less Parnassian, Pound's response was typically pugnacious: "Questionaire an escape mechanism for young fools who are too cowardly to think; too lazy to investigate the nature of money, its mode of issue, the control of such issue by the Banque de France and the stank of England. You are all had. Spain is an emotional luxury to a gang of sap-headed dilettantes".

[2] See Carpenter 1983: 215. ""He was unwilling to talk about his experiences", wrote Isherwood, who saw him immediately on his return, "but they had obviously been unsatisfactory; he felt that he hadn't been allowed to be really useful". Stephen Spender recorded much the same thing: "He returned home after a very short visit of which he never spoke"".

[3] "The phrase "tragic joy" appeared in a 1904 *Samhain*, where it already had the sense of unearthly repletion and detachment: tragic heroes "seek for a life growing always more scornful of everything that is not itself and passing into its fullness, perfectly it may be —and from this as tragic joy and the perfectness of tragedy— when the world itself has slipped away in death"". For a fuller discussion see Daniel Albright's commentary in Yeats 1992: 768-771.

[4] The story is the subject of Victor Shklovsky's "Art as Technique", in which he develops the theory of *ostranenie* (making strange). See Rice 1992: 17-21.

[5] The theme of sexual and emotional frustration is examined elsewhere in *Another Time*, notably in "Three Ballads" from the collection's middle section: "Lighter Poems". "Victor" is reminiscent of Büchner's *Woyzeck*, telling of a man's sexual betrayal and insecurities, and how he is commanded by God to murder his promiscuous wife. In "James Honeyman", the affection-starved child grows up to become an emotionally repressed "hero" who invents a deadly poison which he sells to a foreign power, only to have it later used to kill civilians, amongst them him and his family: "Suddenly from the east/ Some aeroplanes appeared,/ Somebody screamed: "They're bombers!/ War must have been declared!"" Auden's tragicomedy continues in "Miss Gee", the story of a woman

who "passed by the loving couples/ And they didn't ask her to stay". Her sexuality denied, "her clothes buttoned up to her neck", she develops cancer ("It's as if there had to be some outlet/ For [...] foiled creative fire") and dies.

[6] Auden first published "Lay your sleeping head, my love", "Palais (sic) des Beaux Arts", "The Novelist", "Refugee Blues", "The Leaves of Life" and "In Memory of Ernst Toller" in *New Writing*. Lehmann also published translations of Lorca's "The Dawn" (trans. A. L. Lloyd) and "Song" (trans. Stanley Richardson). In his 1946 anthology, Lehmann has this to say about poetry and the civil war in Spain:

> The Spanish War is a gloomy milestone for creative writers, marking as it does the second descent of the twentieth century into the violence of International anarchy, a descent made the more destructive for them by the warring ideologies with warring empires. Rare and lucky were the poets who could find the calm and leisure in the midst of such events for continuous poetic creation at the deepest level; and yet these events, by the passions they excited and the drama they manifested, involving the oldest beliefs and allegiances and spiritual hankerings of our civilisation, were material that most young poets would find it difficult to refuse in any age. Our age, however, has been distinguished above all ages by the tendency, in all fields of activity, to exploit whatever comes to hand as immediately and intensively as possible. (Lehmann 1946: 5-6)

[7] Rilke 1980: 147. The poem, "To Music", contains these lines:

> O you the transformation
> of feelings into what? —: into audible landscape.
> . . . . . .
> . . . the most practised distance, as the other
> side of the air:
> pure,
> boundless,
> no longer habitable.

Returning, with this in mind, to Auden's critique of Yeats's "empty sonorities", we can see how "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" can be read as displaying this absence, this loss of voice in the image of the city gradually "invaded" by silence.

[8] Time and again in "Theory and Function of the *Duende*" Lorca returns to the example of the bullfighter when he wants to clarify what he has to say about the nature of poetry. The death of Sánchez Mejías quickly assumed, therefore, the

status of prophecy for Lorca: "Ignacio's death is like mine, the trial run of mine", he is reported to have said (Gibson 1990: 391). This extraordinary sense of empathy for his dead friend and the circumstances of his death remained with Lorca for the remaining two years of his life. A bullfighter's death, he explained, had nothing to do with sport but was "a religious mystery", "the public and solemn enactment of the victory of human virtue over the lower instincts [...] the superiority of spirit over matter" (ibid.: 391). Such a "mythical view", as Ian Gibson calls it, is not dissimilar to aspects of the final section of Auden's elegy for Yeats.

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QUARRELLING WITH THE OUTSIDE WEATHERS: DYLAN THOMAS AND SURREALISM

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Between June 11th and July 4th 1936, the New Burlington Galleries in London played host to a further noisy assault on that cosy, common-sense bugbear of the *avant-garde*, consensual representational reality —the International Surrealist Exhibition. A green-haired André Breton and his green-clothed wife opened the exhibition. Paul Eluard and Herbert Read delivered their lecture on "Art and the Unconscious" while perched on the backrest of an increasingly unstable sofa. Salvador Dali was almost asphyxiated after giving his paper clad in a diving suit whose helmet became stuck. Among the others involved were a young woman carrying a false leg and a bunch of roses in one hand and a raw pork chop in the other, and a young man who offered visitors cups of boiled string, asking "weak or strong?" The young man was Dylan Thomas. He later read his work at one of the evening events along with Paul Eluard, Samuel Beckett and David Gascoyne.[1]

Thomas's involvement in the 1936 Exhibition is frequently dismissed as inconsequential by a bevy of contemporary critics unwilling to take into account the modernist and, more particularly, surrealist elements in his work. Lurking behind the margins of such readings, which often amount to little more than a kind of bardological empiricism, are attempts to secure Thomas's canonical status by situating him in a metaphysical or romantic tradition. Criticism of this sort has dominated Thomas studies over the past thirty years or so, and even those dissenting voices keen to establish a more positive relationship between Thomas and surrealism have tended to rely upon the same monolithic model as those eager to play down its influence. Paul C. Ray, for example, suggests that "of the major poets of our time, Dylan Thomas was the one most influenced by surrealism", but later claims

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that "whereas they achieved their results by immersing themselves in automatism, Thomas achieved his by remaining in lucid control of his materials and intentions" (1971: 277, 278). In this article I shall argue that this limited (mis)conception of surrealism as purely psychic automatism is partly responsible for, in Alan Young's words, "the failure of British critics generally to appreciate the modernity and seriousness of the early poems and stories of Dylan Thomas, who most successfully combined traditional and modernist elements in his quest for a solution to serious metaphysical questions" (1981: 222).[2]

In the 1930s, the *New Country* poets consistently linked Thomas's work to a surrealism which they regarded as at odds with their own *engagé* writing. Early reviews show that, despite impressing, Thomas was seen as a hit-or-miss writer. Louis MacNeice, for example, referred to the "surrealist principles" and "nonsense images" of Thomas's work (1938: 159, 160). To Stephen Spender it was "just poetic stuff with no beginning nor end, shape, or intelligent or intelligible control" (in Thomas 1985: 297). Yet it is precisely Thomas's refusal to toe their particular poetic line that makes his poetry so outstanding and demands that it be considered as more than just a footnote to the "Audenary", non-experimental, discursive poetic history of the 1930s. The idea that Thomas's own imploded modernist poetic, however, opposed as it was to the diagnostic, hyper-rational, politically left poetic norm of the *New Country* poets, can be read in surrealist terms continues to be viewed with suspicion. The lip-service given to surrealism by, among others, Paul Ferris (1978) and Walford Davies (1986) reflects not only a particular desire to subordinate the *avant-garde* in Thomas's work, but also a suspicion of the authenticity and validity of surrealist practice in general.

Much of the unwillingness of critics to take surrealism seriously, either in relation to the poetry and prose or in its own right, stems from Thomas himself who, six months prior to the exhibition, wrote:

> I have very little idea what surrealism is; until quite recently I had never heard of it; I have never, to my knowledge, read even a paragraph of surrealist literature; my acquaintance with French is still limited to "the pen of my aunt"; I have not read any French poetry, either in the original or in translation, since I attempted to translate Victor Hugo in a provincial Grammar school examination, and failed. All of which exposes my ignorance of contemporary poetry [...]. I must confess that I read regrettably little modern poetry, and what "fashionable poetry" I do come across appears to be more or less communist propaganda. I am not a communist. (1985: 205)

But just as "I am not a communist" was disingenuous, so too was his claim to ignorance of surrealism. The letter was, after all, written in immediate response to one by Richard Church, then the poetry editor of Dent, whose comments, "I look upon surrealism with abhorrence [...]. I am distressed to see its pernicious effects in your work" (Thomas 1985: 204), very nearly resulted in a rejection of *18 Poems*. Little wonder then that Thomas wrote back dismissing surrealism in his work with such gusto. In correspondence with Edith Sitwell over Church's near rejection of his first volume he even writes of *18 Poems* as "surrealist imitations" (1985: 210). Further, the notion that the self-styled "Rimbaud of Cwmdonkin Drive", an avid reader of and contributor to *Transition*, *Contemporary Poetry and Prose* and *New Verse*, had read no foreign or contemporary poetry is, according to Constantine Fitzgibbon, "a downright lie; he had read it all" (1965: 196). Even a cursory glance at Thomas's *Collected Letters*, for example, falls upon the names of Stein, Jolas, Rimbaud and Cummings, and one of his best friends was a translator of Rimbaud: Norman Cameron.

If critics have taken too literally Thomas's dismissal of his work as surrealist, they have also accepted too readily his narrow definition of surrealist practice, citing Thomas's later discussion of surrealism, in his "Poetic Manifesto" of 1951, as often as his earlier dismissal:

> I do not mind from where the images of a poem are dragged up: drag them up, if you like, from the nethermost sea of the hidden self; but before they reach paper, they must go through all the rational processes of the intellect. The Surrealists, on the other hand, put their words down together on paper exactly as they emerge from chaos; they do not shape these words or put them in order; to them, chaos is the shape and order. This seems to me exceedingly presumptuous; the surrealists imagine that whatever they dredge from their subconscious selves and put down in paint or in words must, essentially, be of some interest or value. I deny this. One of the arts of the poet is to make comprehensible and articulate what might emerge from the subconscious sources; one of the great main uses of the intellect is to select, from the amorphous mass of subconscious images, those that will best further his imaginative purpose, which is to write the best poem he can. (1971: 150)

It is precisely this construction of a surrealist other to bolster his craftsman-like self which is accepted and echoed all too regularly by Thomas's critics.[3] Walford Davies concedes that "much in the early poetry smacks of surrealism [...]. Like the surrealists, Thomas thought of himself as drawing on subconscious material", but goes on to state that, "whereas the surrealists allowed no room for the selection, control, and development of images, Thomas again seems busy with those very activities, and with everything carefully subjected to the aesthetic demands of poetic form" (1986: 109-110). But, as was suggested earlier, the space between this account of surrealism ("no room for selection, control and development") and Thomas's own poetic practice ("make comprehensible and articulate what might emerge from subconscious sources") is occupied only by a very limited theory of surrealism. Too heavily weighed down by Breton's initial definition of surrealism as "pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express [...] the real process of thought, without any control exercised by reason" (1962: 40), Thomas's critics fall, more often than not, into the trap that Theodor Adorno identifies in "Looking Back on Surrealism": explaining away the peculiar power of surrealism by explicating the irrational by the rational, the strange by the familiar.

Take, for example, "When, like a running grave":

> When, like a running grave, time tracks you down,
> Your calm and cuddled is a scythe of hairs,
> Love in her gear is slowly through the house,
> Up naked stairs, a turtle in a hearse,
> Hauled to the dome. (lines 1-5)

Davies argues that "a running grave", "a scythe of hairs" and "a turtle in a hearse" cannot be read as surrealist because they are "consciously developed" and can be forced into meaning: "a running grave" is "meant" to imply infection and disease, and the "scythe of hairs" is that which scythes hairs (1986: 110). Surely the point, however, is that the poem is not structured by an external logic, but has a logic of its own (a perfectly surreal dream-logic so to speak) by which another, equally valid, reading might well have scythe made from hairs, a grave running around and a turtle driving a hearse up the stairs. The point is that images cannot be read in terms of what is "meant", but in terms of their effect, as they merge and melt, jostle and collide throughout. It is better, then, to conceptualize surrealism not by going back to psychology, but by looking at the surrealist artistic techniques of *montage* and *collage*. Read in this way, the focus would be on the ways in which

surrealism produces a "photographic negative" of modernity by foregrounding childlike perceptions ("as they must have been then" [Adorno 1991: 90]), rather than on attempting to find the originary moment of a surrealist image. That is not to say that surrealism has little to do with psychoanalysis *per se*: far from it. Adorno is insistent on its indebtedness to psychological dream-theory. It is merely to point out that surrealism is a disturbing and shocking articulation of the kind of images repressed in and by the conventionally structured logic of adulthood.[4]

In 1934 Thomas defined his own poetic practice in Freudian terms, which echo Breton's definition of surrealism. He declared that "whatever is hidden should be made naked", and that his poetry would be "the record of my individual struggle from darkness towards some measure of light, and what of the individual struggle is still to come benefits by the sight and knowledge of the faults and fewer merits in that concrete struggle" (1971: 150). Partly in the light of such remarks, Thomas has a history of being read psychologically. Too often, though, such readings of Thomas are founded on the spurious assumption that his work can be taken as a displaced or condensed registration form for his clinical evaluation as a psychological case study (see, for example, Holbrook 1962, 1972). Recently, however, the emphasis of psychoanalytic criticism has shifted from inept attempts at psychobiography to self-aware examinations of the ways in which psychological, linguistic and literary structures are constituted. According to Elizabeth Wright, for example, the Freudian notion of the uncanny is one method by which surrealism might be usefully conceptualised. To Wright, the surrealist image is always uncanny (*unheimlich*), "in a constant process of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction" by which it confronts representational realism with its own death by reminding it of its inability to cope with the fact that its rationality remains irrational. Expanding the Freudian definition, she suggests that "*heimlich* means not only homely and familiar, but also hidden and secret. The *un* of the *unheimlich* marks the return of the repressed material: the *unheimlich* object threatens us in some way by no longer fitting the context to which we have been accustomed" (1990: 265).

It is this uncanny and surreal struggle between the hidden and the naked that is articulated in the 1936 sonnet sequence, "Altarwise by owl-light", the closing poem of Thomas's second volume *Twenty-five Poems*. (Even its title effects the uncanny as the *heimlich* "altarlight" and "owl wise" become the *unheimlich* "Altarwise" and "owl-light"). The poem is about the problematic entry of a child into the authorized languages of adulthood,

charting the journey of a child who finds the death of a castrated Christ an enabling one as he is then forced to be its own creator of the Word. By literally forcing the child into meaning, "Altarwise by owl-light" explores the relationship between language and reality. One of the ways that it does so is by presenting a surreal landscape, a landscape which is not only structured by uncanny effects, but one on which is inscribed the very process of its own structuration. In other words, the poem both entertains a number of surreal images which work by means of the uncanny (the "wrinkled undertaker's van" of sonnet III, line 8, for instance, or the "bagpipe-breasted ladies" of sonnet VI, line 13) and is about the ways in which, to quote Wright, these images are constantly constructed, reconstructed and deconstructed.[5] This process of image formulation is one of the subjects of sonnet IV:

> Button your bodice on a hump of splinters,
> My camel's eye will needle through the shroud.
> Love's a reflection of the mushroom features,
> Stills snapped by night in the bread-sided field,
> Once close-up smiling in the wall of pictures,
> Ark-lamped thrown back upon the cutting flood. (lines 9-14)

Here can be found a series of transformative images: the "hump" of line 9 into and with the "camel" of line 10, the "camel" then to the "needle" as in the biblical phrase, the opening "Ark" of line 10 to its concluding "flood". What is interesting is that these surreal transformations are not ahistorical, but take place within the particular context of the early cinema —the "stills snapped", the "close-up", the "wall of pictures" and the "cutting flood"— which then provides the possibility of the photographic collage of surreal characters which follows in sonnet V:

> And from the windy West came two-gunned Gabriel,
> From Jesus's sleeve trumped up the king of spots,
> The sheath-decked jacks, queen with a shuffled heart;
> Said the fake gentleman in a suit of spades,
> Black-tongued and tipsy from salvation's bottle,
> Rose my Byzantine Adam in the night;
> For loss of blood I fell on Ishmael's plain,
> Under the milky mushrooms slew my hunger,
> A climbing sea from Asia had me down
> And Jonah's Moby snatched me by the hair;
> Cross-stroked salt Adam to the frozen angel
> Pin-legged on pole-hills with a black medusa
> By waste seas where the white bear quoted Virgil
> And sirens singing from our lady's sea-straw. (lines 1-14)

Wright notes that the "uncanny effect is brought about because we are confronted with a subjectivity now alien to us" (1990: 268), and here, as throughout the sonnet sequence, are childlike perceptions of the type described earlier. The poem can, certainly, be read to furnish a visual confirmation of surrealist-style images: the pin-legged frozen angel on pole-hills could fit into any of Salvador Dali's hallucinatory realist landscapes, as could the classically inclined bear into a painting of Rene Magritte's, while a gun-slinging Gabriel and what might be read as a card-sharping Jesus are suitably iconoclastic for a surrealist collage. More importantly, however, is that parts of the sonnet are historically representative of the 1920s and 1930s, when two of the most powerful legitimating discourses were religion and cinema. What is at work here is a dialectic between the mythology of the Wild West, a modern extension of the romantic notion of the frontier of the imagination, and the Authorized Bible. Caught somewhere in the middle of all of this is Captain Ahab, a man in pursuit, significantly, of a false purity, driven by the perverse religiosity of the puritan principle. Sonnet V is typical of "Altarwise by owl-light" in that a discursive sense is to be found in the fragments rather than the whole as meaning is localised. It is for this reason that its child-like images of the surreal are not merely regressive, but also subversive as the sequence reminds the reader of the artificiality of normal representation.[6] In its refusal to be absorbed into the conventional patterns of meaning construction the uncanny discloses the constructedness of the normative, whose repressed side it returns and foregrounds. Understood in this way, the surreal is that which both reveals and breaks the rules of the game. The disparate parts of its framed assemblages of disassociation both reflect and also, through their assumption of autonomy and self-sufficiency, enact a schizophrenic world. This is of political significance, as the surreal is only able to shock and break the hold of the consensual reality of the existing map of aesthetics because it has the disruptive quality of an event which is not immediately translatable into meaning.

To fully grasp the relationship between Dylan Thomas and surrealism it is essential to grasp the movement's political implications. Surrealism was keen to establish its radical credentials. Breton yoked surrealism to Trotsky's Fourth International and Walter Benjamin famously declared that its aim was "to win the energies of intoxication for the revolution" (1979: 236). To talk of Thomas politically is not simply to refer to a political poetry of the kind normally associated with the 1930s, of poems like "The hand that signed the

paper" or "And death shall have no dominion", but is, more importantly, to seek an understanding of the political character of the *avant-garde* in general. Thus, Breton's attempt to create a "surreality" (1962: 11), a fusion of dream and reality, to reintegrate art and life and to resist the separation of art and social praxis, can be seen as an example of that which, for Peter Bürger, is the ultimate political manoeuvre of the *avant-garde*: the turning of art against itself as institution (1984: 12,13). The *avant-garde* art work, then, is inevitably self-critical, bound to the very processes that it attempts to criticize. As such, it speaks a perfectly surreal and uncanny language which at one and the same time reveals and breaks the rules by which it is constituted.

Much of the poetry in *The Map of Love* dramatizes this problematic in such self-critical terms, turning language against itself in a violent display of the irrational. One such poem is "How shall my animal". First published in 1938, the poem begins:

> How shall my animal
> Whose wizard shape I trace in the cavernous skull,
> Vessel of abscesses and exultation's shell,
> Endure burial under the spelling wall,
> The invoked, shrouding veil at the cap of the face,
> Who should be furious,
> Drunk as a vineyard snail, flailed like an octopus
> Roaring, crawling, quarrel with the outside weathers. (lines 1-8)

The poem is concerned throughout with the limitations of language, the lyrical subject anguished by the impossibility of reconciling self and word, "spelling wall" and "animal". However, in the very utterance of this despair the poem comes to assume a life of its own. The language of the poem creates a reality which, rather than confining the animal and forcing its death and "burial under the spelling wall", liberates the monster from fixity, freeing it to mutate in a series of surreal transformations from human to lion to horse to turtle and beyond. At one and the same time, then, "How shall my animal" registers a prison-house of language and figures the means by which it can be escaped. It is to this paradoxical autonomy of the surrealist art-work that Thomas appealed in correspondence with Henry Treece about the poem:

> [The poem] is its own question and answer, its own contradiction, its own agreement [...]. The aim of a poem is the mark that the poem itself makes; it's the bullet and the bullseye; the knife, the growth, and the patient. A poem moves only towards its own end, which is the last line. (1985: 297)

Further, "How shall my animal" turns on the figure of the monster, regarded by Elza Adamowicz as "the surrealist figure *par excellence*" (1990: 299). As Adamowicz points out, one of the major impulses of surrealism is the relocation of the marginalized —*objets trouvés*, discarded materials, sweeps of the pen or brush— and the monstrous is no exception: there are Max Ernst's Lop Lop, Dali's "Great Masturbator", Pablo Picasso's and Man Ray's Minotaurs, Thomas's "Atlas-eater with a jaw for news", to name but a zooful (Adamowicz 1990: 286-287). Yet in this surrealist manoeuvre the irrational and uncomfortable monster does not escape from the ghetto only to be reconfined by the closure implicit in its foregrounding in a centre/periphery opposition. The central position which it comes to occupy is also that which it disturbs.

One of the positions that surrealism disturbs is the masculine. Traditionally, surrealism indulges *machismo*, articulating it through the likes of Picasso's Tauromachias or Dali's neurotic male fantasies. It might be argued, though, that the surreal is also that which haunts the *macho*. In the first book of Ernst's *Une Semaine de bonté*, for example, the masculine iconography of warfare is examined through the revolutionary lionheaded hero. "How shall my animal", which even uses the term "lionhead", goes further back to disturb the male (in this reading the animal might be considered as"animus") prior to its construction as the masculine:[7]

> How shall it magnetize,
> Towards the studded male in a bent, midnight blaze
> That melts the lionhead's heel and horseshoe of the heart,
> A brute land in the cool top of the country days
> To trot with a loud mate the haybeds of a mile,
> Love and labour and kill. (lines 12-17)

The poem is concerned to interrogate the false rootedness of aggressive masculinity, of the "studded male" (note the play on "studied"), trotting, loving, labouring and killing in the "brute land". This culminates in the male animal's pregnancy in the following stanza and, in the final stanza, the birth:

> Sigh long, clay cold, lie shorn,
> Cast high, stunned on gilled stone; sly scissors ground in frost
> Clack through the thicket of strength, love hewn in pillars drops

With carved bird, saint and sun, the wrackspiked maiden mouth
Lops, as a bush plumed with flames, the rant of the fierce eye,
Clips short the gesture of breath.
Die in red feathers when the flying heaven's cut,
And roll with the knocked earth:
Lie dry, rest robbed, my beast,
You have kicked from a dark den, leaped up the whinnying light,
And dug your grave in my breast. (lines 33-34)

This stanza, however, reveals the birth to be a stillbirth. Articulated in language, the animal gasps and dies, "cast high, stunned on gilled stone" and the final lines make it clear that this is an internal death: "Lie dry, rest robbed, my beast./ You have kicked from a dark den, leaped up the whinnying light,/ And dug your grave in my breast". Thus the poem exposes the spuriousness of the patriarchal inscription of the male as the centre of production. That it is at the end of the 1930s that the male body is so (un)written is crucial.

By the beginning of 1938, the militaristic dictatorships of the Anti-Comintern Pact had effectively undermined any vestige of League of Nations' authority. Japan had occupied Manchuria, Italy had conquered Abyssinia, Germany had reoccupied the Rhineland and was poised to seize Austria, and Franco's victories in the Spanish Civil War stood unchallenged by the western democracies. Confronting the terrifying prospect of a second world war, Thomas turned away from the modernist tradition. The acknowledgement of death in "How Shall my animal" might be interpreted as a recognition of what was lost in the shift towards referentiality in *The Map of Love*, making this poem part of Thomas's farewell to surrealism. In this he was not alone: T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Igor Stravinsky and Béla Bartók, for example, were all part of a general shift away from radical high modernism at the end of the 1930s. Whereas their modernist credentials are well established, however, Thomas's are not. Criticism has tended to concentrate on his later work, to the exclusion of the "modernist" and "surrealist" impulses of the early writings discussed here. To focus on this hitherto marginalized aspect of his work, in the wider context of European surrealism, is to disclose how much Thomas's poetry disturbs the too long prevailing notion of modernism as a monolithic discourse.

NOTES

[1] For a detailed account of the exhibition see Ray (1971: 134-166) and Thomas (1985: 230).

[2] See also Schvey (1975: 96-97): "As a highly conscious artist consumed by his craft, it would be wrong to classify Dylan Thomas with the surrealist movement which advocated the breakdown of the divisions between dream and reality, between art and life. For the true surrealist, whose philosophy was bent upon the revolutionary destruction of reality, art does not exist as an artefact separate from life: life itself is a surreal work of art to be performed. For Dylan Thomas, despite all we know about his lowering drunken personality, it was the other way around —his art was his life".

[3] See, for example, Thomas's response to Stephen Spender's claim that his poetry was "turned on like a tap": "My poems are formed; they are not turned on like a tap at all, they are "watertight compartments"" (Thomas 1985: 297).

[4] See also Elizabeth Wright's "The Uncanny and Surrealism". In *Modernism and the European Unconscious* (1990: 268).

[5] See also Thomas's own description of his composite method of construction in Treece (1957:37): "A poem by myself needs a host of images, because its centre is a host of images. I make one image, —though "make" is not the word, I let, perhaps, an image to be "made" emotionally in me and then apply to it what intellectual and critical forces I possess —let it breed another, let that image contradict the first, make, of the third image bred out of the other two together, a fourth contradictory image, and let them all, within my imposed formal limits, conflict. Each image holds within it the seed of its own destruction, and my dialectical method, as I understand it, is a constant building up and breaking down of the images that came out of the central seed, which is itself destructive and constructive at the same time" .

[6] This distinction between the regressive and the subversive is suggested by Wright (1990: 268).

[7] Thomas was familiar with Ernst's work prior to staying with him in America in 1952.

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THE EUROPEAN RADIO BROADCASTS OF T. S. ELIOT

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It is perhaps not surprising that Eliot's long commitment to radio broadcasting has passed without critical comment.[1] Only a few of his broadcasts were recorded in a publicly available form, so that what once was "broadcast" has left little historical trace. However, scripts for many of the talks survive in the BBC Paper archive, and others may well be found among the papers held by the Eliot estate. Furthermore, many of Eliot's scripts were subsequently redacted and published in periodical form.[2] On the basis of this evidence, and the voluminous records of the BBC paper archive, we can reconstruct not only the shape but also much of the substance of Eliot's radio talks.

He began broadcasting in 1929 and, admitting one early hiatus of five years, continued virtually to the time of his death: a period of approximately thirty-five years. His broadcasts fall conveniently into four groups. In the first period, 1929-1931, Eliot delivered nineteen talks, all in multi-part series, and focused on literary topics such as "Tudor Prose" or "Seventeenth-Century Poetry" (both in six parts). In the second period, 1936-1939, Eliot's interest in radio seemed to decline, and he gave only six talks on various literary and community topics. But the outbreak of war gave rise to a new period of activity, and between 1940-1947 Eliot broadcast at least twenty-nine times. Eleven of these broadcasts were directed at European audiences. In this, the most important phase of his broadcasting activity, Eliot tended to speak about culture itself, and especially about the ultimate unity of European culture. By 1948, however, Eliot became involved with the BBC's new "Third Programme", a species of minority programming concerned primarily with matters artistic and intellectual. His interest in and loyalty to the Third Programme redirected his broadcasting activity, and while between

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1948-1963 Eliot spoke over the air another twenty-nine times, only five of those broadcasts were for one of the BBC's European Services.[3]

In this regard, the history of Eliot's broadcast talks and readings reflects the larger history of the BBC —a history that Eliot actively helped shape.[4] Eliot's broadcasts to European and Asian (particularly Indian) audiences comprise a special chapter in his life. Before 1941, all of Eliot's broadcasts were made for one of the BBC's home services, beamed exclusively to Britain. That pattern changed dramatically with the outbreak of war, and within this change we can see Eliot working to redefine his personal sense of mission, as well as his pre-eminent role as what Americans might call today a "public intellectual". On 26 May 1941, Eliot gave a reading of "East Coker" for the "We Speak to India" programme of the BBC's Eastern Service. The reading was in fact the sixteenth instalment in a series optimistically (in that dire period of the war) called "Turning Over A New Leaf". This broadcast was Eliot's first reading of his own poetry over the air. That he chose to do for India what he had previously been unwilling to do for Britain is striking, and it was five years before he consented to a re-broadcast of the reading for the BBC Home Service West of England (17 March 1946). For all that Eliot had grown friendly with Zulfiqar Bokhari, Indian Programme Organiser for the BBC, his motivation seems less personal than —in the broadest of senses— "political". While doing his bit to help defeat fascism, Eliot was deeply concerned that this global conflict not destroy culture itself. He began broadcasting to Europe and India to reaffirm what he saw as the profound bond among those peoples sharing in the Western Tradition, to which he seems to have regarded India a party. Of course this project overlooks the subaltern condition of the sub-continent, subject to the British Empire. That it overlooks the extent to which literature and "culture" served the imperial powers as what Gauri Viswanathan (1989) has called "masks of conquest" is obvious. To focus on Eliot's broadcasts to Europe does not make such questions irrelevant. For the present, however, the significant consideration is that it was only under the pressure of world war that Eliot began broadcasting to the world beyond the shores of Britain.

After two more broadcasts to India on "Masterpieces of English Literature" in November 1941 and January 1942, Eliot recorded his first talk for Europe. Entitled "Poetry and the War", and broadcast for "Swedish News Talks", it was later published in the New York journal *Common Sense* (October 1942) as "T. S. Eliot on Poetry in Wartime". This short talk suggests the direction of Eliot's subsequent broadcasts to Europe. Addressing the various and sometimes clamorous calls for "war poetry", Eliot explained

why he thought such a question should not be asked. The issue, he felt, concerned not just the current war, "but all wars":

> While a poet, as a man, should be no less devoted to his country than other men, I distinguish between his duty as a man and his duty as a poet. His first duty as a poet is towards his native language, to preserve and to develop that language. As a man, he has the same duties as his fellow citizens; as a poet, his duty is to write the best poetry that he can, and thereby incidentally create something in which his people can take pride. And the artist who will do the most in this way for his own people, will be the artist great enough, like Shakespeare, to give something precious not only to his own country but to the whole of Europe.[5]

Here as elsewhere, Eliot struggled to rekindle or preserve the ability of his audience to imagine Europe as a "whole". He did not speak of Shakespeare, for example, as a "national" poet but as a *European* poet. His aim, even in the early days of the war, was to prepare the groundwork for a peace that could mean something more than the cessation of hostilities.

Within five weeks of that first talk, Eliot broadcast again to Sweden, this time offering a reading from his own poetry. For this, only the second reading of his poetry he had ever made, he chose works from the whole of his career up to that point: "Four Preludes", "Journey of the Magi", "Ash Wednesday" I and II, "Burial of the Dead", "Burnt Norton", and excerpts from "The Dry Salvages". Significantly, he did not read from "Little Gidding", and no part of what he read could be construed as "war poetry". The kind of broadcast-reading he declined to make to promote his career in peacetime he gave in war to exemplify the arguments he was making elsewhere about "culture".

No less interesting in terms of Eliot's choices is his next Swedish talk, of 30 December 1942, on "Rudyard Kipling".[6] Not surprisingly, Eliot acknowledged Kipling as more versifier than poet, but nevertheless recognized in his work the spark of something more: "while I speak of Kipling's work as verse and not as poetry, I am still able to speak of individual compositions as poems, and also to maintain that there is "poetry" in the "verse"". A similar qualification marked Eliot's comments on Kipling's role as an apologist for Empire, but as Eliot turned to this issue, his reflections took an unexpected turn, especially given the apparent obscurity of much of his own poetry. What Eliot said about Kipling's role as popular poet and writer reflects broadly on his own activities as a public

commentator on "culture", and more particularly on his activities as a BBC broadcaster:

> Kipling certainly thought of verse as well as prose as a medium for a public purpose; if we are to pass judgment upon his purpose we must try to set ourselves in the historical situations in which his various work was written; and whether our prejudice be favorable or antagonistic, we must not look at his observations of one historical situation from the point of view of a later period. Also we must consider his work as a whole. (1942: 154)

Eliot clearly thought of radio as "a medium for a public purpose", and approached his European broadcasts in terms best understood as a response to the global crisis. It is not immediately clear, however, why he should have imagined Kipling a subject attractive to a Swedish audience. In fact, the choice of topic is rather striking: Eliot began broadcasting to Europe at the same time as his India broadcasts, and to speak of Kipling to Sweden almost suggests a categorial confusion. The topic, however, returns him to the questions he addressed in his previous Swedish talk on poetry in wartime: the artist who will "do the most for his own people" will be the one, like Shakespeare, great enough "to give something precious not only to his own country but to the whole of Europe". Such an artist will not address the topical details of battle and war, but the more profound question of a nation's collective spirit —of its cultural health or disease. What, in Eliot's view, readers of Kipling miss is his turn, in the last part of his career, to that kind of profound attention: "In [Kipling's] later phase England, and a particular corner of England, becomes the center of his vision. He is more concerned with the problem of the soundness of the *core* of empire; this core is something older, more natural, and more permanent" (1942: 154). More permanent, that is, than shifting political frontiers.

In other words, Kipling, or at least the late Kipling, becomes for Eliot a cultural critic. His interest lay not in "civilization" in the abstract but in *a* civilization. It was for this reason that Eliot concluded that, whereas "we expect to have to defend a poet against the charge of obscurity; we have to defend Kipling against the charge of excessive lucidity". This defence implicitly explained Eliot's own purpose, both in the largest terms and in regard to speaking about Kipling to a Swedish audience.

In the next year and a half, Eliot made no European broadcasts, although in that time he broadcast twice to India, on Edgar Allen Poe and on James Joyce, and once for the BBC's programme "Calling All Students" on Dryden's tragedies. Then, on 4 June 1944, on the occasion of the liberation

of Rome by allied troops, Eliot again recorded a broadcast to India. This broadcast promised to be the most topical he had ever made, but what Eliot delivered proved instead to be in keeping with his talk on "Poetry and War". By June 1944, the tide of the war had turned unmistakably in the allies' favor, and the liberation of Rome might justifiably have been a cause for jubilation. The BBC producers who planned the broadcast certainly thought so, and the announcer gave the following introduction: "We present this evening two talks in honour of the liberation of Rome. For twenty years the Eternal City has lain under the fascist or the nazi yoke. Today it is free". The announcer then introduced Eliot, whom he presented as "one of the foremost English poets and critics of today, President of the Virgil Society and ex-President of the Classical Association, who will speak of the European debt to Roman literature".[7]

Eliot did just that: his four-minute talk betrays not the slightest note of jubilation, nor the most evanescent trace of triumphalism. On the contrary, he insisted on the spiritual kinship of all Europeans, and submitted, meditatively and with an eye to the future, that the bonds among Europeans had been forgotten in peace before they were broken in war. To reaffirm those bonds it behoves the victors of war not only to shoulder their debt but to do so with sorrow for the breach, and with humility and piety toward the legacy bestowed on all of us by the Roman writers.

It was doubtless a noble and philosophical gesture to insist on the cultural unity of Europe, but it is less certain why Eliot thought such a broadcast suitable for a south Asian audience. Indian support for the British empire, against the German or even the Japanese empire, was not always enthusiastic, but it is hard to see how Eliot's meditations on European unity could have impressed the anti-British resistance led by Mohandas Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. Particularly in view of Gandhi's rejection of western, mechanized civilization, Eliot's commitment to India remains one of the unstudied puzzles of modernist history. But when Eliot resumed making such appeals, and such arguments to Europe, they became striking in another way.

With one significant exception, an unusual broadcast to France in November 1944, he did not broadcast to Europe again until immediately after the war's end. In that broadcast, with the *Wehrmacht* retreating rapidly to the Rhine and the temporary set-back of the Battle of the Bulge three weeks in the future, Eliot spoke in French on "Intellectual Cooperation" for the BBC's French Service.[8] It was a harbinger of the important broadcasts to come. After one further Swedish broadcast (15 February 1945), these broadcasts launched what amounts to the last great critical project of Eliot's career: a

project that would culminate, though not end, with his book *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* (1948).

In March 1946, Eliot made a three-part broadcast entitled "Reflections of an English Poet on European Culture".[9] He recorded the talks in German, for the BBC programme "Famous Contemporaries", and used his time at the microphone to press his vision of European unity —precisely that vision he had begun articulating in such broadcasts as "Poetry and the War", "Rudyard Kipling", and "The Liberation of Rome".

The plan for Eliot's series was simple: each talk would examine a different basis for the unity of European culture. In the first, he would discuss art; in the second, ideas; and in the third, the nature of culture. He began informally, striving for the kind of intimacy between speaker and listener that had always attracted him to radio.[10] He acknowledged that this talk was the first time that he had ever "addressed a German-speaking audience", whether in the form of a public lecture or of a radio broadcast, and proceeded to offer his credentials for taking on so vast a topic. Not least, he observed that English is a "composite" language, drawing on many sources and enjoying "constant possibilities of refreshment from its several centres: apart from the vocabulary, poems by Englishmen, Welshmen, Scots and Irishmen, all written in English, continue to show differences in their music".[11] From this local beginning, he went on to argue that, for Europe in general as for Britain in particular, "the frontiers of culture are not, and should not be, closed" (1968: 191).

The second talk focused on his years as editor of the *Criterion*, and offered his experience as an illustration of the failure of Europe in general. Eliot attributed the eventual failure of the *Criterion* to "the gradual closing of the mental frontiers of Europe" (194), and drew a distinct lesson:

> [A] universal concern with politics does not unite, it divides. It unites those politically minded folk who agree, across the frontiers of nations, against some other international group who hold opposed views. But it tends to destroy the cultural unity of Europe. (195)

Recognizing that such a judgment might seem naïve, Eliot allowed that politics affects culture, and in turn is affected by that culture. Nevertheless, speaking at last to the postwar moment, he charged that "nowadays we take too much interest in each other's domestic politics, and at the same time have very little contact with each other's culture" (196). This tendency, Eliot warned, could lead in either of two destructive directions. The first, the mistake of Hitler's Germany, regards all other cultures as inferior. The

second, the mistake of Stalinist Russia (though Eliot did not spell this out), would "lead toward the ideal of a world state in which there will, in the end, be only one uniform world culture" (196). Regarding either direction as a terrible error, Eliot presented what is in essence an Arnoldian compromise: he distinguished between "uniformity" and "unity", and between "organisation" and "organism". Politics pursues the first: poetry, or "culture", the second. The health of Europe requires, he counselled, both that "the culture of each country be unique", and also that "the different cultures should recognize their relationship to each other, so that each should be susceptible of influence from the others" (197).

This counsel led Eliot to the heart of his topic: "the distinction between the material organisation of Europe, and the spiritual organism of Europe" (197). The very distinction assumes Europe's profound cultural unity, and gestures both to establish the irrelevant profanity of political concerns, and to push aside the "material devastation" (202) of the previous fifteen years. It is unfortunate that we have no evidence of how Eliot's talks played to German audiences. Eliot's broadcasts were, by any accounting, made in virtually surreal circumstances. He spoke to a Germany under the military occupation of four nations, affirming all the while the fundamental unity of victors and vanquished. And yet Eliot would not have considered his talk as propaganda, not even "cultural propaganda" against potential Soviet aggression. In fact, he would almost certainly have maintained that his broadcasts contended with the propaganda of *any* political cause.

In this regard, it is useful to distinguish Eliot's radio broadcasts from those made by his sometime friend and often testy rival, Ezra Pound. Their broadcasting activities took very different forms. Pound broadcast for Minculpop, the Italian (fascist) Ministry of Popular Culture. After one talk in January 1935, he began recording talks regularly in early 1941. For the next two-and-a-half years he held onto the microphone as though it were a lifeline, with three or four of his broadcasts often airing in a single week. But, by July 1943 Pound's unfortunate involvement in the mass media was effectively over, and the regime for which he had been speaking destroyed.[12] Eliot's broadcasting activity, by contrast, was sustained over a period of thirty-five years, and he rarely broadcast twice in the same month.

Pound's and Eliot's approaches to the medium of radio differed no less dramatically. Pound delivered his talks in a cracker-barrel yankee accent, purporting to speak as one average man to the masses of average men. Eliot, however, never spoke down to his audience, but rather invited them to look up with him. And whereas Pound explicitly intended his broadcasts as a form of propaganda, Eliot explicitly eschewed propaganda in any immediate form.

Pound, although he did not speak directly to allied troops, explicitly challenged the purpose and even legitimacy of the Roosevelt administration. Eliot by contrast never spoke directly to political questions. And if Pound shared Eliot's concern with the preservation of Western culture, he rarely confined himself to literary discussions, or to claims about the unity of European literature. Pound's charge to his audience that "the supreme betrayal of Western civilization is manifest in the alliance with Russia" exemplifies the extent to which for him cultural issues immediately led to political or economic questions (Doob 1978: 268).[13]

These distinctions do not demonstrate that Eliot's talks were perfectly "disinterested" (to return to Arnold's shibboleth) or apolitical, but they do suggest that the politics of Eliot's broadcasts were mediated in fairly complex ways. Eliot's radio persona was judicious and gentle, conciliatory at a time when partisans on all sides were suspicious of conciliation in any form. Before the end of 1949, Eliot would speak to Europe on four additional occasions, one of which was a broadcast for the BBC's German Service: an introduction to a reading of his own "Journey of the Magi".[14] Thereafter, between 1950 and his death, he spoke over one of the BBC's European services only twice more, an abstention that was not matched by any general decline in his involvement in radio. For in that same period, he remained a stalwart supporter of the BBC in both word and deed, and a particular champion of the BBC's Third Programme. In other words, Eliot's turn to Europe can be identified with the particular project that he continued to develop through late 1949.

The last broadcast that Eliot recorded for a specifically European audience beyond the shores of Britain would also prove among the most important of his European broadcasts. Broadcast on 13 October 1953, the eleven-minute talk was called, simply, "Literature", and figured as the sixth part of a series by different speakers called "The Unity of European Culture".[15] The series of talks was sponsored by "the Central and Eastern European Commission", an "unofficial body composed of statesmen and public figures from the countries of Europe —the whole of Europe" (3). Whatever the composition of the whole body, it has to be said that the speakers in this series of broadcasts were exclusively English (if one includes the naturalized Eliot).

The commission's overt aim was "to bridge the gap between East and West, and to assert, even across the Iron Curtain, the essential unity of Europe, its civilisation and its culture" (3). Although this commission advocated "no war of liberation", it asserted that "the present boundaries of Europe are not permanent" (4). Ultimately, it hoped "to create a platform for the discussion of [Eastern Europe's] problems", so that "when the time of liberation comes, there will be a responsible and informed body of opinion able to help in the material, political and cultural reconstruction of [the] countries" behind the Iron Curtain (5).

In one sense, this commission provided an unlikely context for Eliot's talk, since he himself rejected political solutions to cultural problems, and generally eschewed speaking on political matters. He was not to depart from such a resolve in this talk, establishing very quickly that his position on "culture" remained profoundly Arnoldian:

> To me, the unity of European culture has always seemed a self-evident *necessity*; to me, the rapid circulation throughout Europe of the best that was being thought and written in each country of Europe has seemed as essential for the continued life of literature as is the function of breathing for the life of a human being. (19)

If anything, Eliot's tendency to represent culture by organicist analogies with the human body was growing ever more pronounced. He still emphasized the difference between unity and uniformity, and averred that such unity depended on differences among the several literatures of Europe. All the while, his implicit cautions against Soviet-style ideas of culture continued to drive his discussion. European unity "today" is, he maintained, threatened by "modern and erroneous conceptions of the Nature of Man —what we call ideologies" (21).

Eliot would not of course have seen his conception of culture as ideological, and in that regard he was wholly in keeping with contemporaneous conservative thinkers. But the phenomenon of the leading poet of the day, a poet who represented the "modernist" impulse in unmistakable form, using the mass-media to promulgate and popularize an essentially Victorian discourse is as striking a conjuncture of heterogeneous historical forces as might be imagined. Eliot's broadcasts to Europe mark a distinct chapter in his involvement with radio. If they conform to the general ecumenicity of his other talks before the microphone, in addressing German or Eastern European audience they nevertheless tested the limits of such ecumenism. Today, at the end of the century, the idea of "Europe" has more currency than ever before, but with the end of the Cold War we have to strain to hear anyone insisting on the unity of European "culture". In this sense, too, Eliot's voice proves historically unique.

NOTES

[1] I have discussed these broadcasts in two previous publications: ""This rather elusory broadcast technique": T. S. Eliot and the Genre of the Radio Talk". In *ANQ* 11.4 (Fall 1998): 32-42; "Eliot on the Air: "Culture" and the Challenges of Mass Communication". In Brooker, J. S. (ed.). 1999. *T. S. Eliot and the Turning World*. Houndmills: MacMillan. The latter volume also includes my "Checklist of the Radio Broadcasts of T. S. Eliot". The numbers of broadcasts cited in the sentences that follow are not yet definite: further research will likely turn up additional broadcasts, though not, I suspect, in any large number.

[2] These redactions are all included in Donald Gallup's *T. S. Eliot: A Bibliography*. For general accounts of the early history of the BBC, there are a handful of especially valuable sources: Asa Briggs' magisterial *History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom* remains the most complete study; Burton Paulu's *British Broadcasting: Radio and Television in the United Kingdom* offers a post-war perspective on the BBC that is useful for anyone interested in Eliot; so too does Paddy Scannell and David Cardiff's *A Social History of British Broadcasting. Vol. 1 1929-1939. Serving the Nation*; Edward Pawley's *BBC Engineering, 1922-72* offers details about how the changing technology of broadcasting changed the course of the service, details not available elsewhere.

[3] There may be additional broadcasts made for the national services of the various nations of western Europe. Apart from one broadcast for Irish radio, my research thus far has not encompassed more than the sound and paper archives of the BBC.

[4] Indeed, after WWII, Eliot became an outspoken champion of BBC practice, and urged it to resist the temptations of both television and American-style broadcasting. I discuss this aspect of Eliot's relations with the BBC in my essay in *T. S. Eliot and the Turning World*.

[5] I quote from the published version of this talk, *Common Sense* XI.10 (October 1942: 351); the Eliot estate currently withholds the right to quote from those of Eliot's scripts which survive in the paper archive of the BBC.

[6] Probably a version of "In Praise of Kipling's Verse", an essay that Eliot published in *Harper's* 184.1106 (July 1942: 149-157). The quotations that follow are from the *Harper's* essay.

[7] Typescript located in the BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham. Allied troops entered Rome on 4 June 1944; Eliot pre-recorded his talk that very day, and it was broadcast at mid-day on the next, 5 June, on the "Purple Network" of the BBC Eastern Service. Eliot returned to some of the concerns of this broadcast,

though reproducing next to nothing of its form, in a broadcast for the Third Programme of 9 September 1951 entitled "Vergil and the Christian World". That talk was slightly redacted and published in both the *Listener*, XLVI.1176 (13 September 1951) and in *Sewanee Review*, LXI.1 (January/ March 1953); it was later collected in Eliot's *On Poetry and Poets*. 1957. London: Faber & Faber.

[8] Eliot recorded this broadcast for the BBC series "Demi Heure du Soir", and it was broadcast on 8 November 1944.

[9] All three of these talks were later published, with English and German on facing pages, as *Die Einheit der Europäischen Kultur*. 1946. Berlin: Carl Habel Verlagsbuckhandlung. The second was first published in English in *Adelphi* XXIII.3 (April/ June 1947), and was later republished along with the first and the third talks as an appendix to *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, which first appeared in November 1948.

[10] The nature of Eliot's attraction to radio, and the peculiar strengths he regarded as belonging to a radio talk as opposed to a public lecture or a published essay, is the topic of my essay, ""This rather elusory broadcast technique": T. S. Eliot and the Genre of the Radio Talk". In *ANQ* 11.4 (Fall 1998): 32-42.

[11] Quoted from the appendix to *Christianity and Culture. Two Noted Books Complete in One Volume: The Idea of A Christian Society, and Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. 1968. New York: Harvest/ Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich: 188. Page references to this volume are henceforth noted parenthetically.

[12] For a fuller account of Pound's broadcasts, see Carpenter (1988: 541-542 and 583-584). See also Heyman (1976: 149-151). Heyman notes that Pound made one broadcast for the so-called Salò Republic on 10 December 1943. Thereafter Pound continued to produce radio scripts for Minculpop until April 1945, but there is no evidence that any of these scripts were ever aired. Thanks to Jonathan Gill for reminding me of this dénouement to Pound's broadcasting "career". Most of Pound's radio talks have been collected in Doob (1978).

[13] From a broadcast of 4 April 1943.

[14] Prerecorded on 9 December 1948, the broadcast aired on Christmas day. The poem itself was read in German by actor Mathias Wieman.

[15] Eliot pre-recorded the talk on the previous day. The talk initially aired over the BBC's European Service, but was rebroadcast 2 February 1954 for the BBC's Third Programme. The entire series of broadcasts, including Eliot's, was published as a pamphlet in December 1953 by William Clowes & Sons, Ltd. My quotations come from the pamphlet. A recording of the talk is available for audition in the British Library National Sound Archive. The series comprised an

introductory talk by the Rt. Hon. Richard Law, P.C., M.P., who spoke to represent the purposes of the Central and Eastern European Commission; Christopher Dawson on religion; Denis Healey, M.P., on Socialism; Julian Amery, M.P., on political unity; Richard O'Sullivan, Q.C., on the legal tradition; T. S. Eliot on literature; and Sir David Kelly, G.C.M.G., on diplomacy.

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ABSTRACTS

INTRODUCTION: MODERNISM'S COMINGS AND GOINGS

Jennifer Birkett and Stan Smith

The Introduction gives an overview of the commitment to cosmopolitanism in the lives and writing of the major Anglophone modernists, and discusses the importance of the concept of translation and transition in their work. It considers the particular relationship of the American modernists to the European tradition; and it reviews briefly the different areas of the classical and contemporary European heritage nominated by the contributors to the volume.

LINEAGES OF "MODERNISM", OR, HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM NASHVILLE TO OXFORD

Stan Smith

The history of literary modernism reflects the twentieth century's diasporas and displacements, the construction and reconstruction of national cultures and alliances. This essay examines the retrospective construction of the idea of "modernism" in the late 1950s and 1960s, in tandem with the Americanisation of English culture and the academic institutionalisation of the modernist impulse. Robert Graves and Laura Riding, in *A Survey of*

Modernist Poetry (1927), first introduced the term to British culture, under the influence of the Nashville journal *The Fugitive*, edited by Ransom, Davidson and Tate between 1922 and 1925. The concept for a while took root in the Oxford coteries around W. H. Auden in the later 1920s, but thereafter went underground until the late 1930s, when it was again invoked to characterise the Auden generation and the configuration it made with that of Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Lawrence and Yeats. Auden's departure for the United States in 1939 heralds the end of an essentially mid-Atlantic Anglophone "modernism". Not until the 1960s, however, with the simultaneous privileging of the concept of "postmodernism", does the name become generally applied, in retrospect, to a movement already in process of being superseded. Both Graves and Auden by this time have become exemplary instances of the client relationship of British and Irish modernism to a specifically American discourse.

MODERNISM IN TRANSITION: THE EXPATRIATE AMERICAN MAGAZINE IN EUROPE BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

Craig Monk

The generation of expatriate Americans who spent the period between the world wars in Europe captured the imagination of critics and readers throughout the twentieth century. But while we know their works —and a great deal about their personal excesses— relatively little attention has been paid to the manner in which they facilitated their literary success. For many expatriate American writers, little magazines aided in printing material that commercial publishers would not touch, and the flexibility of these publications allowed the exchange of texts between Europe and the United States. Because modern writers were "self-canonizing", they actually assisted in the "writing" of modernism: we can see many of the threads of the modern canon in these little magazines. But the tension felt by little magazine editors —the tension between an *avant-garde* impulse to abandon tradition and a more conservative desire to reform art to include their visions— is also inherent in modernism. This essay underlines the importance of the little magazine to modern expatriate American writing, and seeks to further contextualize this writing within modernism itself.

PUPPETS, ACTORS AND DIRECTORS: EDWARD GORDON CRAIG AND THE EUROPEAN *AVANT-GARDE*

Olga Taxidou

This essay reads the work of Edward Gordon Craig within the tradition of the European theatrical *avant-garde*. Though he is hailed as one of the "prophets" of twentieth-century theatre, Craig and his overall project are almost never read within their historical and ideological context. Rather than viewing his work as an exception within the mainly literary experiments in Anglophone modernist theatre, this essay proposes a reading that finds parallels between Craig and his European contemporaries. Craig's view of the "art of the theatre" as a distinct discursive practice and not as an extension of literature, places him alongside figures like Reinhardt, Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and Artaud. In particular, this essay reads the work of Meyerhold against that of Craig. It attempts to treat the two directors/ visionaries as "test-cases", as they express similar aesthetic preoccupations on opposite extremes of the political spectrum (Meyerhold was a "utopian" Marxist and Craig flirted with fascism). Both men admired each other's work. Craig's aphoristic writings on the role of the actor are read in conjuction with Kleist's romantic essay on marionettes. This essay was first published in English by Craig in his journal *The Mask* (1909-1929), which also partakes in the *avant-garde* tradition of the manifesto. Rather than being a unique and solitary figure on an otherwise literary landscape, Craig is seen as forming part of the diverse and revolutionary spirit that was the European *avant-garde* in the early decades of this century.

MODERNISM IN BLACK AND WHITE: AMERICAN JAZZ IN INTERWAR EUROPE

John Lucas

This essay is partly about how and why Paris became the great good place for American jazzmen and women in the 1920s and 1930s, especially those who were not merely black but whose sexuality made life back home —or elsewhere— difficult. It is also about how jazz music became written about by Europeans, beginning as early as 1919 with Ernst-Alexandre Ansermet, conductor to the Ballet Russe, for whom Sidney Bechet's clarinet-playing has the "primitive" force analogous to the authentic or even autochthonous, primal energy sought for and found, to their own satisfaction, by early modernists in Africa and the Pacific Islands, and including Constant Lambert, who in his *Music Ho!* (1934) makes much of the music of Duke Ellington. Lambert regards Ellington's compositions as reaching the same level of achievement as, among others, Ravel, Hindemith and Stravinsky. Jazz thus becomes available and assimilated to modernist enterprises —in the fine arts, in literature, and, of course, in music. But jazz musicians were unlike any other creators within the modernist movement in that they never made theoretical statements about their music. Nor did they issue manifestoes. They made the music, others explained it.

EDWIN MUIR: ONE FOOT IN EUROPE

Alasdair D. F. Macrae

A central element of modernism was its cosmopolitanism and this relied on facilitators of cultural interchange and, in the case of literature, translators. Edwin Muir was a significant figure in alerting the Anglophone intellectual world to developments in continental Europe, particularly in literature in German. His own background in remote, rural Scotland was non-academic and his career is fascinating in that he read what he chose or what came his way, not what he was obliged to read to satisfy the demands of an institution. An early engagement with the works of Nietzsche, Hölderlin, Heine prepared

him to read contemporary German literature including Rilke, Hofmannsthal, Kafka and Broch. With his wife Willa, Muir translated several works by Kafka and Broch which fed new ideas, images and notions of form into the modernist consciousness. Muir's essays and reviews promoted this larger consciousness. Although, in comparison with the wildly modernist work of his compatriot Hugh MacDiarmid, Muir's own poetry is only mildly modernist, he contributed in a unique way to making continental writing available to British and American authors and readers.

THE WANDERING *FLÂNEUR*, OR, SOMETHING LOST IN TRANSLATION

Peter Brooker

The *flâneur* and *flânerie* have become a standard trope in accounts of an emergent modernity and the experience especially of the modern city. More recently, the historical figure of nineteenth-century Paris has been re-examined in readings of the gendered formations of modernism and further reconfigured in accounts of more contemporary, postmodern forms of urban experience. The Parisian stroller or window-shopper identified by Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin as a new social type and the model of the artist reappears as the mall rat or TV viewer slaloming across channels. This essay argues that, productive as these later discourses often are, critics responding in particular to the "deconstructive turn" are in danger of losing sight both of the historical and spatial specificity of the later postmodern moment. The *flâneur* becomes a sight without a referent, an unwitting or romanticised projection of the disengaged textualising theorist. The essay therefore calls for a renewed historical awareness which will not only confirm the situated and short-lived role of the *flâneur* and significantly different attitude of the female *flâneuse* in the modernist city, but help to ground the fertile ideas of the nomadic postmodern intellectual.

IS THERE A SWAN IN THIS POEM? YEATS AND SYMBOLIST POETICS

Matthew Potolsky

Although the poetry of W. B. Yeats has long been associated with the imagery and ideals of French symbolism, it is assumed that Yeats turns away from symbolism in the twentieth century and endorses a more public, if still hermetic, model of poetry. While this story may be true for Yeats's poetic imagery, Yeats continues to draw upon symbolist techniques of poetic "decomposition", even where such techniques seem not to be in evidence. Comparing two famous swan poems —Mallarmé's "Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui" and Yeats's "The Wild Swans at Coole"— this paper argues that Yeats continues to draw upon symbolist methods even after he claims to have rejected them. Both poems generate a tension between the represented scene described by the lyric voice and the linguistic or allegorical resonances of the poem's language. And in both poems this tension works to "decompose" the scene. Where Mallarmé effects this decomposition through the material qualities of his language, Yeats presents a landscape that can be read both mimetically (as a place the poet sees) and allegorically (as an embodiment of a system of symbolic correspondences).

DANTE IN AMERICA: ELIOT AND THE POLITICS OF MODERNISM

Jeremy Tambling

This essay looks at the politics of modernism and the politics of reading. Considering the elective affinity that seems to have existed between America and Dante, it focuses on T. S. Eliot's relationship to America and to nineteenth-century readings of Dante, and his desire to create a new, more authoritative Dante, derived in part from Maurras. This reading has become hegemonic in subsequent American criticism of Dante, particularly in relation to "allegory", as opposed to Auerbach's "figural" readings. The essay looks at both the positive and negative features of Eliot's reading, but asks how it may be possible now to go beyond it, and find a reading of Dante that is less bound up with an authoritarian politics.

VIRGINIA WOOLF AND POST-IMPRESSIONISM: FRENCH ART, ENGLISH THEORY, AND FEMINIST PRACTICE

Jane Goldman

Roger Fry's historic exhibition of 1910, "Manet and the Post-Impressionists", was a defining moment in *avant-garde* aesthetics, marking European modernism's revolutionary impact on the practices of British artists. But it also marked the start of British formalist theorists' influence on the critical apparatus for modernism. It is often cited to explain Virginia Woolf's enigmatic statement, in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1924): "on or about December 1910 human character changed". The formalist aesthetics of Roger Fry and Clive Bell with which this date has become linked are also invoked in readings of *To the Lighthouse* (1927) to explain the painting practice of Lily Briscoe and the modernist aesthetics of Woolf herself. But 1910 saw other events surrounding the exhibition that we might acknowledge as relevant: in particular, the suffragette activism occurring at the time of the exhibition, culminating in the notorious demonstration on "Black Friday". Woolf's manifesto on 1910 seems to resonate both with the formulations by Fry and Bell on European art and with the formulations and practices of British suffragist artists. The stained-glass artist and organiser of suffragist colours, Mary Lowndes, published a number of essays in 1910 and 1911 which are of particular interest. The combined influences of French art, English formalist theory, and suffragist aesthetics may be at work in Woolf's *Künstlerroman* of 1927.

FLAUBERT, SCHLEGEL, NIETZSCHE: JOYCE AND SOME EUROPEAN PRECURSORS

Brian Cosgrove

The influence of Gustave Flaubert on James Joyce is well-established, but might it not be more appropriate to look to Friedrich Schlegel for a version of irony that is closer to Joyce's artistic practice? Faced with a world of bewildering plenitude and the recurrent paradoxes in our experience, the literary artist requires, in Schlegel's view, a flexibility of response which will do justice to such multiplicity. Schlegel thus advocates an aesthetic which responds directly to contingency, one that arguably corresponds to Joyce's procedures in the "allincluding [...] chronicle" of Ulysses, where the constant narratorial shifts, for example, seem to indicate an aspiration to come to terms with the contradictory totality of experience. Moreover, the relativism implicit in Schlegel's insistence on authorial flexibility and "caprice"—as the artist seeks to devise strategies which will respond to the complexity of our world— becomes fully explicit in Nietzsche's later and more cogent advocacy of a "diversity of perspectives" in the interests of perceptual completeness. Such diversity is intrinsic to Joyce's non-absolutist aesthetic. The essay concludes with an indication of some further possible affinities between Joyce and Nietzsche.

"FAMILIAR MATERIALS": JOYCE AMONG EUROPEANS

Vassiliki Kolocotroni

In his life and work, James Joyce is often regarded as the paradigmatic exile. His legendary obsession with accurate detail in the account of a day in the life of an imaginary Dubliner in Ulysses, and the importance he always accorded to the minutiae of memory, tend to be seen as evidence of the nostalgic thrust of his writing. Yet, as this essay suggests, the cities in which nearly four decades of self-imposed dislocation were spent (Pola, Trieste, Rome, Zurich, Paris) provided more than a conveniently alien backdrop for Joyce's transposition of remembered Irish material. In those cities, Joyce practised the cosmopolitanism (linguistic and other) that he preached, and surrounded himself with fellow cross-nationals. Usually featuring only in anecdotal asides, or brief editorial footnotes, many of these figures can claim a significant influence on Joyce's work. This essay records the circumstances of some of these friendships, and discusses their emergence within Joyce's "familiar material".

THE ODYSSEY OF D. H. LAWRENCE: MODERNISM, EUROPE AND THE NEW WORLD

Peter Marks

Literary modernism often exhibits the opposing impulses of cross-cultural pollination on the one hand, and exile and dislocation on the other. Writers wrestled with the problem of representing these complex cultural and political forces, especially as manifested in such European metropolises as Paris, Vienna, and London. D. H. Lawrence, in some ways an archetypal modern writer, differed from many modernist contemporaries in rejecting their Eurocentric viewpoint. Both his life and his writing display a search for fresh meanings, forms, and lifestyles in the so-called New World. This essay concentrates on two neglected, often heavily criticised novels of the 1920s, *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, examining how each maps the distinct journeys of protagonists through and beyond a Europe terminally blighted by war. Lawrence recasts Europe as spiritually and culturally empty, but fundamentally unaware of its critical state. *Aaron's Rod* tracks the picaresque adventures of its eponymous hero from an English mining town, through the dulled world of western Europe to his apparent spiritual rebirth in Florence. *Kangaroo* records the more planned flight of Richard and Harriet Somers from a Europe they both detest to the supposed sanctuary of Australia. In neither novel is the search resolved: Aaron is pointed beyond Europe by his mentor, Lilly, while the Somers reject what they see as the unreflective ease of Australian democracy, journeying on to the untamed places of America. Both works overtly criticise the dead hand of post-war Europe from the margins of that culture, and beyond. At the same time, each is a literary experiment, an

attempt by Lawrence to perform radical surgery on the novel form. As such they are worthy of consideration in discussion both of the essentially European focus of much modernist literature, and the diversity of literary newness which marked it.

D. H. LAWRENCE, GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM, AND WEBERIAN FORMAL RATIONALITY

H. U. Seeber

Literary historians still find it difficult to "place" David Herbert Lawrence. Does he actually belong to that revolutionary movement in literature which is given the name "literary modernism" or "high modernism"? In Germany, the accusation of "fascism", usually based on a reading of *The Plumed Serpent*, is still a stock response to the challenge of Lawrence. Not happy with such a reductionist approach, I propose to place Lawrence in the context of German expressionism to explain crucial thematic and, to a lesser degree, formal innovations in his work. *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* are shaped by the typically expressionist tension between form and life. Their chief protagonists, Ursula and Birkin, voicing the author's radical critique of modern civilization, attempt to break through the forms of civilization, an attempt which implies a characteristic apocalyptic dialectic between destruction and renovation. In both expressionism and Lawrence, sexual love is the chief agent of "Aufbruch" ("new departure"). In describing the nature of modernity, Lawrence is evidently influenced by Max Weber's concept of "formal rationality" ("formale Rationalität"), which he learned from Edgar Jaffe.

HEMINGWAY AND MALRAUX: THE UNMANNED VIRILE FRATERNITY

Geoffrey Harris

This essay initially draws on the feminist criticism of Gilbert and Gubar, Pykett, Bonnie Kime Scott and Elaine Showalter to underline the theme of male inadequacy in the early work of Hemingway and Malraux, two of the most "masculine" of modernist novelists. In the aftermath of the First World War a certain concept of masculinity becomes irrelevant and the fictional virile hero finds himself involved in shifting gender boundaries. Harris takes issue, however, with the same feminist theorists when they maintain that this process resulted in the empowerment of women. Close textual and thematic analysis of a number of works shows that while the dislocation caused by the war may have unmanned the virile hero, it does not lead to the enabling of the figure of the heroine. If female characters move into the vacuum left by the beleaguered virile fraternity, they also inherit man's new-found vulnerability. The focus on the unmanned hero does not contribute to any concept of the New Woman and the demise of the male hero is not a consequence of the emergence of an authoritarian heroine. The virile fraternity is solely responsible for its own dislocation.

JEAN RHYS: THE FRENCH CONNECTION?

Jennifer Milligan

This essay examines Rhys's relationship with France as evinced in her autobiographical works and early fiction. It analyses the way in which Rhys, adopting a position of self-imposed artistic marginality and social isolation, refuses to endorse popular utopian visions of Paris as an all-embracing, alternative aesthetic homeland and a realm of erotic liberation. Paris instead becomes synonymous with maternal, not sexual, love. This offers a sense of resolution and closure for Rhys on a personal level (she connects metonymically with her own estranged mother); but her particular representation of the maternal realm also furthers her quest for a technically

innovative form of writing. This is characterised by chronological disturbance, narratorial instability, fragmented interior monologue, and a subversive rewriting of other canonical texts: traits common in much modernist writing of the period. Rhys additionally employs narrative and syntactical structures mimicking the natural rhythms of the maternal body, and, ever the radical, draws on French literature for her revisionary writing, thus aligning herself tangentially with an already dissident French literary canon. Rhys's French connections enable her to explore women-centred themes within the context of modernism and still retain her unique nonconformist voice.

CRYING FIRE IN A THEATRE: AUDEN'S HARLEQUINADES

Teresa Brus

W. H. Auden's writings engage in a self-conscious frivolity which is always alert to the serious. The playfulness of his language mirrors the vulnerability of the community it formulates, but his writing also engages in "verbal playing" for its own sake, dislocating established forms into indeterminacy, heterogeneity and difference. The essay explores Auden's transgressive deployment of the carnivalesque as a Dionysian joker "emigrating from weakness", to expose the tensions and dualities underlying modernist positions.

AUDEN'S JEREMIAD: *ANOTHER TIME* AND EXILE FROM THE JUST CITY

Michael Murphy

This essay examines Auden's growing disillusionment with England during the 1930s, culminating in his leaving for New York in early 1939. Focussing on those poems which were to be published in *Another Time* (1941), Auden's first collection as an "American" poet, the essay charts Auden's analysis of the poet's responsibility for the creation of a "Just City" through such exemplary figures as Rimbaud, Edward Lear, Matthew Arnold and, most importantly, W. B. Yeats. If sailing for America saw Auden attempting to escape a certain kind of limiting and parochial Englishness, then it also, this essay proposes, saw him attempting to jettison Yeats's influence, one which Auden came to recognise as providing a negative role model for the complex relationship between public and private selves. These themes, the essay concludes, are most fully worked out in the series of great elegies contained in the third section of *Another Time*, in which Auden looks at the Just City from the perspective of the exile.

"QUARRELLING WITH THE OUTSIDE WEATHERS": DYLAN THOMAS AND SURREALISM

Chris Wigginton

This essay challenges the traditional readings of Dylan Thomas. Rather than figuring Thomas as a regional romantic, a bardic other to modernism and the Audenesque, it focuses upon the modernist and particularly surrealist elements in his work. It considers in detail a number of poems that deal with the limitations of representation and language in order to suggest that Thomas may be read in a more complex way than has hitherto been the case.

It asks that surrealism be recognized as a politicized aesthetic response to crises of the period, and calls for a rethinking of the work of Dylan Thomas in the light of those newer theoretical responses that have emerged since his death.

THE EUROPEAN RADIO BROADCASTS OF T. S. ELIOT

Michael Coyle

Although T. S. Eliot is among the most-studied figures in literary history, the 80-90 radio broadcasts he did between 1929-1964 have yet to receive critical attention. It is less striking that Eliot should have been attracted to radio than it is that, after 1941, he increasingly directed his broadcasts to European and Asian audiences. After all, numerous other modernist writers and poets experimented with radio (though few others made Eliot's sustained commitment to the medium). If Eliot's foreign broadcasts conform to the studied ecumenicity of his other talks before the microphone, in addressing German or Eastern European audience they did nevertheless test ecumenical limits. Today, at the end of the century, the idea of "Europe" has more currency than ever before, but with the end of the Cold War we have to strain to hear anyone insisting on the unity of European "culture". In this sense, Eliot's broadcasts comprise a uniquely modernist moment: an attempt to use a new technology to recognize a dream in which the rest of the world was rapidly losing interest.

CONTRIBUTORS' DETAILS

Jennifer Birkett holds the Chair of French Studies at the University of Birmingham. Her interest is mainly in the operations of ideology in prose fiction, and she has written extensively on French writing from the eighteenth century to the present day. She is a specialist in the *fin de siècle* (*The Sins of the Fathers: Decadence in France and Europe 1870-1914*, 1986). Her most recent books are *The Macmillan Guide to French Literature: Early Modern to Postmodern* (with James Kearns, 1997) and *Samuel Beckett* (1999), a Longman Critical Reader co-edited with Kate Ince. She is currently lead investigator on an interdisciplinary team exploring the intersections of European and national identities (UK, France and Spain) in the first half of the twentieth century.

Peter Brooker is Professor of Modern Literature and Culture and Research Leader at University College Northampton. He has written widely on contemporary literature and theory and is the editor of *Modernism/ Postmodernism* (1992) and author of *New York Fictions* (1996) and *Cultural Theory: A Glossary* (1999). A volume of essays, *Modernity and Metropolis*, is forthcoming.

Teresa Brus is a Lecturer and Researcher at the Department of English, Wroclaw University, and also a translator (of Polish poetry by Ewa Sonnenberg, published in *Acumen*, and of English short stories, published in *Fraza*). Her main areas of interest are the 1930s, W. H. Auden (Ph.D. dissertation — *Reading Frivolity: A Study of W. H. Auden's Light Verse of the 1930s)*, Polish and Spanish Modernist poetry, discourses of masculinity and play in poetry. She has published short essays on literary theory.

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