

Abstracts Vol. 20: Special issue on Modernism.

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of "postmodernism", does the name become generally applied, in retrospect, to a movement already in process of being superseded.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 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
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 conjunction 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 between the wars
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?: yeast 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 "all-including [...] 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 E. 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.