Transatlantic Modernism

Transatlantic Modernism:

Writers, Thought, and the Quest for Truth

By

Robert P. McParland

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Transatlantic Modernism: Writers, Thought, and the Quest for Truth

By Robert P. McParland

This book first published 2025

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-0364-4674-1
ISBN (Ebook): 978-1-0364-4675-8

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: MODERNISM AND THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Modernism emerged from an international exchange of ideas and approaches to art and literary creation. Central to this creative effort was a search for meaning in modern life. Textual defamiliarization, play with time and space, rhetorical expression, and disruptive gestures broke the horizon of expectation for readers and introduced new aesthetic dimensions and modes of representation. Writers, from Ezra Pound and Ernest Hemingway to James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence, sought meaning in the contemporary world and crossed national borders and traditional boundaries. Ideas, texts, music, styles moved across distances, struggled with modernity, and voiced a response to the changes being wrought and unfolding in the modern world. Transnational exchange concerned the communication and thought of literary artists and the relations and exchanges of texts and cultural production across geographical separation. It addressed the cultural impact of thought and discourse embodied in print or exchanged through sound communication. It recognized the role of material culture in the conveyance of information, images, and ideas. Yet, modernist writers also sought beyond material reality for ways to locate meaning and to give it new expression in their work. How might meaning be found within the modern condition? How could the experiences of the first decades of the twentieth century be put in contemporary terms? What language and which stories could account for this new world? Literary modernism sought new ways of expression and broke from traditional ways of writing.1

This study focuses on the cross-European and transatlantic exchange of texts with respect to the search by modernist writers for human renewal, creative expansion, and meaning. It responds to previous work that recognizes that these artists engaged in a quest in their literary art in which they sought the "tragic optimism" that Barbara Heavilin referred to in *From an Existential Vacuum to a Tragic Optimism* (Cambridge Scholars, 2013). These artists wrestled with "the absence of God" that Gregory Erickson has observed (xvii) amid the modern existential vacuum.2 They were engaged

with the quest that psychologist Victor Frankl referred to in *Man's Search for Meaning* (1946).

During the first decades of the twenty-first century scholars have offered re-readings of literary modernism as a search for meaning that included a rethinking of religious belief. These scholars affirm that there was in modernism not merely a denial of God and the metaphysical but also a 'religious' quest that took new forms. Pericles Lewis set forth this inquiry with *Religious Experience and the Modernist Novel* (Yale University Press 2010). He affirmed that reflections on religious experience were a vital aspect in the work of writers whose art emerged from the climate of the early twentieth century. Anthony Domestico (*Poetry and Theology in the Modernist Period*, Johns Hopkins, 2017), and Stephen Sicari, in *Modernist Reformation*s (Liverpool, 2022) examined religion in modernist poetry. Erik Tonning wrote on *Modernism and Christianity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Gregory Erickson reflected on the modernist engagement of authors with their sense of absence and a *via negativa* typified by the later death of God theologians in *The Absence of God in Modernist Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

Early in Barbara Heavilin's book *From an Existential Vacuum to a Tragic Optimism* (Cambridge Scholars, 2013) she points out that literature has tended to move away from an upward contemplation of God to an outward gaze of humanity, to an inward introspection of an isolated self that is severed from connections to the deity and to others."3 Heavilin presents Victor Frankl, a psychiatrist and former Auschwitz inmate, as an individual who moved through tragic suffering toward a life sustaining affirmation. She begins the first chapter of her book with a rhetorical question from Frankl in *Man's Search for Meaning* (1946): "Is it not conceivable that there is still another dimension, a world beyond man's world, a world in which the question of ultimate meaning… would have an answer?"4 In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Victor Frankl affirmed hope within adversity. He developed this resolve quite personally in his efforts to survive a concentration camp. The Thomistic philosopher Joseph Pieper emphasized hope as a virtue, a potential, and an expectation. Ernst Bloch asserted a historical and future-looking hope in a "not yet." French philosopher Gabriel Marcel viewed hope as a response to trial and the inclination to despair. He referred to this as "the act by which this temptation is actively or victoriously overcome."5

Where did hope lie among the literary modernists? A post-famine Ireland that succumbed to a state of enervation influenced Joyce's *Dubliners*, critics

like Luke Gibbons have claimed. Hugh Kenner, referring to Joyce's story "The Dead," called it a state of "living death."6 Yet, critic David Rando argues for a theme of hope that stretches beyond *Dubliners*, throughout Joyce's works. Critics observe that T.S. Eliot, likewise, suggests a bleak landscape in *The Waste Land*, but also indicates the possibility of renewal. Poet Wallace Stevens writes: "And after the final no there comes a yes." The poetry of Eliot, Stevens, and Joyce, engage in "acts of theology" and produces religious effects in its readers, observes Stephen Sicari.7 Anthony Domestico explores the thought of T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden in relation to theology. He points out that in *The Criterion* Virginia Woolf, William Butler Yeats, and other modernist writers were discussed alongside theologian Karl Barth. T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden emphasized religious thinking more than the religious "feeling" described by Friedrich Schleiermacher, Domestico observes.8 He points out that in these poets' self-reflexive approach was attention to aesthetic form and intellectual engagement. They explored theological concepts like eschatology, revelation, and community (koinonia) through their poetry. Domestico also recognizes the impact of Jacques Maritain's Thomism. He points out that Jacques Maritain, in *Art and Scholasticism* (1950), recognized that shortly after World War I Europe needed "a conversation between philosophers and artists."9

Thus, we consider here literary modernism as a broad international phenomenon which engaged writers across national boundaries in humanity's search for meaning. To consider the search for meaning within the transatlantic movement of modernism de-centers modernism. One considers not only the transatlantic axis between Paris and London and New York City but also sees modernism across several regions and cultures and across the arts. One moves beyond disciplinary containers defined by nation to consider interactions across cultures, considering the translations and transferences between American, British, and continental literatures. Transatlantic displacement of aesthetic practices shaped literary modernism, or modernist art and music. There was an interaction of multiple authors and artists awareness of each other's texts, artworks, and compositions. There was collaboration between artists and there was the transnational reach of their little magazines. There were social and publishing networks. Social and material forces brought these connections into being. Thus, beyond studies focused on national literatures or postmodernist theories of the instability of text or identity, what appears to be needed is context.

The significance of transnational modernism as a scholarly field is confirmed by journals and books, scholarly articles, conferences, and

courses. This transnational turn reflects cultural exchange within our increasingly convergent world. Texts, objects, images, sounds circulate among people at a geographical distance from each other. To consider this variety is to engage in comparative work. This also calls for some involvement in multilingual literary study and openness to translation. We are brought into an international, comparativist approach to the signs, texts, and authors and to reflect upon their 'conversation' with each other. Meanwhile, these literary texts may be received and understood differently across cultures and spaces. We place these texts amid their historical moment, within communication, technologies, war, political tensions, and migrations. This invites us into Anglo-American relations, Francophone, and Hispanic literatures, the black Atlantic and the Caribbean, and other literary exchanges. Transatlantic networks of publishing and exchange have become an important area of scholarship as Meredith McGill points out in her "Foreword: Transatlantic Literary Authority, Material Networks, Symbolic Economies" in *Symbiosis.*10 When the transatlantic intersections of modernism have been discussed, the discussion has extended to literary texts and the exchanges that occurred primarily amid Anglo-American writing and the New York-Paris axis that included the interactions of American expatriates, French artists, and textual production in the English language. One might also look at intertextuality and the broader interplay of texts across the Atlantic that included writing in other European languages such as French and Spanish. Innovation in modernist writing drew upon an intermedial movement in which the arts coalesced.

Literary modernism is many things: complexity, wordplay, critique, pastiche among these. Its aesthetics of art for art's sake can be seen in the writings of precursors like Walter Pater, Charles Swinburne, and Oscar Wilde. Symbolism and French poets Charles Baudelaire, Stephen Mallarme, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Valery, Jules Lafourge lie behind the poetics of literary modernism. Impressionist painting and post-Impressionism also lie behind modernist developments in visual art and in literature. A path toward the modern theatre was set by Henrik Ibsen as he moved across Norway to Germany, and by August Strindberg and Anton Chekhov. The Western world reacted to the worldview that had emerged from Darwinian theory. Perspectives on time, as in Albert Einstein's theories or Henri Bergson's reflections, likewise played a part in reflections on identity and consciousness. Literary modernism was a response to the discontinuities introduced by industrialism, modernization, and technology. Modernism is held to be an art of the machine age by cultural theorist Lewis Mumford and historian Charles Beard, among others. The impact of mechanical reproduction and mass production certainly were present in the era in which modernism

emerged. However, literary modernism is more than a matter of meeting the machine age with art, poetry, and story. Literary modernism, with its artistic concerns, was in part a response to mass culture. It was also, in part, a reaction to a sense of the dehumanization brought by a technological age, increased bureaucratization, or the assembly line. Yet, in its creativity literary modernism, confronting this world, was vital expressiveness, seeing and making it new.

Some artists wished to save thoughtful and well-crafted art from popular mass culture. Theirs was an inventive response to pace and motion and to the modern condition of depersonalization, bureaucratization, and atomization observed by the sociologist Max Weber. The modernists faced positivism, pragmatism, relativism. They became engaged with language, recognizing how uses of language shape the world. They improvised like jazz musicians. Modernist artists anticipated Eisenstein's filmic emphasis on montage; they engaged with fragmentation, cutting, flashbacks and dissolves between images. Modernists explored dreams and extremes. They contested the conventional and sought new means of expression.

There were an amazing variety of cross currents: modernist magazines and salons among them. Ezra Pound connected expatriate American artists with the circles of William Butler Yeats and Ford Madox Ford. Sylvia Beach's bookstore Shakespeare and Company saw visits from James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, nearby residents George Antheil (who lived upstairs) and Ezra Pound. Gertrude Stein welcomed James Joyce, Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, and others. Mabel Dodge oversaw the gatherings of artists. In France, Gerald Murphy hosted John Dos Passos and F. Scott Fitzgerald. In New York, Alfred Stieglitz brought together painters and photographers. In Chicago, Floyd Dell and Margery Currey provided a center for writers and artists. Harlem produced a burst of creative activity.

This study begins with an overview of some of the key concerns and influences of the 1910 through 1920s period: modernization and industrialism, the First World War, Freudian psychology, modern art, attention to language. It proceeds with inquiries into the novel, poetry, the postwar search for meaning, and the interactions of literature with visual arts and music. Literary modernism can be observed from the angle of transatlantic exchange and cultural, artistic, and philosophical exchanges during a time of transition. This includes both the broad sweep of international discourse and attention to the locales in which modernism evolved.

In literary modernism there is a break with the past, a recasting of vision. We have been dealing with this transition or disruption, this upending of culture, ever since. Critics like Lawrence Rainey and Michael North, among others, have pointed out how high modernism conspired with and appropriated popular culture. The literary modernists were altogether conscious of the impact of advertising, radio, the phonograph, and other forms of communication. They contested with what Andreas Huyssen has referred to as "an increasingly consuming and engulfing culture."11 It was the pressures of this culture that instigated innovation and a quest for meaning.

The Mythopoetic and the Scientific

Literary modernism expressed a confrontation with modernity and offered a mythopoetic response to the challenges of scientific naturalism. The natural sciences advanced significantly during the nineteenth century. This development continued in the first decades of the twentieth century, with a marked difference: discoveries in physics began to shift the scientific paradigm. The upheaval in science was parallel to literary artist's inquiry into time, nature, the mind, and human relations. Story, myth, poetic form, and language were put to new uses.

The mythopoetic met the realism of the late nineteenth century head on. To regard the value of the mythopoetic is to embrace a worldview in which symbol, metaphor, and story convey meaning. Following philosopher Karl Jaspers, critic Michael Bell points out that the adoption of a world view is mostly unconscious.12 Modernist writers had "an underlying outlook" or metaphysic of mythopoeia that entered their writings. (Bell situates "the liberal deconstructive ironies" of Joyce and Mann at one end of a continuum and the uses of myth by fascism, as by Pound, at the other.13 Bell points out that "religion, science, aesthetics, and history" all played a role in mythopoetic consciousness. The nineteenth century tensions between religion and science were "dissolved… by the order of the aesthetic…" and myth became an aesthetic category "rather than a social, philosophical, or anthropological one."14

Nineteenth century writers like Emile Zola emphasized the stark realities of naturalism in their work. Naturalism affirms that reality is to be identified with the natural world. Naturalism rejected notions of a supernatural realm. Positivism restricted scientific claims to the level of phenomena while rejecting the notion that any knowledge lies outside scientific fact. Such positivism, making metaphysics peripheral, began with the nineteenth

century philosophy of Auguste Comte, who assumed a triad of progressive development. For Comte, first there was a theological stage inclined toward superstition; then there was a metaphysical stage of speculation; finally, humanity had outgrowth its primitive stage and arrived at the positivist stage of measuring observable phenomena. Of course, Comte himself eventually created something of a religion of humanity. Scientific positivism, after Comte, turned attention to sense experience. Science had the role of investigating nature and how things in the physical world happen so that people could better understand experience. It sought the facts of phenomenal experience and to trim away the apparent marvels and mysteries of metaphysics. It would tell us how things are but would not presume to discover why with any reference to religion. It would remain focused on the finite world and not discuss theological or philosophical notions of the infinite. Critics held that the naturalistic worldview takes part of reality and experience- one that can be measured and quantified- and presents it as the whole of reality.

The paradigm shift in science was indeed revolutionary. Physicists at the turn of the century pondered whether the universe behaved at the atomic level like waves or particles. Their nineteenth century science was grounded in inductive method and empirical observation. However, the work of early twentieth century scientists exposed a subatomic level of material reality and challenged the sureness of observation. The epistemological limits of science were revealed. Science was descriptive, as Karl Pearson in 1892 pointed out. It offered empirical evidence of the workings of nature, but it was only one means of understanding.

World religions held that there were other areas of consciousness, experience, and understanding. Emphasizing reason, the Enlightenment criticized religion as a superstition, or as an institutional force promoted by a priestly class. The theories of Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud were major intellectual peaks that had to be faced. Marx advanced his view of dialectical materialism and social-historical class conflict while regarding religion as superstructure and as an opiate of the people.

The naturalistic approach to reality had an impact upon the emerging field of psychology. William James took an empirical approach to religious experience. He opposed positivism and held to the view in “The Will to Believe” that humans are volitional beings and belief is not only a matter of intellect. One may believe, or take the risk to believe, while holding the hope that this may manifest in experience. James is willing to suspend

judgement as he records accounts of people in *Varieties of Religious Experience*. In his Gifford lectures he applies psychological and empirical perspectives and observes that religious individuals hold 'over-beliefs' that are not measurable by empirical data. With his pragmatic view, he appreciates that religious experience may produce observable effects in the actions of those believers. There may be something "greater"- an unseen, or "higher" spiritual reality.

Sigmund Freud, in contrast, maintained a naturalist view and cast religion as an illusion. He did not take an empirical approach to religious belief. He dismissed it from the outset. In exploring the unconscious mind, Freud adopted a scientific approach. He proposed that the unconscious mind contains repressed experiences and primal instincts and drives. What is repressed emerges in neuroses. Religion, he claimed, was an obsessional neurosis. Religion may be viewed as a sublimation of instincts.

For Sigmund Freud religion was escapism. In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) Freud asserted that religious beliefs are based upon repressed wishes. Freud, however, did not grasp the wide range of religious expression throughout the world. He focused upon ambivalence toward a paternalistic father figure. In *Moses and Monotheism* he presented a combination of anthropology and psychoanalysis in a psychological analysis of the monotheistic idea of Judaism. In this text Freud created a historical myth about the Jews' response to this God-figure. They revered this deity but also would be rid of the father-figure and thus experienced the impact of guilt. Then the repressed law of Moses returned through a religion of duty and law. Religious believers were bound in a fixation from the past.

Friedrich Nietzsche approached the religion of the organized Christian Church of his day as a weakening or debilitating power: one that led to mass man and to a sapping of human authenticity and vitality. Nietzsche is a critic who is sometime associated with the idea of a loss of meaning. He was critical of modern scientific analysis as well as of the structures of conventional morality. Nietzsche was an aphoristic poet, a critic whose fragmentary writing asserted that to cast forth meaning in the world one must face nothingness and have a will toward meaning. Nietzsche affirmed the tragic: *amor fati*. He opposed the formal organized religion of his time. To him it only signaled weakness and conformity.

Genealogy, in Nietzsche's view, was a way of attending to history, without some overarching plan like Hegel's teleological scheme. History is human all too human; it is a context in which stories intersect. Nietzsche challenged

the oppression of what he called slave morality. He rejected the idea that to be good one must be meek. He held that the strength of the human is undermined by such a code. Humans must abandon this way of thinking and behaving and reevaluate by thinking beyond good and evil. The free spirit is one of self-determination. One may dance near the abyss without falling into it. There is an affirmation in the will to life.

Critics of modernism have often seen that the literary artist could do well without religion. These writers faced naturalism and the godless universe perceived by Nietzsche. They countered naturalist claims with aestheticism, intuition, epiphany, the mythopoetic, and novel reflections on time, perspective, and personhood. Breaking from preceding Victorian conceptions, they gravitated toward new ways of thinking about reality. The literary artist was also a witness to cultural transformations in the modern urban world, the expansion of new technologies, and the social impact of the sciences. From Bergson to Proust to Joyce, modernists explored mental time. They embraced a mythic and symbolic sense of reality and contested purely mechanistic approaches to reality that minimized or reduced the human to the status of an object amid mechanistic forces. The creative evolution of Henri Bergson, for example, provided an alternative to Darwinian adaptation and natural selection.

Culture, some believed, would provide new meaning. However, the First World War suggested that something had gone terribly wrong with Western civilization. This calamity deepened among artists and writers the search for meaning.

Literary modernism is many things: complexity, wordplay, critique, pastiche among these. Its aesthetics of art for art's sake can be seen in the writings of precursors like Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde. Symbolism and French poets Charles Baudelaire, Stephen Mallarme, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Valery, Jules Lafourge lie behind the poetics of literary modernism. Impressionist painting and post-Impressionism also lie behind modernist developments in visual art and in literature. A path toward the modern theatre was set by Henrik Ibsen as he moved across Norway to Germany, and by August Strindberg and Anton Chekhov. The Western world reacted to the worldview that had emerged from Darwinian theory. Perspectives on time, as in Albert Einstein's theories or Henri Bergson's reflections, likewise played a part in reflections on identity and consciousness. Literary modernism was a response to the discontinuities introduced by industrialism, modernization, and technology. Modernist writers like Dos Passos anticipated what C. Wright Mills observed in the 1950s as "the ascendency

of the technician over the intellectual."15 Some artists wished to save thoughtful and well-crafted art from popular mass culture. It was an inventive response to pace and motion and to the modern condition of depersonalization, bureaucratization, and atomization observed by the sociologist Max Weber. The modernists faced positivism, pragmatism, relativism. They became engaged with language, recognizing how uses of language shape the world. They improvised like jazz musicians. Modernist artists anticipated Eisenstein's filmic emphasis on montage; they engaged with fragmentation, cutting, flashbacks and dissolves between images. Modernists explored dreams and extremes. They contested the conventional and sought new means of expression.

Literary modernism also wrestled with nihilism. Writers like Wyndham Lewis, T.S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, William Butler Yeats, and Ezra Pound at times regarded authoritarian responses to a fragmenting culture rather favorably. However, literary modernism in the works of Dos Passos, Lawrence, and others argued against dehumanization. They critiqued the impact of modern society making person over into a machine in the image of the industrial system. In the 1920s the argument against this emphasized vitality, consciousness, and decisive choice and action. T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* (1922) observed disintegration. He considered issues of solipsism, an isolation reinforced by the skepticism of Berkeley and Hume which tended to separate the consciousness of the thinker from the community. John Dos Passos in *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) underscored the fragmentation in the technique of his novel. E.M. Forster insisted that an answer lies in "only connect" while Virginia Woolf pondered time, perspective, interiority, and a woman writer's need for a room of her own. During this period, various spiritualist and theosophical perspectives emerged.

Transatlantic Exchange

The story of transatlantic modernism, while partly a tale of textual exchange, is also the story of a context that was shaped by immigration and transatlantic movement. The United States and Canada, since their founding, were locations for discovery that were open to immigrants. So too was the Caribbean. In *The Black Atlantic* (1993) Paul Gilroy pointed to a culture that is a mix of British, American, African, and Caribbean that is an important part of transatlanticism. At the center of this experience is a literary culture of music, oral traditions, and writings.

The European axis of transatlantic movement is a familiar phenomenon that has been well-traced by historians. In the 1840s, German and Irish

immigrants swept into America escaping turbulence or famine. Successive waves of immigrants followed, later from Italy and other Western European nations. The West coast of the United States continued to receive Asian immigrants. Eastern Europeans increasingly came to America's shore from the 1880s through the turn of the Twentieth Century. The Statue of Liberty was set in New York harbor in 1886. Between 1880 and the 1930s, some 2.5 million Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe and Russia. A wave of Polish, Italian, Czech immigrants also made the transatlantic voyage.

This was the age of Social Darwinism and eugenics. Race, ethnicity, and nationality all came under the scrutiny of sociologists. The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 placed quotas on immigration for those who were not from northern Europe. Meanwhile, there was considerable internal migration of blacks from the South to northern cities. The African American population of Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit grew rapidly during these years. Critic Ann Douglas has pointed out a growth of 148 percent in Chicago, 307 percent in Cleveland, and 611 percent in Detroit.16 Racial tensions resulted in a riot in Chicago in the summer of 1919 and a massacre in Tulsa in 1921. Chicago sociologist Robert Park concluded that black ghettos in American cities were a direct product of racism. The story of literary modernism includes this dimension of immigrant voices, African American voices, and their exchange with the dominant culture.

In *The Dialect of Modernism* (1994), Michael North recognizes the "writers who were to make transatlantic modernism the dominant movement of the 1920s."17 Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor, introducing the Edinburgh University Press series on transatlanticism, discuss "ideas of crossing and connection." This emphasis on crossing leads, they say, toward a "rethinking of national identity." They point out that "the other side of the internationalist coin is an increased interest in localism, regionalism, and place-specific writing."18

Modernism was often of a central place of human interaction: the modern city. Literature, music, and visual art faced urban life, industrial development, a shifting of norms. Modernism crossed borders. Little magazines, art shows, and the transit of artists connected ideas, styles, and explorations in new forms of representation across distances. There were an amazing variety of cross currents: modernist magazines and salons among them. Ezra Pound connected expatriate American artists with the circles of William Butler Yeats and Ford Madox Ford. Sylvia Beach's bookstore Shakespeare and Company saw visits from James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, nearby residents George Antheil (who lived upstairs), and Ezra Pound. Gertrude

Stein welcomed James Joyce, Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, and others to her residence. Mabel Dodge oversaw gatherings of artists. In France, Gerald Murphy hosted John Dos Passos and F. Scott Fitzgerald. In New York, Alfred Stieglitz brought together painters and photographers. In Chicago, Floyd Dell and Margery Currey provided a center for writers and artists.

Authorship in the new century developed alongside new trends on publishing. In the 1890s, publishing firms in Britain were increasingly corporate enterprises rather than one-man proprietorships. Manuscripts were now often reviewed by professional readers, prepared by editors, distributed by marketers, and supported by publicists. The literary agent was a recent phenomenon. A.P. Watt, G.K. Chesterton's agent, set up business after 1875 and he represented Rudyard Kipling, H. Rider Haggard, and Arthur Conan Doyle as well as Chesterton. It was his business to establish intellectual property rights and to develop outlets for his work, including serialization and translation. With the Berne Convention (1886), international copyright law was now at last in place. Publishing was becoming more international.

America's relationship to European literary art in the 1910s and 1920s followed its long contestation with British literature. In the nineteenth century American nationalist writers argued that British literature was so often reprinted in the United States that American writers were straightjacketed in their attempt to create a literature of their own. In his essay "Hawthorne" (1879) Henry James pointed out that the United States had no storied past, no inheritance, "no aristocracy, no church, no clergy;" America had no palaces, castles, ivied ruins, or cathedrals. American had "no literature, no novels, no museums…"19 The questions of what made a literature "American" were still in the air even as a global context emerged increasingly in the early years of the Twentieth Century. During this time American writing further emerged as a point of interest to French, Spanish, and Italian artists. Meanwhile, in American politics there were tensions between nationalism and internationalism, ones most often favoring neutrality and non-involvement in European affairs after the First World War. In literary print communities, artists and writers were in communication with each other across the Atlantic. In 1928, the magazine *transitions* asked writers and artists: "How are the influences of the United States manifesting themselves upon Europe?" Gertrude Stein, who was among the respondents, wrote that America was "of the right age to be born in and of the wrong age to live in."20

In Ezra Pound's view, affiliations had affected the development of literature beyond national borders. It is notable that even America's expatriates of the 1920s, while living in Europe, often were writing about the Unites States. That distance provided some perspective for F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, for example. It supported Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans.* Authors set out essays, reviews, and criticism to distinguish modernity writing from that of their predecessors. Even so, the context in which modernism flourished includes relationships with romanticism, realism, symbolism, and popular culture. Performance stage styles met with film and advertising, scripts, and photographic imagery. The popular arts of the 1920s increasingly became absorbed across the subsequent decades in corporate enterprise and mass media.

The Cultural Setting of Literary Modernism

There have been attempts to situate modernism within its social and historical setting. Critics point to trends preceding the First World War that were intensified by it. Modernism emerged from both individual innovation and cultural and critical exchange, as critics from Richard Lehan and Robert Crunden to Michael North have pointed out. Literary modernism responded to mass culture, technologies and consumerism, urban settings. The artist was a "social witness," as Lehan points out.21 Modernists embraced myth and symbols. The artist sought to overcome trends toward nihilism with vitalism. They would not allow the modern world to be drained of imaginative vitality by cold reason, positivism, or a Darwinian worldview. The artist would create by "working inward to theories of consciousness."22 There was Joyce's epiphany, Bergson's intuitionism, Proust's sense of time and memory, Hemingway's neo-stoicism. These confronted Louis-Ferdinand's journey into night, Eugene Ionesco's theatre of the absurd, or Samuel Beckett's later reflections on absurdity and nihilism. The artist faced a world in peril from the alienations of industrialism, the mechanization of war, the lapsing of science into scientism. Freud reminded the artist of the powers of the unconscious. From Joseph Conrad to Gertrude Stein and from impressionism to cubism they were urged to observe the world from multiple perspectives. The cosmopolitan nature of modernist work can be seen in music as well as in literature. "The movement was by tacit definition international, and no one worked in the country of his birth" wrote Hugh Kenner. He added that this interaction led to a "reshaping of the American language."23 Yet, there was also a concern in some writers with the local. Writers worked through their experience of social disruptions. In "I'll Take My Stand" (1930) twelve southern writers, the Agrarians or Fugitives, held

to Thomas Jefferson's model of yeoman farmer. They rejected industrialism. The land and home were a culture's stability, the text was a unity. The poet William Carlos Williams asserted that careful attention to the local was a key to understanding life in the modern world.

If one of the points of modernist literature was to exclude the common reader, it was not always so successful at such an agenda. As Joyce Wexler points out, someone indeed paid for modernism and modernist writers certainly appreciated access to money in a material world. They were not averse to recognition beyond a small coterie of highbrow readers. Much of the work that first appeared in little magazines later appeared in book form. While writers of modernism did not write for the masses, their work was available to the conscientious reader.

Ortega y Gasset's argument in *The Dehumanization of Art* was that there should be writing for two different classes of readers. There would be keen readers who could understand a work and those who could not understand it. John Carey appears to draw a line from Nietzsche's disparagement of the masses to Wyndham Lewis and to the new criticism of F.R. Leavis. Indeed, Lionel Trilling regarded high modernism as contrary to democratic values. He wrote that in its European form it had been "written by men who are indifferent to, or even hostile to, the tradition of American liberalism as we know it." Andreas Huyssen (1986), likewise, observed how modernism has been defined as an attempt to set itself apart from popular culture. He inverted this figure and critiqued the patriarchal, misogynist elements or trends in modernism.24

At the turn of the Twentieth Century, Europe experienced significant social and political developments and the impact of discovery, invention, and technology. Cultural movements in the arts responded imaginatively to this time of transition. Europe had been shaped by several waves of industrialization during the Nineteenth Century. The place of humanity in the universe had been challenged by Darwinian natural selection. Society dealt with the aggressive implications of social Darwinism. Cultural and political nationalisms had coalesced into state ideologies. There were political tensions, worker strikes, international state alliances, and the intermarriage of elite family members across national boundaries.

Literature, during this time, embraced realism. Now, with the new century, a shift began beneath fiction's mimetic representation of life. Writers made a quest for vitality. New printing technologies expanded print readership. Planes, trains, and automobiles carried news and serialized fiction to new

locations. Much as the railroads had expanded transportation, industry, and the speed of life, the automobile now called for roads and increased the pace set by the industrial machine. Transatlantic cable linked people and nations across distances. The Victrola record player soon brought sound. The year 1901 in New York brought white lights to Broadway. Now there were airplanes, vacuum cleaners, razor blades, windshield wipers, crayons, and teabags. There were brassieres, teddy bears, sonar, cellophane, instant coffee, and Kellogg's' Corn Flakes.

In 1900 Sigmund Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Philosopher John Dewey had begun, the year before, to advocate for progressive education. Social science scholars in Chicago and at the London School of Economics applied social data to examine human activity. The Fabians in Britain advanced the view that technical expertise would guide the new era. Marxist revisionists claimed that the proletariat would rise to gain the means of production. Socialist economist Thorstein Veblen (1904) pointed to conspicuous consumption while Max Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic* (1905) examined the drive for capitalist success. The French philosopher Henri Bergson set forth his work on *Creative Evolution* (1907). There were the groundbreaking theatrical productions of Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* (1905). Readers of fiction met with the urban critique of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1902) and Upton Sinclair's critique of immigrant labor in the meat packing industry in *The Jungle* (1906). Joseph Conrad initiated a movement toward modernist literary techniques with point-of-view in *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Heart of Darkness* (1902). Rudyard Kipling explored colonial identity in *Kim* (1901). W.E.B. addressed race in *Souls of the Black Folk* (1903), declaring "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line."25

In 1905 Albert Einstein, at the age of twenty-six, was not part of the recognized scientific community. He was a patent clerk. Eistein was visual, speculative, and he began to publish papers between 1900 and 1905. Einstein gave precise mathematical-statistical accounts. Newton's laws were dominant at this time, including his view of light as a stream of particles. Einstein studied molecular theory and the atom, as well as making an inquiry into light and motion. This inquiry led to his breakthrough: the special theory of relativity.

Language became a central concern of linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure, who pointed out the arbitrariness of the sign. He recognized that a word is conventional, and words are defined in relation to associations with other words. The meaning of a word is grasped through an understanding of these

relationships. Its meaning appears within this system. For Claude Levi-Straus, language and the artifacts of a culture merit close attention. The meanings of ideas and of concepts inhere in a culture. They exist amid a network of signs. The person lives within this culture and does not originate meanings. Rather, he held that the meanings come from the cultural system of signs.

Language and logic were the preoccupation of logical positivists like Rudolph Carnap and Moritz Schlick of the Vienna Circle and Bertrand Russell in Britain. Ludwig Wittgenstein, in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* provided a brilliant analysis of language and logic that was much admired by them. Two decades later Wittgenstein would revise his approach. Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, provides brief statements. He emphasizes context and language games and moves toward ordinary language. He emphasizes the uses of language in practice in a culture. There is a synchronic structure of signs, or a system at work.

In the field of art, Post-Impressionism challenged realist pictorial representation. Fauvism emerged between 1905 and 1908, principally in the painting of Henri Matisse. Pablo Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) marked the beginnings of cubism. Expressionism in Germany was evocative, seeking to convey intensity in color and shape. The emergence of literary modernism owes much to the visual arts. In response to the Post-Impressionist exhibition of 1910 in London, Virginia Woolf marked a beginning of this modern era with her observation: "On or about December 1910 human character changed."

Modernism and Little Magazines

Literary modernism emerged in the little magazines *The Egoist* (1914-1919), *The Little Review* (1914-1922), *Blast* (1914*), Others* (1915-1919), *The Dial* (1849-1929), *The Masses* (1911-1917), *Broom* (1921-1924), *The Crisis* (founded 1910), and *Poetry* (1912-1922) which were circulated on both sides of the Atlantic. "The story of modernism in magazines is a tale of complex entanglements between high art and intellectual thought, mass culture, and the commercial marketplace," write Suzanne W. Churchill and Adam Mc Kible in *Little Magazines and Modernism: New Approaches* (Routledge, 2017). Often it is suggested that these little magazines were designed for specific and limited audiences rather than as commercial ventures. They have been said to appeal to only a small coterie of writers and artists. However, some magazines, like *the transatlantic review*, hoped to bring modernist writing to a broader audience. *The Egoist* became a

central source of Imagist poetry and was edited for a time by Ezra Pound. It called itself an individualist review. In July 1914 Harriet Weaver took over guidance of the magazine. She was joined for a time by Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle. Weaver published selections from James Joyce's *Ulysses.* T.S. Eliot joined in editing the publication. *The Egoist* concluded in 1919 after publishing criticism by Pound and by Eliot, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce, and selections from *Ulysses* which Joyce was developing.

Significant contacts between Europe and America were fostered by little magazines like *the transatlantic review, The Little Review, the Criterion, This Quarter, and Broom*. Little magazines like *Gargoyle* (Arthur Moss, editor), *Secesion* (Gorham Munson and Matthew Josephson, editors), and *Broom* (Harold Loeb, editor) were created as American writers arrived in Europe. Other magazines, like *the transatlantic review*, actively sought a transatlantic audience.8 In his prospectus to the magazine, Ford set forth his goal of introducing young writers who might not find publication elsewhere and of placing a positive tone into the discussion of international relations after the Great War. Pound, Hemingway, Stein, Nella Larsen, and Mina Loy appeared in *Others*- an American magazine. D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Claude McKay, Ford Madox Ford, were also published in little magazines. *The Little Review* published *Ulysses* by James Joyce.

Modernist magazines were at the center of transatlantic exchange between poets, prose writers, and artists. They sustained networks of avant-garde artists. The discussion and debate between them forged discourse communities that crossed the Atlantic. Ezra Pound wrote in his essay "Small Magazines" (1930): "The history of contemporary letters has, to a very manifest extent, been written in such magazines." Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker write: "periodicals functioned as points of reference, debate, and transmission at the heart of a variegated and often internationally connected counter-cultural sphere."26

Ford Madox Ford's work on *The English Review* led to *the transatlantic review*. The publication was based in Paris, financed by John Quinn, and supported among the creative community by Ezra Pound. The magazine's title was a nod to the transatlantic crossing industry the Compagnie Transatlantique shipping line which supported the magazine. The magazine had a circulation which included about 5,000 subscribers. Ford oversaw the development of each issue, except for that of August 1924 which involved Ernest Hemingway. Ford sought a transatlantic readership and to introduce them to modernist writing. His goal was to bring writers together in a

common activity across national and cultural boundaries. Distribution was carried out by the Transatlantic Company office in Paris, Duckworth and Company of London and Thomas Seltzer of New York. While produced in Paris, with connections in London, the magazine sought an American audience. Ford set his gaze on this audience with the comment that "we are all Middle Westerners."27 John Quinn's partner Jeanne Foster became the publication's New York editor. In Paris, the magazine's offices were in the same facility as Three Mountain Press. Paris, viewed as a center of cultural exchange, was the location for the meeting of British literature and American literature. Of course, while French literature was recognized, there was little material in the magazine that appeared in French. Ford introduced young American authors to his reading audience. Meanwhile, imagination had to be supported by funding. Ford had to concede that advertising was necessary to support the magazine financially.

Ford wrote of the goals of the magazine. He wrote: "we-the writer and his collaborators- are here to put before the world a picture of the world's real mental activities which are centered in the world's imaginative arts."28 This meant, for Ford, to present both the writings of a younger generation of authors and to hold the tradition of an older cadre of writers. Critic Bernard Poli has suggested that some readers may have been uncertain about the goals of the publication. Was it to be French and concern itself with Franco-British or Franco-American relations? In what sense was the magazine to be transatlantic?29 Ford sought a bridge across the divide between the new and the old, a path that embraced both youthful postwar writings and predecessors hearkening back to the late Victorian and Edwardian era. There would be a mix of realism and surrealism, mimetic narrative, and Dadaist art. Some of the younger, experimental poets and writers found this untenable. Hemingway, for example, argued to "make it new" and sought to bring Gertrude Stein's experimental *The Making of Americans* and other modernist writing into the pages of the transatlantic review. Ford thought that it made sense to connect newer writings with the traditions of the past.

Ford brought into the pages of *the transatlantic review* the work of Ernest Hemingway, Ezra Pound, Yvor Winters, Ben Hecht, William Carlos Williams, e.e cummings, Djuna Barnes, Kay Boyle, Malcolm Cowley, Matthew Josephson, and Hart Crane. There was some debate about whether to include James Joyce's writings in the publication because *The Little Review* had recently been sued for its publication of sections of *Ulysses*. Ford chose to publish Joyce.

Ford Madox Ford edited *the transatlantic review*, based in Paris, one of the key little magazines of Modernism. The review, founded by Ford with the assistance of Ezra Pound, published Hemingway, Joyce, Stein, and many other modernist writers. Ford was a British novelist who wrote several well-regarded novels, including *The Good Soldier* (1915) and the trilogy of *Parade's End* (1925-28). He also collaborated on two novels with Joseph Conrad. He was born Ford Hermann Hueffer. He took his pen name from his relative Ford Madox Brown who had been a pre-Raphaelite painter. In 1924 Ford started *the transatlantic review* to promote the new literary experiments of Pound, Joyce, Hemingway, Robert Almon and other writers. The Literary Supplement included presented work from the Dada movement. As the journal developed it began to exert an important influence. Three of Hemingway's stories appeared in *the transatlantic review*, including "Indian Camp." The stories appeared in Hemingway's first story collection, *In Our Time* (1925).

Ernest Hemingway followed Basil Bunting as an assistant editor of the review. In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* Gertrude Stein tells us that Ford sought a piece of hers for the review. Hemingway gathered up the first installment of *Making of Americans* in February 1924. Stein's prose made for difficult reading. However, Number 6 included the third installment of Stein's *Making of Americans*. The sixth number mistakenly identified William Carlos Williams as a contributor. The issue concluded with drawing by Pablo Picasso. Ford risked publishing Joyce, whose work was controversial.

Perry Anderson's claims that the term modernism designates little but a wide variety of aesthetic practices. One might respond, as Michael H. Whitworth does, by pointing out that literary modernism emerged amid social and ideological conditions. That is to say that creative artists responded to a new era that was breaking upon the world. "Modernity" was the context. Literary and artistic modernism was the response.

The Lost Generation

"You are all a lost generation," Gertrude Stein is said to have commented to Ernest Hemingway. In *Only Yesterday*, Frederick Lewis Allen wrote that this generation of writers may have been able to "derive a meagre pleasure from regarding themselves with pity as members of a lost generation."30 Hemingway and Fitzgerald were of "what was in its day the younger generation." Malcolm Cowley saw this as America's first literary generation.31

Hemingway referred to Ecclesiastes 12: 4-7 as his caption for *The Sun Also Rises*: "One generation passeth away and another cometh, but the earth abideth forever." Fitzgerald provided a critique of his generation in *The Beautiful and the Damned* (1922). Anita Loos gave a twisted view of expatriates in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* in which the flapper Lorelei Lee goes to Europe. Michael Arlen wrote *The Lost Generation* (1929).

For several artists, there was a resistance to quantification and instrumental rationality. John Dos Passos and D. H. Lawrence railed against it. James Joyce thumbed his nose at it with linguistic play. Adorno and Horkheimer later identified "instrumental rationality" in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). Artists were interested in what Bergson referred to as "creative intuition." They considered design, metaphor, and the language of the heart as much as rationality. They broke with conventional concepts and pondered progress and decline. For them there were aesthetic concerns about the value and quality of a work of art. Some considered mimesis; others reflected upon the formal structure of the work. They confronted the Darwinian perspective, faced Marxism and the appearance of Bolshevism, and encountered the Freudian unconscious. Who was a person and what were his or her relations within this context? Was an institutional discipline necessary for social coherence or were men and women born free but everywhere in chains because of business and institutional structures, as Rousseau had held? Writers recognized and expressed the fragmentary features of modern urban life. T.S. Eliot sought tradition and form, innovation within respected norms. John Dos Passos and Edward Estlin Cummings sought ways to break out and reinvent form. Joyce ventured verbal complexity. Eliot, Yeats, and Lawrence were among those who turned toward myth. Lawrence opposed primitivism to rationality. Perhaps art could return wonder to a disenchanted world. The reader was to be engaged by the artwork to construct meaning from it.

There are several other strands to modernism than the elite, cultured, high-minded effort to make literature difficult. Early Twentieth Century writing in American included stories from Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Theodore Dreiser which responded to groups that might be designated by class. John Dos Passos, Floyd Dell, Max Eastman, and John Reed wrote of working-class groups in *The New Masses*. The democratic spirit that had appeared in the poetry of Walt Whitman appeared in Carl Sandburg's Chicago poems and inspired William Carlos Williams's search for the American idiom. Like Wordsworth's search for the natural language of English rural folk, Robert Frost wrote in *North of Boston* (1914) of rural folk of the Northeast United States.

Female writers point to another strand of modernism. Gertrude Stein, Marianne Moore, Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, and other women writers provide an alternative to male writing. Virginia Woolf's fiction began with her new woman Rachel Vinrace in *A Voyage Out*. She provided a challenge of modernist form and character interiority to realist convention in her essays "Modern Fiction" (1919) and "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1924). She further pursued the practice in her fiction. She wrote *A Room of One's Own* (1928) from a privileged elite position but her argument for financial freedom for women was sound. She supported the idea of a women's form of writing, Meanwhile, she moved fiction in the direction of poetry, collage, and stream of consciousness. She brought symbolism, temporal shifts, and lengthy lyrical passages to her work.

Getrude Stein, likewise, pressed written language toward new horizons. She reinvented form, jostled syntax, language, and signification. She repeated words, as in the fragmented patterns of cubism, or like rhythmic musical notes that would move her narrative while remaining in what she called a "continuous present." In *Three Lives* she produced the story of "The Good Ana," "Melanctha," and "The Gentle Lena." Gertrude Stein observed an aesthetic self and concerned herself with language and form in poetic and prose experiments. Stein's visitors were greeted by the paintings on her walls by Picasso, Gris, Derain, Braque, and Matisse.

Paris provided a communal working context for Stein and other women writers. Natalie Barney, an American of substantial means living in France, represented the independence of the jazz age. She was bilingual, hedonistic, a poetic dilettante, passionate in her liaisons with women. Natalie Barney created the Académie des Femmes and a salon or soiree where artists gathered. In this era of little magazines, editor Ernest Walsh and the wealthy Ethel Moorhead published *The Quarter* from Paris. Kay Boyle became their editorial assistant.

Mina Loy emphasized female freedom. She practiced a dadaist free verse. Mina Loy was a British born transatlantic modernist artist whose painting and poetics engaged with dada, surrealism, and futurism. Loy's early poems appeared in the American little magazine *Others* (1915-1919). During the First World War, she left Italy and Marinetti, and arrived in New York, associating with other expatriate artists, including the dada artist Marcel Duchamp. In 1923 she returned to Europe and settled in Paris. She was involved with the transatlantic movement of surrealist art in the 1930s, including Dali's *The Persistence of Memory* (1931).32

Mina Loy's friend Djuna Barnes began her career as a journalist with the *Brooklyn Eagle*. She developed a reputation as a capable reporter and as a features writer for other publications. In 1915 she lived amid an artistic community in Greenwich Village. In 1921 she received a commission from *Mc Calls* to go to Paris and she remained there for ten years. Upon arriving in Paris, she interviewed James Joyce for *Vanity Fair* in 1922 and draw an illustration of him. She maintained a friendship with Mina Loy, who she knew from her days in Greenwich Village. She developed modernist techniques in her writing of poems, plays, and stories. Her novel *Nightwood*, written in 1932-33, is perhaps her most memorable work.

From the American South came the writer Kate Chopin and the anthropologist-playwright and novelist Zora Neale Hurston, who studied at Columbia University with the anthropologist Franz Boaz. In their fiction, both portrayed an image of the new woman. Kate Chopin's character Edna Pontellier seeks freedom from her marriage and "to swim out" toward possibilities. Like her character in "The Story of an Hour" the protagonist of her novel *The Awakening* achieves her realization late and encounters death. Janie Crawford in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* comes to realize her identity gradually. She emerges in a racial self-identity and in sexual awakening and proceeds through relationships with three different men toward autonomy and the expression of her voice and story.

World War I

The traumatic experiences of World War I entered poetry and fiction. Ford Madox Ford was blown up by the pulse of an explosion during the Battle of the Somme in July 1916. He was ever-after horrified by war. He developed phobias and likely dealt with post-traumatic stress disorder, then called "shell-shock." Ernest Hemingway was hospitalized for months after a bomb exploded nearby while he was serving as an ambulance driver in Italy. He too likely dealt with a persistent condition of PTSD. The ordeal of the war was portrayed as a kind of hell by poets Wilfred Owen (who wrote "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and died in the war November 4, 1918, just before the Armistice), Rupert Brooke (who was deployed in the battle of Gallipoli and died of blood poisoning), Isaac Rosenberg (killed in action in 1918), and Siegfried Sassoon. It was portrayed as a patriotic effort by Julian Grenfell (a captain who was seriously wounded in the battle of Ypres and died soon afterward). Robert Graves' *Goodbye to All That* stands as an arresting memoir. Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* is a

pacifist literary monument to the war and an enduring film. A.P. Herbert (*The Secret Battle*, 1919) and Edmund Blunden (*Undertones of War*, 1928) reflected on the mental anguish of the war. Vera Brittain and Eva Dobel, who wrote poetry, served as nurses.

For some veterans the war prompted post-traumatic stress disorder, or what was then termed "shell shock." The traumatic experiences of World War I entered poetry and fiction. In July 1916, Ford Madox Ford was blown up by the pulse of an explosion during the Battle of the Somme. He was not on the front lines when this occurred. Ever-after horrified by war, he developed phobias and likely dealt with post-traumatic stress disorder, then called "shell-shock." Ernest Hemingway was hospitalized for months after a bomb exploded nearby while he was serving as an ambulance driver in Italy. He too likely dealt with a persistent condition that suggests PTSD. The ordeal of the war was portrayed as a kind of hell by poets Wilfred Owen (who wrote "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and died in the war November 4, 1918, just before the Armistice), Rupert Brooke (who was deployed in the battle of Gallipoli and died of blood poisoning), Isaac Rosenberg (killed in action in 1918), and Siegfried Sassoon. It was portrayed as a patriotic effort by Julian Grenfell (a captain who was seriously wounded in the battle of Ypres and died soon afterward). Robert Graves' *Goodbye to All That* stands as an arresting memoir. Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* is a pacifist literary monument to the war and an enduring film. A.P. Herbert (*The Secret Battle*, 1919) and Edmund Blunden (*Undertones of War*, 1928) reflected on the mental anguish of the war.

Harry Crosby's near brush with death from a bomb during the war caused a long-lasting morbid preoccupation: he was ever haunted by death. His voluntarism in the Harjes ambulance corps acquainted him with devastating scenes. With writers of his generation like Hemingway he agreed that there was no heroism in the Great War. He was morbidly preoccupied with suicide and death and ultimately took his own life. Crosby was born to the Boston elite, a relative of J.P. Morgan with a family bank in Paris. After the war he worked in the bank but spent more of his time at the bar at the Ritz across the street. He gambled and he caroused. He tossed champagne bottles and tossed away his family's cautions about his relationship with the married Polly Peabody of Boston. She agreed to a divorced and they lived together in Paris. He went to work by rowing a boat on the Seine. In December 1923 he left the bank and he lived on the Morgan-van Rensselaer wealth. He spent time with fellow former ambulance drivers Dos Passos and Hemingway. He conferred with his wealthy cousin Walter Berry, a friend of Edith Wharton who now occupied her former Parisian town house at 53

rue de Varenne.33 Wharton was not fond of Harry Crosby. She accepted a few books from Walter Berry's library after he died. The she disengaged altogether from the family.

In 1927, Harry Crosby and his wife started the Black Sun Press. Polly had by this time changed her name to Caresse. They had an open marriage, welcoming the caress of others. They attempted to write poetry. Harry Crosby produced a volume he titled *Red Skeletons*. He became opium addicted. His death wish included daring airplane flights and imagining that he would die on one of them. Instead, the end came following a party for he and Caresse at Hart Crane's residence in Brooklyn that was attended by Malcolm Cowley, William Carlos Williams, E.E. Cummings, and photographer Walker Evans. Sometime afterward, Crosby went to a studio on West 67th Street in Manhattan with Josephine Bigelow. They were found there dead in an apparent suicide pact. Hart Crane wrote a poem for Harry Crosby, "The Cloud Juggler," shortly before his own suicide in 1932.34

The Great War accelerated trends that were already unfolding. Mimesis and realism shifted, became displaced. The world was now something else: a disrupted world, a world knocked off course or upended from its moorings. In poetry Yeats referred to a condition of all coherence gone. Perhaps the shadow of the unconscious observed by Freud and Jung had burst through Western culture's assumptions of reason. Wyndham Lewis wrote that "the war is such a tremendous landmark that locally it imposes itself upon our computation of time like the Birth of Christ." We say pre-war and post war, rather as we say B.C. and A.D.."35 He concluded that modernism was marked similarly.

The Great War had devastating consequences. There were some 40 million casualties of one type or another. The Allies lost 5.7 million troops and the Axis powers lost about 4 million. There were as many as 10 million civilian deaths. Troops from the United States arrived in Europe in June 1917. Some 49,000 American soldiers died in the First World War. Some 230,000 wounded. 57,000 succumbed to disease.

America only entered the First World War on April 6, 1917, when most of the worst of the battles had already occurred. The Battle of the Somme was fought in March 1918. American troops participated in combat at St. Mihiel Salient and fought alongside French and British troops in the Meuse-Argonne offensive. The statistics recorded say that 4,791,172 American soldiers fought in the First World War. The war was over by November 11, 1918. Europe was devastated. In contrast, America's year and half at war