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Places of Rest: Modernism and Environmental Recovery

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by

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ABSTRACT

Places of Rest: Modernism and Environmental Recovery

by

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Places of Rest outlines a modernist aesthetic of slowness, immediacy and introspection in relation to a cultural history of nature protection in the United Kingdom. It draws on the archives of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, founded in 1912, which invoked a threatening rhetoric of Nature's total exhaustion under the march of modern development. Literary modernism's presentation of human fragility amidst exhausted environments challenged problematic industrial and imperial narratives of unlimited progress and generated new modes of ecological awareness in the 20th century. Faced with the restless and inescapable forces of modernization, modernist writers shifted away from the withdrawn, "restful contemplation" of the Romantics and moved towards an increasingly materialist attention to the world as an immersive stream of human and nonhuman connections that are interdependent and hierarchical in problematic ways. The Anglophone novel, as it develops through D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Djuna Barnes, Jean Rhys and Chinua Achebe, becomes increasingly attuned to constructions of personal, social and planetary identity in relation to environmental exploitation. Highlighting the physical limitations that deny autonomy to human life, these writers communicate the unsustainability of relentless modernization and foreground the importance of recovery for communal wellbeing.

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Introduction

Shall I at least put my lands in order?

—T. S. Eliot. *The Waste Land*

T. S. Eliot perhaps expected no answer to this question. It was, however, taken quite literally by British environmentalists in efforts to protect significant areas of the United Kingdom between 1912, with the formation of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, and 1949, with the establishment of the Nature Conservancy. What began as an *avant garde* pursuit met with repeated setbacks during WWI and the interwar period. Yet the early efforts of these self-fashioned "modern" environmentalists provided the framework for a national movement that would firmly resonate during WWII and proliferate throughout Great Britain in the postwar era.

The case for protecting nature required new linguistic and imaginative registers in order to communicate the cultural value of reserve and preservation. While environmentalists largely began with economic registers, citing the "value" of putting Nature in "trust" for future generations, it was not until activists moved towards a rhetoric of Nature as a place of rest, recovery and regeneration for a traumatized society suffering from the ravages of war that protection efforts firmly resonated with a wider public in the postwar era. The interest in protecting Nature grew in relation to the increasingly exhaustive and exhausting conditions of modern life. While critics often cite the influence of Romantic writers such as Wordsworth and Shelley on early British environmentalism, the work of modernist writers to challenge the rampant anthropocentrism of the first half of the 20th century remains a crucial site of critical neglect. *Places of Rest* argues that literary modernism's presentation of human

fragility in relation to exhausted environments challenged problematic industrial and imperial narratives of unlimited progress and generated new modes of ecological awareness in the 20th century. Literary modernism is too often synonymous with an autonomous or insular "art for art's sake." A world to itself, the modernist text has little need for "nature" or the external realities of the physical world. Against this view, *Places of Rest* connects the formal innovations of modernist writers to rapid changes occurring in the surrounding environment. I argue that new narrative techniques that represent slowness, immediacy and introspection provide an early critique of resource consumption and ecological degradation. Modernist literature, read ecocritically, presents a shift from viewing humans as transcendent and autonomous masters of nature to susceptible, immersed and engaged with their environment. T. E. Hulme's assertion that humans are intermixed with the earth, T. S. Eliot's iconic fragmentation of psyches and landscapes in *The Waste Land*, D. H. Lawrence's presentation of the exhausting effects of industrialization on rural England in *The Rainbow*, James Joyce's overlapping of atmospheres in the urban environment of *Ulysses*, Djuna Barnes's mixture of creatural life in *Nightwood*, Jean Rhys's blending of mental spaces and built environments in *Good Morning, Midnight*, the work of modernist writers in the early 20th century was not necessarily to spread a spirit of respect for nature, but to interrogate humanity's constructions of identity and community in relation to environmental control, a project that remains indispensible for contemporary environmental justice issues.

Places of Rest highlights ecological thought among modernist writers and reevaluates a range of cultural attitudes toward environment in the early 20th century. This is a period critics have largely shunned for its wanton environmental disregard. Whereas studies of modernism and modernization have focused on themes such as the loss of place, the rise of

abstract space, movement, speed, acceleration and the fragmentation of experience, I approach these familiar tropes with an opposite attention to "rest" and "place" in order to analyze humanity's material engagement with the surrounding world. The notion that "nothing is at rest" is a defining tenet of modernity going back to the Copernican revolution; however, I connect a crisis of restlessness leading up to WWI to a growing awareness of western culture's exhaustive exploitation of the natural world. Drawing on histories of environmentalism and philosophies of environmental aesthetics, I analyze representations of resting and seeking rest in literature in light of changing attitudes towards humanity's relation to land itself: considering, in particular, the rise of Nature Reserves as places of regeneration for flora, fauna and humans alike (Figure 1). Rest, considered in its larger environmental and cultural conditions, becomes not an individual escape from the world, but a form of "ecological immersion" that reveals the organic limits of all living beings. Linking the physiological and psychological act of resting to the environmental conditions of its production, rest becomes a way to think about place, and in particular the labor and material resources that allow humans to sustain their place in the world. The authors in this study privilege a cosmopolitan notion of rest as an ability to transcend modernization's obsession with efficiency and productivity in order to engage with other people and nonhuman forms of life. Rest, in this sense, is recognition of other life not as mere environment or surroundings but as a vital system of interconnection. Unfortunately, such a rosy picture of care is often only visible through its negation, as many of the texts analyzed in this study provide pessimistic views of ecology as a system of unequal power relations where certain species as well as human communities flourish at the expense of others.

Figure 1. Carr bush at Woodwalton Fen Nature Reserve. (The Wildlife Trusts)

"Modernization" and "industrial modernity" continue to play the chief antagonists in ecocritical studies while modernism remains one of the least studied artistic periods from an ecocritical perspective. In order to explore the "relationship between individual works of art and the larger cultures in which they emerged" (Mao and Walkewitz 2), I consider the work of D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Djuna Barnes, Jean Rhys and Chinua Achebe, among others, in relation to cultural efforts to protect nature, to communicate the unsustainability of relentless modernization, and to foreground the importance of recovery for both ecological and social wellbeing. The study engages a broad subset of environmentalist terms (recovery, regeneration, preservation, reservation, stewardship, conservation) as a set of different ideologies/practices that all broadly point to a contested and heterogeneous concern for rest in the context of broken and exhausted ecologies. While there are numerous environmental movements in the early 20th century, I emphasize a specific strand of British environmentalism—and the efforts of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves (SPNR) in particular—as a modernist practice relying on the science of ecology and the apparatuses of state control and legal frameworks. SPNR, guided by the emerging science of Ecology, was unique for eschewing a single species focus, taking on the more ambitious task of protecting entire ecosystems. In adopting such a wide focus, however, the society had notably more difficulty communicating the cultural importance of their mission. The UK also presented unique spatial and geographical challenges. While other nations were able to draw on vast wilderness areas in order to establish Nature Reserves (although not without often displacing indigenous communities), the United Kingdom's territory was limited and largely developed. At the same time, the extensive imperial holdings of the British Empire brought a large portion of the world's

resources under British control. That the preservation and stewardship of "pristine" tracts of British Nature was often materially tied to colonial exploitation emphasizes the highly ambivalent nature of British environmentalism in terms of class privilege, imperial power and public access. In addition, the upheaval of the Great War and the ensuing economic depression of the interwar period proved to be major setbacks for environmental legislation and protection efforts. It is not until WWII and the inward turns of postwar reconstruction and decolonization that environmental movements found a firm foothold within the United Kingdom. Yet in its failures, half-measures, colonialist contradictions and belated trajectory towards national acceptance, British environmentalism becomes more interesting, precisely because it struggles to articulate what humanity's relationship towards environment should be. The British case in the early 20th century continues to resonate in contemporary environmental discourse, where interests in climate change and the Anthropocene invite humanists to see the global condition as that of a shrinking and sinking island, saddled with the weight of its environmental neglect and discontent.

An attention to "rest" brings together environmental and literary discourses surrounding unsustainable practices in the early 20th century. To this end, the study draws heavily on one of the cornerstone themes of ecocriticism: the pastoral. Environmental writers from Henry David Thoreau to Bill McKibben invest in a notion of rest found in nature, a romantic and increasingly utopian desire to escape the urban ills of modernity by going "back to the land." Britain's leading ecologist of the period, Arthur George Tansley, in particular, combined the study of Ecology with Freudian theories of psychological energy in order to posit pristine Nature as "one of the deepest sources of mental and spiritual refreshment" (3). Tansley notably encountered Freud through translations produced by Virginia Woolf's

Hogarth Press. This view of Nature as a balm for civilization's discontents was a guiding tenet of first-wave environmentalism. Conservation and preservation efforts largely arose as projects of bringing rest and relief to Nature itself, to beleaguered species, ecosystems and by extension to humans as well through a more harmonious coexistence with the natural world. Yet as second and third wave environmental critics such as Bruno Latour and Timothy Morton have argued, such a divide between Nature and culture often works against environmental wellbeing in human communities.[1] Environmental justice critics such as Peter Wenz, Juan Martinez-Alier and Mei Mei Evans cite the material contradictions inherent in first world environmentalism that allow for conservationism alongside the offshoring of toxic waste, the displacement of indigenous communities and the exploitation of natural resources throughout the global south.[2]

Places of Rest does not resolve these contradictions present in environmentalism, but it does contend that literature offers a way to work through the cultural implications of the pastoral mode. "The characteristic gesture of English literature," writes Peter Conrad, "seems to be renunciation or wearied defeat. It complains of a land from which the gods have abdicated, and of a consequent imaginative impoverishment. So its recurrent mode is pastoral; its recurrent mood, elegiac" (171). Conrad sees this tired—that is, in search of rest—mode as constant throughout English literary history going back to Chaucer. In the 20th century, however, English pastoral comes under increasing scrutiny from modernist writers operating at the oft-cited "margins" of Englishness: Conrad's Polish background, Lawrence's working-class status, Woolf's feminism, Joyce's Irishness, Rhys's Caribbean upbringing, Achebe's status as a "British-protected child." These restless modernists offer alternative visions of environmental engagement through an attention to the world as an immersive

stream of living connections that are interdependent and hierarchical in problematic ways.

Rest and the Material World

While it is difficult to say what direct effects modernist literature had on early environmental movements and, conversely, what influences the rising science of Ecology and nature preservation movements had on aesthetic choices made by modernist writers, at least one point of convergence bears mentioning. E. M. Forster's Piney Copse wood—purchased with profits from the American edition of *A Passage to India*—passed to The National Trust at his death in 1970 and remains protected for public access to this day. Forster's own feelings on preservation and stewardship, however, were highly ambivalent. His 1926 essay "My Wood" showcases the wood as a source of restlessness more than peace:

> [P]roperty makes its owner feel that he ought to do something to it. Yet he isn't sure what. A restlessness comes over him, a vague sense that he has a personality to express—the same sense which, without any vagueness, leads the artist to an act of creation. Sometimes I think I will cut down such trees as remain in the wood, at other times I want to fill up the gaps between them with new trees. Both impulses are pretentious and empty. They are not honest movements towards moneymaking or beauty. They spring from a foolish desire to express myself and from an inability to enjoy what I have got … Our life on earth is, and ought to be, material and carnal. But we have not yet learned to manage our materialism and carnality properly; they are still entangled with the desire for ownership, where (in the words of Dante) "Possession is one with loss." (*Abinger's Harvest* 22–23)

If I have quoted such a long passage from Forster's essay, it is because it nicely contains many of the central themes and questions that I will pursue in the pages that follow. In particular, Forster's attention to the material conditions that foster creative and artistic production helps to elaborate a dual valence of rest. The rest provided by private property and material security leads to further restlessness; at the same time, creativity requires a "material basis," a "room of one's own," in Woolf's iconic formulation. A materialist approach to rest emphasizes its relation to private property and labor, both the individual's labor and the labor of others. An aesthetic approach to rest draws on the restful contemplation of the artistic mind as well as the pleasure of creating and enjoying artistic work. Combining questions of the material with the aesthetic, as Forster does, allows for a discussion of human carnality in relation to "life on earth." Yet the ability to rest "content with what one has," is not so easily met given the sheer diversity of human desires, wants and needs. By aligning deforestation and afforestation under the same banner of restless discontentment with one's position in the world, for example, Forster effectively places industrialist and environmentalist agendas on opposite sides of the same coin: a juxtaposition made less absurd by the fact that many British industrialists were also environmentalists who made the case for nature protection in terms of value and national enrichment just as much as beauty and enjoyment. Finally, the notion that "possession is one with loss," speaks directly to conservation impulses to hold Nature in trust for all time. Although such efforts are made with the public good in mind, to protect humans from their own carnal and materialist instincts, the weight of ownership remains. The challenge becomes a mitigation of the stifling influence of property through a vision of social accountability, shared responsibility and communal stewardship.

Forster's essay ends with a consideration of the many people who traverse *his* wood via a public walkway. Some snack on blackberries, some pull up foxgloves and mushrooms, and some leave behind tins and litter from impromptu picnics and lovers' sojourns. Ultimately it is other people who disturb the individual's utopian rest in nature. Given such a state of affairs, Forster wonders whether it would not be better to do as a neighbor who has walled in his wood and provided a bridge for the footpath so that no feet other than his own may roam the wood. Yet such a commitment to private property only provides a squat, selfish security, becoming, in turn, a "pseudo-creative" environment for the proprietor (24). The suggestion, then, is that genuine creativity requires a more progressive vision of social inclusion. Forster may also have in mind a notion of social *accountability*. Private property and a retreat from the public sphere prove counterproductive, provoking carelessness and disregard from those on the public footpath. However if Forster's Wood were to become the People's Wood, as he mockingly suggests the "Bolshie's" would have it, then a more progressive care for the land might transpire.

Such a utopian ideal is precisely the animating impulse behind Forster's 1938 pageant play *England's Pleasant Land*. Forgoing the more nuanced ruminations in "My Wood," the play is a direct call for environmental protection. The play ends under the threatening refrain "Ripe, ripe for development / is England's pleasant land" (400) as the stage directions call for an enactment of modernization as a "Pageant of Horrors," where bungalows, motorcars and masses of adverts crowd and fill the stage. The raucous scene gradually clears as the Recorder steps forward to deliver the Epilogue and make a plea for action and intervention. Notably, the Recorder acknowledges the limits of the aesthetic for such a venture: "I am a Recorder—not a poet—and my last word to you is a word of prose—of practical advice. If

you desire to save the countryside there is only one way: through good laws rightly applied, through Parliament, through the nation as a whole" (400). Here Forster's Recorder notes the limitations of language and literature for conservation movements. No amount of beautiful poetry can save nature from the relentless thirst for modern development. At the same time, Forster's writing plays a significant part in raising awareness for environmental concerns and making the case for nature protection legible beyond small groups of scientists and activists. If other modernist writers did not deliver such clear and practical environmental advice, their work nevertheless contributed greatly to shifting the way people understood and experienced their surroundings. Whether D. H. Lawrence's portrayal of coal mining's transformation of rural England, James Joyce's sensory rendering of the complexity of urban life, Djuna Barnes's insistence on the impossibility of escaping interwar power struggles through a retreat to nature, Jean Rhys's consideration of colonialism's link the failures of interwar recovery or Chinua Achebe's exploration modernism's legacy during decolonization, these writers helped a modern readership to confront the fragility of human life and to rethink humanity's dependence upon one another, nonhuman life and the limited material resources of the planet.

Restless Modernity

The last death throes of a Romantic conception of Nature may be seen, perhaps, in the Art Nouveau styles that proliferated throughout Europe at the dawn of the 20th century. The importation of natural forms to Architecture, living spaces and everyday objects marked less a reverence for Nature than a celebration of the modern artist's ability to recreate Nature's forms—a cloying Second Nature—through modern materials and manufacturing processes.

These feats accomplished, artists quickly became bored with the increasingly outlandish and ornamental petrification of the Natural world. The clean lines, open floor plans and anti-ornamental agendas of modern architecture soon followed, cementing abstract form, utility and mass reproducibility. Within the longer trajectory of Environmental Aesthetics, critics such as Allen Carlson notably posit the first half of the twentieth century as a time when aesthetic inquiry turned away from the natural world and towards the spirit of art as an autonomous and self-referential system.[3] Largely influenced by a Hegelian interest in art as "absolute spirit," philosophical inquiry questioned the tenability of non-anthropocentric approaches to aesthetic appreciation. One of the primary tasks of Rothschild, Tansley and other British environmentalists in the early 20th century was to recover Nature precisely for its aesthetic qualities, to protect Nature for public appreciation much as museums were protecting major artworks. Literature, with its self-contained tools of language, proved immediately amenable to an art of pure spirit. The Aesthetic Movement of Wilde and Swinburne, among others, lead an inquiry into the beauty of sensual life over dull Nature. Joris-Karl Huysmans's attacks on Nature in *À Rebours*, in particular, proceed as his protagonist Des Esseintes constructs more and more intricate forms of environmental control and isolation. At the opposite end of the literary spectrum, however, the Naturalism of Émile Zola and others relies on a conception of environment that is overbearing, domineering and resistant to human agency.

Modernist literature, of course, often positions itself as anti-nature and hostile to the environment. Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound's comical portrayal of "wild Nature cranks" in *BLAST* might be the paradigmatic modernist stance towards environmentalism (13). Further, modernism's focus on interiority, the inner life, seems particularly ill-suited to

illuminate the exterior world. If one were to search for the antithesis of the nature writing on which much ecocritical work bases itself, modernist literature would be a prime suspect. Yet this is precisely the point: to come to terms with the ecological pitfalls of modernity, one must give up the privileged position of the nature writer and open up to alternative forms of environmental awareness. The first person, objective view of Nature, while crucial to launching environmentalist action, at times does more harm than good. In particular, this scientific type of writing often obscures human influence and position within environments. More to the point, as industrial and urban modernization proliferates throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, more and more environments became human-dominated ones. The impulse to go off into nature to learn about environment becomes increasingly problematic for dealing with the reality of environmental conditions for the majority of human populations throughout the world.

For these reasons, *Places of Rest* foregrounds modernist literature that positions characters in ambivalent positions in regard to their surroundings. While modernists have little interest in Nature *per se*, they are deeply invested in understanding environment, atmosphere, milieu and ambience. The modernist novel, as it develops through figures such as Forster, Lawrence, Woolf, Joyce, Barnes and Rhys, involves narrative techniques of rhythmic immersion, stream-of-consciousness and increasingly complex renderings of material influence. In the modernist period, as Stephen Kern (among others) argues, "action moved inside the mind where novelists registered outer experience in the most vivid, stable, and humanizing ways" (*Modernist Novel* 92). The dissolution of external, plot-driving events in favor of introspective, sub- and unconscious workings of the human mind is at first blush counterintuitive to a discussion of environment. Yet, upon further inspection, the modernist

narrative mode provides an important awareness of environment from *within*, as it were, that allows for the perception of the non-climactic, mundane and everyday manifestations of a host of environmental concerns from climate change to toxicity to resource consumption.

From this perspective, many works of modernist literature prove to be excellent candidates for Lawrence Buell's criteria of environmental texts. Buell famously critiques Faulkner's "The Bear" for representing "a forest where treeness matters but the identities and the material properties of the trees are inconsequential" (10). Yet one might just as easily commend Faulkner's engagement with timber farming in *As I Lay Dying*, where the role of the yellow pine for agrarian economies holds a central importance for understanding the trials and tribulations of the Bundren family. More than just environmental themes, however, modernism's potential for generating new modes of environmental awareness and ecological thought arises from the experimental and innovative forms that define its aesthetics. Thus for Sanford Kwinter, modernist novels emerge not merely as records of the period, but as places that actively challenge a reader's sense of space and the surrounding world:

> Today we still need to be reminded that these works, more than just mirrors reflecting a prodigiously mutable world, were important spatio-temporal entities themselves, *places* for the dedicated explorer to navigate and apprentice him or herself, no longer in the techniques of reading, but more properly in the mapping of this very world, and just as it was lapsing forever into illegibility. (97)

For Kwinter, the modernist novel becomes not just a reflection of place but an attempt to construct place itself. Yet Kwinter's assertion that such texts encourage readers to learn techniques of mapping seems rather flat, detached and removed. More productive for an

ecocritical approach to the modernist novel—*as* place—would be an immersive approach to understanding the material influences that control and shape the world of the text. Kwinter's view of a world lapsing into illegibility is also, perhaps, too linear. More to the point is a vision of modernity as a continual lapsing of intelligibility: a constant and restless remaking of environment. This is the portrait of the bourgeois epoch as one of "constant revolutionizing" first painted by Karl Marx himself and which Marshall Berman extends to a vision of modern development through the figure of a restless Faust, constantly drawing on more and more energy from both Nature and his inner reserves. This is also Theresa Brennan's critique of modern capitalism in which industrial economies proceed by binding more and more life in a process of consumption that leads only to death and decay.

Modernism, for its part, also responds with a restlessness of form, taking up one set of guiding principles today only to invest in a new manifesto tomorrow. At the far extreme are the Italian Futurists with Umberto Boccioni's assertion that "from our modern perspective there is no such thing as a non-moving object" (190). While this restless aesthetics of speed, movement and accleration is productive for generating new forms of literature, restlessness as a condition of modern life becomes both subject and suspect for modernist writers. Thus turn-of-the-century English modernism heralds a new restless spirit, what Hardy will warn of in *Jude the Obscure* as the "modern vice of unrest" (59), and Conrad will engage more ambivalently with his short story collection *Tales of Unrest*. In *Howards End*, Forster's Margaret Shlegal echoes a modernist rallying cry with the assertion, "There is no rest for us on the earth. But there is happiness…" (255). Other modernist writers such as D. H. Lawrence attempt new dynamic theories of motion balanced against inertia. A young James Joyce also thoroughly investigates a theory of static "arrest" as the defining moment of

aesthetic experience. Thus while some artists reject rest wholesale, others find it an intriguing site of creative inquiry due precisely to its supposed scarcity.

One of the results of the modernist novel's abandonment of plot-driven narrative in favor of stream-of-consciousness is that human rhythms take on the weight of giving the text shape and form. In Joyce's *Ulysses*, for example, the number of pauses and breaks during Leopold Bloom's day shapes the narrative just as much as the numerous activities that preoccupy him. Whether in the outhouse, the Russian bath, the cemetery, the beach, the bar or his marital bed, moments of reprieve register Bloom's place in society, Dublin and the world at large. *Ulysses* maps a traditional narrative arc onto a single day, a more or less homogenous diurnal section followed by a nocturnal section composed of an escalation towards the climax occurring in "Circe" (a peak moment of restlessness and the resulting threat of arrest) and the following dénouement towards Bloom's sleep. Notably, it is Bloom's own fatigue that leads to the more restless sections of *Ulysses*. Despite its ups and downs, *Ulysses* remains on the whole homeostatic, banal and everyday. As such, it emphasizes connections between subject and environment that are mutually sustaining. Other modernist texts thwart any pretense of the sustainable, presenting decisive moments in terms of collapse, fatigue and exhaustion. Ursula Brangwen's narrow escape from a stampede of horses in *The Rainbow* leaves her wiped out, pinned to a thorn tree, and precipitates the miscarriage and ensuing recovery that leads to her own sense of renewal. Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* ends with the restless Robin Vote lying down with Nora Flood's dog on an abandoned altar floor in a sacrilegious tableau of resignation. Septimus in his refusal of modern medicine's "rest cure" takes his own life, a fact that, when it reaches Clarissa Dalloway, causes her to pause momentarily amidst her party guests.

While such moments signal intellectual breaks, epiphanic moments that resituate a character's consciousness, they also reveal limitations to the personal, singular and autonomous view of consciousness. It is at these moments that individual autonomy breaks down and the surrounding world comes to the foreground. Perhaps the most dramatic representation of this phenomenon is Thomas Hardy's presentation of Tess Durbeyfield asleep at Stonehenge while the forces of modernity surround her. Hardy's blatant juxtaposition between Tess's "being" in terms of Nature and History and the "becoming" forces of modernization is paradigmatic of many of the narrative tensions found in modernist literature, albeit in more nuanced and indirect fashion. Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and, to an even greater extent, *Jude the Obscure*, present characters that confront crises of identity in the face of overwhelming and totalizing forces of modernization that threaten their environment and way of life. Here Fredric Jameson's discussion of modernism as a response to a process of modernization that is ongoing but not yet complete is instructive for locating certain remainders not yet transformed by modern life. "In modernism," Jameson writes, "some residual zones of 'nature' or 'being,' of the old, the older, the archaic, still subsist; culture can still do something to that nature and work at transforming that 'referent'" (*Postmodernism* ix). The notion that Nature was not yet lost entirely was certainly grasped by environmentalists who pleaded the case for preservation through the rhetoric of avoiding Nature's imminent exhaustion. Of course, in doing so, such preservation hastened the end of a conception of Nature untouched by human activity and replaced it instead with the decidedly postmodern "second nature" of the Nature Reserve as sanctioned, maintained and defined by human culture. In modernism, likewise, the transformation of the last referents of nature often occurred in the name of new totalizing narratives, new desires for organic

wholes and unified theories. Yet it is often the case in modernist literature that such residual zones of nature resist modernity's narratives of efficiency and progress. Thus characters end up searching for zones of "nature" and "being" only to find their search is in vain or achieved only fleetingly. This can be seen in Stephen Dedalus's brief repose among the sandy dunes outside Dublin in *Portrait of the Artist* or in Djuna Barnes's short stories "A Night among the Horses" or "A Night in the Woods," where characters retreat to nature only to find a refusal of the peace or security they seek. The result is a decidedly anti-pastoral tone to many modernist texts: characters in effect receive no escape from the forces of modernization. A further result of this negative stance towards concepts of Nature and access to a natural world is that the modernist subject can no longer separate environment from human influence: he or she must confront the culturally constructed living conditions of the modern world. This means coming to terms not only with the material ties between country and city, but also the increasingly problematic global ties of imperial economies and colonial management.

Rest and Environmental Awareness

If the movement, speed and acceleration inherent in capitalist modernization rely on processes of environmental control, exploitation and upheaval, then a critical attention to rest can provide a vantage from which to critique a modernity pitted against Nature and ecological balance. Rest is etymologically related to movement and space as early usage signaled a measurement of distance (OED). Rest, then, can be thought of as a certain measurement of activity, yet it should also be framed more cyclically: rest is certainly influenced by the movements and activities which precede it, but rest also holds a major influence on future actions, movements and energies. Thus rest is not merely a force of

recovery, but also a crucial site of potential: a key component to the creation of "the new" that modernists so desperately seek. A critical attention to representations of rest in modernist literature helps to think through themes of time, space and place that are so central to modernism and ecocriticism alike. Michel Foucault's 1984 essay "Of Other Spaces," outlines a shift from medieval emplacement where "things found their natural rest" to a post-Galilean perception of the world where "a thing's place was no longer anything but a point in its motion, just as a thing's rest was nothing more than its motion indefinitely slowed down" (46). The new spatial epoch outlined by Foucault can no longer provide "natural rest;" at best, spatial order can construct rest as a relative and temporary state. The efforts to create Nature Reserves may be seen as a last ditch effort to reestablish some form of "natural rest," although in practice such rest is highly mediated through modern ecological management and governmental frameworks.

One reason why rest seems so hard to achieve during the modern period is the claim that life itself is speeding up. David Harvey emphasizes such a shift in terms of "time-space compression," experienced as a "speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world seems to collapse inward upon us" (*Condition of Postmodernity* 240). Harvey goes on to assert that the identification of place amongst this spatio-temporal compression was often nostalgic, conservative, reactionary—or worse—a spiritual invocation of racial rootedness that contributed to Fascist regimes and racial persecution. Environmental impulses in the early 20th century are similarly vexed by this desire for a purity of place. Yet, as Andrew Thacker points out, Harvey's dialectics of space/place as becoming/being oversimplifies the complexity of spatial representation in modernist texts. Thacker proposes instead a "modernism engaged in a dialectic between space and place in such a way that the

stress upon local identities does not necessarily result…in an aestheticized and reactionary politics of the nation" (39). Building on Thacker's critique of Harvey, I propose an analysis of the dialectics of place and space within modernism towards the end of elaborating a modernist environmental awareness: one that can hopefully avoid the more troubling nostalgia of place-based identification while outlining the material consequences of modernization's "conquest of space."

Part of Harvey's oversimplification stems from his singular emphasis on *compression* as a claustrophobic and one-directional sensation of modernity as forces collapsing inward. While compression nicely foregrounds the importance of surroundings, it risks positioning environment as an overbearing or determinist force. The modernist turn inward, then, might also appear as a mere retreat from the forces of compression. Marshall Berman outlines such an inward aesthetic as "pastoral modernism" that posits an autonomous world of art and creative spirit separate from the material world of modernization (168). Certainly strands of modernist literature are experimental and hermetic to the point of making environmentalist criticism irrelevant or at best a formal exercise: Stein's *Making of Americans*, for example, or sections of Pound's *Cantos*. Yet much modernist literature maintains a representation of inner experience not as a retreat from the surrounding world but precisely as a register and experience of environment. Harvey, Jameson and Kwinter, among others, invoke the practice of mapping as the result of such an aesthetic, but this mapping metaphor is woefully insufficient and does disservice to the complexity of modernist writing. The personal map—as the bourgeois subject's shield against compression—becomes one more abstraction of environment, allowing for a disconnect or removal from sensual immediacy. To get towards the "intimate unity of the modern self and the modern environment" (132) that Berman

claims as a hallmark of modern life, this study gives attention to representations of physiological responses to time-space compression with a focus on restlessness, exhaustion, repose, somnambulance and anticipation among other phenomena.

Highlighting moments that release the compression of modern life, as it were, this focus on rest leads to an understanding of spatiality and emplacement in much wider terms of agency, politics and community. The work of Doreen Massey and Ursula Heise to outline a more *expansive* experience of place helps to elaborate such an aesthetics of engagement and dispersal. Massey—like most—invokes a sense of modernity as rootless, shifting, and intermixing, with the result that any notion of place or coherence comes into question. Yet rather than focus on retrograde notions of place, she develops a "progressive sense of place" wherein "what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus" (154). Rather than dismissing place outright, Massey's shift in understanding place as a dynamic, unfolding position within the world helps to contextualize the complexities as well as the shortcomings of a modernist identification with place. Ursula Heise expands on this sense of place in a more specifically environmental context to analyze the tensions between regionalism and "back-to-the-land" movements in relation to a sense of the global and more spatially dispersive risks. Against romantic notions of a local and rooted environmentalism, Heise works towards "ways of imagining the global that frame localism from a globalist environmental perspective" (9). To this end she develops a notion of cosmopolitanism that will "dissociate the term from connotations of European upper-class travel and to redefine it as a way of envisioning contemporary modes of consciousness that might be commensurate with intensified global connectedness" (57). An eco-

cosmopolitanism, it follows, outlines this global connectedness in terms of both human and nonhuman influences, an attempt towards envisioning the "global biosphere" (62).

Heise's focus on eco-cosmopolitanism serves to challenge the relationship between place and community. Although Heise goes to great lengths to discredit appeals to place that neglect the "distortions of modernization" (54), she notably retains the trope of "sense" as the defining feature of eco-cosmopolitanism. Thus questions of the body, aesthetics and being—so often involved in discussions of place—remain central to her analysis of the global and "world environmental citizenship" (59). While Heise focuses primarily on contemporary living conditions (especially the influence of digital media), modernist literature—precisely for its interest in sensation—provides an important register of the development of notions of transnational, global or world citizenship. Jessica Berman draws on the work of Jean-Luc Nancy in order to outline community as a condition of being, "In the recognition of oneself as both embedded in a realm of association and bodily finite at the same time one comes to know both community and its limit" (14). A focus on rest, as an organic need, is one way to think through the conditions of the individual as "bodily finite." This focus on human limitations can lead towards a more ecological view of cosmopolitanism, *à la* Heise, that would recognize the influence of nonhuman beings and inanimate matter within human environments. Further, thinking of individual finitude in terms of community helps to avoid an individualistic notion of rest as an escape from others and the surrounding world. Although cosmopolitanism seems to promise a life of fluid movement and freedom from material restraints, Berman stresses that such migrations remain attached and embedded in the material world:

> The notion of the nomadic, or the migrant, self implies one without ideal

> origins, or one unified locus of social belonging. Yet each time that it begins again, the iterative "I" created in the narrative of this migrancy still arises in a particular place at a particular time. Precisely because they arise from the notion of the self as always already embedded in social and discursive formations, these narratives of community, nation, and cosmos remain bound to, if not limited by, questions of location and history. (18)

Here I would like to put stress on the notion of the "I" that "begins again." Rest, as previously discussed, is a way of measuring activity, movement and displacement. It also provides the conditions for which the individual, as well as the conscious construction of identity, is able to renew itself, to begin again. A focus on rest, I argue, can help think through the conditions of class, privilege and social status behind this cosmopolitan ability to "arise" and "go" or "go now" as Yeats puts it. From this perspective, an inability to rest is also an inability to begin again in cosmopolitan fashion. Later authors in this study such as Jean Rhys and Chinua Achebe investigate characters who suffer precisely from an inability to control change in their own lives, often as a result of colonial inequalities. Beyond this physical process of regeneration, of starting again or starting anew, the question of aesthetic generation also arises. If the aesthetic involves a certain form of "arrest" that has the ability to change or shape a person's trajectory, how do modernist authors achieve these rhythmic nodes of potential in an otherwise constant stream of cosmopolitan flux?

Aesthetic Rest

In preparation for a discussion of aesthetic creation in the first half of the 20th century, *Places of Rest* examines material and cultural constructions of rest that serve to historicize

changes to the contemplative and artistic life. Scholars such as Stephen Kern in *The Culture of Time and Space* and William Everdell in *The First Moderns* argue that modernism—a diffuse and contested term—can be viewed in light of a series of technological and cultural innovations emerging at the end of the 19th century. The development of electric motors by Frank Julian Sprague in 1886 (DC) and Nikola Tesla in 1888 (AC) led to the implementation of electrical grids, creating a connected system that was always "on" and expanding. The increasing efficiency of internal combustion engines led to new modes of transportation such as cars and airplanes as well as machinery such as mechanical reaper-binders that brought major changes to agricultural labor. The invention of the telephone (1874) and wireless radio telegraphy (1885) brought a new speed and scale to communication. Sigmund Freud's 1899 publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams* portrayed the mind at rest as a site of volatility, impulse and unconscious desires. The trajectory of scientific investigation from James Clerk Maxwell to Albert Einstein reveals a "never-resting" earth and overturns absolutes of time and space with a new regime of relativity: nothing in fact is at rest, from the largest celestial bodies to the smallest fundamental particles.

What happens to rest in this new culture of turbulence and connectivity? While absolute rest is rejected, relative rest becomes highly valued and contested. Frederick Winslow Taylor's *Scientific Management of Labor* (1911) called for workers to take more rest breaks during work in order to raise productivity. Indicative of the extreme disparity in defining rest are the two dominant views of the period: rest as the tour abroad vs. rest as isolation and inactivity. The notion of "rest in motion" found its best expression in the first transatlantic cruise ships such as the *Prinzessin Victoria Luise* launched on June 29, 1900. With these ships, the restless seas were transformed into serene and pacific vistas for the

wealthy. Le Corbusier would herald these liners as "works of regeneration" (92) that foregrounded light, open air and simple lines. While engineers found rest in the very smoothness of a well-running system of movement, doctors increasingly scrutinized rest as a physiological phenomenon that required removal and isolation from the busy pace of modern life. Hermann Brehmer opened the first sanatorium to treat tuberculosis in 1863, while Silas Weir Mitchell's "rest cure"—developed to treat neurosis in soldiers after the American civil war—gained increasing popularity in treating hysteria, anxiety and depression—most often, and often inappropriately, diagnosed in women. Rest, in these cases, becomes a highly constructed, controlled and mediated experience.

If rest was redefined as a relative equilibrium in the years leading up to WWI, the failures and traumas of modern war left many literally seeking the ability to rest. In the years following WWI, rest became a crucial factor in physical, psychological and cultural recovery. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission grew out of a desire to memorialize individual sacrifice and create places of public mourning. Public housing works such as the Berlin Modernist Housing Estates designed by architects Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius after WWI heralded a new "right to healthy dwelling." Although places of rest (including nature reserves, housing, hospitals, hospices, hotels, graveyards, cafes) became more available than ever before, the question of how to define rest remained imperative. As Virginia Woolf writes in her 1928 *A Room of One's Own*: "if you are going to make [women] work their best and hardest, you must find out what treatment suits them...what alternations of work and rest they need, *interpreting rest not as doing nothing but as doing something but something that is different; and what should that difference be?*" (77). Woolf's focus on rest and having one's own room is meant to give grounding for the real, an

invitation to live in the "presence of reality" (109). Being in the presence of reality points to the Greek etymology of aesthetics from *aisthetikos* "sensitive, perceptive," from *aisthanesthai* "to perceive (by the senses or by the mind), to feel" (OED). This perception and sensation of "real" life is meant to serve artistic creation. Thus, artistic expression for the modernist writer requires an engagement with aesthetics as both material reality and subjective experience of the world.

In light of the scientific, industrial and medical scrutiny of resting states, the artist's investment in "aesthetic rest" from which to perceive or create the work of art necessarily comes in for reevaluation. William Wordsworth, in his 1802 preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, famously defines poetry as taking "its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility" (L). Tranquility proves in fact catalytic, providing the means to move from aesthetic appreciation to aesthetic creation. *Places of Rest* explores how aesthetic engagement may still take place in the absence of this tranquility. One of the modernist's most "environmental" moves is a critique of the writer as a pastoral figure. Rest, it follows, ceases to be the individual's escape from the world. Instead, modernist writers theorize rest in terms of its environmental contexts. The need to rest is a reminder that the individual depends on his or her surroundings for regeneration.

The notion of "aesthetic rest" can be further articulated through Kant's theories of disinterestedness in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790). Kant begins with conditions for judging beauty that require a person to maintain "complete indifference" toward the existence of the object in question. Appreciation or awareness of aesthetic experience in this case actually requires distance or disconnect between subject and object. Later, contrasting the beautiful to the sublime, Kant characterizes this disinterestedness by stating, "taste in respect of the

beautiful presupposes that the mind is in *restful* contemplation, and preserves it in this state" (78). A restful mind is taken to be self-contained, sufficient and independent of surrounding conditions. As a result, the interest in the beautiful as an aesthetic category has limited interest for an environmental aesthetic that would lead to engagement with the nonhuman. The sublime, by contrast, requires a "*movement* of the mind combined with the judging of the object" (78). This dynamic quality of the sublime is later explained as follows: "The mind feels itself *set in motion* in the representation of the sublime in nature; whereas in the aesthetic judgement upon what is beautiful therein it is in *restful* contemplation" (88). Here the restful mind becomes further connected to the notions of security and control that distinguish the human ability to "discover within us a power of resistance of quite another kind, which gives us courage to be able to measure ourselves against the seeming omnipotence of nature" and "reveals a faculty of judging ourselves as independent of nature, and discovers a pre-eminence above nature that is the foundation of a self-preservation of quite another kind" (91). The restful mind, in other words, leads directly to human awareness of the ability to dominate, subdue and control the forces of nature towards human benefit. Such a state, though absent in Kant's analysis, is necessarily one with profound class implications; Terry Eagleton calls the sublime "the rich man's labour, invigorating an otherwise dangerously complacent ruling class" (*Ideology of the Aesthetic* 57). If, as I will argue throughout this study, modernism is concerned precisely with the loss of this restful contemplation, it follows that modernism also challenges the ruling class sense of mastery over Nature.

At the same time, it is not a new sense of Nature's powers that challenges the restful disposition of the modernist. Instead, it is the forces of modernization—the forces that arise

from a Kantian sense of "pre-eminence above nature"—that paradoxically come to rob humans of their restful positions in the world. Modernization itself, then, takes on characteristics of the sublime as an overwhelming force that sets the mind in motion. D. H. Lawrence's depictions of coal mining ripping massive seams into the landscape fall into this category as well as the more fantastical vision of the construction of Bloomusalem that Joyce portrays in the "Circe" episode of *Ulysses*. Georg Simmel claimed that city-dwellers develop a new organ for managing the chaos of metropolitan life. In the absence of Kantian restful contemplation, the modernist writer invents new narrative techniques that generate a "power of resistance," not against Nature but against the modern, human-dominated environment. Such an aesthetics may also be thought of in terms of rest, but no longer in an individualistic position of control and security. As such, this study outlines a modernist aesthetic rest in terms of an immersive environmental aesthetic drawing on Timothy Morton's discussion of ambience and Arnold Berleant's aesthetics of engagement. Berleant focuses on embodiment and sensation, collapsing the subject/environment binary:

> The boundlessness of the natural world does not just surround us; it assimilates us…[When we perceive] environments from within, as it were, looking not *at* it but being *in* it, nature…is transformed into a realm in which we live as participants, not observers…The aesthetic mark of all such times is…total engagement, a sensory immersion in the natural world (169-170).

Berleant's call to perceive environments "from within" resonates strongly with a modernist aesthetic of interiority. While Berleant bases his environmental aesthetics on humans in relation to "natural" environments, there is no reason why his theories of engagement cannot apply equally in urban environments to reveal human participation in the forces of

modernization. Berleant's call for a "sensory immersion in the natural world" finds a scientific basis in the work of German Biologist Jakob von Uexküll. Uexküll's theory of *Umwelt*, published in 1934 as *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, ties each biological receptor of an organism to its environmental referent. An organism's relationship to its environment is determined by the simplicity or complexity of its biological receptors. Thus while all organisms reside on the planet Earth, they inhabit different *Umwelten*, different worlds that intersect and overlap, yet remain distinct. Building on the theories of Uexküll, the modernist focus on interiority may be recast not as a pastoral retreat from the world, but as the recognition of one's entanglement in a larger stream of animate and inanimate forces.

While such forays are straightforward for simple organisms such as the ticks and sea urchins that were a primary part of Uexküll's studies, for humans this entanglement is especially complex and subject to varying interests, needs and desires. To work through the complexity of human *Umwelten*, this study draws on the spheropoietic theories of Peter Sloterdijk. In his three-volume work *Spheres*, Sloterdijk considers both the micro and macro bubbles, globes, domes, moods and odors that connect humans throughout the world. Further, he explores history as a process of enlarging, overlapping and contracting spheres of material and psychological influence that produce constantly changing encounters. Sloterdijk outlines such a process in terms of mood, climate, and atmosphere. Crucially, humans appear not as separate from their surroundings, but vulnerable through varying degrees of permeability:

> Human ensembles are by nature self-harboring or uterotechnic units, they never occupy only one sector in a given physical or legal space; rather, it is

> they that produce the space they inhabit in the first place as their sphere of relationship and animation. Wherever they arrive, wherever they settle, they always bring their ability to create their own particular interior and its mood. Spheropoiesis, atmospheropoiesis and topopoiesis occur in one and the same process. They are the formal aspect of local world-creation, in that they produce the section that constitutes the world. 196

Sloterdijk's theories present a radical reassessment of the divide between humans and environment. By focusing on immediacy, Sloterdijk explores how the "interior and its mood" seeps out and influences human surroundings. A similar project is at work in modernism: the focus on interiority is never absolute, but always leads back out to the surrounding world through material influence. While it is possible to analyze rest as a sphere of isolation, (a state many doctors and psychologists would try to literalize through the strictures of the sanatorium and the rest cure), it is also possible to analyze rest as a sphere that depends upon and exerts an influence upon many other personal and communal spheres.

Rest, in this analysis, instead of distancing the subject from his/her surroundings, moves from the individual's secure position in the world towards conditions of suspension and immersion: a process of "relaxing into an inorganic state (becoming the environment)" (Morton, *Ecology Without Nature* 72). Morton focuses on Romanticism, which, he argues, "developed a static poetics of environments suspended in time" (102). As such, any relaxing into these suspended environments would seem to act as an escape from the temporal, the everyday. In contrast, modernism is precisely interested in the everyday not as a static suspension but as a rhythmic, often repetitive, but nevertheless shifting and developing experience. "'Genuine' contact with whatever the truth of the 'natural world,'" Morton

writes, "ought to be found indoors as much as outside, in introversion as much as extraversion" (136). For this reason, *Places of Rest* explores a variety of "natural" as well as built environments and the interior, psychological spaces that characters develop in relation to their variegated surroundings. To this already ambitious list, the chapters also consider contact between humans under the banner of "Genuine contact with the natural world." In this sense, the study works towards a vision of community that might take into account the diverse material influences of living and non-living, human and nonhuman forces.

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Consider three great modernists at rest in Paris's celebrated Père Lachaise cemetery: Gertrude Stein, Oscar Wilde, and Marcel Proust. Each grave receives unique votives. Stones seamlessly adorn Stein's grave, leaving the impression that they have been there all along. Brown and bright red lips checker Oscar Wilde in ever-renewing embraces. And Proust? A series of metro tickets dot the stern black marble. This dissertation is a study of places of rest. But where are these places? Are they, like Père Lachaise, places we can visit? And if so, will there be an adequate number of places to rest during our journey there? Are you resting right now—reading this page?

How to define rest? It is a slippery, elusive term, and most certainly loathe to appear if called upon directly. Each individual seems to have a slightly different idea of it. But here is a point of consistency: rest is an organic need. It is that which sustains and replenishes life. The dead—contrary to popular expressions—do not rest. Rest, as an organic need, is necessarily an immanent phenomenon. Nevertheless, rest always occurs in relation to some external environment. No matter where—the bed, the café, the meadow—rest takes place somewhere. Rest, then, is an aesthetic mediation between organism and environment. It is

this aesthetic mediation that is of chief interest to this study, an exchange occurring in the multiple and ever-changing places of rest that are to be found all over the world. Aesthetic? Is rest not rather an-aesthetic? Does not the deepest rest remove all feelings? On the contrary, rest will be found deepest in proportion to aesthetic engagement: not a deprivation of the senses, but a release into sensory immersion.

Chapter 1, "Nature's Reserves" begins with a consideration of environmentalist efforts in the United Kingdom leading up to WWI, focusing on the founding of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves in 1912. Led by Charles Rothschild, the Society took a self-professed "modern" approach to preservation through the science of Ecology, aiming to foster entire ecosystems rather than protecting single species. The Society staked its claim for reserving Nature through the rhetoric of the threat of Nature's complete exhaustion under industrial modernization. The Reserve signaled a rest and reprieve for Nature as well as a site of aesthetic contemplation, calm and renewal for the human psyche besieged by urban modernity. What started as a promising venture quickly ran into impediments with the outbreak of the Great War and the requisitioning of land for military purposes under the Defense of the Realm Act. I consider these early environmental activities in light of shifting aesthetic uses of Nature occurring concurrently in literature. Specifically, I contrast Edward Marsh's *Georgian Poetry* anthologies, which provided nostalgic and Romantic visions of the rural world to T. E. Hulme's refutation of Romantic "limitlessness" and turn towards a classical verse that remains "mixed up with earth." I focus, in particular, on D. H. Lawrence's novel *The Rainbow* both for its register of changes to a rural English marsh community during industrialization and for the new rhythmic form that Lawrence develops that foregrounds bodily experience during rapid environmental transformation. I explore

Lawrence's ideas of "positive inertia" that he develops in his *Study of Thomas Hardy* as a generative form of rest arising from the individual's connection to his/her material surroundings. As distinctions between country and city begin collapsing, Lawrence turns to inertia to formulate a new mode of environmental awareness that can operate equally in undeveloped countryside, industrial mining towns, manufacturing plants and schoolhouses among other locales.

Chapter 2, "Urban Environs," leaves the countryside of rural England to consider the humming, phosphorescent, non-stop pulsation of the built environment, arguing that, in a certain respect, cities are more "natural" or akin to the constantly shifting nature of the planet. At the same time, personal security and housing conditions become highly contested. Virginia Woolf's argument for a writer's need to control her own rest and living space in *A Room of One's Own* provides a basis for analyzing how social action determines the built environment. Woolf's address leads to an active definition of "environing" as a process of constructing and maintaining surroundings. Modernization and imperialism are two such environing forces, but I also reimagine the familiar modernist figure of the "flâneur" (Joyce's Leopold Bloom, for example) as an "environer" who outlines a grassroots project of cultural change through numerous moments of rest that depend on connections to others. The chapter turns to a discussion of "atmosphere" in order to expand on the subtle interactions between personal and public spaces in the metropolis. The notion that even the most deeply personal and invisible matters carry an outward atmosphere points to the aesthetics of immersion and engagement that embed humans in environment. Atmosphere, then, is not just a surrounding, but a register of the influence that personal forces exert on the external world.

As the dissertation progresses into the 1930s, it becomes clear that if rest is to be

found, it is not in a pastoral retreat to nature. Chapter 3, "Waste Lands," explores modernist uses of the pastoral that deny the escape into nature and emphasize instead the biological limitations of human life. This dark pastoral mode coincides with setbacks to Nature Preservation in the United Kingdom during and following WWI and heightening in the 1930s. Beginning with the iconic presentations of decay and destruction found in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, the chapter considers Eliot's symbolic registers of waste and regeneration in relation to actual attempts at land restoration in the United Kingdom. As the first large land holding entrusted to the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, the case of Woodwalton Fen presents the tensions between "reserving Nature" and "putting lands in order." Far from a simple letting nature be, the upkeep of the Fen required a great deal of money, legal dealings, and human labor. Between drainage disputes and biological balance lies the difficult reality of Eliot's impulse to set lands in order. To further explore the undoing of pastoral retreat at the hands of anthropogenic control, I look to the fiction of Djuna Barnes as late modernism that employs a dark pastoral aesthetic in order to subvert Thoreauvian notions of man's self-sufficiency in Nature. Robin Vote as the "black sheep" in Djuna Barnes's 1936 novel *Nightwood* poses a queer resilience to those who seek to tame and exploit living beings.

Instead of pastoral retreat, it is only through an engagement with the political powers sustaining human environments that recovery may begin to take place. In my final chapter, "Decolonizing Ecology," I explore how Jean Rhys presents the failures of interwar recovery in Europe, the failure to find rest and the return to war, as an environmental justice issue stemming from the continued colonial subjection of foreign lands. Tracing the colonial history of Rhys's homeland Dominica in her 1938 novel *Good Morning Midnight*, I argue

that protagonist Sasha Jansen's inability to rest points to larger geopolitical inequalities that continue to deny large portions of the global population the ability to generate meaningful change. The chapter traces how the field of Ecology arose through explicit ties to imperial and colonial projects of territory control and resource management. I challenge uncritical visions of the "ecological" as inherently benevolent or just, and pursue instead an understanding of ecology as unpredictable, fragile and subject to violent and exploitative power relations. The second half of the chapter addresses environmental recovery efforts after WWII leading up to the environmental movements of the 1960s. While nature protection became an international priority in the postwar era with, for example, the formation of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, I look to Chinua Achebe's 1960 novel *No Longer at Ease* to complicate the unevenness of environmental recovery in relation to decolonization. Through a juxtaposition of main character Obiajulu, whose name means "the mind at last is at rest," and Mr. Green, a 1950s counterpoint to Joseph Conrad's Colonel Kurtz, I explore modernism's environmental legacy in regard to the end of colonialism and a newly emerging "green imperialism" that seeks to manage natural spaces on a global scale.

Places of Rest reevaluates the impact of modernist writers on a longer trajectory of environmental thought. The dissertation intervenes in contemporary environmental discourse with the assertion that the American tradition of environmentalism has become too dominant at the expense of alternative ways of thinking about environmental protection. Whereas environmentalism in the United States developed with a sense of expansive frontiers, in the UK a sense of limited territory and intense industrialism led to an awareness of humanity's ability to bring about Nature's complete exhaustion. At the same time, the vast colonial

holdings of the British Empire (nearly one quarter of the earth's surface and population by 1900) led to parallel problems of global overextension. A consideration of environmental impulses within the United Kingdom during the height and decline of empire reveals issues of class and privilege that continue to vex contemporary environmental discourses surrounding the Anthropocene and environmental justice.

To bring a history of ecological activism into conversation with literary modernism shows how cultural attitudes towards the environment developed in relation to imperialist exploitation, world war and a growing sense of the limits of anthropocentric control. The authors explored in the study no longer hold nature and environment as separate from human life; instead, they overturn individual autonomy to present the interrelation of flora and fauna within natural and built environments. In the absence of an idealized, "aesthetic rest" of the kind that Romantic authors found by going back to nature, modernist writers present cosmopolitan moments of rest that sustain place and community in terms of lateral influence and ecological dependence.

Chapter 1

Nature's Reserves: Rural Exhaustion, Inertia and Generative Aesthetics

> Then one is never in the same place?
>
> It would seem not.
>
> But that which is never in the same place is never quiet or at rest?
>
> Never.
>
> One then, as would seem, is neither at rest nor in motion?
>
> It certainly appears so.
>
> —Plato. *Parmenides*

Accounts of modernism often begin *à la* Virginia Woolf with the year 1910, when human character changed. In terms of environmental modernism, however, 1912 serves as a watershed year when attitudes towards Nature and Ecology changed in dramatic fashion. 1912 was notably the year that Charles Rothschild founded the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves to organize "persons interested in the preservation of the natural fauna and flora of the United Kingdom" ("The Humble Petition"). SPNR was unique in its aim to protect not just individual species but entire ecosystems.[4] As such, it is one of the first environmental groups to privilege the science of ecology over more simplified and dualistic ideas of Nature. An announcement for the new society printed in *The Times* on December 18, 2012 quotes Dr. Chalmers Mitchell's assertion, "It is only by the deliberate and conscious interference of man that the evil wrought by man has been arrested. Each generation is the guardian of the existing resources of the world; it has come into a great inheritance, but only as a trustee" ("Nature Reserves"). From the beginning, SPNR positioned the protection of Nature as an anthropocentric project dealing in economic terms of value, reserve and trust.

To reserve nature was positioned not so much as a pastoral retreat from the reigning capitalist concerns of modernity but as an important component of the modern organization of resources. Yet notably SPNR arose as a response to the lack of an official, State-sanctioned government body to oversee nature protection. As such, the announcement states, "all students and lovers of nature generally are now invited to combine in support of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves" ("Nature Reserves"). This local, communal appeal, however, remains at odds with the imperialist rhetoric of managing all the "existing resources of the world."

Given the expansiveness of the British Empire, notions of scarcity, exhaustion and depletion were counterintuitive to most. At the same time, Empire's reach in the 20th century increasingly ran up against the limits of global territory and resources, leading to an increased scrutiny of interior conditions. Thus 1912 was also the year that the Land Enquiry Committee began its survey of social and economic conditions in rural Great Britain, the first volume of which the Committee published in 1913 as *The Land*. The report proceeds along "scientific lines" to achieve an objective view of labor positions, housing conditions and industrial relations in order to make recommendations for general improvement. While the majority of the report focuses on social and economic points of view (which are often pitted against one another), the authors consider a third perspective that takes into consideration the inherent value of land itself aside from the strictly industrial or utilitarian perspective:

> To a large number of people land is not the raw material of an industry, but a means of pursuing sport or obtaining social consideration…this must be carefully distinguished from what may be called the recreational or social side of country life in a broader sense. There must always be regard for those parts

> of the country which by their seclusion seem marked out for the enjoyment of the public. No purely economic considerations can be allowed to destroy such amenities. (xxv)

The Land recognizes land that falls outside normal economic considerations. Yet in distinguishing such land from the social recreation of country life, this third type of land is not necessarily "the commons" or "the green." At the same time, the authors desire to preserve such land for "public" enjoyment, although it is unclear who constitutes the "public" and what "enjoyment" entails. Commenting on *The Land* on January 2, 1914 in *The Times*, Rothschild compares nature preservation to art collection, claiming that "The aim is, in fact, to do for these islands what the National Art-Collections Fund is doing for the National Gallery" ("Nature Preservation"). The urge to collect, catalogue, anthologize and preserve, as Jeremy Braddock has recently shown so well, is a defining practice of modernist culture. Such efforts reveal profound class-based implications surrounding the criteria of collecting, the economics of upkeep and preservation, and the question of public access. Rothschild, for his part, invites "all classes to join the society—there is neither entrance fee nor subscription" ("Nature Preservation"), yet actual membership skewed decisively towards the upper classes, those with the material means to take up the study or enjoyment of nature. Rothschild's comparison to the National Gallery is also instructive for how such Nature Reserves should be visited and enjoyed. Not as in the American tradition of outdoor adventuring, but in a decorous, fiercely protected, aesthetic atmosphere of contemplation at a remove.

But the protection of Nature differs significantly from the protection of art works as Nature is living, shifting and constantly evolving. The Nature Reserve presents a curious combination of protection and preservation with stewardship and sustainability. It is not a

static, standing reserve *à la* Heidegger, nor is it a Heracleitan free-flowing of letting Nature be. It is somewhere in between: a privileging of certain ecological balances within the larger interests of industry, government and agriculture. It is worth comparing the impulse of Charles Rothschild to his brother Walter, who amassed the largest zoological collection of some 300,000 bird skins, 200,000 bird eggs, more than 2 million butterflies as well as thousands of specimens of insects, reptiles, mammals and fishes.[5] Whereas the older brother Walter's collection speaks directly to Braddock's collecting impulse, as well as Theresa Brennan's critique of the capitalist investment in death, the younger brother's society stands out in its much more complicated mission to protect and foster living ecosystems.

SPNR, then, emerges as a dynamic and thoroughly modern reconsideration of humanity's material and aesthetic relationship to the natural world at a time when many intellectuals and artists were dismissing nature's importance (following the Aesthetic Movement) or romanticizing pastoral settings in new ways, as seen in the publication (also in 1912) of Edward Marsh's first collection of *Georgian Poetry*. Braddock notes that Marsh's project "was to redress a decline of public interest in contemporary poetry by employing the modern techniques of publicity that until that time had only been used in the promotion of novels" (17). As such, though the subject matter of the poems was largely conservative and pastoral, its aspirations were revolutionary, "at once an anthology and a manifesto" (17). Full of "moonblaze," "dark ecstasies," "boughs green" and "golden light," the poems collected in Marsh's anthology present a stark contrast to the catalogue of rural life presented in *The Land*. Where these poets see in a nostalgic and idealized pastoral a reflection of man's own creative spirit and intellectual largesse, the Land Enquiry Committee sees an exploitative system that fails to provide its constituents with a living wage and healthy dwelling

conditions. In his lecture "Romanticism and Classicism" (also delivered in 1912), T. E. Hulme takes issue with the romantic imagery of man's "infinite reservoir of possibilities." As one of the leading intellectual forces behind the emergence of poetic modernism, Hulme privileges instead a "classical verse." He explains:

> What I mean by classical in verse, then, is this. That even in the most imaginative flights there is always a holding back, a reservation. The classical poet never forgets this finiteness, this limit of man. He remembers always that he is mixed up with the earth. He may jump, but he always returns back; he never flies away in to the circumambient gas. (120)

Chapter 2 will address this "circumambient gas" in terms of atmosphere, but the present chapter explores humanity's intermixture with the earth in terms of inertia: a measure of the frictional, relational forces that tie humans to environment—a condition that proves both exhausting and generative. While Hulme speaks to limitation and reservation within verse, his rhetorical register is equally helpful for contextualizing the efforts of Rothschild and the SPNR, who propose a quite literal "reservation" of Nature from the exhaustive exploitation that goes into feeding man's "limitless flight" and "transcendent mobility." By insisting that humans remain "mixed up with the earth," modernist writing presents an important locus of ecocritical inquiry.

D. H. Lawrence is a watershed figure between Georgian romanticism and international modernism. His poem "Snap-dragon" appears in Marsh's first volume of *Georgian Poetry*. The poem begins in typical pastoral fashion as a young narrator follows a woman into a garden filled with "mellow sunlight" in order to view snap-dragon flowers. Once the encounter between man, woman and flower begins, however, the poem veers into

decidedly more complicated, dark and ambiguous territory. The strangeness circles precisely around questions of control. As the woman grasps the flower, so the narrator feels held in thrall: “She laughed, she reached her hand out to the flower / Closing its crimson throat: my own throat in her power” (Lawrence, *Complete Poems* 123). The woman’s tactile control over the flower extends to control of the narrator as well. The moment sends the narrator off into a hallucinatory state in which a brown bird hovers around his head and settles on his bosom. But once the narrator returns to his senses, as it were, things take a decidedly darker turn. Now the narrator takes the snap-dragon by its “throat,” and makes a cruel pretense to snap it off:

> I pressed the wretched, throttled flower between
> My fingers, till its head lay back, its fangs
> Poised at her: like a weapon my hand stood white and keen,
> And I held the choked flower-serpent in its pangs
> Of mordant anguish till she ceased to laugh,
> Until her pride's flag, smitten, cleaved down to the staff. (125)

Here the narrator’s potentially fatal grasp on the snap-dragon carries with it all of the weight of the heavy hand of human mastery over nature. Invoking the fall of man in the Garden of Eden as well as the flag of battle, the narrator reasserts control over the poem in ruthless fashion as the last two stanzas turn to an intermingling of darkness and laughter, ecstasy and death. Yet, by the poem’s end, “large hands of revenge” (i.e. Death) threaten the narrator’s own throat. Humans, with their hands around Nature’s throat, are really as fragile as the snap-dragon. The ostensible mastery of nature does not separate humans and nature but only affirms a greater entanglement. Yet knowledge of this impending darkness does inform a

certain perspective on life. The salvo, "death I know is better than not-to-be" (126), is indicative of much of Lawrence's early writings, where characters struggle against often-oppressive environments towards self-realization and a new way of life. The strangely charged encounter between man, woman and flower in "Snap-dragon" provides a microcosm of the overlapping forces of character and environment, liveliness and deathliness that shape Lawrence's fiction in his crucial transition period between *Sons and Lovers* and *The Rainbow*.

As I argue in the following sections, Lawrence develops a metaphysics that aligns the dreaded "not-to-be" with that which is "inert." Although Lawrence privileges a notion of being alive, liveliness, living at all costs, such a state does not necessarily find expression in the restless activity that is such a hallmark of modernity and modernization. Instead, the poem is primarily interested in the "deep dark" of human recesses, the untapped potentials of life that await actualization. Lawrence elaborates this potential through an understanding of "inertia," not as that which is inert and without life, but as a resting state that holds the key of new generation, the inner reserves of Nature and human being. "Inertia" becomes a key term for Lawrence's understanding of energy and materiality, leading him to a unique environmental aesthetics that stresses the body's constant engagement with its surroundings. His articulation of "positive inertia" as an attention to the limits, needs, and fragility of human life serves as an important counterpoint to modernism's obsession with autonomy, excess, and limitless production. Lawrence fully develops this critique in *The Rainbow*, where the negative inertia of industrialism and coal mining is juxtaposed to the positive inertia of familial generation and personal growth. This aesthetics of generation leads to a model of community based on ecological dependencies rather than hierarchical power

structures. Thus while Lawrence's exploration of life and being often focuses on the "inner reserves" of human spirit, this metaphysical inquiry remains intimately connected to the surrounding world, and especially with the effects of industrialization on the English countryside. Notably, the Marsh community that Lawrence portrays in the early pages of *The Rainbow* inhabits a "traditional" English fen ecosystem that SPNR would list as a priority for protection efforts. Yet Lawrence's inertial aesthetic also provides an alternative way to think about "reserve" and "reservation" as integrated with life rather than as separate spaces. As such, Lawrence anticipates an environmental rhetoric of interconnectedness that SPNR would only turn to after the ravages of World War I, when conservation and nature protection were increasingly posed as a process of healing both the land and the traumatized human psyche.

Living Inertia

In his essay "The Morality of Inertia," Lionel Trilling outlines the mundane, habitual and biological behaviors that largely determine the moral life of communities. He notes how literature in particular has a difficult time grappling with such phenomena, claiming that, "Literature is charmed by energy and dislikes inertia" (37). Modernism especially dislikes inertia. With the restless introduction of new forms, techniques and content, aesthetic modernism presents a perpetual investment in new ruptures and revolutionary potentials. This privileging of dynamism equally inheres to the rhetoric of various critical discourses, myths and ideologies of modernism: thus Terry Eagleton writes, "What launched [James Joyce] into the vibrant heart of modernist Europe was inertia at home" (*Heathcliff* 256). Yet the faith in autonomous art and unlimited creative production inevitably runs up against the

impasse of consumption and expenditure.[6] The celebration of "art for art's sake" coincides and depends upon unprecedented levels of resource exploitation and environmental degradation. The generation of writers that follows the energetic wave of modernism inverts the earlier obsession with limitless potential to focus on exhaustion, dissipation and entropy. Thus the wholesale rejection of inertia that leads to artistic renewal also tends dangerously towards the unstable and unsustainable.

Among the numerous self-styled modernists of the twentieth century, D. H. Lawrence is unique in his extensive theorizing of inertia. On the one hand, Lawrence's attitude towards inertia is entirely typical of the dominant discourse of modernism: he writes in a critique of *Point Counter Point* that Aldous Huxley's obsession with murder, suicide and rape "produces ultimately inertia, inertia, inertia and final atrophy of the feelings" (*Letters VI* 600). Such a connotation is typical for Lawrence's use of the word inertia: boredom, *ennui*, deadness, detachment, inactivity, loss of feeling; in short, without the spirit or energetic liveliness that he sees as essential to art. Yet in 1914's *Study of Thomas Hardy*, Lawrence engages in a more nuanced discussion of inertia as inherently ambivalent. Most significantly, he considers the inclusion of "positive inertia," defined as "a concession…to the being and requirements of the body" (91), imperative to the creation of meaningful literary work. This chapter investigates the importance of this alternative conception of inertia for Lawrence's aesthetic innovations in *The Rainbow* and for modernism more broadly. Instead of the expenditure of energy that defines many forms of modernism, positive inertia focuses on the cultivation of energy. Far from being static, positive inertia acts as a source for new generation, both artistic and cultural. Yet this source is not inexhaustible. The focus on the body's "requirements" invites an exploration of how bodily energy is inextricably linked to

environment. Through the recognition that the regeneration of bodily energy requires the consumption of environmental resources and, conversely, that the exploitation of environment requires the expenditure of bodily energy, positive inertia serves as a useful critique of discourses of unlimited energy and progress. Lawrence fully develops this critique in *The Rainbow*, where the positive inertia of Ursula's personal growth develops in opposition to the negative inertia of industrialism. Focusing on inertia as a rhythmic register of forces, Lawrence represents a communal sense of stabilization as his characters encounter violent ruptures in their environment. Most significantly for the formal innovations that distinguish Lawrence's fiction, this chapter outlines inertia not as torpor and paralysis but in terms of an aesthetics of generation that focuses on growth, rhythm and sustainability.

Coal mining and the industrialization of pastoral England provide the specific force of antagonism in *The Rainbow*, but such an intervention provides an important way of rethinking environmental aesthetics and awareness in the early 20th century more broadly. In particular, a sense of positive inertia is an awareness of the body's continual engagement with environment. Thus, while Rothschild and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves responded to the effects of industrialization by promoting nature reserves, effectively leading to connotations of nature and environment as distinct from human society, the concept of positive inertia leads to an analysis of all spaces in environmental terms. Lawrence is able to present the mining pit, the factory, and the school, among other spaces, in terms of the specific movements and rhythms they place upon the human body. At the same time, an attention to a living inertia is also a helpful way to think through questions of conservation and preservation. In particular, Inertia aids in thinking of the persistence of material changes within environments: a certain lingering upon phenomenon, the

representation not just of energetic events, but their dissipative afterlives. Through adopting an inertial framework, preservation and conservation can avoid turning nature into a static or reified system controlled by careful human intervention. Such an inertial approach to environmentalism in the United Kingdom proved indispensible throughout the first half of the twentieth century as efforts to protect land suffered repeated setbacks due to the wars and financial depression. What often appeared as a stagnant and losing battle masked in fact a slow accretion of environmental awareness and protection efforts that would take hold during WWII and find energetic release during postwar reconstruction.

Without Art

The word inertia stems from the Latin *iners* meaning without art, life or activity, aligned with the deadly sin of sloth. In its colloquial form, inertia almost always carries this negative connotation, whether in reference to laziness, moral backwardness or the repression of creativity. To understand Lawrence's articulation of "positive inertia," it is helpful to draw on definitions of inertia in the scientific realm, which are not inherently negative but rather ambivalent. Critics note Lawrence's interest in the sciences. N. Katherine Hayles, for example, explores how Lawrence's "subjective science" emerged as an attempt to "break free of the constraints that logical positivism had placed on thought and discourse" ("Ambivalent" 106). Hayles aligns Lawrence with the "New Physics" of relativity, flux and uncertainty that challenged the positivistic determinism of 19th century science. While Hayles focuses on physics, recent work by Jeff Wallace focuses on Lawrence's engagement with biology, ecology and evolutionary theory in order to position "modern science as a *source* of Lawrentian reverence and wonder for 'life' rather than as an obstacle to it" (102).

Lawrence's positive inertia draws from both physical and biological sciences in order to reimagine bodily needs and desires in terms of material forces. Following Hayles and Wallace, Lawrence's articulation of positive inertia can be understood as both an engagement with scientific discourse and a unique cultural theory of life's complexities that cannot be reduced to strictly mechanistic laws.

Johannes Kepler gave inertia its first formal treatment in his *Epitome astronomiae Copernicanae* (1621), where the inertia of planets resists the motor power of the sun. Nicolaus Copernicus founded his astronomy on the principle that the earth was never at rest. But what is perhaps most striking about his *Revolutions* is the failure to abandon rest altogether. While the earth is in constant motion, the sun is at rest. The metaphors Copernicus employs to establish the sun's rest bear quotation:

> At rest, however, in the middle of everything is the sun. For in this most beautiful temple, who would place this lamp in another or better position than that from which it can light up the whole thing at the same time? For, the sun is not inappropriately called by some people the lantern of the universe, its mind by others, and its ruler by still others....Thus indeed, as though seated on a royal throne, the sun governs the family of planets revolving around it. Moreover, the earth is not deprived of the moon's attendance. On the contrary, as Aristotle says in a work on animal, the moon has the closest kinship with the earth. Meanwhile the earth has intercourse with the sun, and is impregnated for its yearly parturition. (24)

To be at rest is to be at power, governing and influential. The resting sun "impregnates" the attendant earth. The earth moves around the sun, yet has a more intimate relation with the

moon.[7]

Isaac Newton turned to the word inertia in his Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica (1687) to describe his first law of motion, the Vis Inertia, or "Force of Inactivity." Significantly, Newton distinguishes two forms of this force, impulse and resistance:

> It is resistance in so far as the body, for maintaining its present state withstands the force impressed; it is impulse, in so far as the body, by not easily giving way to the impress'd force of another, endeavours to change the state of that other. Resistance is usually ascrib'd to bodies at rest, and impulse to those in motion: But motion and rest, as commonly conceived, are only relatively distinguished. (3)[8]

Disrupting the absolute distinction between rest and motion, which limited the physics of Aristotle and many other classical thinkers, Newton's inertia measures forces of internal resistance and external influence. It concerns the persistence of matter in any given state: positive and negative valences enter only in relation to how one defines change. After its inception in scientific discourse, the term eventually drifted into a metaphoric register to describe forces of culture and willpower. Michael Faraday—best known for his work on electromagnetism—considered the metaphor in detail in an address titled, "Observations on the Inertia of the Mind," presented to the City Philosophical Society on July 1, 1818.[9] Faraday also notes the ambivalent tenor of inertia: he ascribes "apathy" as the inertia of the passive mind and "industry" as the inertia of the active mind. Despite this, Faraday clearly privileges an active inertia, calling industry the "natural state of man" (Jones 277). Though mental inertia might be positive (industrious) or negative (apathetic), Faraday believes that

unlike Newton's law of inertia that "holds sway" equally over "bodies in motion as over those at rest," cases of passive mental inertia are found much more readily than active mental inertia (Jones 279). The predominant use of inertia as a cultural descriptor during the 19th century attests to this focus on the passive mind. In his Confessions of an English Opium Eater, Thomas De Quincey—whose work Lawrence was quite fond of—describes his "profoundest reveries" leaving him with a tranquility that "seemed no product of inertia, but as if resulting from mighty and equal antagonisms; infinite activities, infinite repose" (68).[10] Here inertia essentially means inert, without life, activity or use, and most significantly for the aspiring writer, without art. Against this inertia, De Quincey struggles to articulate a sense of equilibrium that is, paradoxically, another metaphoric extension of inertia.

It is a productive, industrious inertia that will save man from the inertia of idleness and lethargy. Similarly, it is a harmonious, equilibratory inertia that will save art from the inertia of anesthetic lifelessness. For Lawrence, writing the *Study of Thomas Hardy* and rewriting *The Rainbow* in 1914, such human-centered harmony was hard to come by. Faraday's industrious inertia led to a regime of steam dynamos, machines, and the "Scientific Management" of labor.[11] Bodily energy and the rhythm of everyday life became largely subject to this industrial inertia. To resist the march of modernization was to live in the negative inertia of habit and convention. The outbreak of war was similarly theorized in terms of a rejection of the "moral inertia" of imperial rule. Consider, for example, Briggs Davenport's early assessment of the genesis of war in 1916's *A History of the Great War*: "In Austria-Hungary, the dynastic element, since the revolutionary impulses of 1848 were repressed, seems to have sought safety, so far as internal political forms are concerned, in what one might almost call inertia; but it has found, of course, that to a living organism

inertia is impossible, and to court it most dangerous" (5). More than the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, Davenport emphasizes the cultural inertia that led to such a violent rupture. England entered WWI out of a similar fear of inertia's perils.[12] A faith in the application of industrial inertia for new tactics of warfare led to the belief that war, too, could be efficient and expeditious.[13] But instead of speed and dynamism, industrial warfare led to the worst kind of inertia and attrition, revealing a fundamental antagonism between the inertia of industry and the needs of living beings.

In the catalytic environment of WWI, the role of the artist was necessarily changing. In an essay on Lawrence's poetry, Marjorie Perloff succinctly states the challenges facing modernist aesthetics, "Given the context of the Great War, of the new concepts of space and time and of the machine that so profoundly influenced the Futurists, an individual response to nature—the confrontation of an 'I' with a skylark or a nightingale or a field of daffodils—is perhaps no longer enough" (127). It is precisely at this moment that Lawrence turns to an idea of "positive inertia" as a way to understand experience. He outlines positive inertia as a bodily energy in fundamental opposition to the negative inertia of machines and industry. In his inertial representation of being, Lawrence foregrounds the relationship between body and environment, but the individual encounter becomes less important than the repetition of impersonal experience and the slight modulations that the living makes in response to the non-living, what this essay terms an aesthetics of generation. Such an aesthetics involves a rethinking of the body's relationship to its surroundings. The body no longer holds a unique and autonomous space within nature; rather, body and environment participate in a shared field of forces. Positive inertia becomes a measure of the exchange of energy between body and environment.

To situate the positive valence of inertia in terms of energy, it is helpful to return to scientific ideas of inertia in the years leading up to WWI. While the colloquial understanding of inertia was cemented as negative and unenergetic, both physicists and biologists began investigating inertia as the key to understanding energy's deepest organizing principles. In 1905, Albert Einstein returned to Newton's law of inertia in order to elaborate his "Special Theory of Relativity." The proposition that mass and energy were deeply intertwined through the formula $E = mc^2$, where E represents "rest energy," led to the conclusion that energy, like mass, must be subject to the law of inertia. Einstein further articulated the "inertia of energy" in a paper published in 1906, where he argues, "a body's inertia depends on its energy content" (206). Inertia, far from being a lack of energy, is merely the visible façade of matter's deep, indwelling potentials, waiting to be released. Although it comes in a much different context, Lawrence's positive inertia also recognizes that what looks like inactivity might actually mask great energy and potential for growth. While Lawrence does not express an interest in Einstein's relativity until 1921, he was more attentive to concurrent biological interests in the self-organizing principles of life.[14] Against Darwinian notions that environment determined life, biologists and philosophers began articulating new theories of organic resistance and innate force. In 1908 for example, a Scottish biologist, David Fraser Harris, proposed a new principle of organic life, which he called "physiological insusceptability," or, "functional inertia" (2). Harris explains, "Non-correspondence with the environment is the keynote of this protoplasmic inertia, independence of environment, disregard of stimulation, inaccessibility to external influences, all insusceptibilities, and limits set to powers of response" (12). Harris's "functional inertia" signals not only independence from environment, but also the physical limits of this very independence that

inhere to any living organism. Harris cites the heart, for example, which cannot be forced beyond a certain rate; in other words, "the tissues set the pace" (11). In 1911, the English translation of Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* appeared, with the assertion that, "a purely mechanistic biology will strive to make the *passive* adaptation of an inert matter, which submits to the influence of its environment, mean the same as the *active* adaptation of an organism which derives from this influence an advantage it can appropriate" (70). Both Harris and Bergson seek to challenge, in the words of vitalist philosopher Hans Driesch, the "negative" and "eliminating" influence of natural selection through an appeal to the positive, self-organizing resistance of the organism against the inertia of environment (262). Lawrence's "positive inertia" is in line with this vitalist tradition of foregrounding the energy of the body, yet he does not go so far as to consider bodily energy an innate force or *élan vital*; instead, he emphasizes the "requirements" that the body needs from its environment in order to sustain itself.

Thus, in the years leading up to WWI, scientific discourse returns to an investigation of inertia as the key to understanding the release and exchange of material energy. At the same time, English modernists were no longer interested in replicating the sane and sound prose of Victorian and Edwardian novelists. Praising the aesthetic extremes of Italian Futurism, Walter Sickert writes in the *English Review*, "In order that a salutary truth may penetrate the shell of inertia and habit in which humanity will ever lap itself, the most monstrous exaggerations may do good service" (148). Fredric Jameson describes the modernist shift as an epistemological rejection of materialist knowledge, where "all the concrete determinations of the older social novel…are eyed with all the suspicion of a foreign body, of the inert resistance of matter to the newly autonomous realm of aesthetic

language" (*Fables* 39). While Jameson is certainly correct that the productive and industrious inertia of the 19th century that filled so many pages of prose became pedantic and stifling, inert matter was perhaps not eyed so much with suspicion as with a new sense of the potential energy it contained, energy waiting to be released by the aesthetic innovations of the modernist writer. This can be seen, for example, in the Vorticism of Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound, where the blast of the new depends entirely on the inertia of English society that is the object of its blasting. Amidst modernism's swirling interest in energy and dynamism, D. H. Lawrence stands out in his nuanced understanding of the relationship between bodily energy and environmental energy, what he theorizes in 1914 as "positive inertia."

Inertia without Inertness

Lawrence's use of "inert" and "inertia" largely follows a negative connotation in the sense outlined above as without art, activity or life. Yet, from his first published use of the word—in *The Trespasser* when Siegmund rises from a "fruitful inertia" (68)—a positive valence is also present. In *Sons and Lovers*, the word inert appears only twice, both times in reference to a person's hands. In The Rainbow, by contrast, inert appears thirteen times and inertia three. Inertia is part of a dynamic vocabulary that Lawrence emphasizes in an attempt to revitalize the novel itself. The first extended use of this new vocabulary comes in the 1914 short story "The Prussian Officer," where the officer's abuse renders his orderly a "mass of inertia" (15). Lawrence's only extended critical treatment of inertia occurs in his Study of Thomas Hardy, which he began as England entered WWI. Lawrence sees the war as revealing "how little we value ourselves at bottom, how we hate our own security" (*STH* 16). He presents war as an opportunity to escape the negative, determining inertia of habit,

tradition and environment through a vitalist assertion of the organism's ability to determine its own development. Although numerous artists recognized a need for art to respond to an increasingly restless culture that, in a paradoxical submission to mechanical inertia, had arrived at the brink of self-destruction, Lawrence is distinct in that he does not reject inertia wholesale. The inclusion of a positive valence of inertia remains crucial for his vision of art.

In Chapter VII of the *Study*, titled "Of Being and Not-Being," Lawrence makes the assertion that "life consists in the dual form of the Will-to-Motion and the Will-to-Inertia." Significantly, "this will to inertia is not negative, and the other positive. Rather, according to some conception, is Motion negative and Inertia, the static, geometric idea, positive" (*STH* 59). Despite the mechanical language of the Will-to-Motion and the Will-to-Inertia, Lawrence's aim is in fact to reveal the arbitrary nature of such a division. He critiques the limitations of mechanical language by positing that the divide between rest and motion is false. He writes, "There is no such thing as rest. For a thing to us at rest is only a thing travelling at our own rate of motion: or, from another point of view, it is a thing moving at the lowest rate of motion we can recognise. But this table on which I write, which I call at rest, I know is really in motion" (*STH* 60). In positing the relative distinction of rest and motion, Lawrence affirms Newton's Law of Inertia. Lawrence's attention to the movement of his desk is instructive of his new aesthetic vision more generally: his is a sense of the work of art's movement and development through space and time. Recognizing there is no absolute rest, no tranquility, no true aesthetic distance, the artist's effort is to represent the sense of the push and pull of impulse and resistance, to reveal the rhythms and revolutions that determine human orientation and to investigate the channels and disseminations of energy between material bodies.

Art becomes a measure of these inertial forces, and the work of every artist can be understood in terms of the particular balance or equilibrium of forces it represents. Lawrence cites Shelley's "To a Skylark" as an exemplar of artistic balance, and it is in his reading of the poem in Chapter IX of the *Study* that he gives some definition to what he means by "positive inertia." On the one hand, Shelley's skylark embodies what Lawrence sees as a problematic, bodiless transcendence of life. On the other hand, Lawrence considers Shelley's poem as a prime example of "active force meeting and overcoming and yet not overcoming inertia" (*STH* 90). While Shelley wishes to portray the skylark as pure motion, Lawrence claims that, "The very adherence to rhyme and regular rhythm is…a concession to the body, to the being and requirements of the body. They are an admission of the living, positive inertia which is the other half of life, other than the pure will-to-motion" (*STH* 91). Here Lawrence explicitly addresses a positive valence of inertia, to which his Will-to-Inertia only alludes. As Peter Balbert elaborates, "where there is no motion there is not necessarily boredom, and where there is inertia there need not be stasis" (74). The appeal to rhyme and regular rhythm should not be confused with an artificial or mechanical approach to language or as Helen Sword calls it, "traditional form" (86). Instead, it was through reading Shelley, Lawrence claims, that he became "a real cropper" in his understanding of meter (*Letters II* 105). Rather than scan poetry in a strict or scientific manner, for Lawrence, "it all depends on the pause—the natural pause, the natural lingering of the voice according to the feeling—it is the hidden emotional pattern that makes poetry, not the obvious form" (*Letters II* 104). Lawrence denies abstraction into pure form by insisting on the significance of the physiological and emotional levels of art. Though it comes in context of the rhyme and rhythm of poetry, it is clear that positive inertia is a much larger force in Lawrence's

metaphysics: "the other half of life," which Lawrence believes has been overlooked and undervalued in England, and for this reason all the more essential.

Lawrence's return to the body as an aesthetic source of knowledge can be understood in terms of an inward exile from the industrial England of his youth, where the human body was increasingly regarded as a unit of labor to be weighed and balanced in terms of its contributions to a larger system of material production.[15] Frederick Winslow Taylor's attention to the need for rest breaks for workers as periods of inertia to allow for greater efficiency and productivity is paradigmatic of such a regime.[16] On the one hand, a turn to the unrealized potentials of one's own body was desirable and perhaps unavoidable in order to escape the ruling industrial logic; on the other hand, the voyage back out into the world of building community through an organic, felt, or affective logic is fraught with its own perils. As Eagleton argues, a political society where "to consent to the law is…to consent to one's own inward being," is one in which "power…has become *aestheticized*" (*Ideology*, 20). If "positive inertia" is a powerful critique of industrial rationality, it can equally become, when extended to a political ideology, a dangerous rhetoric of the state as a living organic unity. Most troubling for Lawrence's ideas in the *Study of Thomas Hardy* is his dependence upon sexual normativity and a biological theory of race.

The proximity of Lawrence's organicism to the rise of fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany has marked his aesthetic theories as particularly controversial. Anne Fernihough has extensively explored the ambivalence of Lawrence's organicist aesthetics. She cites as particularly problematic Lawrence's "attempts to root cultures in their native soil, binding together culture and national destiny" (20). On the other hand, Fernihough finds an unexpected parallel between Lawrence and Theodor Adorno's critique of the "culture

industry." Both thinkers develop a theory in which "sensuous receptivity, the body, [holds] in check the conceptual domination of nature…the organic becomes an antidote to various kinds of totalizing" (41–43). "Positive inertia" is precisely such an antidote to the threat of an overly spiritual and totalizing form of art. Yet an engagement with the term is noticeably absent in Fernihough's study, despite the fact that her book ends by directing readers to the opening sentences of Chapter IX of the *Study*. Fernihough's reluctance to engage the term may be attributed to the sexual politics of Lawrence's work, which have come to polarize Lawrence studies as much as the question of organicism from which they stem. While Fernihough rightly warns that the Lawrentian juxtapositions of Love/Law, Will-to-Motion/Will-to-Inertia and Spirit/Body ultimately point to the "man–woman polarity," she is mistaken to view these distinctions as "rigid binaries and hierarchies" (59). As previously discussed in relation to rest and motion, Lawrence states that such divisions are arbitrary. The continual performance of semiotic displacement that Lawrence maintains as these terms supersede one another in chapters VII–IX of the *Study* point to the "indeterminacy and multiplicity of the semiotic" that Fernihough celebrates as the defining feature of Lawrence's aesthetics (60). More than sex, religion or the body, Lawrence's real interest lies in the perpetual forces of impulse and resistance that determine material interaction, a fascination with the natural law of inertia that governs the exchange of energy within a non-hierarchical, ecological milieu.

The Microcosm of the Novel

How, then, does this conception of positive inertia influence the novelist? "Novelists," Lawrence writes, "have the hardest task in reconciling their metaphysic, their

theory of being and knowing, with their living sense of being" (*STH* 91). For the novelist, positive inertia moves beyond rhythmic form to function as a balance to reason and intellectual knowledge of life. In Lawrence's formulation, metaphysics (theory of knowledge) must be reconciled with a living sense of being. The directionality of his aesthetics is not a lifting up of the senses to the heights of reason, but a lowering of knowledge to the realm of lived experience, from which it must proceed in a dispersive and ecological fashion. In his meticulously researched "The Marble and the Statue," Mark Kinkead-Weekes has shown how influential the *Study* was for Lawrence's revision of *The Rainbow*. At the same time, he notes that, "when the imagination of Lawrence the novelist is liberated in its proper medium, he creates people and situations whose density extends far beyond the categories of his 'thinking'" (110). It is precisely to a conception of "rhythm" that Lawrence turns to mediate between his aesthetic theory and the creation of people and situations in what he terms the "microcosm of the novel" (*STH* 91). As he explains in a famous letter to Edward Garnett, "don't look for the development of the novel to follow the lines of certain characters: the characters fall into the form of some other rhythmic form" (*Letters II* 184). Privileging rhythmic form within the novel was a stark challenge to literary realism and especially to the sensationalism that drove literary bestsellers. Yet Lawrence defends his form precisely as a more natural representation of lived experience. As he writes in the unpublished foreword to *Women in Love*, "fault is often found with the continual, slightly modified repetition. The only answer is that it is natural to the author: and that every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro" (486). This frictional to-and-fro is precisely a measure of impulse and resistance, an appeal to the law of inertia. By viewing the novel as a "microcosm" and establishing a sense

of inertia as the guiding force within this microcosm, Lawrence is able to achieve a persistence of narrative that registers both rapid industrial change, as well as the long-term effects of working the coalmines. The aesthetic innovations that led to the new, inertial form of *The Rainbow* can be seen as a response to both overt and subtle environmental changes that threatened to define modern life.

Lawrence's interest in inertia helps to explain the rhythmic form he developed in *The Rainbow*. This idea has been proposed by Mary Ann Melfi, who argues that, "The dichotomy between passive inertia and active yearning defines the rhythm of life as Lawrence depicts it in *The Rainbow*" (355). But Melfi's discussion of inertia is limited in that she only considers inertia as a passive and hence negative force to be overcome by the novel's heroine. Inertia understood as Lawrence presents it in the *Study*, as both negative and positive, allows for a more productive understanding of the formal innovations of the novel. Rhythm and inertia share the sense of sustaining a state of motion or perpetuating a regular or slightly modulating condition. From the opening pages of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence presents the different rhythms of the Marsh community. Men like Tom Brangwen feel "the pulse and body of the soil," they mount horses and hold life "between the grip of their knees" (*R* 10). At the end of the autumn days, "the men sat by the fire in the house where the women moved about with surety, and the limbs and the body of the men were impregnated with the day, cattle and earth and vegetation and the sky, the men sat by the fire and their brains were inert, as their blood flowed heavy with the accumulation from the living day" (*R* 10). Although the male brains are inert, the scene is far from passive. The blood is heavy only from the accumulation of life, pointing towards potential energy rather than exhaustion. As Christine Connell argues, "The men's identities become explicitly generative because their labor forges

an intimate connection with the earth, the fauna, and the flora" (76). The inertness of the men portrays positive inertia as concession to the living body.

Inertia becomes a way for Lawrence to ensure that his novel remains "firmly bound up with the material world" (Fernihough 189). Wallace also stresses this focus on materiality as a key factor in recasting Lawrence as a posthumanist thinker. Yet a posthumanist Lawrence is distinct from a materialist Lawrence, Wallace argues, through his "wariness about the perils of reductiveness within materialism;" as such, "We cannot accept the disappearance of the human into matter, looking for the 'phenomena' of physics in human beings, yet neither can we refute the science which is surely the basis of a physiology of matter" (107–108). The appeal to a positive inertia of the body can be seen as a way of mediating between the laws of matter and the less reducible differences to be found in human behavior, thought and imagination. Lawrence's attention to positive inertia as the "requirements of the body" is particularly instructive for such mediation. Lawrence rethinks both natural law and an overly vibrant materialism by focusing on the fragility of life itself. Thus the dispersion and integration between life and environment is not simply a scientific reality, but a complex of conditions, needs and desires. At its best, such a realization of the body's limits can lead to an ethics of care, sympathetic attachment and communal sharing. But the body, as Lawrence was no doubt aware through his bouts of illness, can also be tyrannical.[17] Validating every bodily desire, moreover, must make room for a troubling allowance of violence, exploitation and excess. Here, again, an appeal to inertia can be instructive: the way forward is not a blind validation of the body's needs and desires, but a sustained representation of the push and pull of desires and needs as they change and shape materiality through acts of consumption and preservation.

Inertia, then, as a measure of bodily needs, desires and demands, sets the pace for the generational progression of *The Rainbow*. Lawrence initially represents the change and development that this frictional exchange of energy generates through the encounter between man and woman. For the restless Tom Brangwen, "sensitive to the atmosphere around him" (*R* 17), connection to the life of the world becomes available only through brandy binges that obliterate his individuality. Only the site of Lydia Lensky "arrests" his destructive behavior and leaves him "suspended" (*R* 29). Though Tom resolves to marry Lydia, and is fully ready to propose marriage, he is utterly unprepared for Lydia's acceptance. The moment of "infinite embrace" becomes "bleached agony," and what happens next is utterly unexpected: "He turned and looked for a chair, and keeping her still in his arms, sat down with her close to him, to his breast. Then, for a few seconds, he went utterly to sleep, asleep and sealed in the darkest sleep, utter, extreme oblivion" (*R* 45). Lawrence writes *The Rainbow* as a succession of generations that revisits this struggle for positive connection through the search for moments of stillness and ensuing rebirth. Anna and Will languish in stillness during their honeymoon almost to the point of expiration. Only for Ursula does this moment of stillness occur without the presence of the other sex, a moment that will become the basis for a new mode of communal identification, which Lawrence will fully explore in *Women in Love*. Thus, although Lawrence begins with the investigation of forces between man and woman, his ultimate goal is to get at the inertial energy of generation itself, "the eternal stillness that lies under all movement, under all life, like a source, incorruptible and inexhaustible" (*Letters II* 137–138). Lawrence seeks this inexhaustible beyond the nuclear couple as the transformative potential for a new, utopian form of community that has yet to emerge.

Exhaustive Methods, Generative Aesthetics

The generational structure of *The Rainbow* is both Lawrence's attempt to represent the force of inertia within the novel and the means by which his inertial aesthetic becomes political. Hayles describes how bodily practices can achieve a "surprisingly resistant" inertia to intention and change. As a result, "When a new regime takes over, it attacks old habits vigorously, for this is where the most refractory resistance to change will be met" (204). By privileging a positive inertia of growth and generation, Lawrence achieves a similar challenge to the negative inertia of habit and self-preservation. But instead of a violent attack on the past, positive inertia refigures the past as a resource for new generation. In this political attention to the generational development of aesthetics, Lawrence can again, following Fernihough, be aligned with the aesthetic theories of Adorno, who argues that "Art acquires its specificity by separating itself from what it developed out of; its law of movement is its law of form" (3). The work of art, composed of "centers of energy that strain toward the whole," enacts an inertial departure from its source of genesis (178). Commenting on Adorno, Jameson locates this artistic impulse within the writer as a need to reinvent language itself, with the result that "Each generation…feels the unsatisfactory inherited linguistic schema of subjectivity to be an artificial convention, which it is challenged to replace with some newer representational substitute" (*Singular* 157). Lawrence grapples with this challenge most explicitly through an attention to the labor of writing novels. In pursuing an "exhaustive method" (*Letters II* 143), he makes the labor of producing new versions of his novelistic vision his guiding aesthetic practice. In doing so, he effectively achieves a life outside of industrial England while maintaining its rhetoric of industrious labor. As Hugh Stevens points out, Lawrence's organicist aesthetic is in fact dependent on the antagonistic

world of coal mining to generate "writing of great energy" (143). It is equally dependent on a vision of the writer as energetic laborer in which the artwork becomes less important than the efforts of the artist. Lurking behind this "exhaustive method" is again the inexhaustible, the depth beyond change. The goal of exhaustion is not completion or even rest, but a momentary transcendence of the phenomenal world. Because the inexhaustible is only reached momentarily, return is inevitable, and for Lawrence this return always takes the form of new generation. Lawrence's "exhaustive method" then is not to complete, finish or use up resources, but to perpetuate the aesthetics of generation.

While such a method proves efficient in creating new writing, its sustainability remains questionable. Once again, what seems a promising investment in human potential on the personal level becomes more problematic when extended to a larger political program for community. Most troubling—especially in light of the war—is the notion that the exhaustion of certain populations can lead to new generation for others. Yet what remains productive in *The Rainbow* is the extended exploration of the relationship between exhaustion and generation as the narrative persists through the three Brangwen generations in search of a new basis for community beyond the nuclear couple. The inherent tension between exhaustion and generation is strikingly portrayed in Will and Anna's honeymoon, where inertia is at its most ambivalent. Languishing in stillness, the newlyweds "squander and waste like conscienceless gods" (*R* 134). Here, with the center generation, Lawrence extends the stillness that transcends the phenomenal world. Will and Anna exist in a sort of perpetual stasis; the moment passes, yet they continue to lapse into the "golden stillness." The honeymoon becomes generative and exhausting all at once, as the two are unable to rise even to feed themselves. The inertia of Will and Anna's honeymoon takes on both positive and

negative valences, but the vocabulary of inertia switches decidedly from positive to negative with the death of Tom Brangwen in the flood, "a big, soaked, inert heap" (*R* 232). This imagery of negative inertness is transferred to Anton Skrebensky, a "persistent, inert burden" to Ursula (*R* 296). A similar inertness grows in her affair with Winifred Inger. It is the vision of the "clayey, inert, unquickened flesh" (*R* 325) that leads Ursula to think of marriage between Winifred and her Uncle Tom Brangwen, the collier manager who represents the apex of negative inertia. Tom chooses to serve the "great machine," to marry Winifred and set upon a domestic life to "propagate himself" (*R* 326). All this he does with, "the instinct of a growing inertia, of a thing that chooses its place of rest in which to lapse into apathy, complete, profound indifference" (*R* 326–327). In this negative industrial inertia, all matter is equally exhausted by the production of the mine, an antagonistic inertia against which Ursula strives to escape.

Despite the climactic and vigorous encounter with the stampede of horses that signals this escape, Ursula's transformation ultimately relies upon an acknowledgment of the positive inertia of her own body. Ursula's break with the inert Anton leaves her, in turn, "inert, without strength or interest," but the knowledge of pregnancy overtakes her like flames that "wear her away to rest" (*R* 448). While awaiting Anton's reply to her letter of entreaty, Ursula takes her portentous walk in the rain. Though she has "limbs like water," it is through the knowledge of her body's strength that Ursula manages to escape from the "great flash of hooves" and arrive at her "final isolation," "motionless…like a stone at rest on the bed of the stream, inalterable and passive, sunk to the bottom of all change" (*R* 454). Kinkead-Weekes calls her escape a "collapse into inertia" (*TE* 207), and Gerald Doherty argues similarly that, "she embodies the inorganic inertia of matter that brings the sinking

process itself to an end" (67). Yet, more significantly, this is the first moment where Ursula experiences the limitations and requirements of her own body. Ursula's sinking is an acceptance of the living, positive inertia that Lawrence outlines in the Study. She becomes like a stone, but with a crucial difference: it is precisely this moment of inertia that gives Ursula the depth of "inalterable knowledge" that allows her to survive her illness, her miscarriage, and to sleep "in the confidence of her new reality...absorbed into growth" (R 456). In her recovery, Ursula no longer sees other people as a hindrance to her ability to live; instead, she finds comfort through the shared life she sees in others. The recognition of positive inertia provides the grounds for the generation of a new form of community.

Environmental Inertia

After *The Rainbow*, Lawrence's interest in positive inertia seems to wane. He parodies the metaphysics of the *Study of Thomas Hardy* in *Women in Love* when Halliday and the "canaille" of the Pompadour read aloud and ridicule Birkin's letter (385). A vocabulary of inertness returns to describe Gudrun's resistance to Gerald, but the positive valence is missing. The "potential sequel"[18] to *The Rainbow* ends with Ursula watching Birkin watching the "inert mass" of the frozen Gerald Crich (479). The long duration of WWI left Lawrence without the earlier confidence in renewal he expressed in the Study. The suppression of *The Rainbow* also left Lawrence feeling betrayed by the English public. He lost interest in identifying with England as a community, turning more fully to his dreams of the utopian Rananim, a small community of sympathetic artists and intellectuals that would leave England for a new land (Kinkead-Weekes, TE 181–186). Following the war, Lawrence embraced again the role of autonomous exile, finding relief in the vibrations of steamer ships.

In his travel book *Sea and Sardinia*, he associates the failures of the war years with the solidity of land itself. He imagines a life of material freedom, "Ah if one could sail for ever, on a small quiet, lonely ship, from land to land and isle to isle…Sweet it would be sometimes…to annul the vibration of one's flight against the inertia of our terra firma! but life itself would be in the flight... Land has no answer to the soul any more. It has gone inert" (47–48). Despite his recognition that there is sweetness in the inertia of the earth, Lawrence believes that land is forsaken and holds no longer the positive living potential that sustains *The Rainbow*. Lawrence now associates land with the inert, the dead: he desires instead to "wander aimless across...the world empty of man" (48).

A counterpoint to this reinvestment in negative inertia comes in a poem published in the same year as *Sea and Sardinia*, entitled "Baby Tortoise." Lawrence portrays the baby tortoise as Ulysses, a challenger of the inanimate:[19]

> Are you able to wonder?
> Or is it just your indomitable will and pride of the first life
> Looking round
> And slowly pitching itself against the inertia
> Which had seemed invincible?
> …
> Nay, tiny shell-bird,
> What a huge vast inanimate it is, that you must row against,
> What an incalculable inertia. (*Tortoises* 11–12)

It is important to remember here that Tortoises live on land—thus the baby tortoise rows against the inertia of the earth. Yet unlike the terra firma that Lawrence rejects in Sea and

Sardinia, the tortoise lives through vital opposition to environmental inertia. Yet the positive inertia of the tortoise is ultimately a celebration of its uniquely autonomous body: the shell on its back acts as a controlled environment within the larger environment of "the garden earth" (13). Lawrence celebrates the tortoise, a "Traveller…Like a gentleman in a long-skirted coat" (13), despite the fact that it symbolizes the self-preservation and autonomy he so bemoaned in the opening pages of *Study of Thomas Hardy*.

The description of the tortoise as a "voiceless little bird" (12) invites a return to Shelley's skylark, the consummate aesthetic of motion and inertia. In his *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, published the following year in 1922—the same year the English translation of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* describes repetition and instinct as "the manifestation of inertia in organic life" (45)—Lawrence returns to the metaphor of the bird:

> What is the good of a tree desiring to fly like a bird in the sky, when a bird is rooted in the earth as surely as a tree is? Nay, the bird is only the topmost leaf of the tree, fluttering in the high air, but attached as close to the tree as any other leaf. Mr. Einstein's Theory of Relativity does not supersede the Newtonian Law of Gravitation or of Inertia. It only says, "Beware! The Law of Inertia is not the simple ideal proposition you would like to make of it. It is a vast complexity." (215–216)

This chapter has sought to make some sense of this vast complexity and its implications for Lawrence's new vision of the novel. In Einstein's relativity, Lawrence recognizes the material exchange of energy that guided his generational theory of aesthetics in *Study of Thomas Hardy*. Despite the reinforcement that there is no absolute force or law in the universe, Lawrence draws from this conclusion the need for "obedience and pure authority…

society tapering like a pyramid to the supreme leader" (270). In an indefensible turn, Lawrence reinvests in the rhetoric of verticality and hierarchy, a sharp political departure from his inertial aesthetic. The guiding imagery of renewal found in the rainbow cedes to the pyramid, the quintessential expression of heaping up the primordial mound of inert matter through the obliteration of human energy. Gone is the attention to positive inertia, the care for the limits and requirements that determine the fragility of human life, a neglect made all the more devastating as the failures of postwar recovery led to new social regimes of self-preservation and a return to the violence of war.

Chapter 2

Urban Environs: The Politics of Shared Atmosphere in the Metropolis

> To be alive to what is happening in the smallest registers of motion.
>
> —Don DeLillo. *Point Omega*

It is notable that Lawrence chose a life of itinerant exile over, for example, moving to the metropolis, as did the majority of his peers from a rural background. Lawrence dramatizes the pull of the urban environment in spectacular fashion in the last pages of *Sons and Lovers*. The town becomes a spatial fix where Paul Morel will seek to quell his "restless instability" (419). The last lines of the novel reconfigure the last lines of the poem "Snap-dragon," with Morel contemplating death, nothingness, extinction, and his own limitations. The turn to the city is ultimately a refusal to accept non-being: "But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly" (420). Paul Morel's resolve here is an embrace of movement, change and self-determination. While his resolve leaves parts of his body oddly paralyzed (clenched fist and mouth), he is able to walk forward (quickly) to transcend the dark, rural dell. Morel is emblematic in this climactic scene of a (compromised) modernist desire for pure movement, life without rest through an embrace of the new vibrant energies that man has unlocked from nature. The description of the city as "phosphorescent," "glowing" and "humming" suggests an ethereal and otherworldy ambience surrounding the urban center. This chapter will analyze such an environment in terms of atmosphere itself, arguing that modernists such as Conrad, Woolf and Joyce employ an atmospheric aesthetic to

register the subtle interactions between characters and material conditions in the metropolis. If Chapter One focused largely on an inner restlessness, Chapter Two focuses on the external restlessness of weather and climatic change as a resistance to modernization's quest for total environmental control.

If the metropolis presents transcendence from rural, often oppressive environments, it is not without its own strictures, regulations and tightly controlled environments. The Land Enquiry Committee's Second Volume of *The Land*, published in 1914, focused on the state of living conditions throughout Great Britain's urban centers. The authors contrast the urban case to the rural one, even while notably employing a similar approach to consider the quality of life in the built environment:

> [I]n the country the results of bad housing conditions are extremely grave; but in the town, where an insanitary dwelling is not surrounded by wide space and pure air, and nature's healing forces are denied free play, its results are even more serious. In the town everything is man-made, and nature has become subordinate. Mile after mile may be entirely covered with dwellings, streets, and pavements, and not a tree can grow without human sanction. In short, the town is the environment which man himself creates, one of so permanent a character, that in all probability, it will endure for generations. (1)

The authors start with a prejudice against the built environment that operates on an idea of nature as the healer and salve for man's ailments. Similarly, they overemphasize the extremity of nature's suppression in the urban setting. Nevertheless, the notion that humans must sanction the growth of a tree points to the complicated web of economic, legal and political stakes that determine the built environment.

The Land: Volume II arrives at a turning point between late 19th century communitarianism and 20th century urban planning. In the first decade of the 20th century, social reformers looked to environment itself as the key to working towards a more healthy and restful community. Stanley Buder notes that theories of environmentalism—the idea that humans are largely determined by their social and physical surroundings—were crucial for groups of activists who sought to reverse-engineer happy communities through environmental control. One of the more polarizing projects was Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement, which sought to combine the best of urban and rural dwelling. Buder outlines how Howard distinguished his plans for the Garden City by mobilizing theories of environmentalism in order to posit "the development of a cohesive community in a balanced environment" (75). Given the ambition of the Garden City movement, it is not surprising that attempts to actually build one led to economic and social compromises of Howard's vision. One reason for the project's difficulties might lie in the very environmentalist theories that initially set it apart from other communitarian efforts. If environment largely shapes human character, health and community relationships, it would seem to follow that a perfect environmental order will lead to a happy and sustainable community. In theory, as Buder notes, an environmentalist approach would shift "responsibility away from the individual to a broad social canvas" (70). Yet this broad social canvas is precisely the largest stumbling block hindering the promise of environmental balance. The varying interests of industry, government and agriculture, not to mention the sheer diversity of interests, behaviors and desires of community members, as Howard soon discovered, all vie for space and control no matter how solid the environmental underpinning. The equilibrium of the Garden City, moreover, often appeared to residents as false, artificial or contrived. Thus to one resident, as

Buder recounts, the first garden city seemed merely a "practical ideal of bourgeois villadom, a rest haven" (92).

If the utopian aspects of the Garden City as rest haven undermined its social mission, Howard's work nevertheless provided much to think about as twentieth century urban planners began tackling the difficult task of improving living conditions in the growing city environment. The complexity of anthropocentric control results in a paradoxical relationship between the speed of industrial development and the resulting slowness of environmental change in urban centers. Change, under such conditions, is not impossible, but it is all the more difficult given that the living conditions do not inspire lively and vigorous activity. Once the brick and mortar is thrown up, stagnation sets in for working class communities. Some of the chief interests found in *The Land: Volume II* are the problems of overcrowding and lack of ventilation. Crowded conditions lead to poor circulation of air and a resulting drain on vitality and health. As such, the report aligns poorly designed homes with a host of afflictions ranging from tuberculosis to intemperance, poor posture to petty crime: "insanitation spells confined space, bad air (i.e., air which is insufficient in quantity, lacking movement, of high temperature, moist, deprived of fresh oxygen, malodorous, or perhaps actually poisonous), lack of sunlight, dampness, bad drainage, uncleanliness, and overcrowding; and these conditions either exert an unfavorable influence upon the persons subjected to them or afford the occasion for direct infection" (30). Such a bad air is directly painted in Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," where a toxic yellow fog nuzzles the urban window pane. Yet much of the phenomena of concern to the Land Enquiry is not so vividly observable. Some of the most perfidious effects occur at nighttime where a lack of fresh air breeds illness while tenants sleep. The unsensational and mundane effects of poor

living conditions make fighting for change all the more difficult. As the report warns, "The effect of bad housing on the physique of a people is gradual, imperceptible, insidious" (29). Here, I argue, the subtle and sensitive approach of the modernist writer is perfectly poised to reveal these slow, lingering and persistent effects that the built environment impresses on its inhabitants. James Joyce's *Ulysses*, in particular, as it moves away from his earlier naturalism in *Dubliners*, provides a way to think through urban life not in terms of an overly strict, deterministic environmentalism, but as a more flexible ecology of human and nonhuman relationships coexisting and shaping urban environs.

In his statement defending *Ulysses* from obscenity charges, Joyce considers the importance of atmosphere for the modern writer, "The modern writer has other problems facing him, problems which are more intimate and unusual. We prefer to search in the corners for what has been hidden, and moods, atmospheres and intimate relationships are the modern writers' theme" (Begnal 14). Such a statement is in line with a typical reading of modernism as uninterested in environment, nature or surroundings. Yet the inclusion of "atmospheres," belies a certain leakage of the hidden, intimate interior into open, public environment. The notion that even the most deeply personal and invisible matters carry an outward atmosphere points to the aesthetics of immersion and engagement that embed humans in environment. Atmosphere, then, is not just a surrounding, but a register of the influence that personal forces exert on the external world. In his three-volume work on *Spheres*, Peter Sloterdijk develops a theory of atmosphere as a theory of the micro and macro encompassing conditions of human being in the world. People, he argues, "are immersed in atmospheres…Immersion in the conductive element makes them originally *there* and open for environments. Space as atmosphere is nothing but vibration or *pure* conductivity" (136).

Here is a vision of space much different from the cartographic approaches of Jameson, Kwinter and Harvey, among others. Sloterdijk's focus on vibration speaks to a restless and never static spatial surround. At the same time, the built environment is constantly striving to secure and control such vibrations, to exact environmental order in what might otherwise become a world of immersive anarchy.

The Dublin Joyce presents in *Ulysses* might also be profitably thought of in terms of vibration and "pure conductivity." Despite his claims that the novel could serve to rebuild Dublin should it ever fall to ruin, more significant seems to be the affective and energetic exchanges that occur between characters and places as Bloom restlessly wends himself from street to street and vibratory place to vibratory place. Joyce investigates this vibratory phenomena on the micro level, but his discussion of atmospheres also provides a basis for thinking about the larger scale influences that human activity exerts on the global atmosphere through the form of climate change. The influence between individual and atmosphere, then, runs in both directions. In the "Circe" episode of *Ulysses*, for example, Bloom becomes increasingly fatigued, loses his sense of orientation and notably succumbs to the influences and suggestions of the prostitutes at Bella's brothel. In his acquiescence, he cites the weather, the climatic surroundings that wear away his resolve: "BLOOM: (*Trembling, beginning to obey*) The weather has been so warm" (*U* 382). How differently these words appear in the 21st century with a full knowledge of the human acceleration of global warming. Yet, is there not also something new in Joyce's presentation of the warm and oppressive weather that Bloom bemoans here in "Circe"? A traditional modernist reading might allude to Dante in purgatory or Don Giovanni being dragged to hell, but might an eco-critical analysis of the sensation of warm weather reveal a new environmental awareness in the works of James

Joyce and in modernism more broadly? In his study *The Classical Temper*, S. L. Goldberg famously criticized *Ulysses* for failing to adequately engage industrial modernity. "Industrialism" he writes, "is notably untreated. Its effects are reflected in the Dublin scene, of course, but only indirectly and unspecifically" (305).[20] Yet this chapter argues that Joyce's environmental aesthetic lies precisely in the "indirect" and "unspecific" representation of industrialism's effects.

An elaboration of a Joycean environmental aesthetics may initially look to the spatial and temporal features of Joyce's epic.[21] While *Ulysses* has been rightly theorized as a masterpiece of movement and mobility,[22] less attention has been paid to the various moments of rest that punctuate the long day of Leopold Bloom. The stops and pauses are numerous: the Turkish baths, Dignam's grave, Davy Byrne's, the Ormond Hotel, Barney Kiernan's, Sandymount strand, the National Maternity Hospital, Bello's brothel, the cabman's shelter and finally the marital bed. The critical fascination with Bloom's movement between these places has been paired with a cartographical analysis of space in the novel.[23] Yet more than an exercise in cognitive mapping, Joyce's project is first and foremost concerned with the sensations of experience that no map can reproduce. An attention to Bloom's sensations in the numerous places of rest he visits throughout the day is a first step towards elaborating the experience of atmosphere itself. I argue that these moments bring a critical pressure to the surrounding environment. If, in movement, Bloom becomes environment, circling around the city of Dublin, at rest, Bloom becomes aware of his participation in the forces of history, capital and culture that shape his urban environs.

While Joyce begins his literary career with an investigation of rest as the necessary condition for perceiving beauty, he moves towards an immersive aesthetic where rest does

not signal immobility but rather an awareness of the body's participation in a larger field of environmental forces. This aesthetic shift occurs in relation to Joyce's self-imposed exile from Ireland, a move that necessarily lends his work a political dimension. Writing from the space of removal, Joyce is able to achieve some distance from the tumultuous period of Irish revolution. At the same time, he invests more and more energy into recreating the sensory experience of life in Dublin. In the process, Joyce recovers the revolutionary potentials of the land he has left. The rendering of atmosphere becomes a tool for revealing the diffuse dynamics at work in the modern metropolis. Focusing on the role of community in creating and sustaining environment, Joyce challenges the flattening features of modernization and the hierarchical power structures of imperialism.

Nature Knows No Rest

Representing and anthropomorphizing climate, atmosphere and weather in literature is of course nothing new. It is, after all, largely winds and storms that keep Odysseus from his home.[24] What is the *Decameron* without the backdrop of pleasant climes in Fiesole, and what is *King Lear* without the violent storms that rage on the moor?[25] Traditionally, representations of the weather serve two purposes: to reflect some inner struggle of character or to signify the limits of human agency, to assert the larger forces of fate and mortality to which all heroes are subject. The representation of weather in modernism is, in certain respects, no exception. The drought of "The Waste Land," for example, is certainly symbolic. Yet in modernist fiction particularly, there is a change in representing weather. Consider the opening of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, where the narrator, from the deck of The Nellie, at rest, surveys the Thames:

> The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint, and in the luminous space the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide seemed to stand still in red clusters of canvas sharply peaked, with gleams of varnished sprits. A haze rested on the low shores that ran out to sea in vanishing flatness. The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth. (3)

The scene is remarkable precisely for its focus on an atmosphere entirely devoid of any exceptional features. The weight of London in the background acts as a magnet, drawing a dark shroud around itself. While the motionless brooding and gloomy mournfulness does personify the indeterminate mood among the sailors that leads Marlow to launch into his tale of darkness, there is a unique blurring between land and sea, sea and sky, sky and sail. The weather is not presented as a distinct feature registered from the perspective of a human observer; instead, the weather is a sensory envelopment, a horizon that actively encompasses the influences of land, sea and all material objects alive or inanimate. Here is an early representation of modernist atmosphere.

Conrad's ability to achieve this atmospheric effect, examples of which can be found throughout his fiction,[26] depends largely on a play between objective weather conditions and subjective personal narratives. The effect is to immerse the reader in an exchange between the physical surroundings of the narrative and the psychological environment of the characters. He achieves a certain balance of what Edward Bullough termed in 1912 "aesthetic distance." Bullough also turns to the experience of atmosphere in order to elaborate theme.

Through the example of being on a ship in a heavy fog, Bullough distinguishes between the subjective anxiety that prohibits aesthetic experience and an objective appreciation of the fog's beauty, the "opaqueness as of transparent milk, blurring the outlines of things and distorting their shapes into weird grotesqueness" (88). Bullough's aesthetic distance is a sort of Kantian disinterestedness, a suspension of subjective sensations that leads to transcendent delight.[27]

If the representation of weather changes in various strains of literary modernism (not to mention the visual arts), a major reason may very well be the new technologies of weather prediction developed during modernization. At the time Bullough was writing, meteorologists were pursuing an even more "objective" understanding of atmosphere. The rise of observation networks in the 19th century began to amass data on weather formations that could be used to predict future weather patterns.[28] With electrical and wireless telegraphy, observation centers could communicate quickly, sending out storm warnings. Far from the whims of gods, weather became a series of repetitive atmospheric phenomena governed by complex but predictable laws. It is hard to think of a more mundane yet environmentally profound feature of modernity than the daily weather report. Beyond the daily forecast, a desire comes to know the forecast for the weekend, for the week, even for an entire season. As an accretive process over time, these first weather reports contain the logic of climate modeling and the long term models of futurity that drive the contemporary debate surrounding global warming.

As a feature of the everyday, the weather report is a banal given of modernity. But as a tool to predict environmental events in the future that will directly affect human property, the weather report is a tool of power. This power can be glimpsed through the public outcry

that occurred at the suggestion that this service be suspended. In the early 1880s, the United Kingdom Meteorological Office decided it would discontinue sending weather warnings to Continental Europe on Sundays during the summertime. The press on the Continent made some fun of this announcement, hoping that summer storms would be good Sabbatarians and observe the day of rest as well. English astronomer Richard Anthony Proctor took exception with the meteorologists, in his rhetorically titled essay, "Are We Jews?"[29] He argues:

> Nature, indeed, as it seems to me, answers for us all questions concerning the seventh day's rest. Sabbatarians lay great stress on the assumed fact that the rest is found good for body and brain—a fact which, if proved, would mean little more than that long-continued habit has made such rest a necessity. But they pay little attention to the fact that nature knows no seventh day's rest. The earth does not pause in her orbital motion round the sun, nor the moon on her motion round the earth. The tides and currents of the ocean continue their motion, and the waves rest no more on the Sabbath than on week-days. Winds blow and rains fall on that day as on the rest. (266)

Although the tone is playful, it is worth taking his propositions seriously. The international telegraphing of storm warnings is certainly an exceptional feat of modernization. To suspend this technology for a religious custom is decidedly backwards. Yet it is the appeal to "Nature" itself that makes this argument unexpected and interesting. In becoming modern, civilization is normally assumed to be moving away from nature towards a new state of anthropogenic control. But in Proctor's assessment, the "always-on" and "non-stop" features of modernization actually make civilization more akin to the natural world, better equipped, even, to live in harmony with the ever-changing atmosphere. By this logic, if one is to look

for "Nature" in modernity, it is not to the countryside and pastoral landscapes but to the vibrant heart of the city.

Yet, not everyone was in accord with Proctor's pontification. A review in *The Journal of Science* took exception with Proctor's attack on rest:

> Plants have, under various forms, intermissions of rest and activity. Wild animals are nowhere goaded into unceasing toil from the beginning to the end of the year. Hence, for them, a seventh day's rest is not required. As to man, he has never, in the savage or in the barbarous state, or in the ancient civilizations, been driven to work as at present. Of this overwork, the consequences are only too patent. So far, then, from fancying that a day of rest is a mere matter of habit which might be dispensed with, we hold that our leisure wants increasing. (356)

Beyond its interest as a minor spat between science writers, the distinction of human rest is instructive for thinking about humanity's relation to the earth. The communal assertion, "we hold," points to rest as a social right. Most importantly, and this is crucial, the reviewers point out that man's environment is not merely Nature, capable of ceaseless continuation. Labor builds environment. And the continuation and upkeep of the built environment requires labor. This is what is at stake in the seemingly benign question over whether the meteorologists can take off Sundays in the summer. Between the "we" of *The Journal of Science* and the "we" of "Are We Jews?" there lies a decisively political dimension to humanity's relationship to environment. In Proctor's assertion that human rest may simply be "long-continued habit," he appeals to the evolutionary debate that animated much of 19th century science and politics. Douglas Mao has recently explored the centrality of the

organism/environment binary in discourses of evolutionary theory, using as a touchstone Herbert Spencer's definition of life as "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations" (Quoted in Mao 123). By implying that humans might easily adjust to having less rest, that such an adjustment would in fact bring them into closer balance with their environment, Proctor affirms Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's adaptive force, which posits the role of evolution within single life-spans. In this vision of man and metropolis, humanity shapes an ideal environment, the adaptation to which leads to a more advanced state of being. Georg Simmel's *The Metropolis and Mental Life* argues that the metropolitan man develops a new organ in order to thrive in the city, "The metropolitan type of man…develops an organ protecting him against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him…Metropolitan life, thus, underlies a heightened awareness and a predominance of intelligence in metropolitan man" (12). Simmel presents metropolitan man as immune and impervious to environment. At the same time, man remains connected to his surroundings through intellectual knowledge. As the last stage of man's primitive fight with nature, this urban evolution brings humanity face to face with its own self-consciousness as a reserve of identity and political affiliation.

Mao considers the influence of the organism/environment binary on literary naturalism and Joyce's own representation of experience. Émile Zola famously wrote that the experimental novel should ultimately, "exhibit man living in social conditions produced by himself, which he modifies daily, and in the heart of which he himself experiences a continual transformation" (21). In terms of reading Joyce, Mao argues that "when we encounter the small transactions between character and world that constitute the fabric as well as the originality of books like *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, we are in some sense meeting

versions of the ongoing interaction between environment and organism" (124). Yet more than simply inscribing the organism/environment binary in his representations of experience, Joyce is above all interested in challenging and subverting the division between organism and environment. The real interest, in other words, is in the threads that weave together to form the "fabric" (to borrow Mao's word) of the exchange. Such a negotiation can be found in Bloom's coat itself, with its numerous pockets that hold various accumulated objects. Yet more than fabric, the thin layer between skin and air, what Joyce presents is more appropriately thought of in terms of atmosphere, the fabric that enshrouds all material bodies on the earth. Peter Sloterdijk pursues the idea of an "atmospheric politics," going so far to suggest that "Society *is* its room temperature, it *is* the quality of its atmosphere; it *is* its depression, it *is* its clearing up; and it *is* its fragmentation into countless local microclimates" (966). As a starting point for understanding such a politics, Sloterdijk considers a new definition of environment proposed by German biologist Jakob von Uexküll, who used the term "*Umwelt*" to signify an organism's perception of its surroundings. Uexküll's work stands as an investigation into the biological systems that determine the organism/environment interaction that preoccupied evolutionary thinkers such as Spenser and Lamarck. As both biological inference and semiotic reference, Uexküll's *Umwelt* describes how organisms interact with the world through a perpetual feedback loop between physiological sensors attuned to specific features of the surrounding world.

Although humans share the planet with any number of animals, they do not share the same *Umwelten*: the dog receives different sensory data than the tick, the bird responds differently to the flower than the bee. While Uexküll developed *Umwelt* through researching relatively simple organisms such as the sea urchin and the jellyfish, the articulation of

Umwelt in terms of humans is necessarily more complex precisely for the reason that humans have an increased level of consciousness about their control of environment. Sloterdijk explores the influence of Uexküll in relation to Martin Heidegger's formulation of "being-in-the-world." Unlike animals, who are trapped in *Umwelt*, humanity creates and reshapes *Umwelt* through an "open" consciousness of their interaction with the world. It is precisely at moments when humans shift or gain some new perspective on environment that reveals their unique state of being. As Sloterdijk explains, "Whereas for the organism the meaning of the 'en' in environment or the 'sur' in surrounding consists of the perfectly calibrated dependence on the original stimuli, in the case of the existence in the world they signify an abyss above which one hangs, or a transcendence into which one is suspended" (945). Uexküll's *Umwelt* provides an important new way of understanding environment in the early 20th century. His ideas, as Giorgio Agamben argues, "express the unreserved abandonment of every anthropocentric perspective in the life sciences and the radical dehumanization of the image of nature" (39). Yet an overhasty analysis of human experience in terms of *Umwelt* risks all the pratfalls of organicist essentialism. Community may be reduced to the specific biological selections that certain groups of people hold in common. Cultural difference may be ascribed to inhabiting and experiencing different environments. Behind Proctor's casual anti-Semitism in the question "Are We Jews?" lurks the very dangerous assertion that Jewish people form a separate species that literally and figuratively see the world differently. More troubling still is the presentation of an entire group of people as an undesirable feature in the national *Umwelt*. Citing their perceived "rootlessness" and threat to "traditional community," Geoffrey Winthrop-Young points out that "Jews were to Uexküll the epitome of *Umweltvergessenheit* or the 'forgetfulness of *Umwelt*'" (Uexküll 229). Enter the Wandering

Jew.

Can Leopold Bloom offer a different conception of environment? *Ulysses*, certainly, may be productively explored in terms of presenting the multiple, interpolated and interpenetrating *Umwelten* of Dublin. Consider, for example, the opening lines of "Calypso" when Bloom muses about his cat, "Wonder what I look like to her" (*U* 45). Uexküll's call to "see each of our fellow human beings as being enclosed in bubbles that effortlessly overlap one another because they are made up of subjective perception signs" (70) reads as an apt description of "Wandering Rocks." What seems most useful, in particular, about Uexküll's conception of *Umwelt* is the stress it lays on an active negotiation between organism and surroundings.[30] If environment is often discussed in its nominal form, a reified and static object, can *Ulysses* provide a model for rethinking environment as an active process? Paradoxically, it is not to a modernist definition of environment that such a conception will be found, but to an older, obsolete definition of environing as "wandering" or "circumnavigating." A vision of Bloom as environer occurs as he enters the National Maternity Hospital in "Oxen of the Sun": "And the traveller Leopold went into the castle for to rest him for a space being sore of limb after many marches environing in divers lands" (*U* 317). In this section, Joyce imitates the 14th century *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. Already at this early date Mandeville presents the human domination of environment, claiming that in all travels it is impossible to transcend the human sphere: "Men may environ all the earth of all the world…And always he should find men, lands and isles, as well as in this country" (121). Bloom as ecological flâneur provides the fundamental structure that underlies the aesthetic permutations of *Ulysses*. By "environing" Dublin, he does not just experience environment, he is not, following Heidegger, *in* environment. Nor does he exactly, following

Michel de Certeau, create "a mobile organicity in the environment" (99). He is not *in* environment; Bloom environs the urban milieu just as it environs him. This is the profound ecological statement at the center of *Ulysses*, and it is deeply political. In subduing nature and expanding the built environment, modernization may also be understood as a similar process of environing. Yet Joyce reveals how this environing is not merely one directional. The city is an amalgamation of individuals environing interlocking and overlapping environments. As a first step towards a theory of environing, the next section begins with a consideration of the room as the basic unit of built environments. To more fully elaborate a Joycean aesthetics of atmosphere, I trace the beginning of Joyce's aesthetic theories to a fixation on the moment of rest between artwork and viewer.

Rest and the Room

"Every night as I gazed up at the window I said softly to myself the word *paralysis*" (*D* 9). So begins "The Sisters" and so begins the extended meditation upon death that is *Dubliners*. The room observed by the young narrator is as good as a tomb. To be inside the room is to be inert, waiting for death, but to be outside is to be still alive, to have the potential to live. This distinction between interiors and exteriors runs throughout James Joyce's entire career. Ireland itself became a stuffy interior that he needed to escape in order to create his works of art. Recall Eagleton's assertion, "What launched him into the vibrant heart of modernist Europe was inertia at home" (256). Yet, this is not entirely accurate. Consider the positively vibrant description of the Liffey banks that follows in "An Encounter": "We spent a long time walking about the noisy streets flanked by high stone walls, watching the working of cranes and engines and often being shouted at for our

immobility by the drivers of groaning carts" (*D* 23). It is perhaps more appropriate to say that what launched James Joyce was precisely the dynamism of his home. The juxtaposition of the dying priest with the shouting cart drivers is instructive, however, for a larger discussion of forms of work and, by extension, forms of rest. The fundamental question is one of how the writer may avoid the paralysis of the priesthood or the boredom of a clerkship or the inertia of the manual laborer by seeking an alternative career of creative, artistic work. While such a life sounds promising, in theory, in practice it quickly succumbs to economic realities and the logic of material production that guides capitalism.

This tension between work and art is the fundamental problematic in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. As Woolf explains, the writer requires a room, a personal space in which to cultivate imagination. At the same time, the writer is to earn this room by her "wits;" thus, the freedom provided by the room is quickly constrained to a process of work to sustain this very freedom. The cycle becomes one of working in freedom for the freedom to work. While *A Room of One's Own* is rightly canonized as a feminist text, it is also a profoundly environmental and ecocritical one. Read ecocritically, *A Room of One's Own* stands as an argument for the right to maintain some measure of control over one's environment. In this sense, Woolf's argument affirms the guiding logic of modernization itself, that humanity's rightful role is to subdue nature and control natural resources for its own preservation and benefit. At the same time, Woolf's attention to material needs within modern society is a way to think ecologically about one's actions and influences within a larger urban environment. For the room is not an escape from the world, no monastic cell of tranquility. Given her history of troubling rest-cures, Woolf is wary of a notion of rest that is mere inactivity or removal from the world. Instead, she opts to leave rest open-ended, a

marker of difference: “not as doing nothing but as doing something but something that is different; and what should that difference be?” (78). The room does not represent rest, but instead allows the writer to control the rhythms of her own body. It is this control that provides the grounding from which to live “in the presence of reality” (144). Reality, for Woolf, is that which “remains,” that which is “left of past time,” and the writer, by collecting this reality, has a stake in shaping and influencing the world through her writing. In this sense the writer gains environmental agency, both cataloguing and shaping her surroundings. The room becomes dispersed and attached to the world.

The question remains, however, whether such a position of influence is enough for a truly transformative artwork, or if such work will ultimately succumb to the larger forces of social and economic inertia. Woolf’s room gains validation through its implicit location in London, a central node of both artistic creation and imperial power. Is it enough hold a room, or should one aspire to transcend the building entirely? This seems to be the question defining the career of James Joyce, one that he poses through the character of Little Chandler in “A Little Cloud.” Lamenting the poor houses of Dublin as a “band of tramps, huddled together along the river-banks,” Little Chandler yearns to escape to London, where he will gain the regard of English critics by striking the “*Celtic note*” (*D* 73–74). Whereas for Woolf writing is a way to have a certain ecological sway over one’s environment, for Joyce writing becomes the means to transcend environment altogether. “Place,” writes Yi-Fu Tuan, “is clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning” (236). While this assertion seems innocent enough, it is worth asking how exactly this process of “giving meaning” happens. Specifically, Tuan asserts that it is “perspective” which gives meaning. Tuan effectively discusses the difference of perspective between a

local community and an outsider, but what is the role of the writer who lives in exile but still writes to "give meaning" to the place he has left? In a letter to Willa Cather concerning the role of the writer, Sarah Orne Jewett writes, "you don't see quite enough from the outside, — you stand right in the middle...To work in silence and with all one's heart, that is the writer's lot; he is the only artist who must be a solitary, and yet needs the widest outlook upon the world" (15). While Jewett is using spatial language figuratively, Joyce sought this outside position through actual geographical displacement.

Yet Joyce's launch into exile depended largely on a reconstruction of the environment he had left through the work of art. Like Woolf, the question of rest is also imperative for Joyce. But whereas Woolf focuses on the rest of the body, Joyce focuses on rest found through the work of art, the mark of aesthetic perception. In his notes on aesthetics from his 1903 Paris Notebook, Joyce writes:

> All art…is static for the feelings of terror and pity on the one hand and the feeling of joy on the other hand are feelings which arrest us…this rest is necessary for the apprehension of the beautiful…for this rest is the only condition under which the images, which are to excite in us terror or pity or joy, can be properly presented to us and properly seen by us. (*OCPW* 103)

Like Woolf, Joyce does not present rest as "doing nothing." Instead, rest acts as an emotional catalyst. Critics have noted the parallels between the Paris Notebook and Stephen Dedalus's discussion of art in *Portrait*.[31] Yet with the publication of *Portrait* in 1916, Joyce's own composition has gone far beyond Thomist aesthetics to become a sensory rendering of environment. Joyce portrays the distinctions between rest, arrest and the kinesthetic in Stephen's own feelings of restlessness. Stephen performs Joyce's aesthetic theory. Stephen's

restlessness initially develops through his encounter with the elusive Mercedes, but eventually it becomes a general feeling of environmental unrest. This restlessness becomes tied to Stephen's exploration of Dublin itself, "a new and complex sensation" (*P* 69). His unrest becomes triggered again at the sight of the Dublin quays and the loading and unloading of merchandise from steamer ships. Here the movement of capital mirrors Joyce's aesthetic theories, becoming the kinesthetic that signals a lesser art. Stephen's investment in art becomes an alternative movement that will avoid commodification but provide a life of freedom that will solve his unrest. In this sense, Joyce portrays the artist as developing an aesthetic theory that attempts to resolve his own feelings of restlessness in an oppressive environment. The first step towards this mastery is a sensory immersion in the environment, thus Stephen deeply inhales the "rank heavy air" of straw and horse piss in order to calm his heart (*P* 91).

Portrait, then, may be thought of as an environmental bildungsroman, where the protagonist's psychology develops to master and eventually transcend his surrounding milieu. Nowhere is this more evident than in the meticulous attention to the lighting of gas as the environmental baseline of Stephen's consciousness. Significantly, by the end of the novel, the hum of electricity replaces the hiss of gas. Yet this environmental rendering is also found in the Catholic tradition, as seen in the imagining of hell in Chapter III. By practicing the "composition of place" (*P* 137),[32] Hell moves from an idea to an imagined sensory world that the sinner inhabits. But this practice necessarily takes recourse from the actual world, thus it smells like a "rotting human fungus" (*P* 130). The imagination of another place serves to obscure actual living conditions, even while drawing on undesirable imagery that is familiar. This auto-affective labor has real physiological effects: thus it is that Stephen

vomits violently the night of this exercise, and finds solace in the air of Heaven, which is also the air outside of the window of his room, "amid the moving vapors from point to point of light the city was spinning about herself a soft cocoon of yellowish haze. Heaven was still and faintly luminous and the air sweet to breathe, as in a thicket drenched with showers: and amid peace and shimmering lights and quiet fragrance he made a covenant with his heart" (*P* 149). For all the attention paid to the oppressive environment of Dublin, here the city is a chrysalis, in the process of a metamorphosis. Of course the yellowish haze also points to a polluted atmosphere. With this image, Joyce presents Dublin as anthropogenic environment, an encapsulated vision of the atmosphere that forms the basis of his epic *Ulysses*.

It is this return to the actual world, the earth, that marks Stephen's definitive moment of self-realization through aesthetic experience. After his rejection of the priesthood—marked by his attention to the "murmur of the burning gasflames" (*P* 179), Stephen sets off on a wide-ranging ramble that leads him to the sea.[33] His encounter with the bird-girl on the beach is the climactic vision of artistic futurity, yet after this moment, Stephen achieves perhaps the only moment of true rest in *Portrait* as he naps in a "sandy nook amid a ring of tufted sandknolls." Significantly, this moment presents a consummation with the earth itself:

> He felt above him the vast indifferent dome and the calm processes of the heavenly bodies; and the earth beneath him, the earth that had borne him, had taken him to her breast.
>
> He closed his eyes in the languor of sleep. His eyelids trembled as if they felt the vast cyclic movement of the earth and her watchers, trembled as if they felt the strange light of some new world. His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under sea, traversed by cloudy

shapes and beings. (*P* 187)

Here Stephen finally achieves the state of rest he has been seeking throughout *Portrait*. Yet the moment is not an absolute moment of stasis as outlined in Joyce's aesthetics; instead, Stephen becomes attuned to the "cyclic movement of the earth." This relative rest, which is a recognition and acceptance of the earth's constant movement, transports Stephen to the fantastic and cloudy dream world that signals the deep reserve of his artistic conscience.

So concludes section IV, and section V is largely devoted to Stephen trying to express this experience as the basis of his guiding aesthetic theory. Yet this very expression is complicated through Stephen's realization that the English language itself denies him rest. In his discussion with the dean of studies over the word "tundish," Stephen comes to the realization that he "cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit" (*P* 205). Thus, Joyce portrays Stephen in confrontation with the peculiar challenge of trying to achieve an expression of aesthetic rest through a language that makes him inherently restless.[34] In his exile, Joyce's own relationship to English became even more contentious as he resorted to teaching English in order to support himself. Instead of an escape into unrestrained movement, Joyce found himself largely arrested, constrained to a sedentary lifestyle which deprived him of "the pleasure of defecating" for days at a time (*SL* 124). His turn to teaching English comes with the increasing recognition of the difficulty of supporting himself through artistic work. As he explains to his brother Stanislaus, "What I wish to do is to secure a competence on which I can rely, and why I expect to have this is because I cannot believe that any State requires my energy for the work I am at present engaged in" (*SL* 61). Beyond the economic unfeasibility of the work of art, Joyce notes the politically untenable position of his "energy." While he speaks of State in the abstract, he continues to reference the

"maldisposition of affairs" in Ireland that led to his exile. He also notes how this overhasty reaction to his homeland skewed his presention in *Dubliners*. Writing to Stanislaus from Rome, he claims, "Sometimes thinking of Ireland it seems to me that I have been unnecessarily harsh…I have never felt at my ease in any city since I left it except in Paris…[Ireland] is more beautiful naturally in my opinion than what I have seen of England, Switzerland, France, Austria or Italy" (*SL* 110). In this context, the climactic scenes of Stephen nestled in the dunes may be read as a nostalgic attempt to reclaim the natural beauty of Ireland and make it the basis of aesthetic value.

When Joyce turned to writing *Ulysses*, he found his position much improved. Through the patronage of Harriet Shaw Weaver and the serial publication of his works spurred by Ezra Pound, he could finally rely on his artistic competence. Rather than finding security for his energy within a State, he secured his position within the international market of modernism. The result, as Richard Ellman elaborates, was a softening of his attitude towards Ireland that allowed him to compose his monumental epic, "A change came…in his relations with Ireland…He could more easily give expression to that fascination he had always felt with the life of Dublin, especially the classless, almost anarchic life of the streets, the cemetery, the public houses, the library steps" (*SL* 214). Ellman notes Joyce's fascination with urban spaces and the liberation of imagining the city through Bloom's perspective. Bloom's casual flâneurie supersedes Stephen's restlessness in *Portrait.* Yet Bloom's day is certainly not restful, far from it. His incessant flâneurie is due largely to his aversion to returning to his Ithacan home, knowing his wife has been unfaithful. As such, *Ulysses* presents a series of journeys in Dublin, largely focusing on impromptu places of rest where Bloom catches some momentary solace from his anxieties. The work is a trial in exhaustion,

for the characters, the author and readers. As an aesthetic work, its interest lies in precisely the opposite of the aesthetic theory Stephen outlines in *Portrait*. Rather than the presentation of rest, *Ulysses* investigates aesthetic experience in the absence of rest. While the abandonment of an absolute aesethetic rest led Joyce to the schematic permutations, mythological encryption, and linguistic inventiveness for which *Ulysses* is celebrated, it also led him to a new aesthetic sensibility that was profoundly environmental and non-hierarchical. This, as I will argue in the following section, can be seen most clearly in Joyce's rendering of the day itself, the weather, temperature and pressures that determine the atmosphere of *Ulysses*.

Bloom's Weather

"Lovely weather," "cricket weather," "seasonable weather," *Ulysses* records June 16, 1904 as a particularly fine day. The warm weather is both quotidian, filling the small talk of social conventions, and exceptional, an event in itself. Moreover, Joyce's sensory mode registers the subtle influences the weather brings to the events that transpire throughout Bloom's long day; thus, the wine Bloom drinks at lunch, "Tastes fuller." Yet it is not all sunshine. Soon after Bloom steps out of the butcher with his breakfast kidney, a cloud obscures the sun. This slight modulation of the environment sets off a traumatic recollection of the ruined landscape of the dead sea, causing "Cold oils [to slide] along his veins." This first passing instance of shade reveals the ambient corporeality and mortal anxiety that follows Bloom throughout his day. Assuaging himself with thoughts of Molly and home, he regains his spirits, and the sunshine promptly returns. Yet clouds, both literal and figurative, linger. This early passing cloud (which Stephen also witnesses in "Telemachus")

foreshadows the thunderstorm that eventually brings Stephen and Bloom into conversation in "Oxen of the Sun." Frightened by the "black crack of noise in the street," Stephen cows in desperation while Bloom comforts him that it is "all of the order of a natural phenomenon" (*U* 323). Stephen's frightened and poetically leavened response to the thunder clap on the one hand and Bloom's reasoned, scientific approach on the other form two ends of the "aesthetic distance" through which Joyce presents environment in *Ulysses*.

This early passing cloud foreshadows the thunderstorm that eventually brings Stephen and Bloom into conversation in episode 14, "Oxen of the Sun." Frightened by the "black crack of noise in the street," Stephen cows in desperation while "Master Bloom, at the braggart's side, spoke to him calming words to slumber his great feat, advertising how it was no other thing but a hubbub noise that he heard, the discharge of fluid from the thunderhead, look you, having taken place, and all of the order of a natural phenomenon" (*U* 323). This appeal to natural phenomenon is no assuagement to Stephen, "he saw that he was in the land of Phenomenon where he must for a certain one day die as he was like the rest too a passing show" (*U* 323–324). Stephen's frightened and poetically leavened response to the thunder clap on the one hand and Bloom's reasoned, scientific approach on the other form two ends of a spectrum through which Joyce presents the natural environment in *Ulysses*. For both Bloom and Stephen, the weather influences the particular streams of consciousness that unfold throughout the day. Rather than simply entering into an isolated and removed psychological stream of thoughts, the warm day shapes the stream. Stream of consciousness (already overdetermined from an environmental perspective) can be rethought of not so much as a stream flowing in one direction, but as a two-directional mediation between individual and place. Bloom considers the relationship between climate and consciousness as he passes

the Belfast and Oriental Tea Company in Westland Row:

> So warm. His right hand once more more slowly went over his brow and hair. Then he put on his hat again, relieved: and read again: choice blend, made of the finest Ceylon brands. The far east. Lovely spot it must be: the garden of the world, big lazy leaves to float about on, cactuses, flowery meads, snaky lianas they call them. Wonder is it like that. Those Cinghalese lobbing about in the sun in dolce far niente, not doing a hand's turn all day. Sleep six months out of twelve. Too hot to quarrel. Influence of the climate. Lethargy. Flowers of idleness. The air feeds most. Azotes. Hothouse in Botanic gardens. Sensitive plants. Waterlilies. (*U* 58)

Bloom fantasizes about life supported by air alone, an osmotic drawing of azotes (nitrogen) from the surrounding atmosphere. Although he has never been to the far east, he has been to the Hothouse in the Dublin Botanical Gardens. Designed by Richard Turner and completed in 1848, the Curvilinear Range was one of the first hothouses constructed in Europe. Employing wrought iron and curved glass, hothouses and palm houses were able to recreate tropical climes in the less than temperate British Isles. The new technology used to construct the hothouse signals, as Sloterdijk argues, "the materialization of a new view of building by virtue of which climatic factors were taken into account in the very structures made" (945). The hothouse brings an explicit attention to interior atmosphere: the structures of iron and glass are designed to produce specific effects to the enclosed air itself.[35] In his *Towards a New Architecture*, Le Corbusier recognizes this environmental control as the driving impulse of modern architecture, claiming, "We have acquired a taste for fresh air and clear daylight" (91). Where the hothouse aimed for a warm and heavy atmosphere, modern architecture

would make use of the same technologies of glass and iron in order to replicate the circulation and invigoration found on the steamer, airplane and train car.

In citing the "influence of climate," Bloom makes a subtle distinction between weather, which signals any given atmospheric condition, and climate, which signals the dominant weather of a specific country or region. In *The Ecological Thought*, Timothy Morton takes the distinction between climate and weather even further, arguing, "Climate isn't weather. You can see weather, but not climate, in the same way that you can't see momentum but you can see velocity. Climate is a derivative of weather" (99).[36] In a different, but related fashion, Joyce's presentation of atmosphere is a derivative of cultural and environmental influences. He writes in his letters, for example, of the "interesting atmosphere I breathe" (*SL* 64). It is possible to see Joyce's focus on Dublin's cultural atmosphere as the derivative behind Bloom's Cinghalese fantasy. As Gregory Dobbins argues, "Though Bloom apparently fails to recognize that the stereotypical qualities of indolence that govern his idea of the native had long been applied to the Irish as well, the novel does not; it depicts a version of Ireland in which the 'flowers of idleness' are already growing upon local soil" (72). The concept of the derivative can further illustrate the shift in Joyce's aesthetic theory. Whereas in the "Paris Notebook," an idealized static rest provided the baseline of emotional response, in *Ulysses* such rest is unavailable. At best, Bloom is able to achieve a sort of leisurely idleness. Instead of an Aristotelian notion of absolute rest, what undergirds the novel is the earth itself. After his musings on the far east, Bloom recalls a picture of a man floating in the dead sea. He asks, "What is weight really when you say the weight? Thirtytwo feet per second per second. Law of falling bodies: per second per second. They all fall to the ground. The earth. It's the force of gravity of the earth is the weight" (*U*

59). The assertion that "they all fall to the ground" cuts against the geographic specificity of climate and points to an international framework of physical law. *Ulysses* constructs the tension between the environmental specificity of colonial Dublin and a larger international modernism that disrupts the specificity of place.

An early instance of Joyce's atmospheric aesthetic occurs in the short story "Grace," during Mr. Kernan's rehabilitation to the Jesuit church:

> In one of the benches near the pulpit sat Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Kernan. In the bench behind sat Mr. M'Coy alone: and in the bench behind him sat Mr. Power and Mr. Fogarty. Mr. M'Coy had tried unsuccessfully to find a place in the bench with the others, and, when the party had settled down in the form of a quincunx, he had tried unsuccessfully to make comic remarks. As these had not been well received, he had desisted. Even he was sensible of the decorous atmosphere and even he began to respond to the religious stimulus. (*D* 172)

Here, the atmosphere of the church functions as a subtle derivative of Catholic influence and control, eliciting a delayed response in even the undecorous Mr. M'Coy. It is this subtle atmosphere that holds the men, gazing at the altar, in the form of a quincunx. A quincunx is a simple geometric shape of four points with a fifth at its center. Given that Joyce sets his quincunx of men on three church benches, it is worth looking at the presence of the quincunx in Christian symbolism.[37] Many churches are designed on a quincunxial plan, the most famous being Donato Bramante's[38] early 16th century plan drawings for St. Peter's Basilica. Bramante embellishes both the X geometry and the + geometry, combing them in a form he considered to be "sublime perfection" (Cherici 18). By using the quincunx as the basis for structural support, Bramante is able to achieve the open space of the basilica in the form of

the + sign or Greek cross. Joyce's quincunx of men breathes in the atmosphere to become pillars of the Jesuit community. Flesh and blood, not only stone and mortar, holds up the open space of the church that creates such a "decorous atmosphere."

Atmosphere, then, functions as a spatial and cultural derivative, entering and exiting the body through inhalation and exhalation. The atmospheric rest of the men in "Grace" is a more or less static one, but Joyce's presentation of atmosphere in *Ulysses* becomes much more dynamic. In the urban environment, where the financial, scientific and technological systems of modernism increasingly regulate everyday experience, the weather remains anomalous. When a cloud passes with a spattering of rain in "Hades," Simon Dedalus rails against the weather, "as uncertain as a child's bottom" (*U* 75). An attention to atmosphere reveals what, drawing on Sanford Kwinter, may be termed the "morphogenesis" of events in *Ulysses*. Kwinter explains through a discussion of snowflakes, "Each is different because the crystal *maintains its sensitivity* both to time and to its complex milieu. Its morphogenetic principle is active and always incomplete (i.e., evolving)—the snowflake interacts with other processes, across both space and time; it belongs to a dynamical, fluvial world" (28). The characters in *Ulysses* also maintain this sensitivity to time and milieu, interacting with one another and the diverse urban environment of Dublin. Thus Joyce's atmospheric aesthetic is a modernist critique of an overly programmed and schematized process of modernization. The weather resists the forces of modernization. At the same time, the publication of *Ulysses* in 1922 coincides with the emergence of modern meteorology and the publication of British meteorologist Lewis Fry Richardson's *Weather Prediction by Numerical Process*. Richardson sets out in this work to present a model of forecasting that is not based on historical weather observation but can work from current conditions to predict future

atmospheric changes. After much consideration of the calculus and equations behind weather prediction, Richardson indulges in a fantasy of a weather "forecast-factory":

> Imagine a large hall like a theatre…the walls of this chamber are painted to form a map of the globe. The ceiling represents the north polar regions, England is in the gallery, the tropics in the upper circle, Australia on the dress circle and the Antarctic in the pit. A myriad computers are at work upon the weather of the part of the map where each sits…From the floor of the pit a tall pillar rises to half the height of the hall. It carries a large pulpit on its top. In this sits the man in charge of the whole theatre; he is surrounded by several assistants and messengers. One of his duties is to maintain a uniform speed of progress in all parts of the globe. In this respect he is like the conductor of an orchestra in which the instruments are slide-rules and calculating machines. (219)

In Richardson's formulation, weather prediction is not just a calculation of the complicated systems of nature, but a delight in the fantasy of the human orchestration of environment.

This vision of controlling the weather makes for a striking juxtaposition to episode 15 of *Ulysses*, "Circe." "Circe," as Enda Duffy argues, "is the most spatially indeterminate episode, "The outdoors-indoors distinction is everywhere underlined, so that the *threshold* becomes a privileged place" (159). As a result of the blurring of interior and exterior, "Circe" becomes the most environmentally inventive episode of *Ulysses*. It is, as Frank Budgen first wrote, "steeped in the atmosphere" (225). Joyce originally planned to compose "Circe" and the end of *Ulysses* in Ireland, where he hoped to find "quiet in which to finish it" (*SL* 253). Instead, the composition of "Circe" would take place in Paris, and coincide with the height of

Irish unrest during the guerilla war for independence. Joyce's desire to return to Ireland in 1920 presents the reversal of his voluntarily exile in 1904. Where before he deemed it imperative to leave the paralytic environment of Ireland in order to compose his literary work, in 1920 he romanticizes his homeland and sees it as the fitting place to complete his most ambitious project. Once settled in Paris, Joyce reflects on this instinct as paradigmatic of Ulysses himself. He writes to Budgen:

> A point about Ulysses (Bloom). He romances about Ithaca (Oi want teh gow beck teh the Mawl Enn Rowd, s'elp me!) and when he gets back it gives him the pip. I mention this because you in your absence from England seemed to have forgotten the human atmosphere and I the atmospheric conditions of these zones.
>
> Can you tell a poor hardworking man where is the ideal climate inhabited by the ideal humans? (*SL* 275)

Budgen, the painter, forgets the human atmosphere, and Joyce, the writer, forgets the atmospheric conditions. Joyce stresses the immediacy of atmosphere. It is easily forgotten, elusive and impossible to transport. In his critique of Ulysses' nostalgia, he distinguishes his own work in a more progressive vein; as Ellman notes, "Homer's Ulysses wishes, after all, to restore the *ancien régime* in Ithaca" (1977, 76). Given the colonial history in Ireland, a return to the *ancien régime* was neither tenable nor desirable. But Joyce also critiques an overly abstract and idealistic political futurity in his closing comment on Utopia. His satirical search for the "ideal climate inhabited by the ideal humans" critiques the modernist desire for transcendence through unrestrained mobility. Between a backwards looking nostalgia and a naïve Utopianism, Joyce situates the union of Stephen and Bloom in "Circe" as a political

alliance founded on proximity and affinity, a politics of shared atmosphere. "Like every shared life," Sloterdijk writes, "politics is the art of the atmospherically possible" (967).

Yet it is neither in Trieste nor in Dublin that Joyce is able to arrive at this middle ground. It is instead, in Paris, where he found an invigorating and "spiritual atmosphere." What does it mean, then, to steep "Circe" in a forgotten atmosphere? To what extent is the atmosphere of "Circe" attributable to Dublin, and to what extent is it that of the vibrant atmosphere of Paris? An attention to the conventions of playwriting helps to contextualize the particular "atmospheric conditions" in the Circean zone. The environmental spectacle of "Circe" unfolds in the stage directions, which modulate ceaselessly to present an interpenetration of urban and rural settings, animals, people and objects. After the rain of "Oxen," a fetid atmosphere rises from the bowels of Dublin's nighttown, "*Snakes of river fog creep slowly. From drains, clefts, cesspools, middens arise on all sides stagnant fumes*" (*U* 354). With his wildly modulating and indeed unstageable stage directions, Joyce writes a form of drama that exists beyond the theatre. In doing so, he attempts to represent the pure form of drama that he first theorized as a student at University College Dublin. In his early essay on Munkascy's painting *Ecce Homo*, Joyce argues that the painting is dramatic. He continues, "Drama is strife, evolution, movement, in whatever way unfolded. Drama exists as an independent thing, conditioned but not controlled by its scene. An idyllic portrait or an environment of haystacks does not constitute a pastoral drama" (*OCPW* 17).[39] Joyce presents drama not as naturalism, but in what can more properly be understood in an ecological fashion of evolution, influence and interrelation. In his attack on pastoral scenery, Joyce asserts that the environmental aesthetics of drama are not to be found in representations of nature. Such an assertion is in line with Joyce's opinion on the representation of nature in

writing more broadly. In a critique of Gissing's *The Crown of Life*, Joyce writes, "What irritates me most in him is when he begins to write eloquently about nature. Like William Buckley, the Irish novelist, who writes in *Sinn Féin*, he makes 'nature' very tiresome" (133). Joyce has no interest in 'nature' as a distinct category separate from human life, but he is deeply drawn to the interrelation of characters and environment, the "conditioning" of scenery, what can be best understood as a sensory rendering of atmosphere.

With these preliminary comments on drama's relation to nature, environment and evolution, it is possible to turn to a reading of perhaps the most iconic stage direction in "Circe." Namely, the "heavenly weather" of the day is strikingly associated with Bloom himself, when the stage direction gives a cue for, "*Bloom's weather. A sunburst appears in the northwest*" (*U* 391). This stage direction follows Bloom's stump speech, in which he rails against the Flying Dutchmen of finance who cry, "machines," and let the poor starve, "while they are grassing their royal mountain stags or shooting peasants and phartridges" (*U* 389). Bloom's weather signals a new environmental order that supplants industrial capitalism. But the weather also signals Bloom's transformation into Leopold the First, immediately complicating this ecological vision with Catholicism and divine government. The "sunburst" points to the catholic solar monstrance, used to display the Eucharistic host.[40] By associating "Bloom's weather" with the symbol of Christian sacrament Joyce is also critiquing an overly simplified environmentalism. The association also shows the extent to which Joyce's aesthetic principles have changed. The moment when the weather becomes static and aestheticized is not the moment of art but the opposite, a satirical critique of the reification of nature. "Bloom's weather" becomes just as staid as the "decorous atmosphere" of "Grace," and fittingly, Tom Kernan is one of the first to congratulate Bloom on his ascendency.

Yet, not everyone is convinced. The first naysayer is the mysterious man in the macintosh. It is fitting that the man wearing a weatherproof jacket should fail to fall under the spell of Bloom's Weather. As the quintessential mystery man in Joyce's epic, the man in the macintosh represents any number of elusive figures. Is he an Irish nationalist? A terrorist? A British spy? Bloom's double?[41] For all the critical speculation paid to the man *in* the macintosh, less attention has been paid to the macintosh itself. Patented by Charles Macintosh in 1823, the mackintosh was the first waterproof jacket coated in soluble rubber. By combining natural India rubber with naphtha, Macintosh was able to cloak the British Empire in a thin protective layer against the elements. The description of the process in his *Biographical Memoir* bears quotation, for its exceptional coagulation of industrialism and colonialism, chemistry and raw nature:

> Mr. Macintosh entered, in 1819, into a contract with the proprietors of the Glasgow gas works, to receive for a term of years, the tar and ammoniacal water produced at their works. After the separation of the ammonia, in the conversion of the tar into pitch, to suit the purposes of consumers, the essential oil termed naphtha, is produced; and the thought occurred to him of its being possible to render this also useful, from its power as a solvent of caoutchoue, or India rubber. This latter article is a gum obtained from the tropical plants, *Iatropha elastic, Urseola Elastica*, and some others, natives of South America, and of the East and West Indies. It is procured in the state of a milky juice, which coagulates on exposure to the atmosphere; and it was this coagulated gum, which Mr. Macintosh, by exposure to the action of the volatile oil termed naphtha, obtained from coal tar, converted into a water-

> proof varnish, the thickness and consistency of which he could vary, according to the quantity of naphtha which he employed in the process. (82)

By combining the refined products of industrialism and the raw material of colonialist imports, Macintosh created a thin and flexible film to varnish the human body against the inclement weather. A more perfect expression of modernization is hard to come by.

Bloom, for all his grandiose illusions in this episode, does not wear the macintosh; he is exposed to the elements. Recall that the man in the macintosh's first appearance in Hades is preceded by Bloom sticking his head out of the carriage to look at the Gasworks when "A raindrop spat on his hat" (*U* 75). The standing reserve of natural gas serves to condition the urban environment: the industrial infrastructure that enables the subtle hissing of sound that forms the baseline of Stephen's environmental consciousness in *Portrait*. The Gasworks form a larger weatherproof coating for the city of Dublin, the cocoon of yellow haze that wraps the city in chrysalis. This, to a certain extent, is the industrial order that Bloom rails against in his stump speech. In his vision of Bloomusalem, Bloom presents the Utopian hopes of social regeneration, "the ideal climate inhabited by the ideal humans." This perfect environment turns out, in fact, to be a built one, in the kidney-shaped "*colossal edifice with crystal roof*" (making for a striking comparison to the present day Gasworks apartments). Yet the projects of "social regeneration" reveal themselves to in fact depend upon a certain casualty rate among the working class. As the glass structure rises, workers and surrounding buildings are crushed. In decrying Bloom, Theordore Purefoy claims, "He employs a mechanical device to frustrate the sacred ends of nature" (401). The same might be said of Joyce's aesthetic innovations in *Ulysses*. The sacred ends of nature cede to a new urban unfolding, as Heyward Ehrlich argues, "The new ordering of time and space in city life led to

the further distancing of representation from nature…no longer demanding either the physical presence or even the extended attention of the audience" (7). If Bloom's weather signals a mechanical reification of nature, it also leads to a more productive critique of "nature" and the "natural" as normative categories on which to found community. The formal innovations of "Circe" do make it "unnatural" or "uncanny" theater, but such a presentation is appropriate and more useful in coming to terms with the complex constructions of nature, environment and ecology to be found in the urban atmosphere.

The weather that signals Bloom's rise to a position of absolute authority inevitably leads to his inquisition, by a crab and holly bush among others. "Bloom's weather" fails as a political event precisely through the attempt to represent Bloom as a fixed, static and particular condition. The questions of how one cues the weather, with whose stagehand, through what technology, become crucial in a move towards a critique of the political control of environment (it is notable that Richardson would apply his methods for weather prediction to studying the causes of war and its prevention). Atmosphere becomes power. To control atmosphere is to shape perception, behavior and orientation. In her 1938 essay *Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf writes, "Atmosphere plainly is a very mighty power. Atmosphere not only changes the sizes and shapes of things; it affects solid bodies, like salaries, which might have been thought impervious to atmosphere" (64). Woolf refers specifically to the wage discrepancy between men and women, but her attention to the subtle modulation of what is normally perceived as stable and solid reveals the cultural and political derivatives of atmosphere. In atmospheric control, she claims, "we have in embryo the creature, Dictator as we call him when he is Italian or German, who believes that he has the right, whether given by God, Nature, sex or race is immaterial, to dictate to other human beings how they shall

live; what they shall do" (65). In controlling the weather, Bloom becomes momentarily such a Dictator. Yet this moment is ultimately undone in the larger polymorphic environment of "Circe." What remains is Bloom's rescue of Stephen from the "*raincaped watch*" and a moment of care when he undoes Stephen's waistcoat buttons "To breathe."

At Rest Relatively

After the climactic events of "Circe," the narrative proceeds towards the Nostos. Critics have noted the exhausted language of "Eumaeus."[42] Yet more than exhaustion the episode highlights a certain release of atmospheric pressure. The sentences lose their tension and evoke deep breathing more than shortness of breath. After the rain in "Oxen of the Sun," the heat of the day has broken, the "temperature refreshing" (*U* 502), and Bloom and Stephen make their way towards Eccles Street. In his discussion with the Odyssean, "wily old" sailor in the cabman's shelter, Bloom returns to his climate theory of character, this time in relation to his wife Molly, "I for one certainly believe climate accounts for character…It's in the blood…All are washed in the blood of the sun" (*U* 521). Bloom seeks to account for his wife's infidelity in terms of an irrepressible influence of climate. Yet by the time he makes it home, climate, weather and atmosphere are stripped from the narrative.

"Ithaca," as Andrew Gibson points out, "is where restless Bloom—peculiarly restless, on this particular day—finally comes to rest" (4).[43] That this rest should occur in the particular form of a "mathematical catechism" (*SL* 278) presents a logical conclusion to Joyce's aesthetic theory. As he writes to Budgen, "not only will the reader know everything and know it in the baldest coldest way, but Bloom and Stephen thereby become heavenly bodies, wanderers like the stars at which they gaze" (*SL* 278). This particular combination of

religion and science has puzzled critics. Some, like Andrew Whitworth, argue that while the episode "contains many scientific facts…as a form the catechism is ecclesiastical in origin, and stands in no significant relation to contemporary scientific research, nor to the facts examined in 'Ithaca,' nor to the structure of Joyce's novel as a whole" (3). Such an analysis misses the obvious connection that science was becoming as dogmatic as the Catholic Church, threatening its own restrictions on life. Others, such as Michael Bell, contend that the episode's "contemporaneity with the new science lies not at the level of its overt imitation/parody of science, but in the awareness of its own discourse as a relative projection alongside the other discourses making up the world of *Ulysses*" (74). Bell rightly emphasizes the "scientific outlook as a mode of emotional impersonality," but he perhaps does a disservice to his own reading by suggesting that "in modernism…Science became simply one of the possible world constructions open to human culture…it is just one way of organizing the world" (72). Further, he elides how this scientific mode has been present in numerous other episodes, particularly in Bloom's rationalizing the thunderclap in "Oxen" and his ruminations on weight and the Dead Sea in "Lotus Eaters." A large part of the critical pressure placed on "Ithaca" is due to its position in the work, the penultimate chapter, and the last to be finished by Joyce. As such it holds the burden of occupying that position in the novel where the reader is expecting some pay off for the themes and actions developed throughout the work.

In one sense, "Ithaca" delivers on this expectation. Joyce sucks out the air, weather and atmosphere of the preceding episodes, leaving ruminations on the enigmatic details that filled the long day. The morning cloud, for example, is revisited, "(perceived by both from two different points of observation, Sandycove and Dublin)" (*U* 545). Here the narrative

makes explicit a point of parallax that the reader might otherwise have easily missed. Marilyn French reads this cloud as revealing Joyce's larger method in *Ulysses*, "It suggests the identity of *a* reality, an actual and ultimate reality which is alike for all people and the differing interpretations made of it" (222–223). This attention to reality may be juxtaposed to Bloom's fantasies in the episode of an idealized "ultimate ambition" for his life. After compiling his budget for the day, Bloom imagines a pastoral retreat; he desires "to purchase by private treaty in fee simple a thatched bungalowshaped 2 storey dwellinghouse of southerly aspect, surmounted by vane and lightning conductor, connected with the earth" (*U* 585). The extended rendering of "Bloom Cottage. Saint Leopold's. Flowerville" (*U* 587) is comparable in some respects to the vision of Bloomusalem in "Circe," but instead of magical stage directions, Bloom meditates on the means by which he might achieve such a pastoral wonderland. One of his "industrial" schemes includes the selling of a fertilizer composed of human excrement, waste paper and sewer rodents. Others include the building of hydroelectric plans, the construction of luxury golf links, casinos, and the management of Dublin tourism. Finally, he might gain his wealth through "the independent discovery of a goldseam of inexhaustible ore" (*U* 591). Bloom's large-scale spatial and temporal ruminations draw connections between economics, social construction and environmental degradation. These imaginative exercises are pursued for the purpose of relaxing Bloom before he goes to bed, a habitual practice that alleviates fatigue and produces "sound repose and renovated vitality" (*U* 591). His final meditation is on a more local fantasy of the perfect execution of his profession, "one sole unique advertisement to cause passers to stop in wonder" (*U* 592). Here is a return to the aesthetics of "arrest" that is capable of holding a viewers attention for a moment. Yet instead of the "rhythm of beauty," the ideal

advertisement is "reduced to its simplest and most efficient terms not exceeding the span of casual vision and congruous with the velocity of modern life" (*U* 592).

Such an aesthetic vision may be extended to the episode of "Ithaca" more broadly. Rather than simply one more way of presenting the world, one more formal mode in Joyce's toolbox, "Ithaca" may be read as the climax (anticlimax) of the aesthetic theory Joyce first pursued in his Paris notebooks. Rather than viewing the structure of *Ulysses* as a series of relativized episodes, the penultimate position of "Ithaca" may be fruitfully compared to the suspended quincunx of men in "Grace," the penultimate story in *Dubliners*, as well as the scene of Stephen nestled in the dunes at the end of section IV, the penultimate chapter of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. To these scenes of rest may be added Bloom entering his bed next to Molly, "at rest relatively to themselves and to each other. In motion being each and both carried westward, forward and rereward respectively, by the proper perpetual motion of the earth through everchanging tracks of neverchanging space…He rests. He has travelled" (*U* 606). The extension of the moment of rest to the perpetual motion of the earth is the same as Stephen experienced with his fluttering eyelids in the sand dunes, yet the emotional element has been removed. Rest, rather than the necessary condition for the apprehension of the beautiful Joyce outlines in the Paris notebook, has been stripped to a purely physical register of matter in space. One effect of relativizing rest is, as Gibson argues, "to keep potentiality always in mind and to preserve its power" (250). Yet, perhaps more important is the *actuality* of Bloom's final scene. Joyce emphasizes rest as a base unit of community. The limits of Bloom's body require him to return home, his rest is not just his own, but relative to his wife and position in Dublin.

"Molly," as Marilyn French argues, "is less or more than a person here: she is a center

to which he adjusts as he accepts his position in her realm—the bed, the real earth" (238). While it is tempting to read Molly as mother earth, Joyce bases the form and language of "Penelope" not necessarily on the itself, but on the earth's rotation, "It turns like the huge earth ball slowly surely and evenly round and round spinning" (*SL* 285). This aesthetics of revolution largely forms Joyce's subsequent work, where the exploration of the nighttime unconscious leads to the biosemiotic lexicon of *Finnegans Wake*. Regarding "Penelope," he writes to Harriet Shaw Weaver, "I tried to depict the earth which is prehuman and presumably posthuman" (289). While much might be made of posthumanism as an interrelation of humans, non-human animals, objects, etc., Joyce seems to allude to a literal posthumanism, that is, the world after humanity. The prehuman earth is a validation of the empirical sciences of Geology and Biology, and the posthuman earth is an assertion of humanity's inevitable extinction. As such the focus on the limit's of Bloom's energy extend to the limits of modernity itself. The ceaseless drive to "make it new" ultimately runs up against the exhaustion of humanity. This grand scale scope positions humanity's time on the earth in relation to a larger time frame of the earth itself. With such a scale in mind, moments of rest and connection become all the more important for both their immediacy and their transitory nature.

Chapter 3

Waste Lands: Late Modernism as Dark Pastoral

> The search for equilibrium is bad because it is imaginary.
>
> —Simone Weil. *Gravity and Grace*

This study began with a history of environmentalism in relation to the fiction of D. H. Lawrence during those few quintessential years of modernist change directly before the Great War. In Lawrence's early fiction, the focus is on the industrialization of pastoral England. It is about the city's mechanized reach into the countryside. Lawrence remains highly ambivalent in his representations of rapidly changing surroundings. *Sons and Lovers* ends with the rural subject embracing (stiffly) the urban environment, while *The Rainbow* inverts the metropolitan desire for pure movement—Ursula's transcendence is achieved not through movement, but rather through a moment of exhaustion, a giving up that signals complete immersion in the material environment. Her ensuing rest and recovery reveals a new consciousness from within environment, an immanent awareness of a sort unachieved by the stiffly mobile Morel.

Chapter 2 focused precisely on the humming, phosphorescent, non-stop pulsation of urban environs, arguing that, in a certain respect, such an environment is more "natural" or akin to the constantly shifting atmosphere of the planet. The fiction of James Joyce presents the environmental consciousness of one raised in the urban milieu, aware of subtle changes such as the lighting of gas lamps or the buzzing of electricity. In a certain sense, Joyce is akin to Morel in his early desire to transcend Dublin. Yet significantly Joyce's exile proceeded from one city to the next, leading him to return (through writing) again and again to the urban

milieu of his youth. The sensory awareness found in *Ulysses*, an attention to atmosphere itself, combines both spatial movement/transcendence with immanent sensation in order to reveal the complex political, economic and social interests that determine life in the city.

Taken together, these two chapters form a *pas de deux* around that central trope of environmental literature, the pastoral, in its most general sense of a juxtaposition between the city and the country. Chapter 3 takes up directly this theme of pastoral in order to contextualize the increasingly fervent desire for rest and recovery in the 1930s, as interwar recovery efforts and unregulated economic systems failed systematically on a global scale to provide peace and renewed prosperity. Whereas the movement between Chapters 1 and 2 was a largely successful one of transcending the country through an embrace of the city, the movement between Chapters 2 and 3 is largely a failed one of attempting to escape human-dominated environments and return to nature. This failed, "dark pastoral," as I will outline it, is a defining feature of late modernism, especially the fiction of Djuna Barnes.

A primary reason for a breakdown or crisis in the pastoral mode is the growing notion that there is no longer a pristine and restful Nature left to go back to. As World War I got underway, the export of human life and resources to the continent led to the increased scrutiny of Britain's interior holdings. The Land Enquiry Committee's 1913 study *The Land* already pays much attention to waste lands. The report argues that the question of waste as under-cultivation of the soil cannot be removed from the question of labor and the issue of low wages, which leads to the migration of labor to urban areas. The reduction of waste through scientific, economic and social incentives, the authors conclude, "would mean an important addition to the national wealth, to say nothing of the advantage of having a larger population supported on the land" (254). The speculations found in *The Land* were given

greater consideration and urgency as 1914's Defence of the Realm Act gave the British Government the power to requisition land deemed necessary for the war effort. J. Wilson's "Report on Waste Lands," presented to The Cornwall County Council on 3 July 1916, detailed a total area of 86,015 acres that was currently going unused. Wilson included more specific divisions for certain tracts including categories such as "Inferior & doubtful Land" and "Land totally useless." Charles Rothschild—founder of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves—took issue with the report, writing to R.T.F. Husband that it represented, "an organised attempt to cultivate all the waste land in the county of Cornwall that can be cultivated." Rothschild continues, "Now it seems to me that if an organised attempt is to be made by the County Council the permanent retention of suitable nature reserves should also be a matter they should consider and realize the value of" (Rothschild). Rothschild poses the argument for nature preservation in economic terms of "value." This focus on value should come as no surprise from someone whose day job was managing the Royal Mint Refinery, which, by 1913, was processing some 6.8 million gross weight ounces of gold, the majority of which came from South Africa (Figure 2). Given Rothschild's socioeconomic background, the efforts of British environmentalists provide an early instantiation of environmentalism as a "postmaterial" concern. Wealth, in short, provides the freedom from the basic human concerns of shelter and subsistence that occupy the majority of people, and allows one to take up an interest in the natural world. Such a postmaterial position is most often achieved through the exploitation of natural resources and the impoverishment of local and indigenous communities.

Figure 2. Gold Bars, Royal Mint Refinery (Rothschild Archive)

In the case of SPNR, the flow of natural resources from South Africa had direct ties to the transformative actions of British environmentalists as they sought to make the value of nature reserves intelligible on the same level as the pure gold bullion leaving the Rothschild refinery. If the nation pursues Gold Reserves, they asked, why not Nature Reserves? To this end, Rothschild and SPNR presented in 1915 their own "Humble Petition" to King George V outlining a schedule of 284 sites "worthy of preservation" in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The petition divides the sites into 14 types and designates those of "especial interest, representing various ecological types" with an asterisk. To make the concept of Nature Reserves more legible, the petition appeals to the international currency of Nature, citing the 1913 International Conference for the Protection of Nature held in Berne which resulted in a consultative commission comprised of two delegates from each state or self-governing colony. The report also notes the considerable tracts of land already designated as Nature Reserves in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, the Argentine Republic, Sweden and elsewhere. Despite the efforts of SPNR, the case for Nature conservation and protection was largely illegible during WWI, when the increasing casualty of British soldiers was understandably of greatest concern. Rothschild's Society would also go on to plead the case for Nature Reserves at the House of Commons hearing on the Defence of the Realm Act on October 25th, 1916, asking for an amendment to address "national nature reserves," to which Home Secretary George Cave replied, "These words really have no technical meaning. I do not know in law what is a national nature reserve…I hope my hon. Friend will not press this Amendment," ("Parliamentary Debates").

The case for nature preservation during WWI was largely a failed one. Land that was not being productive was deemed "waste." While there were attempts by Rothschild and

SPNR to recast "waste" as "reserve," a potent and valuable asset, the notion of a nature reserve remained counterintuitive to most. The drive towards an efficiency of maximum yield, as I have been arguing, parallels cultural attitudes towards rest. Yet WWI provides a decisive shift in attitudes towards rest and the importance of the natural world. Whereas before the war rest was deemed superfluous or easily managed in a scientific fashion to yield maximum productivity and efficiency, after the war the ability to rest became a cultural imperative, yet one that for a variety of material and psychological reasons was increasingly difficult to achieve. The long duration of WWI and the sociopolitical thorniness of interwar recovery was met, especially in England, with a resurgence of pastoral writing, seen notably in the increasing popularity of Edward Marsh's *Georgian Poetry* anthologies. Terry Gifford makes the case succinctly that "following the horrors of the First World War, these poets sought refuge in rural images that did not disturb a sense of comfortable reassurance" (71). While this general assessment largely holds true, it is worth noting that certain poems present a much more ambivalent attitude towards the pastoral mode. Consider, for example, the opening stanza of Fredegond Shove's "The World":

> I wish this world and its green hills were mine,
> But it is not; the wandering shepherd star
> Is not more distant, gazing from afar
> On the unreapèd pastures of the sea,
> Than I am from the world, the world from me.
> At night the stars on milky way that shine
> Seem things one might possess, but this round green
> Is for the cows that rest, these and the sheep:

To them the slopes and pastures offer sleep;

My sleep I draw from the far fields of blue,

Whence cold winds come and go among the few

Bright stars we see and many more unseen. (14)

The poet, strangely out to sea, desires for the pastoral rest of the cows and the sheep, yet knows it is unobtainable. Shove, notably the first woman to be included in the *Georgian Poetry* series, displays a prescient pastoral skepticism that complicates the largely male desire to go back to nature. True, in her appeal to the cosmos, the bright stars beyond the cold winds, Shove effectively invests in an alternative, what one might term sci-fi pastoral mode that leads along the "great road to the unknown." Yet Shove's insight that a traditional pastoral retreat is no longer available is valuable for its new articulation of the individual's relationship to the world. Humanity, rather than master of Nature—partaking of its pastoral pleasures at will—is subject to the greater world that surrounds it. The drive towards movement and transcendence arises from humanity's inability to emplace itself in the world. Against the impulse to go "back to nature" to retreat into the idyll glen of arcadia in order to escape the disturbing realities of human-dominated ecologies, this chapter outlines a "dark pastoral" mode from the high modernism of T. S. Eliot to its full realization in the late modernism of Djuna Barnes where the desire to commune with nature is thwarted. While Shove's poem is a first step towards a dark pastoral—a recognition that the "round green" is no longer accessible—her turn in the final stanza towards a movement out to "the very middle of the sky" becomes equally escapist in a problematic manner. For it to be effective, the dark pastoral must firmly return the would-be escapist to the constraints of reality.

The turn to this dark or stark pastoral mode can again be found in shifting notions

towards nature and "the land" itself. Whereas before WWI many considered humans to be in a comfortable position of mastery in regard to nature, the effects of WWI left many reconsidering this notion. T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" begins precisely with a Nature that is "cruel," but perhaps more pointedly, indifferent to the human speaker of the poem. The attitude toward the land in Eliot's poem is not unlike J. Wilson's survey of "doubtful" or "totally useless" waste lands in Cornwall, yet the catalogue has changed. The interest is no longer in cultivating or rehabilitating such lands, but in a certain exhausted languishing among the broken landscape. Humans are clearly to blame for the blighted state of nature in the poem, yet, in his privileging of the wounded Fisher King, Eliot denies the transcendent mobility found in Shove's poem. Not only is the "round green" forsaken, but the poem ties this loss explicitly to immobility. Here is a dark pastoral reminder that human action is intricately connected and dependent upon its surrounding environment. Thus, in the opening of "The Fire Sermon," the breaking of the river's tent signals not only Nature's last leaves clutching along the banks, but also the end of even the most exuberant objects of human consumption:

> The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
> Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
> Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed. (*CP* 42)

The fundamental question for the poem becomes whether regeneration is possible, will the nymphs return in a vegetative restoration? And if not, what can anyone do to act? While "The Waste Land" admirably poses this question, it falls short of delivering an answer. The turn in the final section to the Upanishads, the mountain hole, and the crouching jungle, becomes escapist in pastoral and problematic ways. The pivotal question, "Shall I at least set

my lands in order?" should, to counter the poem's pastoral turn, I think, be read quite literally. If human action has gone so far as to obliterate the chance for nature to regenerate on its own, what can humans do to actively restore the world?

To bring Eliot's poetics of fragmentation, dispersal and obsolescence into conversation with SPNR's efforts to protect and preserve nature and ecosystems requires a larger discussion of anthropogenic power as it influences modes of existence on land itself. The pristine management of selective tracts of British land must be situated alongside imperialist projects, resource accumulation and political subjugation. For Eliot's poem, the question of power emerges most clearly in section V's appeal to *Damyata* and the "controlling hands" expert with both sails and hearts. Eliot's version of the Sanskrit "self-control" suggests that there is no mode of self-empowerment that does not undermine or disempower others and the surrounding environment. Such a sentiment becomes more problematic in light of Eliot's anti-Semitism, which connects the "place-less" wandering of the Jew with capitalist exploitation. Though Eliot never made the vociferous attacks on the Rothschilds that would preoccupy *il miglior fabbro* Ezra Pound, most troubling, as Anthony Julius points out, are the cases where "Eliot's poetry returns Jews to the primeval mire, as if they were the oldest and most degraded members of creation" (18). Julius identifies *The Waste Land*'s Phlebas the Phoenician as a crucial border case for Eliot's poetry and anti-semitism more broadly. Hinging on the phrase "Gentile or Jew," the fourth section of *The Waste Land* suggests a new vision of waste that is indifferent to cultural and political allegiances. "These gentle, elegiac lines," as Julius explains, "articulate a dismal materialism. In our bodies, our limbs and internal organs, we are neither Gentile nor Jew but merely mortal and therefore liable to die" (143). If "Death by Water" presents a certain high water

mark for Eliot's ambition to "unify the human race through reference to our common origins" (Cuddy 221), it also signals the realization of a poetic exceptionalism that reinforces an intellectual (and by extension biological) superiority over others. "Eliot," as Lois Cuddy argues, "created a poetics based on a monistic ideal which evolutionists confirmed and which he tried to make into reality through words; the consequence of both motive and design in his everyday life, however, was a fragmenting hierarchy reflecting and enhancing his own position of dominance over women, Jews, Africans, and anyone else different from himself" (222). The fundamental question for both early British environmental efforts and *The Waste Land* becomes whether social and ecological recovery can go hand in hand to lead towards more inclusive forms of community. Taken quite literally, the pivotal question, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?" reveals the paradoxes involved in the seemingly benign and laudable restoration of Nature.

Butterflies and Bushes

A year after the publication of Eliot's poem, Rothschild, suffering from encephalitis, committed suicide. Not, however, before entrusting his land Woodwalton Fen to the protection of the SPNR. In many ways, the Fen was a small microcosm of the quintessential rural ecosystem that Lawrence celebrates in *The Rainbow*. As the first large land holding entrusted to the Society, the case of Woodwalton Fen presents the tensions between "reserving Nature" and "putting lands in order." Far from a simple letting nature be, the upkeep of the Fen required a great deal of money, legal dealings, and human labor. Between drainage disputes and biological balance lies the difficult reality of Eliot's impulse to set lands in order. The first organized survey of the Fen occurred in 1931 as Captain Edward

Bagwell Purefoy sought to establish a colony of Large Copper Butterfly's (a return of the nymphs of sorts) at Woodwalton. Purefoy, notably, worked with the illustrator Frederick William Frohawk who published his *Natural History of British Butterflies* in 1914 (figure 3). Purefoy also had established the only successful colony of Large Coppers at his home in Tipperary, which thrived from 1918 until the second world war. Fryer and Edelsten's 1931 survey of Woodwalton Fen detailed what appeared to be, in fact, a losing battle:

> The next ten years [1915–1925], however, showed another and much less desirable change: the carr (the bush), which had already obtained a firm foothold, began to invade the reed beds, and this invasion has progressed rapidly and is at the present time approaching completion, so that the greater part of the fen now consists of dense impenetrable thickets of sallow bushes, with as almost its sole undergrowth a tangle of bindweed. This type of agitation is clearly of a very restricted interest, whether from the botanical or zoological points of view, and its exclusive occupation of a Nature Reserve would render the area no longer worthy of the name. (2)

Leaving aside the militaristic language of the "invasive" bush, the report makes clear the notion that a "Nature Reserve" is not merely a "letting-be" of nature but in fact a careful cultivation of an ecosystem to be "worthy of the name." To remedy this situation, they notably start with the human caretaker of the Fen, George Mason, "As a preliminary to the adoption of any scheme of work, the position of Mason, the Keeper, should be defined…It is uncertain who is responsible for him under the National Health Insurance and Workers Compensation Acts, but it would seem that under certain circumstances the Society might be held liable" (2–3). It is significant that the first order of business in regard to the protection of

Nature should be the anthropocentric positioning of a human steward within this land. Mason, with walking stick and dog, cuts a strikingly modern figure of the pastoral shepherd (Figure 4). He is both organic caretaker (keen on his work) and modern laborer (entitled to health care and protection from the State).

With labor relations secure, the report goes on to propose a restoration scheme to privilege certain fauna that in turn will be favorable for desired species. Of chief concern is the carr bush, the rampant growth of which threatens to choke the diversity of the Fen. They propose to clear the bush in order to promote the reed beds, fen grasses and other small marsh plants. With over 100 plant species in the Fen, some 30 of which are listed as "introduced by the agency of man or animal" and at least 2 that are "peculiar to the Fen and not as yet known as native in any other British locality," the authors stress the importance of achieving a proper balance, one most amenable to the Large Copper Butterfly. They explain their methods succinctly, "Finally, to prevent misunderstanding, we may explain that we have dealt with the subject from the botanical and ecological point of view because in a fen the fauna is very largely governed by the plant associations existing upon it" (4). The report's emphasis on ecology provides the botanical means to set one's lands in order (should one decide to do so). The authors stress the fact that higher forms of life, animals, are "governed" by the balance of vegetative life. While this ecology serves a "common" good, it is important to note that it is not without hierarchy or power relations; in fact, the opposite: the right balance of preservation is precisely one of privileging certain species over others.

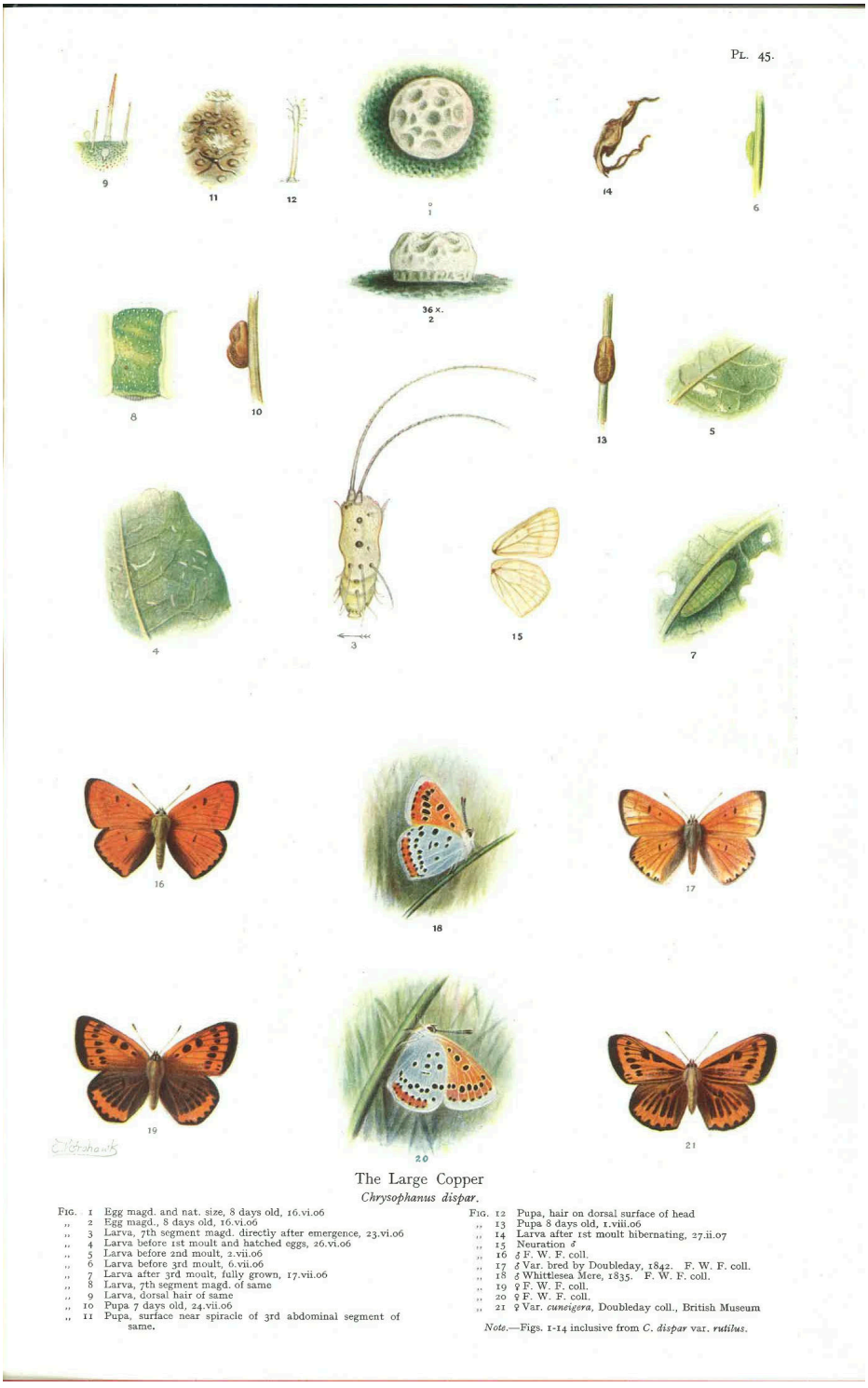


Figure 3. Large Copper Butterfly (Frohawk)

Figure 4. George Mason. Keeper of Woodwalton Fen (The Wildlife Trusts)

I have indulged in this rather lengthy discussion of land stewardship after WWI in order to put Eliot's ambivalent question "Shall I at least put my lands in order?" to a quite literal test. From the point of view of ecology, the order of the land is not the "least one can do" but indeed the most crucial factor contributing to the conditions for sentient organisms. Yet in the ecological imperative to control and steward the land, one must also be wary of which life forms get privileged. One might ask, why the Large Copper Butterfly above all other species? Where Eliot's poem goes a great distance against the problematic pastorals of the *Georgian Poetry* anthologies, it stops short of posing an alternative to anthropocentric control. Between his treatment of Damyata (self-control) with heart "beating obedient / To controlling hands" and the last ditch shoring of fragments, Eliot presents no potential for a non-anthropocentric vision of control. The importance accorded to fauna in the Woodwalton Fen land survey provides an ecological alternative, one that posits the base of plants as the crucial factor in ecosystems, yet this vision of balance and equilibrium is also presented from the anthropocentric desire to promote certain species and visions of pristine Nature.

A dark pastoral mode, by contrast, denies the fantasy of anthropocentric control and returns instead to a focus on the power relationships existing between species. It is neither a pastoral retreat nor an escape from the difficult realities of life. It is an attempt to think ecology in a non-hierarchical fashion, to allow for new possibilities of connections between species and new modes of existence. Where Eliot's poem stops short of such a pastoral vision, I argue that a fully mature dark pastoral mode emerges in Djuna Barnes's 1936 novel *Nightwood*. Eliot himself provides an early gloss of such a mode in his introduction, claiming that "the characters are all knotted together…it is the whole pattern that they form, rather than any individual constituent, that is the focus of interest. We come to know them through

their effect on each other" (*NW* 3). Turning now to the literary work of Djuna Barnes, this chapter argues that a dark pastoral mode can help us rethink humanity's relationship to environment by insisting on the impossibility of ever achieving perfect environmental control. The limits of human control of environment is found not in the inanimate surroundings; here, as we have previously discussed, the modernist can achieve an exquisite degree of control—rather, the limits of control are found in the animate realm, ultimately the loss of control is a failure to control all other living beings. No human can be a perfect shepherd. Can, in short, a dark pastoral mode through its critique of the escapist rest of the pastoral mode provide an alternative nostrum for interwar recovery? I argue that in its fatalism, the dark pastoral is not hopeless, but can provide in fact a more realistic model for humanity's relationship to the natural world. The dark pastoral highlights the limits of human control over environment as well as the inability of Nature to provide humans with any ultimate freedom or transcendence from the difficult power dynamics of the built environment (Eliot's Unreal City).

Pastoral Rest and Environmental Control

Critics such as Annabel Patterson and Paul Alpers argue that Pastoral as a fully realized literary form emerges in Virgil's *Eclogues*. Virgil's *Eclogue I* presents a conversation between Meliboeus (who has lost his lands to Rome) and Tityrus (who has successfully petitioned to save his land, albeit to the detriment of its upkeep). These two figures present two forms of environmental consciousness: Meliboeus, forced to leave, to change his environment, becomes hyper sensitive to his natural surroundings, he marvels at the unrest (*turbatur*) that fills the fields. Tityrus, for his part, is at ease, despite the disheveled

state of his own lands, due to the fact that he has protected his fields through political petition. Tityrus's environmental consciousness extends beyond the fields themselves to consider the larger human agency at stake in maintaining environment.

Conceived broadly, the two forms of environmental consciousness displayed by Meliboeus and Tityrus correspond to the different types of environmental consciousness explored in Chapters 1 and 2 through the works of D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce, respectively. Lawrence, as Meliboeus, laments the industrial incursion into the pastoral countryside, whereas Joyce, as Tityrus, recognizes the importance of urban power dynamics. It is Tityrus's success as an "environer," moving between Rome and Arcadia that allows him to keep his position. Lawrence's exile from England is not unlike Meliboeus's exile from his lands, ever searching for the utopian bower that was never able to manifest itself in England. Joyce, for his part, notably emigrated from one city to the next, a consummate city-dweller, whose literary success was in fact closely tied to his ability to survive and thrive in the urban environment. Leaving aside this comparison, one can't help wondering if these, in fact, are the only two voices in the conversation. Can there be no middle ground between country and city? In *Eclogue I*, there is indeed another voice present, and it is in fact that of the land and living earth itself. As Meliboeus laments to Tityrus, "The very springs and pine-trees / Called out, these very orchards were crying for you, my friend" (5). This third voice, as I will argue in this chapter, is one that Djuna Barnes explores in depth: it is in fact the dominant speaker of dark pastoral. Yet while in Virgil's *Eclogue* it might be appropriate to say that the environment is calling out to its keeper, in the work of Barnes what one encounters is much more appropriately thought of as the presence of the nonhuman, a vision of Nature that only does not cry out to humans but that proceeds in complete indifference to human presence.

This distinction is ultimately one that provides a new interrogation of the term environment, of central importance to this study. Where Chapter 2 explored "environing" as an active process of shaping and sustaining surroundings, Chapter 3 presents the paradox of thinking environment that is not centered on a subject. The paradox of such a thought experiment lies precisely in the words "environment" and "surroundings" which imply a center or point of organization. The Italian *ambiente* also implies a center for that which circles around in all directions. While the French *milieu* is slightly better, evoking suspension or saturation, it still holds the suggestion of a middle point. The German *Umwelt* proposed by Uexküll is also unreservedly subject-centered. He claims that with his project, "biology has once and for all connected with Kant's philosophy" (51). All of these subject-centered terms are problematic precisely for the reason that they limit a discussion of ecology and the power dynamics existing between species and among members of the same or similar species. Uexküll's tick, in all of its Kantian glory, becomes a star upon the stage, whereas other life forms connected to the tick (mammals) are reduced to be merely "butyric acid." Yet Uexküll's strictly biological definition of environment is instructive in that it calls attention not only to what physiological features determine an organism's environment, but also, by extension, to how any organism's *Umwelt* is inherently limited by these very perception organs.

Where Chapter 2 turned to atmosphere in order to better understand the active processes of environmnent, Chapter 3 turns to *bio*sphere to better elaborate the interdependence of organic beings. Geographers introduced the word biosphere at the turn of the twentieth century in order to explain the distribution of living beings in terms of the spatial configuration of the earth. As Hugh Robert Mill explains in his introduction to 1899's *The International Geography*, "Living things possess the world, and the purpose of

Biogeography is to trace out the reasons why particular species occupy the regions where they are now found…Some geographers even bring in the layer of living matter to complete four parts of the physical globe—the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere" (4). Biospheres are not subject-centered, rather, Mill's description of the biosphere as a "layer" helpfully positions it as a lateral system that registers the influences of climate, geographical location, flora and fauna. Yet the dispersive horizontality of the biosphere is immediately challenged through the introduction of human influence within biospheres, "Alone amongst the animals man, in virtue of his higher intelligence, has the power, while always under the control of his surroundings, to react upon his environment in such a way as to render its action more beneficial to himself" (5). Accordingly, Mill goes on to outline human influence upon geography in terms of political action and commercial venture. Yet, significantly, Mill maintains that man is "always under the control of his surroundings." The pastoral impulse is precisely a desire to explore humanity's ambivalent position of control. The pastoral functions as an escape from the responsibilities of anthrogeography, a return to the biosphere, and an expression of perfect control through isolation.

Uexküll pursues a similar discussion similar to Mill's to consider man's "advantage" over animals, "Our advantage over animals consists in our being able to broaden the compass of inborn human nature…We have created perception tools…which offer each of us who knows how to use them the possibility of deepening and broadening his environment. None leads out of the compass of the environment" (199–200). While the development of these tools augments human nature, human beings also largely employ such tools to control and steward other species within a "deepening" and "broadening" (although we might substitute *flattening* and *narrowing*) environment. Building on Mill and Uexküll, we can see that the

broad juxtaposition of country and city is one that hinges not only on environmental awareness, but also crucially on environmental control. Citing the increasing influence of the city in modernizing and thus controlling the interests of the country at the turn of the twentieth century, John Barrell and John Bull argue that "The separation of life in the town and in the country that the Pastoral demands is now almost devoid of any meaning" (432). To elaborate the political and socioeconomic dimensions of this control, I argue that it is in fact helpful to return to the classical figure of pastoral, the shepherd and his flock. In order to elaborate inter- and intra-species power dynamics, I propose a reading of the pastoral (in its classical sense of shepherding) as a controlling and shaping of *Umwelt*, milieu or environment. The impulse to encircle, to compass, to determine surroundings, lies at the heart of projects of imperialism and modernization. Such logics depend on viewing other civilizations, cultures and species as so much "butyric acid" that may or may not trigger a desired response for an idealized political subject. Yet, as Uexküll fatally reminds his readers after presenting them with the powerful tools at their disposal, "None leads out of the compass of the environment." As Mill also notes, man is "always under the control of his surroundings." The suggestion here is that all of the tools of mastery and modernization are conducted ultimately towards a failed attempt of humans to transcend animality. The political potentials in Uexküll's *Umwelt* ultimately lie in his articulation of humanity's limitations and thus their dependence on one another and a larger web of species.

If Uexküll's celebration of subject-centered epistemology resonates with the high modernism of the profoundly psychological work of T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf, among others, his fatal view of mankind's limitations, his insistence on the dark, negative deprivations inherent in human perception resonate with late modernists such as Wyndham

Lewis and Samuel Beckett, but perhaps most closely with Djuna Barnes, whose "dark pastoral" denies humans the ability to find transcendence through a return to nature. Critics have largely ignored Barnes's use of pastoral. Where discussions of animality and environment enter into critical discourse it is largely in service of gender theory, queer theory, spatial theory or other established modes of modernist critique. At the same time, studies of the pastoral almost exclusively focus on representations of the green world as a positive, healing space of retreat. What critical studies of the pastoral neglect is the darker and more disturbing side of nonhuman territories, not the daytime bower of bliss, but the woods of the night, or, in a word, *Nightwood*. I elaborate a "dark pastoral" mode in Djuna Barnes' celebrated work of modernist fiction through a reading of Robin Vote as the black sheep whose "droppings," as Matthew O'Connor puts it, will always be found in the king's bed "right before it becomes a museum piece" (*NW* 44). While much attention has been paid to Robin as "the beast turning human" (*NW* 41), focusing on the metaphor of the black sheep allows for a more specific discussion of pastoral themes such as community, mobility and ideological critique. The continual presence of animals (circus, domestic and wild) as well as the presence of the Bois de Boulogne and the American countryside suggests a dark pastoral materiality behind the personal sufferings of the characters in *Nightwood*. Thus pastoral, rather than an explicit juxtaposition of city and country, emerges as a dissociative and immersive force that permeates the narration. Robin Vote as the black sheep in Djuna Barnes's highly biosensitive novel *Nightwood* represents a queer resilience to societal powers that seek to tame and exploit other living beings. Robin's waywardness stems from a desire to refuse anthropocentric control and pursue instead a "dark pastoral" world that stresses the impossibility of escaping one's own biological limitations. The climactic encounter between

animal and human at the end of *Nightwood* leads Robin to acknowledge her biological limits, to "give up" and "let be" in a moment of rest between species that affirms the interdependence of all life that persists despite the manifold modes of existence in the world.

Pastoral Influences

Barnes's own trajectory was from the countryside of the Hudson Valley into the vibrant hearts of New York City and Paris and eventually back to the hermetic retreat of 5 Patchin Place in Greenwich Village. Also germane were her stays at the country manor Hayford Hall in Devonshire where she wrote much of *Nightwood*. Explicit treatments of pastoral can be found in the early writings of Djuna Barnes—most notably in the poem "Pastoral" and in short stories such as "The Rabbit," "The Earth" and "A Night in the Woods." These works fall into Terry Gifford's second definition of the pastoral as literature that "describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban" (2). In terms of pastoral influences, Henry David Thoreau quickly comes to mind (*Walden* being the favorite book of Djuna's father Wald Barnes) (Herring 34). Robert Azzarello has argued recently that Barnes "zoological imagination" echoes Thoreau in that "human being is banished from animal being by selfconsciousness" (101). Humanity's "enlightened" state paradoxically leads to a state of darkness surrounding animality and interiority.One of the striking features of Thoreau's *Walden*, a clear touchstone for modern pastoral, is the importance of the individual. This is a sharp departure from classic pastoral such as Theocritus where the scenes are of communal celebration and the sharing of songs. Even Virgil presents the dialogue as an essential feature of pastoral. For Thoreau, however, the pastoral is as much about escaping other humans as it is about returning to nature. This can be seen most

strikingly in the opening of Chapter V "Solitude":

> This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me...Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the but seek their prey now; the fox, and skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and woods without fear. They are Nature's watch men, —links which connect the days of animated life. (84)

The description of the night scene, and the creatures that come alive at night is precisely a vision of the dark pastoral which Djuna Barnes will make the defining feature of her modernist fiction (*Nightwood*, as we shall see, devotes a chapter to the "Night Watch" and interrogates the watch men of the night). Yet indispensible to Thoreau's "strange liberty in Nature" is precisely his isolation from his own species. It is only as an individual that he can feel the strange ripples and attractions of the nonhuman world.

In his insistence on individual exceptionalism and the primacy of inner life and subjective consciousness, Thoreau may be aligned with the high modernism of Eliot and Woolf. Yet *Walden* is also highly attentive to the material requirements for constructing an environment free from other humans. Much of the pleasure found in *Walden* is of a Georgic, "How to" variety in which the reader marvels at the economy of Thoreau's cabin, bean fields and taxonomic endeavors. In its attention to the material surroundings necessary for solitude and isolation, *Walden* becomes strikingly similar, in many aspects, to a work that at first

glance would appear to be its direct opposite: Joris-Karl Huysmans's 1884 novel *À rebours*. Translated, alternatively as *Against the Grain* or *Against Nature*, Huysmans's novel presents the story of Jean Des Esseintes, a degenerate French aristocrat who tries to escape Parisian society by retreating to an elaborate house of aesthetic delights. Although Des Esseintes's retreat is completely constructed and artificial whereas Thoreau's is a project of returning to a more natural mode of existence, the impulse to claim "a little world all to myself" (Thoreau) is precisely the same. Des Esseintes retreats to a life of artifice and imitation, one that he finds superior to the banality and limited means of Nature:

> Nature has had her day; she has finally exhausted, through the nauseating uniformity of her landscapes and her skies, the sedulous patience of men of refined taste. Essentially, what triteness Nature displays, like a specialist who confines himself to his own single sphere; what small-mindedness, like a shopkeeper who stocks only this one article to the exclusion of any other; what monotony she exhibits with her stores of meadows and trees, what banality with her arrangements of mountains and seas! (20)

Des Esseintes's rant against Nature is also Huysmans critique of literary naturalism. As such, *À rebours* stands as a modernist manifesto for a departure from realism and naturalism towards the autonomous realm of art for the novelty of invention, art for art's sake. The episode of the gilded tortoise provides a highly satirical vision of the anthropocentric tendency to see other biological life as mere adornment. To soften a garish rug, Des Esseintes purchases a large tortoise to perambulate slowly within its perimeter. Yet, the effect not to his liking, he decides he must, in fact, gild the tortoise and adorn it with jewels in order that it will trump the rug's display. All of which is magnificently to his liking until the tortoise

inconveniently dies. Here, then, is the limit of environmental control. Not so much in the will of Des Esseintes, nor his material means, nor his inventiveness; rather, the limit lies in the ability to keep the tortoise alive, as he will allow it to live.

Barnes (under the alias Lydia Steptoe) composed her own critique "Against Nature" in the August 1922 issue of *Vanity Fair*. Striking a tone of delightful satire, Barnes warns against the unforeseen consequences of being drawn too strongly to Nature:

> I presume almost no one really realizes how dangerous it is to love Nature. I've seen it do peculiar and horrible things to people who had a good start…Through love of plants men have lost their ability to stand alone, and have become permanently hooked…On the other hand, love of Nature has done even worse things to women. Under its influence women become prone to nets and sharp pitiful little cries, because they have stepped on a worm or removed the pollen from some butterfly. (88)

Wickedly humorous, perhaps most interesting here is Barnes's caricature of the "Nature lover" as a misguided, tragicomic figure. Against the love of nature, Barnes calls for "intricacy, falsity, perfidy" *à la* Huysmans, but she also calls for "Nature lovers who will let Nature have a few private moments—in this way perhaps something wonderful would happen!" (88). Here is an early version of a vision of Nature that is indifferent to humanity. Nature does not exist to be loved by men and women, rather, the dark pastoral mode resists human attempts to claim Nature, to return to a simpler, more youthful mode of living in the world. Thus Barnes is clearly against an overly simplified and ultimately anthropocentric love of Nature. She positions herself against the early acolytes of Thoreau, of which her father Wald Barnes was a particularly troubling instantiation. Yet her "Against Nature" is not

as extreme as Huysmans's *À Rebours*. She does not wish to banish Nature: Nature is not to blame but rather human attitudes towards Nature.

If Thoreau and Huysmans are equally problematic in their common search for the perfect human retreat, the Irish playwright J. M. Synge provides an alternative path of pastoral influence. Specifically, an attention to humanity's unenlightened state in relation to Nature is found in Synge's work, whose style Barnes largely copied in her early plays. While critics often dismiss these earlier plays as juvenilia, reading and mimicking Synge was formative in the development of pastoral themes in Barnes's work.[44] In her 1917 article "The Songs of Synge" she writes that "[Synge] toiled as one who digs for a buried loved one, knowing that the statutory six feet of earth must come up first. He realized that it was only after the struggle that he could hope to be himself…when he lay down with himself he was still in the great dark" (14). A great part of this struggle was Synge's apostasy from the Ango-Irish Protestant church, a result, as he recounts, of reading Darwin's *Origin of Species*: "It opened in my hands at a passage where he asks how can we explain the similarity between a man's hand and a bird's or bat's wings except by evolution. I flung the book aside and rushed out into the open air…the sky seemed to have lost its blue and the grass its green" (*Collected Works* 8). Synge experiences here a broadening and deepening of his *Umwelt* through an encounter with Darwinian conclusions based on the new *Merkzeuge* of biological science. By doubting a religious pastoral authority, Synge turns to the natural world and to his own animality for a new orientation of his effect space. This emphasis on perception and self-determination is perhaps best dramatized in Synge's plays with Martin Doul's refusal to regain his sight in *The Well of the Saints*. As Doul explains to the Saint after tricking him and spilling his holy water, "it's more sense is in a blind man, and more power maybe than

you're thinking at all…I'm thinking it's a good right ourselves have to be sitting blind, hearing a soft wind turning round the little leaves of the spring and feeling the sun" (*Plays* 171–172). Martin Doul appeals to an alternative sense perception and knowledge as the basis of his power. The refusal of the religious miracle is an affirmation of empiricism, ironically positioning the blind as more modern than the seeing. Perhaps, most significantly, Martin Doul asserts the right to determine (to some degree) his own *Umwelt*. It is precisely the access to "darkness" that allows him to know nature and to retain his right of autonomy.

Building on Thoreau and Synge, it quickly becomes clear that Barnes is not utilizing the pastoral mode in its common form of the retreat and return. Consider, for example, the last quatrain of "Pastoral":

> The snail that marks the girth of night with slime,
> The lonely adder hissing in the fern,
> The lizard with its ochre eyes aburn—
> Each is before, and each behind its time" (*ANAH* 75).

Barnes' pastoral presents an ambient temporality. The linear form of the retreat and return is replaced with its purely circular movement, both past time *and* futurity. Dark pastoral, in this sense, affirms a literal understanding of environment as that which surrounds, an ambient movement of circling around in all directions. Barnes's temporality here, her emphasis on each animal having "its [own] time" resonates with Uexküll's discussion of time; he writes, "Time, which frames all events, seemed to us to be the only objectively consistent factor, compared to the variegated changes of its contents, but now we see that the subject controls the time of its environment" (52). Whereas Uexküll stresses the subject's control of time, the relationship between subject and time is not as straightforward in Barnes's formulation,

where time seems to slip in and out of subjective control.

A desire to explore the dark pastoral organizes many of Djuna Barnes's short stories. In "A Night Among the Horses," for example, John attempts to escape his life by going out into the night, "His heart ached with the nearness of the earth…something somnolent seemed to be here, and he wondered. It was like a deep, heavy, yet soft prison where, without sin, one may suffer intolerable punishment…He had heard about the freeness of nature, thought it was so, and it was not so" (*S* 3–4). Here, the dark pastoral mode denies the escape into the freedom of nature. Connection with the earth only affirms mortality, obligation and suffering. Put another way, John hopes that the night might reveal some new form of life, some new vision of being, but instead it only affirms the limitations of his biological faculties: *Umwelt* as a deep, heavy, soft prison.[45] Dark pastoral as an indebtedness to the earth also frames the virtuosic and polyphonic *Ryder*. The story of Wendell becomes that of a man who tries at once to be shepherd *and* beast, to seek "his life, by rhythm" (119). He, too, turns for answers in the dark of night, where the multiple and impossible Race of Ryder confronts him, "Everything and its shape became clear in the dark, by tens and tens they ranged, and lifted their lids and looked at him…Closing in about him nearer, and swinging out wide and from him far, and came in near and near, and as a wave, closed over him, and he drowned, and arose while he yet might go" (242). Here the pastoral becomes an immersive force. Rather than being "escapist" in the pejorative sense, the pastoral refuses to allow Wendell to escape: he rises and falls, not unlike Phlebas the Phoenician, in the pastoral abyss.

The Black Sheep

With these early versions of pastoral in mind, the dark pastoral in *Nightwood*

becomes more visible. At the same time, Barnes's use of the pastoral in *Nightwood* goes beyond her previous juxtapositions of country and city. Part of the reason for this—discussed further in the next section—may be the increasing breakdown of the separation between country and city due to the modernizing forces of transportation, communication and industrialized agriculture. These changes, as well as the increasing migration of people from the country to urban centers, led to the increased dominance of the metropolis over rural areas. This dominance was both material (in terms of dictating social and labor conditions for farmers) as well as cultural. Jed Esty, for example, outlines a "metropolitan perception" as the guiding influence on literary modernism and cosmopolitan cultural formation precisely because it is "cut free from the moorings of 'narrow formations' like the nation or the region, the clan or the family, the church or the guild. This experience of selfhood in what Keynes called an 'international but individualistic' era provides one basis for what we generally take to be the most innovative and typical forms of modernist writing" (34). The international/ individualistic combination seems to present the best of both worlds, or the best of both *Umwelten.* If we recall Uexküll's assertion that, "an animal is able to distinguish as many objects as it can carry out actions in its environment," then the "metropolitan perception" marks the *Umwelt* of the modernist as a seemingly limitless horizon of actions. The *Umwelt* of the rural subject, in comparison, appears increasingly narrow and confined by arbitrary strictures. *Nightwood*, as a work of late modernism, effectively indicts this autonomous "metropolitan perception" by insisting on the "objective social conditions" that continue to bind the actions of metropolitan subjects. The economic crises sweeping through the world in the 1930s made these social strictures all the more apparent. The global economic crisis that followed the American stock market crash also directly impacted efforts to preserve and

improve rural conditions in England. The Council for the Preservation of Rural England notably submitted in 1929 a memorandum on the subject of national parks and landscape preservation to Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. Published in 1931, "The Report of the National Parks Committee" presented a detailed plan for selection areas, recreational facilities and common land access guidelines. Given the more pressing financial issues of the depression, however, such plans were tabled until 1935 with the formation of the Standing Committee on National Parks, which itself was brought to a standstill by the renewed imminence of war.[46] Thus an institutional effort to establish the pastoral as a framework for national organization met with difficulties from metropolitan and international forces. Barnes achieves a late modernist critique of tensions between the city and the country through a new pastoral mode that affirms the collapse between country and city but insists on the persistence of interpersonal power dynamics through a return to the traditional notion of pastoral as shepherding.

Thus *Nightwood*'s Dr. Matthew O'Connor, watchman of the night, is the shepherd of lost souls. He is, like Wordsworth's Michael, "watchful more than ordinary men" (119). Robin Vote, it follows, is the black sheep of his flock. The novel's obsession with "bowing down" points to what critics such as Paul Alpers and Annabel Patterson outline as pastoral's ideological critique of authority.[47] Yet it also reveals the complex social and cultural power dynamics at work in any given character's entourage. To bow down, "the genuflection the hunted body makes" (*N* 5), is to cede one's subject-centered authority to another transcendent, living power: to recognize oneself as merely an object occupying a small part of another, more powerful environment. This pastoral control of environment appears most vividly in *Nightwood* at the carnival and the circus. Such spectacles, as Laura Winkiel

argues, "offered real or fake monsters and hybrids—whatever was unique or abnormal and hence unclassifiable in a scientific taxonomy: a five-legged sheep, a dog boy, an ape man, a giant or dwarf animal or human…They restored a biological continuity denied by scientific thought and, in general, by modernity" (29). Yet this restoration of biological exceptions is achieved through a process of behavioral control. Thus, for Felix, the carnival affirms his own perverse regard for aristocracy in "the love of the lion for its tamer" (*NW* 14). The figure of the lion-tamer may be read, following Uexküll, as one who attempts to master the effect space [*Wirkraum*] of the lion. Uexküll stresses the importance of the vestibular system of the inner ear, which provides animals with a three-dimensional effect space. The act of bowing down, lowering the head, is not only a symbolic act of deference, but a literal reorientation of the vertical resting plane of the subject. Such a biological realignment highlights differences of class, race, and species. Thus for Felix, as Jane Marcus argues, "his restless search for 'pure' racial nobility to which to 'bow down' signifies his internalization of racial difference while underscoring the reality of a Europe in which racial purity has been obscured by mixed marriages and false credentials" (158). In Marcus's formulation, bowing down is not simply a biological response, but a complex register of cultural power dynamics that rely on artifice and a certain willing participation of docile subjects.

A *New York Press* article of February 14, 1915, titled "Djuna Barnes Probes the Souls of Jungle Folk at the Hippodrome Circus" similarly presents the circus as a ring of power relationships that invite us to question which side of the spectacle we are on. Barnes considers the relationship between animality and childhood, writing that, "For every ton of earth that is thrown upon the floor, a yard of childhood comes skipping back. They may talk of the cost of the earth, but it's only the kid who really can appraise it properly. Animals and

children: this is the state of creation; after that it is civilization" (192). Robin's liminality between child and adult is crucial in an analysis of her connection to the earth. After his invocation of the black sheep, Matthew O'Connor proposes a toast to Robin, who "can't be more than twenty" (44). This age has significance for Barnes, in "A Night in the Woods," for example, Trenchard claims that "one may speculate before the age of twenty, but not after" (*Smoke* 173). Being not yet 20, Robin may be read as a speculative organism, "a beast turning human," in a liminal stage between pastoral animality and civilized obedience. Despite the mature and disturbing themes of dark pastoral, it is precisely to childhood stories that one may turn for an understanding of its basic features. As Roni Natov argues, "the dark pastoral is associated with the creative energy and the imagination of childhood. It is constructed to resolve the tensions and bifurcations associated with civilization, whether demarcated as bestial and spiritual, male and female, or social and natural" (120). In this sense, what one encounters in the dark pastoral landscape is precisely the mirror of the "potential destruction from which [one] has fled" (119).

Yet Djuna's dark pastoral does not resolve the tensions of civilization. It provides neither escape nor creative regeneration; instead, it critiques the flawed divide between nature and civilization demanded by modernity. When Robin and Nora meet at the Denckman circus, Robin is faced with the supplication of a lioness who regards her with eyes that flow "in tears that never reached the surface" (60).[48] These unshed tears point to both a compassionate connection between human and animal, but also the limitations that inhere to such identification. It is at this moment that Robin makes the declaration, "I don't want to be here" (60). As the narration is quick to point out, she does not specify where she wants to be. This declaration, "I don't want to be here," illustrates the waywardness of the dark pastoral.

The impulse is not to retreat or escape to a place of rest and retreat but a perpetual desire to escape, which can be satisfied only in death.[49] While Robin's waywardness leads her to travel and voyage alone, she also presents a "tragic longing to be kept, knowing herself astray" (63). It is this tragic longing that entices Nora, as Dianne Chisholm elaborates, "Nora is attracted by Robin's wildness which she is tempted to domesticate like an enterprising circus manager" (183). Robin's status as the stray is visible even in "the changing direction taken by the curls" that hang on her forehead (64). These wayward curls of the black sheep signal both a genetic degeneracy and a potential escape from authoritarian control. Born to "holy decay," (*N* 115) the infant Guido may be read as the "droppings" that Robin has left in the Baron's bed.Yet the black sheep as a product of recessive genes that rarely coincide within any given herd may also be read as a queer resilience to the dominant norm and a reserve of revolutionary potential. Barnes's illustration of "The Beast" in *Ryder* places the dark curls of a black sheep at the center of her hybrid ram/lion/griffin chimera (Figure 5). Such a creature stands apart from the docile herd that casually chews grass in the background, oblivious to the stunted trees that signal an amputated environment. Dana Seitler sees in Robin's wayward travels, "the migratory nature of the subject, and its perverse dislocatedness. An unpredictable being whose identity is mobile and as temporary as her relationships, she resists the determining descriptions of the science-culture dichotomy by ensuring that avenues for desire remain multiple and continuously shifting" (549). While Seitler is right to celebrate this mobility, especially in a character continually faced with enclosure by the desires of others, Robin's ramblings are not pursued purely for the sake of maintaining multiple and continuously shifting avenues of desire.

Figure 5. The Beast (UMD Djuna Barnes Collection)

Such a reading reinscribes what is arguably the modernist fantasy *par excellence*: a limitless life of movement and consumption that in reality can be achieved only through a gross exploitation of other living beings and natural resources.

Seitler's attention to desire does, however, reveal a central contradiction within pastoral narration. As Paul Alpers argues, "Desire can either be represented in pastoral modes—in which what is unruly and unsatisfied is stabilized by the pleasures of utterance and performance—or it…can give rise to statements and acts that effect change and that thus generate a normal plot, with its entanglements, rhythms, and resolutions. But not, apparently, both" (335). For *Nightwood*, however, the drive is not simply to represent and therefore stabilize desire, nor is desire exactly the fuel that generates the surreal and hallucinatory ordering of events in the novel. More than a drive to maintain open avenues of desire, Robin's waywardness is both an attempt to escape the desires of others, as well as her own physical limitations that force her to bow to these desires. Carrie Rohman points out importantly that Robin is able to transcend desire momentarily in the depths of the forest, surrounded by nonhuman language, "Robin can stop moving, and become fixed, because she is deeply subsumed into a nonhuman milieu…by becoming an anonymous drop of water in the greater ontological pond—a pond larger than Being conceived as merely human, as merely Dasein—this is Robin's reverie" (80–81). Rohman's description of Robin calls to mind Ursula Brangwen's moment of fixture, sinking as a pebble to the bottom of the stream of life. Robin is able to transcend desire through a momentary suspension of her subject-centered *Umwelt*. This scene in the woods parallels that of John in "A Night Among the Horses" as well as Wendell in *Ryder*, however Robin is distinct in that she does not expect something from the darkness of the woods; instead, her intrusion is "forgotten in fixed

stillness" (*N* 177) as she integrates seamlessly into the surroundings. She escapes, briefly, in a way that no other character is able to.

Why Not Rest?

In traditional pastoral, a rest in the country can provide a new, reinvigorated return to civilization, but in Barnes's dark pastoral one finds no rest. Matthew O'Conner asks Nora, "Why not rest? Why not put the pen away? …Your body is coming to it, you are forty and the body has a politic too" (*N* 161). To rest in the politic of the body would be to accept one's own biological apparatus and concomitant *Umwelt*, yet *Nightwood* is determined to deny such a state to its characters. The end of the novel presents a pastoral death drive as Robin circles "closer and closer" to the decaying chapel, culminating in her sacrificial dance with Nora's dog.[50] For the first time, Robin goes down of her own accord, "dragging her forelocks in the dust" (179). Her moment of release is an approach to freedom not by action but through a giving up. She turns her face and weeps, invoking both Hezekiah and Fergus, simultaneously going inward and releasing herself outward. The dog, in turn, also gives up, "his head flat along her knees" (180). It is this tableau of giving up, of letting be, that replaces both the pastoral control of the shepherd and the calming release into nature. The dark pastoral denies human control of nature and environment, asserting instead life's ultimate fragility and inevitable submission to that which surrounds it.

Barnes's dark pastoral emerges as an important counter narrative at a time when the pastoral mode itself approaches a crisis. William Empson's 1935 collection of essays *Some Versions of Pastoral* signaled a new skepticism towards the propaganda lurking behind the pastoral mode. Citing, for example, the comedic "double plot" in the Jacobean tragedy *The*

Changeling, Empson writes, "The Logos enters humanity from above as this sheep does from below, or takes on the animal nature of man which is like a man becoming a sheep, or sustains all nature and its laws so that in one sense it is as truly present in the sheep as the man" (28). By embodying the black sheep, Robin similarly enters into an animal nature in order to explore the limits of nature's laws. In this vein, recent work by Cary Wolfe has pursued the intersection between animal studies, biopolitics and systems theory in order to posit a legal system that might remain "open to its environment but responding to changes in it in terms of the autopoietic closure of its own self-reference" (90). Barnes's dark pastoral is a similar exploration of transgressions between animals and humans existing at the margins of legal status. *Nightwood* largely affirms the collapse of the separation between city and country, repurposing the pastoral as an immersive, ambient force that is present in both urban and more traditionally "natural" settings. Yet, significantly, the dark pastoral inverts the narrative of city controlling country; to wit, it is precisely the natural world that infiltrates mankind's fortress of civilization, seen in the description of Robin's room at the Hôtel Récamier as a "jungle trapped in a drawing room (in the apprehension of which the walls have made their escape)" (38). The dark pastoral critique of escapism then does not affirm the total human domination of nature but the opposite: the escape into nature is impossible precisely for the reason that nature's dark forces are present regardless of how artificially controlled one's environment is. There is no escape into nature; instead, it is nature that cannot be escaped. Despite the bleak and pessimistic tone of this assertion, this realization ultimately leads to a new, peculiarly modernist environmental aesthetics that collapses the separation between body and environment and stresses the continual, material engagement between life and its surroundings.

In one sense, such an environmental aesthetics leads directly back to the Kantian subject celebrated by Uexküll. The industrial capitalist may simply view the countryside as an extension of the increasingly sustainable urban *Umwelt*. Yet beyond a flattening of spaces into a single all-encompassing *Umwelt*, the collapse between country and city reveals that the two are not in fact distinct and separate but dependent upon one another, and not just on a level of resources and space, but more significantly in terms of interpersonal relationships. Addressing the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, Norwegian Ambassador Erik Colban observes, "We must try to bridge the gap between town and country, because after all the towns are as interested in the preservation of the country as those who live in the country. We should not be jealous of one or the other. We have been pressed so close together through the development of modern transport that we really are all living in the towns and in the countryside" (*Handbook* 11–12). It is precisely this "pressing together" of organisms that is the defining environmental shift of modernity, yet Uexküll's *Forays* provides little to elaborate the significance of other living beings within the individual *Umwelt*. As more and more organisms "come under the spell" of any given human's *Umwelt*, what is the effect on new types of meaning and actions? One helpful starting point offered by Uexküll is the concept of the "functional cycle," which "connects the carrier of meaning with the subject. The functional cycles that are most important according to their meaning and are found in most environments are the cycles of the medium, of nourishment, of the enemy, and of sex" (145). All of these cycles, but especially the last two, necessarily involve other sentient organisms. For humans, questions of sex and enemies certainly depend on biological factors, but the incredibly complicated range of human interactions can hardly be reduced to biology alone. It is precisely the intricate functional cycles that a highly biosensitive novel such as

Nightwood can begin to articulate. In particular, *Nightwood* reveals the damaging ruptures that occur when a functional cycle is denied, suspended or interrupted. Thus Nora's inability to rest, to put the pen away, stems from the traumatic inability to retain her functional cycle to Robin. Robin meanwhile is able to forge a new functional cycle, albeit through an abandonment of her own species.

It is this anxiety over the impossibility of interpersonal connection that drives the narrative of *Nightwood*. In his 1937 review of the book, Alfred Kazin writes, "The story of the novel is like the biological routine of the body; it is the pattern of life, something that cannot be avoided, but it has the function of a spring, and nothing more. It is in their release from mere sensation, or rather the expression of such an attempted release, that Miss Barnes's characters have their being" (6). This attempt to find something beyond sensation is again an attempt to transcend the Uexküllian *Umwelt* that is both the perfect expression of a character's insertion into her world and the biological limits of knowledge and experience. Kazin's attention to the "expression of such an attempted release" points to the overwhelming futility of such desires, particularly seen in Matthew O'Connor's final drunken diatribe that leaves him pinned to the café table. Yet behind this desire for release is the desire for connection with another, the giving up of oneself through a shared life of complete intimacy. Such intimate connection may be glimpsed in a letter from Thelma Wood to Barnes, in which she describes her interaction with a parrot encountered during her trip to the Isle of Pines, "I have taught the Polly to say "Poor poor Polly"—and "pretty pretty Polly" Some day I shall have to have a Polly—Though if it were around us much I fear for its vocabulary…I guess we can't have one—we wouldn't dare have anything but something dumb around us" (Wood). Wood stresses that she and Barnes live in a world of their own,

complete with its own language, vocabulary and nonsense. The personal relationship between the two forms its own *Umwelt*, unintelligible to anyone else outside of its perception marks.

Such a shared world is the negative at the center of *Nightwood* that generates the ruptures and unraveling of the characters left in Robin's wake. Shared moments, if they exist at all, do so outside of the pages of *Nightwood*. The narration in "Night Watch," for example, details the happiness between Nora and Robin in a single paragraph, "In the passage of their lives together every object in the garden, every item in the house, every word they spoke, attested to their mutual love, the combining of their humours" (*N* 61). Tellingly, this time of connection is described as a fusing of *Umwelten*, a sympathy that extends to their surrounding environment and language. What fills the rest of the pages is a constant drive towards captivating, domesticating and taming the wild other. In an excised passage from a manuscript draft of *Nightwood*, Robin laments, "They encompass me about—yea, they encompass me about—they encompass me about like bees" (TSR 210). Perhaps most vexing about this desire for control is that it is not primarily malicious. Before his collapse, Matthew O'Connor rants about the ducks in Golden Gate park who are damned through the kind feeding of strangers, "how they flop and struggle all over the park in autumn, crying and tearing their hair out because their nature is weighted down with bread…and that's another illustration of love; in the end you are too heavy to move with the greediness in your stomach" (*N* 170). When Robin takes to the night, Nora becomes similarly weighted down by the objects they have accumulated together. She experiences Robin's absence as a "physical removal, insupportable and irreparable. As an amputated hand cannot be disowned because it is experiencing a futurity, of which the victim is its forebear, so Robin was an amputation

that Nora could not renounce" (*N* 65). Just as her connection with Robin created a new, shared world, the severance creates a biological as well as psychological effect. As Robin increasingly draws away, Nora is forced to confront her own desire to control, tame and possess Robin. It is in this sense that Nora's nightmarish vision of her grandmother, of "something being done to Robin" reflects Nora's own incestual desires to keep Robin as "her life out of her life" (*N* 69). The final scene of "Night Watch" presents Robin and Nora as living statues amidst the garden statue at dawn:

> Standing motionless, straining her eyes, she saw emerge from the darkness the light of Robin's eyes, the fear in them developing their luminosity until, by the intensity of their double regard, Robin's eyes and hers met. So they gazed at each other. As if that light had power to bring what was dreaded into the zone of their catastrophe Nora saw the body of another woman swim up into the statue's obscurity, with head hung down, that the added eyes might not augment the illumination; her arms about Robin's neck, her body pressed to Robin's, her legs slackened in the hang of the embrace. (*N* 69–70)

Here, the intense, "double regard" illuminates the inexpressible impossibility of truly sharing another living being's *Umwelt*. The other woman, fishlike, swims into the frame, not maliciously but naturally, inevitably. It is this final regard that signals the ultimate rupture between Nora and Robin. After this moment, Nora can only watch as Robin enacts the behaviors of dominance and control towards Nora's dog, a perpetuation of Nora's own controlling desires.

While a sharing of *Umwelten* may result from the functional cycle of sex, sex is not necessarily its driving force. Commenting on sexual readings of the end of the novel, Emily

Coleman writes, “You actually have this dog sexual. But it can be made less so. It isn’t that publishers wouldn't like it—it is that *you do not want that idea there yourself*” (Coleman). By lying down with the dog, then, Robin is not so much pursuing a sexual connection as attempting to transcend her own *Umwelt* through an exploration of the dog’s biological receptors.[51] While the ultimate significance of this final scene is purposively ambivalent and multi-layered, Robin’s final realization in this moment may be precisely that she cannot control nor master the dog. Such an acknowledgement would also affirm that Robin herself cannot be controlled by Nora, Jenny, or any of the other creatures that come to her in the night. Her release, then, is not so much one of futility, but one of relief and acceptance of her own being. Following Giorgio Agamben’s comment on Walter Benjamin, the final tableau presented in *Nightwood* is one of the “saved night,” which gathers, “creatural life not in order to reveal it, nor to open it to human language, but rather to give it back to its closedness and muteness” (81). The rest that occurs between Robin and Nora’s dog presents “the inactivity and *desœuvrement* of the human and of the animal as the supreme and unsavable figure of life” (87). Robin no longer aims to “purge her body of its theme,” rather she can rest in the knowledge that her theme, though unique, is shared by those animals, human and otherwise, who make up the manifold environments in her *Umwelt*. Thus *Nightwood* ends with a “letting be” of animal and human, a dark pastoral dénouement that does not find safety in nature, but rather affirms the interdependence of all life that persists despite the manifold modes of existence in the world.

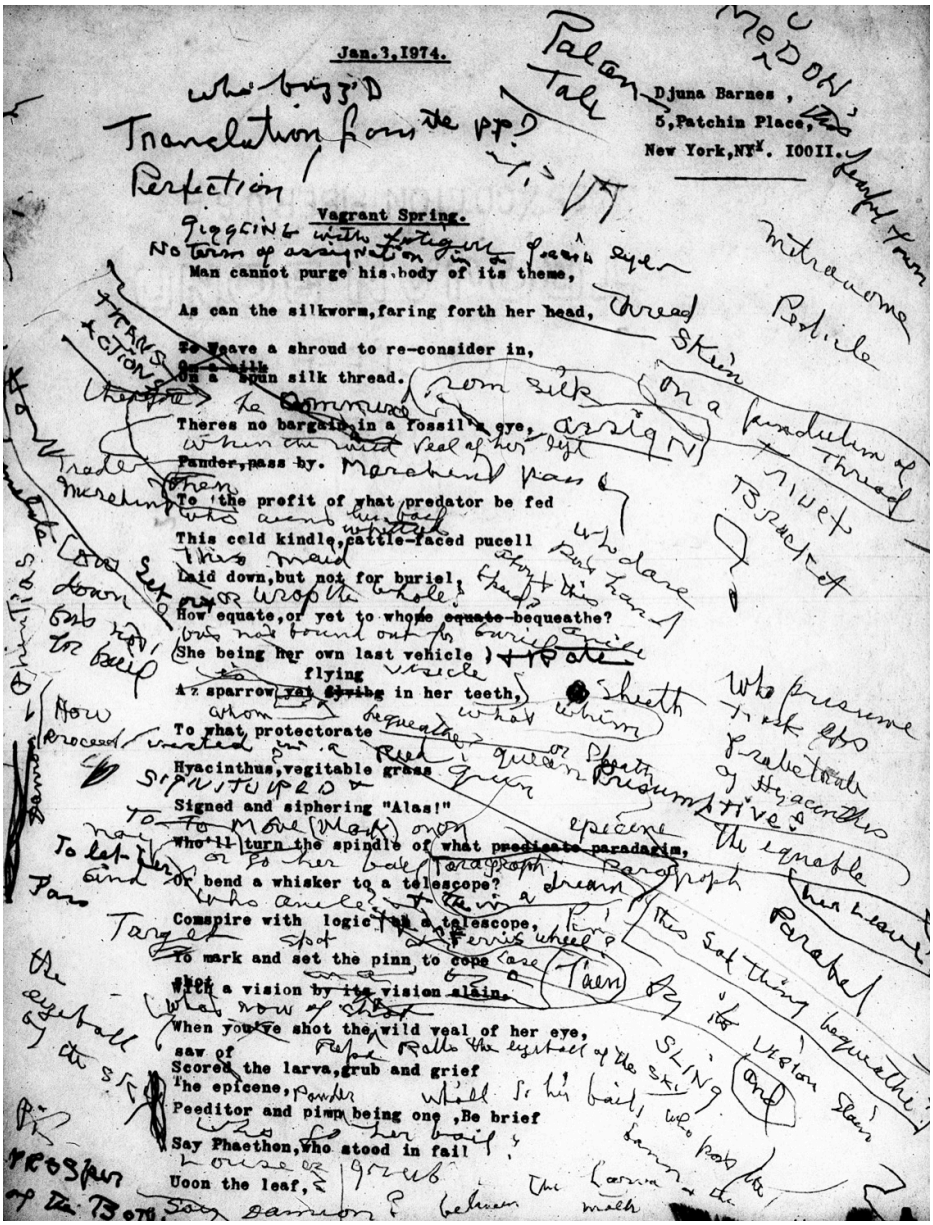
Exeunt

Starting in 1960, Djuna Barnes spent over twenty years writing, revising and re-

spinning the long poem called variously "Rite of Spring," "Vagrant Spring," "Viaticum," and "Transfiguration," among other working titles:

> Man cannot purge his body of its theme,
>
> As can the silkworm, on a running thread,
>
> Spin a shroud to re-consider in. (1)

The neatness of the three opening lines belies the messy mutations of the numerous drafts, even while establishing the central theme of what Barnes saw in a Joycean vein as "poetry in progress." For man, Barnes insists, there is no transcendence of body. As she once wrote succinctly to Emily Coleman, "We all lean (biologically) towards the end of ourselves" (Quoted in Coleman 1/26/36). For man there is no metamorphosis. Unlike the silkworm, which can spin a cocoon from which it will emerge as the fully mature *Bombyx mori*, complete with new biological faculties and concomitantly (following Uexküll) a new *Umwelt*, man remains tied to a single body with a single set of biological receptors. Yet for all of this, man's desire to "purge his body of its theme," is not lessened; it becomes if anything more desperate.[52] Barnes's "work in progress," reveals just this desire to take something from the body, from experience, and to leave it transformed upon a page in verbal expression. Her scrawling notes on typewritten drafts come across as so many silk strands that form the cocoon from which a poem might emerge newly formed and unexpected into the world (Figure 6).[53] Writing, in this sense, becomes a doomed attempt to transcend *Umwelt*. For Barnes, the isolated, spinning away of verse within the cocoon of 5 Patchin Place marks the complete reversal from her early career as a journalist and dramatist, which necessitated constant interaction with other people and the outside world.


Jan.3,1974.

Djuna Barnes ,
5,Patchin Place,
New York,NY. 10011.

Vagrant Spring.

Man cannot purge his body of its theme,
As can the silkworm,faring forth her head,
To weave a shroud to re-consider in,
On a spun silk thread.
Theres no bargain in a fossil's eye,
Pander,pass by.
To the profit of what predator be fed
This cold kindle,cattle-faced pucell
Laid down,but not for buriel,
How equate,or yet to whome bequeathe?
She being her own last vehicle
A sparrow yet in her teeth,
To what protectorate
Hyacinthus,vegitable grass
Signed and siphering "Alas!"
Who'll turn the spindle of what predicate paradigm,
Or bend a whisker to a telescope?
Conspire with logic to a telescope,
To mark and set the pinn to cope
With a vision by its vision slain.
When you've shot the wild veal of her eye,
saw of
Scored the larva,grub and grief
The epicene,powder
Peeditor and pimp being one ,Be brief
Say Phaethon,who stood in fail
Upon the leaf,

Figure 6. “Vagrant Spring” draft. (UMD Djuna Barnes Collection)

A deeply pastoral turn, her asceticism is all the more striking for its location in the center of a thriving, postwar New York City. Such isolation amid civilization is strikingly achieved through that most quintessential technology of modern environmental control, the air-conditioner. As Barnes writes to her benefactor Natalie Clifford Barney on May 16, 1963:

> It may please you to know that your kind gift is helping to put in an air-conditioning machine (for the heart, and for hope of removing some of the death-dealing smog, which by the by, increases in mischief as time passes; air fouled by auto gasses, D. D. T. spraying, refuse burning, manufacturing fumes, etc, etc, so that living becomes very "chancy" from here in out. (1)

The reference to D. D. T. is telling, as Barnes's turn towards the composition of "Rites of Spring" occurs at the same time that Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was leading the launch of the contemporary American environmental movement. Carson's work was the subject of the final written correspondence between Barnes and Thelma Wood. Wood writes on April 14, 1969, "i have a trembly right hand so the typing, no hangover haven't had a drink about ten years—spring is here but as rachel carson said it is silent, the people have taken everything." To which Barnes replies, "I am sure you are right, 'They have taken everything away', that spring that's gone." People, with their rampant consumption, are thus directly opposite to the silkworm. Forever using up, depleting, fouling, humans are stuck in a process of expenditure that can never lead to metamorphosis, growth or transformation. In thus privileging the silkworm (itself one of the most domesticated and genetically modified animals in the world),[54] Barnes highlights the fundamental truth that while for man there is no metamorphosis, humanity's ability for new creation and generation depends entirely upon its interaction with fellow humans as well as the full diversity of life on earth.[55]

Chapter 4

Decolonizing Ecology: Global Unrest and Postwar Environmentalism

> I put for the general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in death.
>
> —Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

With the isolated, spinning-away of verse presented by Djuna Barnes at 5 Patchin Place, we return once again to the room, that basic unit of the built environment. Yet instead of remaining attached and dispersed to the world (*à la* Woolf), Barnes's room becomes a problematic pastoral retreat, complete with air-conditioner for a constant and filtered atmosphere. Rest, as such, becomes the individual's escape from the surrounding world and community, rather than a process of caring for others and one's larger environment. In this final chapter, I will explore the possibilities for a modernist environmental awareness to lead instead to an active engagement with ecological crisis. Can, in short, the legacy of literary modernism lead to a model of community engagement and cultural change? Such a discussion will run up against the limits of the modernist environmental mode and require an engagement with environmentalism's ties to colonialism and global resource management.

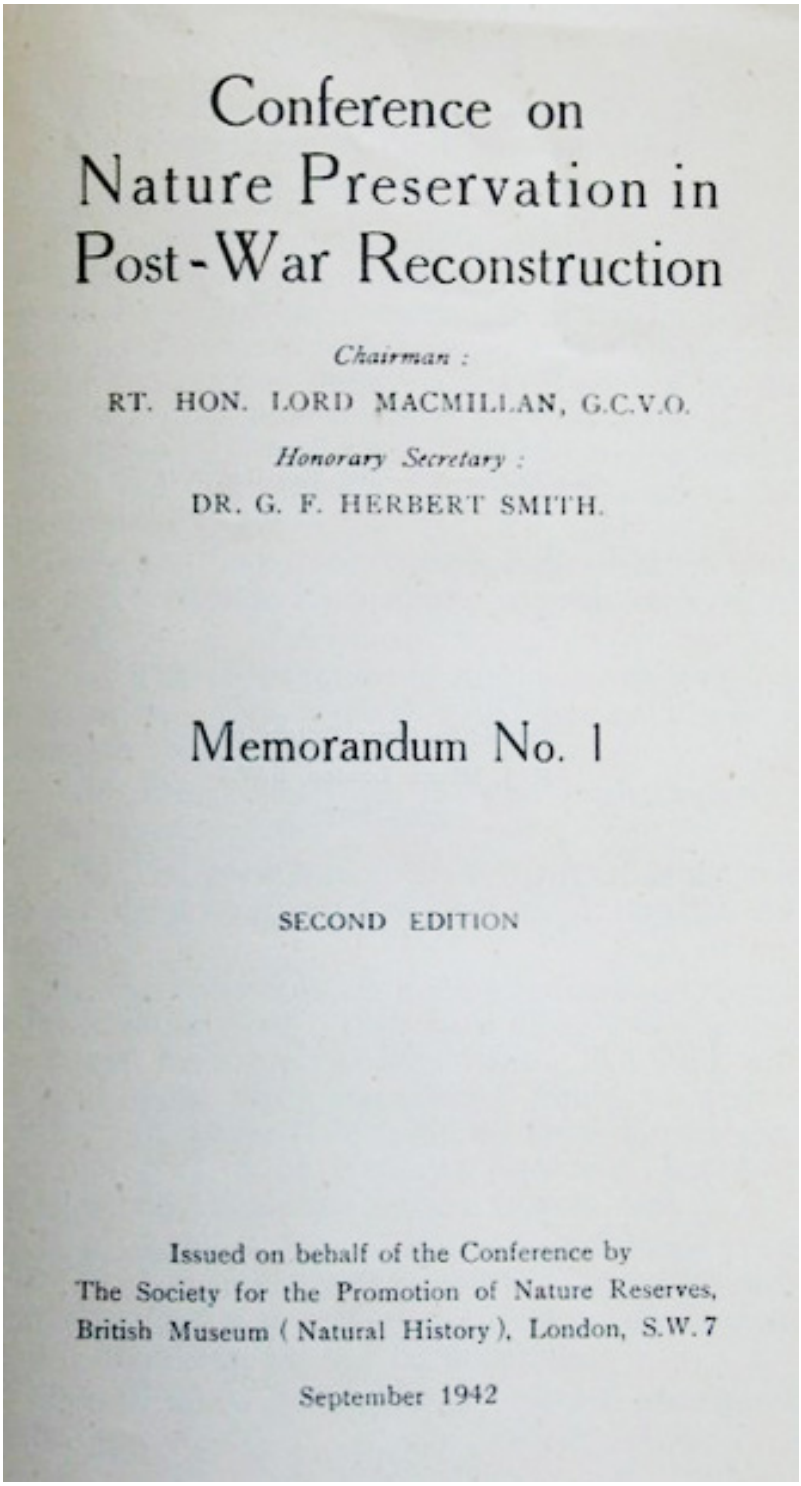
Where *Nightwood* contains intimations of a late modernism, self-aware and self-reflexive, Chapter 4 looks to Jean Rhys's 1938 novel *Good Morning, Midnight* for a tipping-point within the modernist novel: a dead end or impasse from which Rhys herself could not proceed until 1966's *Wide Sargasso Sea*. *Good Morning, Midnight* presents a decisive return to the urban environment—Paris, the quintessential metropolis—accompanied by the new realization that pastoral retreat is impossible. At the same time, the novel presents a new

global environmental awareness that connects the failures of interwar recovery, the failures of European nations to find rest and peace, to the continued colonial abuse of foreign lands. Thus Sasha Jansen's restless movement between England and France parallels the colonial history of Rhys's homeland Dominica. Rhys's novel displays a prescience of the return to war. Although WWII presented a stark challenge to environmental efforts, the importance placed on recovery and reconstruction efforts in the postwar era provided new grounds for environmental action.

While nature conservation became an international priority in the postwar era, the second half of this chapter turns to Chinua Achebe's 1960 novel *No Longer at Ease* to explore the unevenness of environmental recovery. Through a juxtaposition of main character Obiajulu, whose name means "the mind at last is at rest," and Mr. Green, a 1950s counterpoint to Joseph Conrad's Colonel Kurtz, I explore modernism's environmental legacy in regard to the end of colonialism and a newly emerging "green imperialism" that seeks to manage natural spaces on a global scale. Within this larger discussion of environmentalism and empire, literature is able to render certain remainders that challenge and contest modernization and colonialism's narratives of efficiency, progress, recovery and control. Rhys and Achebe present material and psychological remainders that lie outside scientific visions of supposedly "balanced" ecosystems as well as a sense of remainder as that which is imminent, yet to occur, and thus outside the scope of anthropogenic control. Such remainders provide a vision of ecology not as inherently benevolent or just, but as unpredictable, fragile and subject to violent and exploitative power relations.

A Chain So Broad

Whereas during and following WWI nature preservation in the United Kingdom was largely unintelligible, the case for "Nature Preservation in Post-war Reconstruction" was presented as early as June 5, 1941 in the House of Lords. The efforts of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves during and after WWII led to the establishment of the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee and the Nature Conservancy in 1949. Along with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which held its first congress at Fontainebleu on October 5, 1948, the case for Nature protection was finally becoming legible beyond small groups of interested individuals (Figure 7). On the one hand, the fact that British Lords were meeting to discuss Nature a mere three weeks after the Blitz on London appears as a callous disregard for the more pressing damage dealt to human life and the built environment. On the other hand, the importance of Nature in Post-war Reconstruction does address a larger problem at the heart of modernist culture, namely, the relationship between violence and the conquest of the natural world. The conference signals a certain tipping point within the British Empire where imperial expansionism cedes to an inward view towards protecting the British interior itself: a tension between external development and interior preservation. Jed Esty's *A Shrinking Island* outlines the renewed attention to the British interior as an "anthropological turn," where the end of empire leads to a resurgent national culture and autonomous art cedes to the agency of culture. Esty notes that the late works of high English modernists such as Woolf, Eliot and Forster often return to the English land itself as a source of regeneration and cultural renewal. Eliot invokes an "Ecology of Cultures," while Woolf poses a ritualized relation towards nature as the basis for collectivity.



Conference on Nature Preservation in Post-War Reconstruction

Chairman :

RT. HON. LORD MACMILLAN, G.C.V.O.

Honorary Secretary :

DR. G. F. HERBERT SMITH.

Memorandum No. 1

SECOND EDITION

Issued on behalf of the Conference by
The Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves,
British Museum (Natural History), London, S.W. 7

September 1942

Figure 7. Nature Preservation in Post-War Reconstruction (The Wildlife Trusts)

Forster, in particular, calls for preservation in *England's Pleasant Land*, and describes his own stewardship efforts in his essay "My Wood," showcasing a mixture of international expansionism and sad provincialism. While Esty does not connect this body of literature with concurrent environmental movements, the parallels are striking and suggest a multimodal constellation of scientific and literary environmental awareness emerging in late modernism.

The international reception of British environmental efforts testifies to the unique ambivalence of such a project during wartime. Responding to the 1943 report *Nature Conservation in Great Britain*, the National Park Service in the United States issued the following statement:

> Imagine—Great Britain in March 1943, with bombs still dropping sporadically on London and environs; the country pushed to the utmost in manpower and domestic economy; and no certainty, whatever the hope, that it can survive the impact of war; and yet these sturdy, un-panicked people initiate and go ahead with plans for the amenities of future Britons; for the preservation of plant and animal species with relations to their habitat…what imagination is this, which sees that, if Britain is worth dying for, these things are worth dying for, because they are intrinsic to the enjoyment of freedom itself! (*1943 Handbook* 14)

What stands out here is the appeal to the *imagination* of such a venture. Alternatively such imagination might be understood as escapism or denial. Yet such rhetoric should not be hastily dismissed as misplaced utopianism precisely because this imagination was directly tied to actual land and ecosystems.

While WWI and the difficulties of interwar recovery proved to be the greatest

impediment to British environmentalist efforts in the early 20th century, an appeal to the material and psychological ravages of WWII would provide environmentalists with the clearest logic for Nature protection in the postwar era. Speaking at the Annual Luncheon for members of SPNR, Lord Macmillan, President of the Society,[56] took stock of the influence of wartime trauma in reframing humanity's relationship to nature, claiming that, "The works of man when destroyed can be replaced—we can rebuild and restore what has been destroyed in the hideous conflicts of war; but the creations of nature once lost can never be restored" (*1946 Handbook* 7). At first blush, such a statement is a callous disregard for the human devastation sustained during WWII. Most notably, he neglects the massive loss of human life (creations of nature) and Germany's extreme project to exterminate Jews and others viewed as nonhuman species. The hardline distinction between the works of Nature and the works of man, furthermore, posits an antiquated duality. In the case of species extinction, such a divide is warranted, but the need for environmental restoration proves more ambivalent. At the same luncheon, W. L. Taylor's address on the case of afforestation, for example, provides a more nuanced take on the theme of "preservation":[57]

> To speak of preservation, as people often do in this context, seems rather a contradiction in terms because, as we know, nothing stands still in nature, and we cannot hope to do more than our best to influence natural forces in the directions we have at heart. All wildlife is linked, for good or ill, to a succession of natural circumstances, a food-chain if you like, but really a chain so broad that it includes all natural elements and phenomena. (*1946 Handbook* 12)

The broadness of this chain, though not explicitly stated, necessarily involves all human

activity under the banner "natural elements and phenomena." The complexity of acts and occurrences cannot be understood simply as human/non-human, nor can the entanglements of these two terms be easily studied within scientific parameters. It is here that literature can intervene to elaborate the complex cultural processes that shape and maintain environments. This chapter contextualizes the surge of interest in conserving Nature in Great Britain within a larger global chain of international economies and decolonization in the postwar era.

As successive waves of ecocriticism revisit early forms of environmentalism, the problematic ties between nature, class and race become increasingly apparent. At the center of these debates is the vexed question of acting on behalf of "environment," whether defined as pristine nature, urban living conditions or cultural milieu. The difficulty lies in the word environment itself, which implies a center, subject or specific community for that which surrounds. In order to escape this Kantian, subject-centered bind, critics have turned almost exclusively to variations on the term "ecology" in order to propose interconnected, layered and complex visions of the world.[58] Such efforts have been bolstered notably by posthumanist theories that seek to eschew any anthropocentric epistemologies.[59] At the same time, the invocation of ecology as an inherently benevolent force has not gone unchallenged. Recent work by Sarah Jaquette Ray convincingly makes the case that "environmentalism espouses social and ecological harmony, yet it reinforces many social hierarchies" (17). Drawing on Giovanna Di Chiro's critique of contemporary "eco-managers" and Susan Kollin's critique of "green imperialism" among others, Ray argues that mainstream environmentalism overemphasizes the "domination and exploitation of the natural world at the expense of considering the subjugation of many *human* communities" (20). Ray supports this poignant critique of the schism within ecological thought through a history of

environmentalism's close alliance and complicity with social Darwinist eugenics and imperialist regimes of economic exploitation that privilege a white, masculine, first world identity.

Given this social milieu, the efforts of British environmentalists provide an early instantiation of a larger divide within contemporary Global environmentalism between what Joan Martinez-Alier terms "materialist" vs. "nonmaterialist" forms of activism. Citing the suspicious rise of "postmaterialist" values, Martinez-Alier questions the position that "wealth provides the means to correct environmental damage and that wealthy people are environmentally more conscious because they can afford to care about quality-of-life issues" (314). The fundamental paradigm for Martinez-Alier is that "economic growth goes together with environmental degradation" (315). Theresa Brennan takes this thesis to its logical extremes in *Exhausting Modernity*, arguing that "sustaining profit and sustaining the environment are mutually exclusive" (2). Others, such as David Harvey, however, maintain the need to engage more ambivalently with capital's intricate ties to environmental control. Acknowledging that human action shapes or influences nearly all ecosystems throughout the world leads to the need for more engagement with human-dominated ecologies rather than pastoral calls for letting nature be. "To think biocentric," writes Harvey, "is to collapse the boundary between human activity and ecosystems…flows of money and of commodities and the transformative actions of human beings (urban living etc.) have to be understood as fundamentally ecological processes" ("What's Green" 331).[60] Yet any invocation of ecology or ecological processes, as Ray points out, must be wary of Ecology's own complicity with projects of eugenics, imperialism and social Darwinism's privileging of healthy, able bodies. Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin point out helpfully that "Ecology…tends to function more

as *aesthetics* than as *methodology* in eco/environmental criticism" (13). A too easy appeal to ecological aesthetics as an inherently positive and benevolent force risks obscuring the very real power dynamics at play in any given ecosystem. The question of ecological balance, from an anthropocentric perspective, is always one of privileging certain species over others. For Ray, such power dynamics play out in human societies through the construction of "ecological others," notably persons with disabilities who are the ecological others of the able-bodied wilderness adventurers championed within environmentalism.

Given the pitfalls of ecological thought, this chapter will look at the idea of "ecological remainders" in order to challenge uncritical views of ecology as fair, perfectly balanced or harmonious. The most obvious example of such ecological remainders (which environmental justice critics have explored in detail) is the offloading of toxic waste from rich to poor, north to south, and first world to third world. Yet more intangible psychological remainders influence the actions and perhaps more importantly *inaction* of marginalized and disenfranchised people. Thus the protagonists in both Rhys's and Achebe's novels often feel powerless to act and create change in their lives.

The Good Life Will Start Again

Environmental efforts in the postwar era present a recovery of human spirit, health and wellbeing in tandem with the restoration of land and the protection of an otherwise helpless Nature. Ecologists led these efforts with the highly ambitious project of understanding a total system of life's interrelations. Yet the ostensibly benign and progressive character of environmentalism becomes quickly complicated in light of the close ties between Ecology's rise as a discipline in Great Britain and the colonial management of

land and populations. In his comprehensive account *Imperial Ecology*, Peder Anker focuses in particular on the "mechanistic view of ecology," led by Arthur George Tansley (a prominent member of SPNR), "suitable for creating a system of control of material and human resources in the empire" (2).[61] In addition to ecology as a mode of resource management and political control, Anker's history stresses the important influence of Sigmund Freud's psychological theories on the vision of social ecology that Tansley developed. Thus, from the point of view of British Ecology, intellectual progress, mental well-being and social cultivation were deeply entwined with the ordering and evolution of ecosystems. At the same time, Anker argues that most ecologists pursued a methodological stance "from above" that too often excluded human agency from nature's economy. Anker cites in particular the importance of the airplane for conducting ecological surveys.

Here the formal innovations of modernist novelists prove particularly insightful for resituating humans in an ecological milieu, a sensitive stream that overturns the traditional, omniscient third-person narration so favored by Edwardians such as the trio of Bennett, Wells and Galsworthy that Virginia Woolf presents in her 1923 essay/manifesto "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown." In reference to the artistic rendering of Mrs. Brown as a character, Woolf claims that "The important thing [is] to…steep oneself in the atmosphere of her character" (9). It is this lateral, immediate, sensory apprehension of character that stands in such contrast to the "view from above" favored by scientific inquiry. Yet Woolf does align aesthetic development with the ecological rhetoric of progress and development, as she goes on to position this atmospheric rendering of character as a sign that "the form of the novel…has been evolved" (9–10). This evolution led by Forster, Lawrence and Joyce, among others, is in stark contrast to the mechanical conceits of the Edwardians. Woolf critiques

Wells for his Utopianism, a brand of literature, as Anker points out, heavily influenced by the ecological social mission of Tansley and Julian Huxley. Huxley and Wells co-authored *The Science of Life*, first serialized in 1929. These writings notably present to a popular audience modern ecological concepts such as overconsumption, sustainability, soil-fertility, water access and alternative solar and hydro energy sources, among others. The argument begins with the assertion that "The cardinal fact in the problem of the human future is the increase in the speed of change" (1027). Although the authors celebrate the slowness of nature that has resulted in "enormous reserves" of energy and diversity of life forms, such slowness is not necessarily the answer for man's (and it is the masculine pronoun that runs throughout *Science of Life*) future. Instead, man should strive to better control his management of Nature. The dominant metaphor for the "Ecological Outlook" becomes a financial one: "Man's chief need to-day is to look ahead. He must plan his food and energy circulation as carefully as a board of directors plans a business. He must do it as one community, on a world-wide basis; and as a species, on a continuing basis" (1030). Here is the Utopian Ecology that envisions a perfect moderation of human life and activity. While such rhetoric is appealing, one should immediately question just how inclusive and equal such a worldwide community could possibly be.

Given the pitfalls of this homogenous lumping of human difference under the ecological banner of species preservation (not to mention the work's view of organic bodies as machines), the insistence on *character* (and subsequently *difference*) is more imperative than ever. Woolf sets out to reclaim the project of understanding character through an insistence on subjective, personal and inner qualities. Arnold Bennett, on the other hand, is a master of rendering environmental detail, keeping his eyes "firmly on the carriage" (13).

Woolf's critique—which parallels Anker's portrayal of Wells and the airplane ecologists—is that environment is rendered through the obfuscation of human life itself. Woolf's antidote—the focus on interior, mental and subjective renderings of character—is in many respects equally antagonistic for the work of ecocritical literature, although in practice Woolf's novels often focus on the interrelation of psyche and environment rather than one at the expense of the other.

If Woolf and her band of Georgians led a modernist evolution of the novel, Jean Rhys may be considered part of a wave of "late modernists" who further evolved—even if it so often took the form of degeneration and devolution—the form of the novel. Rhys in particular stands out for her ability to render interior psychological states in spatial and environmental terms: an aesthetics that invites a further movement to consider the social standing and power relations that revolve around her characters. Much of this fluency in a certain inner/outer perspective stems from her Caribbean background and her oblique and heavily "steeped" mode of considering the subtle influences of colonial atmospheres. This aesthetic of environmental control is paired with a frantic attention to material wealth and the power capital holds over people's lives.

Rhys's attention to the material fallout and pernicious psychological effects of imperialism provides a certain breakdown to the ecological mechanism of colonial management championed by Tansley, Huxley and Wells. Her early novels, in this sense, stand as an early register of the transitions and recovery efforts that would preoccupy the United Kingdom in the postwar era. The postwar era proved a challenge to the mechanistic ecology of imperialism as urges toward decolonization were made in order to focus more resources on British recovery efforts. In certain respects, then, the proliferation of Nature

Reserves and conservation efforts in the UK during the postwar period can be seen as what Paul Virilio has termed endo-colonization, where systems of control and resource management developed in the colonies were put to effect on the British interior.[62] For Anker, also, environmentalist efforts post-WWII represent a certain legacy of Empire; he writes, "National Parks were a needed symbol for Great Britain's imperial heritage: while withering away as political superpower Britain could still claim to be a moral empire through nature conservation" (234). Yet Anker no doubt oversimplifies the realization of efforts decades in the making by emphasizing the international symbolic register over the reality of local organizational efforts. The resonance of Nature in postwar Britain also points to the material and psychological needs for recovery after the trauma of war. For Tansley, the preservation of tracts of land signified "one of the deepest sources of mental and spiritual refreshment; and of this the specifically aesthetic value, the enjoyment of beauty for its own sake, is really a part" (3). Given these aesthetic, sensory and physiological rationales, the work of modernist writers to render the complexity of character in relation to environment provides a crucial site for ecocritical inquiry.

Thus it is impossible to separate the recovery efforts led by environmentalists in the United Kingdom from the history of the British Empire. As a result, environmental action during this period must be considered alongside a legacy of colonial practices. Huggan and Tiffin argue that a central task or starting point for a postcolonial ecocriticism is a sustained and balanced critique of western ideologies of development. On the one hand, citing Wolfgang Sachs and Oswaldo de Rivero, they question whether development can be anything other than neocolonialism operating under the guise of "assisted modernisation" (28). On the other hand, looking to the work of post-development thinkers Rahnema and

Bawtree, they evaluate the potentials to rearticulate development on a grass roots level that recognizes "that the nonhomogeneity of the world system requires that the multiple modernities encapsulated within it be negotiated in local terms" (31). The question is whether modernization can ever exist harmoniously with local tradition. Both viewpoints benefit from a historical discussion of development's relationship to modernization and colonization. The question of development returns to one of the central paradoxes of this dissertation, the challenge that environmentalist thinkers are faced with, as Timothy Clark argues, of "divorcing the project of human liberation from that of the exploitative conquest of nature that mars mainstream conceptions of 'progress' and modernization'" (102). Can there, in short, ever be a mutually beneficial program that would bring economic prosperity alongside human liberation and liberal moral progress? Theresa Brennan, for one, is highly skeptical; yet given the unavoidable need to consume, can there at least be a better compromise or less exploitative approach to the earth's resources?

A helpful starting place for a discussion of development is Marshall Berman's discussion of Goethe's *Faust* in *All that is Solid Melts into Air*. Berman bases his study on Marx's "vision of history as restless activity, dynamic contradiction, dialectical struggle and progress" (29). Reading *Faust* as a "Tragedy of Development," Berman identifies Faust as the prototypical modernist who "asserts and knows himself, indeed who *becomes* himself through restless, endless self-expansion" (58). Here Berman identifies a "universally modern problem," namely, whither all this restlessness? Berman explains, "Faust feels that the crucial thing is to keep moving… he is willing to give up his soul to the devil the minute he wants to rest—even in contentment…what matters is the process, not the result: 'it's restless activity that proves a man'" (50). It is not, however, until Faust turns this restless activity

towards exploiting nature's resources to shape the world at large that he truly becomes the figure of the developer.[63] Faust, in Berman's reading, is the quintessential pairing of human liberation with the exploitative conquest of nature: a vision of modernity that is only possible through the denial of rest, that most basic of human needs that forces a consideration of the limits of exploitative human activity.

While Faust is far from an ecosensitive figure, the discussion of Faust as developer is productive for denying the rift between an ideal, autonomous or pastoral "modernism," what Berman identifies as a "species of pure spirit," on the one hand, and the material structures of "modernization" that operate with no regard to human minds or souls. Against this dualism, Berman insists on the "intimate unity of the modern self and the modern environment" (132). An attention to this unity of modern self and modern environment, as I have been arguing, distinguishes the best work of novelists such as Lawrence, Joyce, Woolf and Barnes. Jean Rhys, in particular, presents the limits of this "intimate unity" through her attention to the role money plays in mediating the relationship between individual, environment and community. This focus on money drives her debut novel *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* in which the protagonist Julia receives "a certain sum of money weekly to give her time to rest, to look about her, etc, etc" (27). The monetary focus is further developed in *Voyage in the Dark*, in which Anna muses that "Money ought to be everybody's. It ought to be like water." (27). Here Rhys plays on the many liquid metaphors that accompany monetary flows and distributions. It is in her 1938 novel *Good Morning, Midnight* and her last great work, 1966's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, however, that Rhys fully develops her psychological themes in relation to colonial economies and the British Empire. *Good Morning, Midnight* enjoys a more mixed critical reception than perhaps any of Rhys's other works. Scholars have read Sasha Jansen

as a modernist Ophelia (Gildersleeve), a sufferer of Kristevan depression (Czarnecki), a wry humorist (Savory), a rebellious drunk (Nardin), a giver of existential charity (Davidson), and a sufferer of post-traumatic stress disorder (Linett). These numerous interpretations stem from the way Rhys constructs the narrative: a claustrophobic intimacy with Sasha's experiences and memories that nevertheless denies any absolute revelations of character. Rhys constructs Sasha through a series of restless negations, invoking identifiable personalities and character types only to complicate and challenge them. She may be read, in this sense, as a female counterpoint to the restless Faust. Sasha escapes categorization, a quality that makes her especially suited for critiquing definitions of the "good life" based on ethical order, patriarchal control, and psychological stability.

Much of the hope in *Good Morning, Midnight* stems from Sasha's interwar belief that, "When we get to Paris, the good life will start again" (*GMM* 115). This phrase echoes the end of *Voyage* where Anna thinks about "starting all over again" (*V* 188), but the question for Sasha becomes one of recovery rather than refreshment: how exactly *will* this good life start again? On the one hand, there is a degree of human control in the ability to return to Paris; on the other hand, the lack of agency behind "will start" points to an uncertainty surrounding human ability to generate change. Rhys's novel represents the fundamental volatility of change—what humans can and cannot control—as a larger crisis of cultural agency stemming from the lingering traumas of World War I. In one of Sasha's early scenes of recollection, for example, a young medical student takes her to "see something rather interesting," "We came to a cafe where the clients paid for the right, not to have a drink, but to sleep…Every place in the room was filled; others lay along the floor. We squinted in at them through the windows. 'Would you like to go in and have a look at them?'

he said, as if he were exhibiting a lot of monkeys" (*GMM* 40). This scene presents an empirical account of interwar exhaustion,[64] as well as two distinctly different gazes. The medical student's gaze is cold and clinical: it is representative of the mechanistic approach of ecologists such as Tansley. Although critics note that Sasha is obviously unsettled by the medical student's attitude, the sleepers themselves may equally unsettle her. The soundly sleeping clientele represent the precise state that Sasha is unable to achieve. They are literally paying for the ability not to think, not to contemplate, a self-imposed state of slavery. Perhaps Sasha is jealous of this state, but she might also be highly suspicious of the sleep cafe: an all too literal representation of an apathetic rest that cannot be afforded in the interwar era.

Rhys's Caribbean background gives her a unique perspective to critique the relationship between the failures of interwar European recovery and the systems of colonialism that continued throughout the interwar period. Much as the Caribbean is a "submerged text" in the novel (Savory 117), the legacy of just war expansionism, religious conversion, slavery and colonization resonates throughout Rhys's portrayal of interwar Paris. In addition, Rhys's position as an exile from Dominica influences her perspective on interwar displacement. Unlike the speaker of Emily Dickinson's poem "Good Morning, Midnight," who is "coming home," Rhys presents the story of Sasha Jansen who is at home neither in England nor in France. Sasha's movement between England and France mirrors the history of the island of Dominica itself. Following the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, the French relinquished control of the island to England (Niddrie). The French retook the island during the American Revolutionary War, but the island was returned to England following the 1783 Treaty of Paris (Boromé). That peace between England and France required a

shifting of colonial territory—a balancing of the remainders of power—reveals how the peace and stability of imperialist countries relies on the continued control and domination of foreign subjects. In this respect, Sasha's plight may be aligned with environmental justice issues stemming from the continued subjection of foreign lands. By creating a narrative on the premise that Sasha will gain rest by returning to Paris, Rhys invites a consideration of the colonial history of Dominica—the island Christopher Columbus named after Sunday, the day of rest.[65] Dominica is present in the novel from the very first page, when the woman at the table next to Sasha hums the song "*Gloomy Sunday*" under her breath (*GMM* 9). The return to France also suggests a return to Dominica's days before slavery: British rule rapidly increased the importation of slaves to work coffee and sugar plantations (Honychurch). At the same time, French rule marks the beginnings of conversion ideology and the politics of just war. It is not surprising, then, that the "good life" should fail to start again in Paris, the problem lies in the larger European culture of imperialism. Writing against the Aristotelian maxim that, "We go to war in order that we may be at peace," Rhys denies the ability of the "good life" to start again; displaying a prescience of the return to war.

Imperial Roads and Environmental Resistance

Although the plot of *Good Morning, Midnight* hinges on Sasha's return to France, it is important to consider that the novel was written after Rhys's own return to Dominica in 1936. According to H. Adlai Murdoch, this was a time of, "great political and economic tension in the Caribbean, with strikes and confrontations with the powers-that-be occurring in almost every island" (253). According to Lilian Pizzichini, despite the many changes, "Jean still loved her island. For her, it was the loveliest place that could be imagined. It was so

conducive to sleep" (4). At the same time, she was disturbed by figures such as Elma Napier and the rhetoric of improving and developing the island (Pizzichini 212). Her recent experience in Dominica may well have been a major influence as Rhys returned to Europe and began writing *Good Morning Midnight*. As previously mentioned, the return to France invites a consideration of the return of Dominica to French rule. While the return to France is appealing given the legacy of slavery under British rule, it draws attention to the ideological and theological origins of colonial rule on the island. Rhys reveals this engagement with the colonial back and forth that is the history of Dominica through the psychology of her protagonist, Sasha Jansen. Recent work has focused on the positive and negative valences of "voyaging" throughout Rhys's oeuvre (Murdoch, 2003; Seshagiri, 2006). In *Good Morning, Midnight*, the voyager becomes the antagonist (in the figure of the *commis voyageur* who haunts the hotel hallways) while the protagonist Sasha becomes aligned with the decidedly more negative terms of the fugitive and the displaced. Sasha's desperate restlessness is registered both physically and psychologically.

Lurking behind these valences of movement, voyaging, displacement and bondage is the history of British slavery. Susan Campbell estimates that as many as 100,000 slaves were brought to Dominica from Africa between British occupation of the island in 1763 and Britain's 1808 abolition of the slave trade (4). Most of these slaves eventually ended up in St. Lucie, Martinique and Guadeloupe. Rhys's great-grandfather, John Potter Lockhart, came to Dominica to manage a sugar plantation in the 1790s and became a plantation owner in 1824 (Pizzichini, 9–11). Rhys explores the legacy of this system of slavery most vividly in the opening of *Wide Sargasso Sea.* Although Britain abolished slavery in 1833, attitudes towards labor on the island continued to posit the refined European guiding the majority black

population. Symington Grieve's 1906 *Notes Upon the Island of Dominica*, for example, explains that, "These black men with their wives and families must be considered as an all-important factor in calculating the possibilities of Dominica. Without them the resources of the island cannot be developed, as they must do all the manual labor. The white population must carefully supervise and also provide the capital to a large extent" (24). Rhys, as a writer, is necessarily invested in certain aspects of the contemplative life. Yet, given her experience of the legacy of slavery and its remaining colonial discontents, she is uniquely aware of the relationship between thinking and not thinking. As Sasha asks, "Since I was born, hasn't every word I've said, every thought I've thought, and everything I've done, been tied up, weighted, chained?" (*GMM* 106). Rhys has Sasha internalize and appropriate the rhetoric of slavery. Although Rhys's own heritage is one of colonizer rather than colonized, the passage suggests—in line with the Hegelian master-slave dialectic—that the legacy of slavery and continued colonial rule disallows freedom of thought and action for everyone involved in such a system.

Although the Spanish did not attempt to capture Dominica, recent work by Wayne Burke and George Lovell suggests that Spanish contact greatly reduced the indigenous Carib population through the transmission of disease. Burke and Lovell note that the island's many geothermal hot springs made it a destination for sick crews seeking rest and recuperation (10). This initial contact left the island vulnerable, reducing the population from an estimated 13–17,000 to 4–5,000 (11). The ensuing French catholic missions and military capture of the island point to the conflation of religious ideology and conquest. Following the Seven Years' War, the British moved quickly and methodically to populate and develop the island. Yet D. L. Niddrie notes that among the British Ceded Islands, "Dominica presented the greatest

environmental hindrances to rapid development. It's relief, inaccessibility, its mantle of gloomy cloudiness, together with the absence of suitable beaches from which cargoes could be lifted, did not encourage pioneering ventures into the interior" (76). Thus the island of rest also presented an environmental resistance to the more rapid exploitation seen, for example, in Tobago. At the same time, 300 acre lots were quickly divided up for sugar and coffee plantations, and by 1766, the population stood at 2020 whites and 8497 slaves (Honychurch).

The island's resistance to imperial incursion appears most pointedly in the long project to construct an Imperial Road through the center of the island to connect the Atlantic and Caribbean coasts (Figure 8). Undertaken by Hesketh Bell, under Joseph Chamberlain's newly revitalized interest in the undeveloped land of Dominica as "one of the very richest islands in the possession of the Crown" (Hulme 28), the Imperial Road was a curious combination of developmental ideals running up against environmental, cultural and political realities. As Theresa O'Conner explains:

> The Imperial Road—not only in its name—is clearly a colonial thoroughfare, one whose very opening Rhys recalls as accompanied by all the pomp and circumstance, all the ceremonial paraphernalia, of the already declining British colonial presence in Dominica. Its eventual failure as an enterprise, according to Waugh, was due not only to the inefficiency of Dominican economics but to the power of the landscape, the implacable natural force of Dominica—a force which Rhys has often, in her other work, associated with the blacks of the island and about whom she expresses the same mixture of feelings that she ascribes to the island itself. (411)

Figure 8. Imperial Road—Red Gully under Landslides (The National Archives)

Rhys attempted to walk the Imperial Road during her return to Dominica in 1936. A fictional account of the fiasco appears in her unpublished short story "The Imperial Road." The road also figures prominently in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Drawing on Rhys's representations of the Imperial Road in her fiction, it is possible to explore an aesthetics of environmental resistance to imperialist incursions. The presence of the imperial road haunts the second section of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, frustrating Rochester and undermining his attempts to control the narrative. After receiving a letter from the mysterious Daniel Cosway maligning Antoinette's family as slave-owners and mentally unsound deceivers, Rochester attempts to escape *Granbois*:

> I began to walk very quickly, then stopped because the light was different. A green light. I had reached the forest and you cannot mistake the forest. It is hostile…A track was just visible and I went on, glancing from side to side and sometimes quickly behind me. This was why I stubbed my foot on a stone and nearly fell. The stone I had tripped on was not a boulder but part of a paved road. There had been a paved road through this forest. The track led to a large clear space. Here were the ruins of a stone house and round the ruins rose trees that had grown to an incredible height. At the back of the ruins a wild orange tree covered with fruit, the leaves a dark green. A beautiful place. And calm—so calm that it seemed foolish to think or plan. What had I to think about and how could I plan? Under the orange tree I noticed little bunches of flowers tied with grass. (*WSS* 62)

Here Rochester literally stumbles over an old piece of the Imperial Road that has been "swallowed" by what Rochester will later refer to as "that green menace" (*WSS* 90). Yet in a

moment of calm, Rochester achieves a brief repose from the constant onslaught of forest against man, man against nature. He becomes disassociated from his previous train of worries and insular questioning. As a result, he becomes fully immersed in a pastoral reverie the likes of which has evaded him ever since leaving England and the likes of which Charlotte Brontë's Rochester will strive desperately to project.

With the exception of that last detail—the bunches of flowers tied with grass—marking a voodoo offering to the dead. Death, however, is no longer the permanent reunion of man with earth that T. E. Hulme speaks of in "Romanticism and Classicism"; instead, the flowers signal an offering to the dead who still inhabit the earth as spirits, the only true indulgers of the pastoral bower. Rhys reinforces the presence of death as Rochester is brought out of his reverie only through the sensation of feeling "chilly." Once again, as in Barnes, Rhys denies the pastoral escape into Nature, with the result that the would-be escapist must return to human society with no easy answers. The remainder of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, much like *Good Morning, Midnight*, presents the failure of humans to recreate this moment of calm and understanding between one another. The environmental resistance that Rochester encounters on the swallowed up Imperial Road is matched by Baptiste's blunt rebuke—repeating three times the simple phrase, "No road," in response to Rochester's persistent questions. Faced with the green menace, Rochester's response is to assert his control over Antoinette in an increasingly ruthless fashion, first by removing her identity by calling her Bertha, and finally by keeping her under lock and key in the controlled environment of the English country house.

Thus the end of *Wide Sargasso Sea* returns to a meditation on "this room," just as *Good Morning Midnight* proceeds with Sasha Jansen attempting to hide from the world in

one room to the next. In her nighttime excursions, however, Antoinette deconstructs the built environment that surrounds her, "I open the door and walk into their world. It is, as I always knew, made of cardboard…everything is coloured brown or dark red or yellow that has no light in it…They tell me I am in England but I don't believe them…This cardboard house where I walk at night is not England" (*WSS* 107). Despite Rochester's best efforts to contain Antoinette, she effectively transports the environmental resistance of *Granbois* to the English country house, turning the walls to cardboard that will all too soon be engulfed in flames. Yet, perhaps surprisingly, Antoinette does not view England itself as antagonistic; instead, she indulges in her own pastoral vision of a verdant England complete with healing properties. In a memory that blurs into reverie, she reflects, "That afternoon we went to England. There was grass and olive-green water and tall trees looking into the water. This, I thought, is England. If I could be here I'd get well again and the sound in my head would stop. Let me stay a little longer, I said, and she sat down under a tree and went to sleep" (*WSS* 109).[66] Here, also, is the vision of a protected England that guided environmental efforts in the postwar era: one that would not only heal the blighted land, but broken minds as well. This vision of England is the negative of Antoinette's existence in Rochester's cardboard England. It also presents a decisive rupture between Berman's "intimate unity of the modern self and the modern environment." Antoinette's final dream of burning down her environment and being engulfed in the flames reveals a decisively fractured relationship between self and environment, one that can only proceed through destruction. An oppressive environment similarly stifles Sasha Jansen's psychology in *Good Morning, Midnight*. Looking back on England, Sasha reflects, "what was London to me? It was a little room, smelling stuffy, with my stockings hanging to dry in front of a gas-fire. Nothing in that room

was ever clean; nothing was ever dirty, either. Things were always half-and-half" (*GMM* 113). Though France presents an alternative to this half-and-half stasis, Sasha quickly finds herself in new enclosures. The half-and-half stasis points to what Rhys presents as the defining struggle between self and environment: change, and the ability—or inability—to control it.

Rhys ultimately defines human helplessness not as the inability to *control* change in one's surrounding environment, but as the inability of the individual to *generate* change within environment.[67] Although ostensibly a question of individual and environment, Sasha's helplessness finally stems from an inability to connect with other people. It is in the last scenes of *Good Morning, Midnight* that forces of environmental resistance are shown to be inadequate if they are not paired with a larger community of people. This breakdown of community occurs between Sasha and the scarred veteran René. While Sasha feels powerless to generate change, René becomes increasingly adamant on his ability to make this change for her, as he says, "'What I know is that I could do this with you' – he makes a movement with his hands like a baker kneading a loaf of bread – 'and afterwards you'd be different'" (*GMM* 175). But this distinction is fundamental: rather than helping Sasha to generate change for herself, René wants to change her. At this moment, René shifts from ally to adversary, and the rest of the novel dramatizes this struggle between male and female, first physically and then mentally. The final perversion of community occurs after the physical confrontation between René and Sasha, when Rhys dramatizes a mental struggle in which Sasha tries to will René's return to her room. Sasha gives a spatial narration to this movement, "Now he is turning into the end of the street. Very clear he is in my head. He is turning into the end of my street […] Now the door is moving, the door is opening wide. I put my arm over my

eyes" (*GMM* 189). The opening door symbolizes the dawning of Midnight, and Sasha puts her arm over her eyes to shield herself from this light. Except the door is not only the door that Sasha locates symbolically in her own mind, it is also the actual door to her room. The *commis voyageur* enters to the scrutiny of Sasha's mind in its most lucid moment: "I don't need to look. I know […] I look straight into his eyes and despise another poor devil of a human being for the last time. For the last time" (*GMM* 190). With the repetition of "for the last time," Rhys tempts the reader to view this scene as a climactic moment of change. But given the numerous repetitions narrated throughout the novel, why should this be for the last time? Does Sasha aim to commit suicide? Is this the self-sacrifice that will allow her to finally feel nothing? Or is the reality simply that this will not be the last time?

While many critics seek to pin down Sasha's restless character through a definitive reading of this final scene—with particular attention to Sasha's Molly Bloom-like "Yes – yes – yes"—the scene may also be read as merely another negation of absolute meaning. It is perhaps for this reason that Rhys writes three yesses (evenly spaced with dashes): not a repetition of one definitive answer, but a multiplicity of possibilities. These three yesses further resonate with *After Leaving* and *Voyage.* Julia's yesses come in response to a maid knocking on her door: she "fretfully" responds to her disheveled state. Anna's yesses are a more subtle acquiescence to the advances of Walter Jeffries as he places his hand on her knee. Sasha's yesses, then, are meant to echo these earlier yesses, with the result that the three protagonists emerge as versions or iterations of one another. By placing these three yesses at the end of *Good Morning, Midnight*, a certain trilogy is established—not unlike the blurring of characters Beckett will pursue in his Trilogy—in which Rhys invites a shift in the discussion of remainder from that which lies outside the system, to that which has not yet

occurred. Instead of giving closure to the novels, then, the ending invites a return to the texts.

A vision of remainder as unrealized potential occurs in the middle of the novel. Contemplating suicide during her weeks of starvation, Sasha recalls a scene from her childhood in which she is scolded for her haste, "'My child, don't hurry. You have eternity in front of you.' She used to say that sarcastically, Sister Marie-Augustine, because I was slow. But the phrase stayed with me. I have eternity in front of me. Soon I'll be able to do it, but there's no hurry. Eternity is in front of me. . . ." (*GMM* 87). Perhaps a reference to the Convent School in Dominica, which Rhys revisited in 1936, the passage calls attention to both her own religious upbringing as well as a unique reappropriation of theological doctrine. What keeps Sasha alive is the knowledge that she can take her own life. But there is also recognition here that being alive is fundamentally a position of agency. Soon after this recollection, Sasha experiences this generative potential in the presence of the art of the Russian painter Serge. Significantly, this moment occurs after Serge's story of the drunken Martiniquaise in London, the mulatto exile who is "no longer quite human, no longer quite alive" (*GMM* 97). The woman, an exile in England from a French colony, mirrors Sasha's own position as an exile in France from a British colony. Sasha's identification with the Martiniquais points to a larger creole Caribbean identity, as Murdoch explains, "A creole person can be either white or black, colonizer or colonized, as the term articulates an essential ambiguity that both mediates and ruptures the strategies of containment that have driven the dominant designations of difference that have been the traditional corollary of the colonial encounter" (254). This essential ambiguity also drives *Voyage in the Dark* where Anna repeatedly references her desires to be black. Although the wide net spread by the banner "creole" would seem to provide a basis for identification and community building, in

Rhys's novels, the protagonists most often suffer from misidentification, isolation and loneliness.

Thus following his story, Serge leaves Sasha alone with Delmar, who stages the exhibition of the paintings. So it is that Sasha enjoys one genuine moment of happiness in her return trip to Paris, "I am surrounded by the pictures. It is astonishing how vivid they are in this dim light. . . . Now the room expands and the iron band round my heart loosens. The miracle has happened. I am happy" (GMM 99). Again, Rhys employs imagery of bondage and constriction. While an iron band around the heart symbolizes sadness (an example being the Brothers Grimm fairytale "The Frog King; or, Iron Henry"), it also points to the band of British rule still held around Rhys's heartland of Dominica.[68] The suggestion is that through art this band may be loosened. In this sense, art is a mode of resistance to the binding forces of power and subjugation. The band is loosened, but yet unbroken, suggesting a way forward, but not an end. While this vision of happiness is a powerful antidote to the pessimism running throughout Rhys's oeuvre, the inability for Julia, Anna, Sasha, Antoinette or any of the troubled characters in Rhys's work to connect in a meaningful way with other people remains daunting. Thus, in *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie*, Julia is terrified by the touch of Mr. Horsford, going so far to say, "I thought it was – someone dead…catching hold of my hand" (165). Sasha's fantasy, as such, becomes a modernist one *par excellence* of living in autonomous artistic isolation. The question remains, can modernist literature lead to a more generative vision of community based in lateral support and non-exploitative relations?

The Burden of Life

To answer this question it is necessary to return to the early stages of modernism,

which began with just such a promise of cosmopolitan identification through the spirit of art. In its early phases, this study began with a consideration of the English novel in transition from Hardy to Conrad. Whereas Hardy finds tragedy in the "modern vice of unrest," Conrad is more ambivalent. His first short story collection *Tales of Unrest* places a primary interest on restlessness as a driver of plot and pleasure within fiction. Slow moments, as a result, stand out:

> The wind and rain had ceased, and the stillness of the night round the schooner was as dumb and complete as if a dead world has been laid to rest in a grave of clouds. We expected him to speak. The necessity within him tore at his lips. There are those who say that a native will not speak to a white man. Error. No man will speak to his master; but to a wanderer and a friend, to him who does not come to teach or to rule, to him who asks for nothing and accepts all things, words are spoken by the camp-fires, in the shared solitude of the sea, in riverside villages, in resting-places surrounded by forests—words are spoken that take no account of race or colour. One heart speaks—another one listens; and the earth, the sea, the sky, the passing wind and the stirring leaf, hear also the futile tale of the burden of life. (60)

Here seems to be the great promise of modern restlessness: that stolen moments of intimacy will emerge as the vital signs of being alive and connecting with other human beings and the surrounding world itself. This also is the promise of postwar recovery: the trauma and senseless violence of the past will allow for new forms of connection and prosperity. The success of environmentalism in the United Kingdom following WWII is partially a testament to modern resilience and a renewed national intimacy. Yet in both instances, a certain

aesthetic glaze seems to wash over larger inequalities. Thus the open hearts between "native" and "white man" does not change the very real material distance between the two. Similarly, the pristine Nature Reserves in the UK that are ostensibly open and accessible to "everyone" regardless of class, race or creed, do not exist as utopias free from larger social and economic realities.

In terms of Conrad's prose, the above passage is exemplary of the "inexpressible mystery" that F.R. Leavis aligns with the crude art of the magazine writer (*The Great Tradition* 180). In his pointed critique of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Chinua Achebe maligns such an aesthetic for masking something far more pernicious, "When a writer while pretending to record scenes, incidents and their impact is in reality engaged in inducing hypnotic stupor in his readers through a bombardment of emotive words and other forms of trickery, much more has to be at stake than stylistic felicity" (*HI* 6). It is this trickery that turns Africa into mere background and immersive setting for the psychological exploration of white consciousness. One might also consider the "resting-places surrounded by forests" a similarly flat engagement with environment. Achebe's novels effectively add depth to Conrad's romantic views of wilderness. Conrad's "stillness" and "shared solitude" is given an ironic twist at the end of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* through the District Commissioner's focus on the "pacification" of Africa. Such pacification begins through religious conversion—a form of "intellectual DDT" in the words of Frantz Fanon—and proceeds through the instruments of government, imprisonment and trade in natural resources in order to subdue Umuofia.

The positing of an ecocritical Achebe has recently attracted scholarly interest. Of the handful of essays outlining environmental themes in his work, one immediate observation

can be made that essays tend to focus on ecological practices found in traditional Igbo culture as represented in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God.* Susie O'Brien, for example, reads the cultural transitions of *Things Fall Apart* as a model for ecological resilience in the face of crisis. The novel, she writes, "depicts a vibrant community in which human society is not at one with nature, but rather densely entangled with it…environmental crises—drought, locusts, along with the quotidian challenges of weather and sickness—are part of Igbo life, mangaged within a system of agricultural, political, social and spiritual practices that have evolved over time" (8). What sustains the Igbo culture and community during these times of environmental crisis, and most significantly during colonial incursion, is a proliferation of storytelling that resists a single mode of producing meaning.

Although the rural novels are a logical starting point for ecocritical inquiry, difficulties arise when reconciling the traditional "ecological balance" of Igbo culture with less savory social practices. Gloria Ernest-Samuel, for example, explores how "the traditional Igbo concept of nature reflects the justification of material things based on the purpose it serves" (89). This strictly utilitarian view of natural resources leads to power structures that are less than desirable, as Ernest-Samuel explains:

> Given that the rural environment involving man, forest, and wildlife is shown as a world or social system with unified sets of elements that remain unapologetically interdependent, it becomes imperative that any act that may be inimical to human survival is punished…This justifies why one sees Okonkwo beating his second wife for cutting some leaves off a banana stalk. (Okuyade 90)

The challenge for an ecocritcal Achebe based solely on traditional Igbo culture is to recover

the sensitive understanding of balance between humans and environment, while recognizing the limits of a social system that is overtly patriarchal and violent towards weaker members of its community. What is needed then, is a more ambivalent approach, as Elaine Savory argues, that would recognize Achebe's choice to "represent both his Igbo inheritance and colonial-Christian intrusions without repeating the self-deceptions of the pastoral and romantic belief in the goodness of nature or turning traditional Igbo culture into a kind of lost Eden or simply demonizing modernity" (255). While Savory sees this as the work of "postcolonial ecocriticism," I argue that Achebe's ecocritical awareness is more in line with a modernist tradition of environmental aesthetics. Furthermore, Achebe's most convincing ecocritical work from a contemporary perspective is not found in his rural novels, but in his contemporary work *No Longer at Ease*, whose complex representations of cosmopolitanism in the face of cultural heritage resonate most strongly with environmental justice concerns.

1960's *No Longer at Ease* continues to explore themes of foreign control vs. self-determination in the emerging nation of Nigeria in the late 1950s. Focusing on Obi Okonkwo's rise and fall in the Civil Service, the novel presents the struggle to establish a stable and prosperous Nigeria after postwar decolonization. The generational tie to *Things Fall Apart* is made through Obi's full name Obiajulu, meaning "the mind at last is at rest." The mind in question here, is Obi's father Isaac Okonkwo, otherwise known as Okonkwo's son Nwoye in *Things Fall Apart*. The irony, of course, is that the father's rest is the son's unease. Yet the larger implication is also clear: England's postwar decolonization of Africa in order to focus on recovery in England itself is a trading of interior rest for global unease.

Although it is his intellectual distinction that gives Obi the opportunity to study abroad in England and raise his position, he is explicitly positioned as an advocate for

Nigerian soil: Obi's scholarship is organized by Umuofians with the aim of securing a lawyer to "handle all their land cases against their neighbours" (*NLE* 6). Further, the once prosperous village has become one where "men and women toiled from year to year to wrest a meager living from an unwilling and exhausted soil" (*NLE* 10). This struggling life on the land is contrasted with the bustling hub of Lagos. The city is introduced as the negative counterpart to Conrad's Congo, with a Nigerian soldier who tells Obi, "There is no darkness there…at night the electric shines like the sun, and people are always walking about" (*NLE* 11). Yet the bright lights are also juxtaposed to the dark slums, where Obi comes across a run-over dog left rotting in a drain. The existence of extreme disparity is further discussed in the community Ikoyi, where Obi lives, outside of Lagos:

> It was once a European reserve. But things had changed, and some Africans in 'European posts' had been given houses in Ikoyi. Obi Okonkwo, for example lived there, and as he drove from Lagos to his flat he was struck again by these two cities in one. It always reminded him of twin kernals separated by a thin wall in a palm-nut shell. Sometimes one kernel was shiny-black and alive, the other powdery-white and dead. (*NLE* 16)

The offhand reference to Ikoyi as a one-time "European Reserve" invokes the history of resource accumulation pursued by England in its colonial management of Nigeria (Figure 9). The Office of Woods and Forests was established in 1896 in Lagos with the target of protecting 25% of forestlands in Nigeria, although eventually only 11% found protection (Lowe). The idea for "game reserves" soon followed the forest reserves and during the 1930s colonial officers such as A.H.W. Haywood proposed protecting savannah areas of Nigeria.[69]

Figure 9. Cameron Road, Ikoyi (The National Archives)

It was not, however, until 1956 that Yankari game reserve was protected and opened to the public in 1962 (Ejidbike and Ajayi).[70]

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) led much of the work to establish conservation sites and game reserves in Africa. Founded in 1948, IUCN took on the ambitious project of identifying and protecting endangered species and threatened wilderness sites throughout the world. Julian Huxley, as first Director General of UNESCO, took the initiative to establish IUCN.[71] While much of the initial work of the organization was of a diagnostic and prescriptive character, during the 50s and 60s as postwar reconstruction in Europe coincided with the decolonization of Africa, IUCN became increasingly involved in managing African spaces and resources. In a 1960 summary statement of the IUCN's mission, Harold Coolidge writes:

> The Union is the only international body whose sole aim is attention to the relationship between natural environments and their potentialities for serving the needs of man. While other international organizations may be concerned largely with the conversion of particular resources into products for consumption, the Union strives for perpetuation of resources and their use to serve all the needs of man, emphasizing their non-commodity values-space, recreation, amenity-as well as the material benefits that resources provide. (2)

The project is not only unabashedly anthropocentric, but it is one centered on a particular definition of "man" as Western, educated, scientifically educated and privileged. Thus in the quest to ensure Nature protection for an abstract and idealized "mankind," IUCN was often painfully oblivious to the actual communities that lived on the sites that were selected as targets for international protection. One of the more controversial actions taken by the group

was the relocation of the Massai people in Kenya in order to establish the Serengeti National Park.

This history of forest and game reserves in Africa reveals how environmental management is a defining practice of colonialism and remains a neocolonial force within developing nations.[72] Frantz Fanon's essay "Concerning Violence" makes the argument that "the colonial world is a world divided into compartments…if we examine closely this system of compartments, we will at least be able to reveal the lines of force it implies…to mark out the lines on which a decolonized society will be organized" (37–38). Building on Fanon, it is possible to see the practice of nature preservation as a "line of force" that—far from a simply benign designation existing outside of human society—has very real influences and consequences for a culture's way of life. Discussing the challenges to nature protection in Nigeria, Ejidbike and Ajayi note that:

> Most people around the [reserves] are unemployed and most of their soil texture is unsuitable for agriculture leaving nothing other than hunting and harvesting of natural resources from forests around them. Most people inherit only hunting equipment and skill from their parents; as a result poaching is not viewed by such people as a crime against wild animals and breach of law of the land on protected areas. Their belief is that wildlife is gift from nature and is owned by everybody hence there is no need restricting its use. (186)

Such a confluence of geographic and economic disparity resonates precisely with Fanon, for whom these lines are also "species" lines, drawn through race, class and privilege. For *No Longer at Ease*, it is significantly the new class of Nigerians (educated in England) who are given homes in the European Reserve. Yet instead of becoming places of rest, the community

in Ikoyi comes to represent the new divisions that challenge the emergent Nigerian nation. The tension of the novel proceeds through Obi's attempts to traverse the different lines of community, to generate a new order for Nigeria that might lead the nation forward in some more unified effort. Obi's efforts to regenerate his nation, however, fail on multiple levels: in his ties to the village of Umuofia, in his attempts to marry Claire (an *osu* or outcast Umuofian), and finally in his turn to corruption in accepting bribes through his Civil Service post. By placing the site of Obi's domestic unease on a former European Reserve, Achebe reveals how the colonial lines of environmental force continue to vex the work of decolonization.

Green and Green

As nature preservation gains more and more literal ground in the postwar era, the ideologies and value systems embodied by environmentalism should be debated and reformulated. Ray's critique of environmentalism as neglectful of human difference and human justice issues implies that environmentalism—perhaps paradoxically—should strive to be more anthropocentric rather than less. The question remains, however, centered on which humans—or which definition of "human"—exactly? As Harvey warns, "all debate about ecoscarcity, natural limits, overpopulation, and sustainability is a debate about the preservation of a particular social order rather than a debate about the preservation of nature *per se*" (*Nature* 148). In the case of Africa, the socio-economic registers of environmental debate are especially pronounced. As Ogaga Okuyede writes in the introduction to the first essay collection on African ecocriticism, "Africa is heavily endowed with natural resources, but the inability to translate these natural endowments into socioeconomic bliss for the

empowerment of the African peoples, which will in turn power their economy, lamentably positions Africa once again at the margins of [technological and scientific] revolution" (x). Achebe takes these ideas even further to argue that beyond marginalization, the mismanagement of material resources creates "vast social inequalities and more powerful institutions of repression" ("A Call to Nigerians"). It is here that the intellectual work of literature can intervene to radicalize an anthropocentrism that could promote diversity by working against exclusion. African literature in particular can reformulate ecocritism as an "attempt to counter an (un)conscious violence orchestrated by humans on the environment" (xi). In this effort, the focus on inequality, resource wars, and governmental negligence become key in a literary tradition that remains "engagingly combative."

Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* may be positioned as a forerunner of African literature that engages the socio-economic and political dimensions of environmental issues. Questions of diplomatic intervention and corruption enter through Obi's boss at the Civil Service, Mr. Green, a foil for Obi's moral agency, "No matter how much he disliked Mr Green, he nevertheless had some admirable qualities….Here was a man who did not believe in a country, and yet worked so hard for it…It was clear he loved Africa, but only Africa of a kind…the Africa of his garden-boy and steward-boy" (*NLE* 96). Mr. Green's love of an Africa firmly subdued by the force lines of colonization speaks to Fanon's assertion that "In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem" (40). Marxist analysis much be stretched even further to account for questions of environmental justice. David Harvey's Marxist geography is one version of this stretching of

economic forces to account for space, resource access and environmental quality. "The circulation of money," writes Harvey, "is a prime ecological variable, and the continued circulation of money is essential if the material qualities of the environment are to be maintained" ("What's Green" 332). Achebe explore's the less visible effects of money's circulation through the nefarious workings of the bribe, a temptation to which Obi will slowly succumb as other environmental and economic factors start to overwhelm him.

The bribe emerges as both symbol and material reality of the force lines of decolonization. Harvey warns that:

> The proper management of already constituted environments…may require transitional political institutions, hierarchies of power relations and systems of governance that could well be anathema to both ecologists and socialists alike. This is so because, in a fundamental sense, there is in the final analysis nothing *unnatural* about New York City, Los Angeles, or the New Jersey Turnpike, and sustaining such created ecosystems even in transition entails an inevitable compromise with the forms of social organization and social relations that produced them. ("What's Green" 336)

To this list is easily added Achebe's portrayal of Lagos both in its glittering lights, rank slums, and surrounding nature reserves. The Civil Service is one such transitional political institution wherein the "bribe is natural" to those who have risen through the ranks. Mr. Green stands apart in his moral fortitude and dedication to duty; however, he also resonates with a longer trajectory of problematic "transitional institutions" that ultimately lead nowhere:

> [Green] must have come originally with an ideal—to bring light to the heart of

> darkness…Obi remembered his Conrad which he had read for his degree. 'By the simple exercise of our will we can exert a power for good practically unbounded.' That was Mr Kurtz before the heart of darkness got him. Afterwards he had written: 'Exterminate all the brutes.' It was not a close analogy, of course. Kurtz had succumbed to the darkness, Green to the incipient dawn. But their beginning and their end were alike. 'I must write a novel on the tragedy of the Greens of this century,' he thought, pleased with his analysis. (*NLE* 97)

Here, as Philip Rogers cunningly points out, Obi comes to resemble the District Commissioner in *Things Fall Apart*, with his "analytical detachment" that allows him to "reduce complex experience to words and books" (175). Ironically, as Rogers points out, it is in fact Obi who will come to resemble an inverted Mr. Kurtz; the two are "quasiliterary men, writers of idealistic articles, who travel from Europe imbued with optimistic theories about the future of Africa" (173). While Rogers reading of the novel as a "Heart of Whiteness" is convincing on a number of levels, it perhaps oversimplifies the complexities of decolonization by mirroring it a bit too neatly to the history of European colonial incursion.[73] Thus Obi is not simply coming to Africa from England to enlighten it once more, he is—like Rhys's Sasha Jansen—*returning* to Africa, a movement that must be distinguished in relation to history, memory and community.

Yet Rogers is particularly astute in calling attention to Obi's degree in English Literature and the effect it has on his actions—or inaction—throughout the novel. Obi's literary discussions of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, Waugh's *A Handful of Dust*, and the poetry of T. S. Eliot and W. H. Auden

situate his literary consciousness firmly within a canon of modernist literature. Yet Obi's inability to either learn from the tragic colonial figures in these works (if such didactic readings are available in the first place) or to replicate a modernist style to tell a uniquely African story leaves literature's cultural influence in question. For Brian May, "Obi's defining ambition is to become Nigeria's poetic authority…and it is the collapse of this ambition that constitutes the novel's tragedy" (919). C. A. Babalola goes further to suggest that this type of literary education in fact strips Obi of his ambition, "The 'civilized' hero of *No Longer At Ease* is prone to anxiety, sleep and day-dreaming in many situations where vigorous action or personal courage is necessary to confront his difficulties" (145). Here a mind-body divide begins to emerge in criticism surrounding the novel. Is Obi's arrest (both literal and metaphoric) a result of his supposedly enlightened education? Does he succumb, as it were, from within, from something lacking in his own mental reserves, a Prufrockian failure to dare? Or is he a victim of a toxic and corrupt environment? Are his actions, or inactions, inevitable given the world that surrounds him?

These questions get to the larger issue of environmental control and enlightened liberty that runs throughout discourses on modernization. As I have been arguing throughout this chapter, such control and liberty did not exist for Western Europeans without considerable remainders in the form of imperialist exploitation of non-European cultures and resources. The period of decolonization was an attempt to rebalance these remainders, yet new ecological and economic remainders developed in the postwar era. It is here that Achebe's focus on the bribe becomes an important way of representing the subtle power structures at work between individual and environment. From a contemporary perspective, the "ecological" bribe appears in all facets of environmentalism, whether in the form of

environmental reparations, class-action lawsuits, or emissions trading.[74] While such questions of environmental economics are perhaps outside of the scope of this chapter, Achebe's novel does helpfully work through the bribe's relation between individual and community, community and environment. The bribe is a monetary expression of placing an individual or small group of individuals ahead of community. The bribe is also the price of the individual's free will and action. It expresses a certain economic naturalism, naming the price for which the individual will defer to external forces. Perhaps most disturbing for Obi is the way in which his slide into corruption is expressed in the ecological language of ceding to the earth and one's "natural place." The death of his mother leaves him strangely able to sleep through the night. Reflecting on his mother as "the woman who got things done," her death comes to represent a final moment in the "successful…emasculation of the clan by the white man's religion and government" (*NLE* 151). Obi takes a "queer pleasure" in contemplating colonialism as the unstoppable force meeting the immovable presence of his mother, "He no longer felt guilt. He, too, had died. Beyond death there are no ideals and no humbug, only reality. The impatient idealist says: 'Give me a place to stand and I shall move the earth.' But such a place does not exist. We all have to stand on the earth itself and go with her at her pace" (*NLE* 151). The romantic notion of "going at the earth's pace" manifests itself in Obi succumbing to the bribery and corruption that is "natural" to the Civil Service Officer.[75]

The Powers of Event

Here, then, is the tragedy or fall from grace that completes the promise of the novel's title. Yet it is worth noting that while his actions show no sign of redemption, Obi's

increasingly "uneasy" conscience does point to some alternative, if unrealized, potential, "People say that one gets used to these things, but he had not found it like that at all. Every incident had been a hundred times worse that the one before it. The money lay on the table. He would have preferred not to look in its direction, but he seemed to have no choice. He just sat looking at it, paralysed by his thoughts" (*NLE* 154). This paralysis is quickly interrupted by the fated knock on the door: Obi "springs" to action, but it is, of course, too late, as paralysis transitions into literal arrest.[76] Yet while this tableau marks the end of the novel, it also completes the frame narrative, and returns the reader to the opening pages of the book where Obi stands his trial. While Obi is denigrated by the judge and his boss Mr. Green, he is notably still strongly supported by the Umuofia Progressive Union. As Russell Macdougall argues, "[Obi's] arrest…immediately relocates him in his tribal context…as a kinsman in trouble, who must be saved regardless of his fault…Thus the novel concludes with Obi's kinsmen searching for a solution to his problem, which calls for a restatement of individual identity in terms of collectivity" (23–24). The UPU, as James Ogude argues, embodies a form of local cosmopolitanism that mediates between their traditional way of life in Umuofia and the modern promises of change and development found in Lagos. "Local cosmopolitans," Ogude writes, "are adept at exploiting symbols of modernity to fuel their own local projects…These people's awareness of modernity is anchored in signs they know and can control and in the possibility of mobility between modern and traditional spaces" (252–53). Here is a form of resistance that posits lateral and horizontal attachments in contrast to the "view from above" favored by colonial officers and airplane ecologists.

In the opening pages of the novel, the UPU is juxtaposed to Mr. Green and the country club. Here Green reveals the disdainful view of Africans that lurks beneath his

veneer of propriety and devotion to service. Wiping his "red face" with a "white towel" he claims that "The African is corrupt through and through...over countless centuries the African has been the victim of the worst climate in the world and of every imaginable disease. Hardly his fault. But he has been sapped mentally and physically" (*NLE* 3). Achebe presents here what he elsewhere discusses as "the myths created by the white man to dehumanize the Negro in the course of the last four hundred years—myths which have yielded perhaps psychological, certainly economic, comfort to Europe" (*HI* 15). Mr. Green's insistence on positioning the African as a victim of environment, one that only Western Education and cultivation can overcome with limitless white towels and ice-cold beers, resonates with a contemporary rhetoric of "green imperialism" that argues Africans are too corrupt, unknowledgeable or disorganized to manage their own natural resources. Opposed to the white-washed club, where black stewards fade invisibly into the background to seamlessly serve beers to the "masters," Achebe positions the UPU, holding an emergency meeting, "somewhere on the Lagos mainland" (*NLE* 4). The juxtaposition of these two sections highlights the disconnect that exist between these two groups. Though the club is theoretically open to those who make up the UPU, dialogue between the two is impossible.

Contrary to Mr. Green's caricature of Africans as an inferior and worn down species, the UPU presents a diversity of interests united by a common goal in maintaining their culture during a tumultuous time of transition for Nigeria. Their interest is ultimately rooted in the land they live on, and their awareness that continuing to live on their land requires an engagement with larger governmental and economic interests. Thus the positioning of Obi as an "only palm-fruit" that cannot be lost "in the fire" (*NLE* 6). For Achebe then, Obi's unease is not the modernist's individual and autonomous load to carry, but part and parcel of a larger

community, tradition and history. Nowhere is this more evident than in Obi's attempts to avoid his mother's funeral. After hearing the news of her death, he holes up in his house in Ikoyi, crying like a child, and instead of holding vigil, he sleeps soundly through the night for the first time in years. While Obi seeks isolation, the Umuofia people come to him, some "in taxis…in teams of three or four, sharing the fare among them" (*NLE* 147). The President of the UPU asks permission to sing hymns in Ikoyi, the "European Reservation." Here the Umuofians exercise a local cosmopolitanism that allows them to reclaim a place within land once reserved for Europeans. In the process, they emerge as an alternative vision of a modern Nigerian assembly.

While this moment of connection between the prodigal Obi and the larger Umuofian community is a genuine moment of rest and perhaps does point to an "active potentiality" (Macdougall 25) underlying the novel, the fact that Obi is unable to act to generate positive change for a modern Nigeria remains the tragedy of the work. Obi's failure (made manifest when he crumples his poem "Nigeria") is a writer's failure to fulfill his role in society, which Achebe defines in "Colonialist Criticism as "using his art to control his environment" (*HI* 58).[77] At the same time, Achebe questions whether such a traditional role is open to the African writer, "In the very different, wide-open, multicultural and highly volatile condition known as modern Nigeria, for example, can a writer ever begin to know who his community is let alone devise strategies for relating to it?" (*HI* 40). As such, what emerges from *No Longer at Ease*, perhaps, is not the effort of the artist to control his environment, whether that artist is the failed Obi or the successful Achebe. Instead, the novel opens up a discussion of remainder, as Rhys's *Good Morning, Midnight* does as well, not as what is left over, but as what is left to occur. Thus the modernist hero, in these works, is not immune to the

surrounding world, but is, as Achebe insists, "subject to the sway of non-human forces in the universe, call them God, Fate, Chance or what you will. I call them sometimes the Powers of Event, the repositories of causes and wisdoms that are as yet, and perhaps will always be, inaccessible to us" (*HI* 39). Here, again, is an assertion of human limitation, an acknowledgement of the non-human and of what remains outside of human control.

Literature, as a result, is no longer a tool for controlling environment, but becomes an intermediary force of allowing the human to respond to the non-human in such a way that generates new values and the "kinetic energy necessary for social transition and change" (*HI* 115). As such, literature becomes a driving force of modernization, particularly as a way for developing nations around the globe to generate meaningful change. As Achebe concludes:

> Development or modernization is not merely, or even primarily, a question of having lots of money to spend or blueprints drawn up by the best experts available; it is in a critical sense a question of the mind and the will. And I am saying that the mind and the will belong first and foremost to the domain of stories…what Nigeria is aiming to do is nothing less than the creation of a new place and a new people. And she needs must have the creative energy of stories to initiate and sustain that work. (*HI* 116)

Such rhetoric, as Wilson Harris points out in his response to Achebe's essay on Conrad, is not foreign to the liberal manifesto of Conrad's Kurtz, who writes, "By the simple exercise of our will we can exert a power for good practically unbounded" (Harris 89). What remains imperative, then, from the position of the novelist, as storyteller, is to overcome what Harris identifies as the "pressures of form" through the assertion of the "intuitive self" (86). Thus Harris finds a more charitable reading of *Heart of Darkness* as a "frontier novel…that…

stands upon a threshold of capacity to which Conrad pointed though he never attained that capacity himself" (335).[78] As example of this latent potential lying outside of the text, the "unfinished senses and perceptions that hang upon veils," Harris cites Marlow at the "heart of the original forest," where, "The living trees, lashed together by the creepers and every living bush of the undergrowth, might have been changed into stone, even to the slenderest twig, to the lightest leaf. It was not sleep—it seemed unnatural, like a state of trance" (91). Here Marlow comes in contact with what Achebe calls the "Powers of Event," a non-human force that is not quite nature or supernatural phenomenon; a seeming unnaturalness that is really a crisis of understanding his own place in the world. So, too, does Obi experience this unnatural state of trance, wrapped in the lash of the bribe, incapable of acting in his home on Ikoyi, the once protected European Reserve. That Achebe no longer needs the primitivist imagery of dark forests and "savage discords" is a testament to a modernist legacy that interrogates environment in its deeply entwined relationship to human society and culture. As such, *No Longer at Ease* also stands as a frontier novel, struggling against the "pressures of form" of the European novel to render a distinctly new African awareness of the forces of capital and human agency sustaining modern environments.

As with Rhys, Achebe reformulates remainder to be not what is left over but what has yet to occur. Literature, in this sense, becomes a site of potential for new growth, generation, identity and community. But whereas Rhys fails to find such potentials in a larger community of people, falling back on a vision of the artist as autonomous and exiled, for Achebe it is precisely the "new place and new people" of Nigeria that holds the potential for generating positive change for the future. This vision of remainder as the unrealized potential of community action stands opposite the rhetoric of sustainability based on finite and limited

resources aligned with the mechanistic Ecology of colonial management. It posits instead a flexible and unpredictable ecology, one that resists systems of control and management. Literature, then, becomes a site for generating remainders that can provide new forms of cultural awareness and communal identification: no longer the stories spoken in resting-places surrounded by forests romanticized by Conrad, but places of rest able to provide renewal through connection with others as well as grounds for new activity and actions that harness the "creative energy of stories."

Conclusion

> Rest then before again from not long to so long that perhaps never again and then faint from deep within oh how and here that missing word again it were to end where never till then.
>
> —Samuel Beckett. "Stirrings Still"

Reflecting in 1950 on the efforts of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, director of the British Museum of Natural History Gavin de Beer considered the relationship between literary imagination and nature preservation:

> [T]he charm of the Lake District is largely due to…the romantic interest which it has aroused in people for a century and a half. There was a poet at the bottom of it all, and I feel sure this has a very important bearing on the way in which we shall be able to spread a spirit of respect for nature which is so desirable in all quarters. (*Handbook 1950* 14)

A year later, one year after the centennial of Wordsworth's death, The Lake District National Park would become the first National Park in the UK, nearly 80 years after the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in the United States. If British environmentalism began with "romantic interest," the legal protection of land and the upkeep of ecosystems required distinctly modern apparatuses of control and management, most notably from the sciences of Biology and Ecology, the legislation of local organizers and government officials and monetary support from an increasingly disparate and exploitative capitalist system. Though slow to emerge in the twentieth century, the British model of nature preservation as practiced today by The Wildlife Trusts presents some unique advantages that do seem well adjusted to the modern world. Notably the Trusts encourage local stewardship of often relatively small

tracts of land, providing a highly dispersive access to Nature throughout the British Isles. Instead of large tracts of wilderness that are often far removed from civilization (as seen in many of the United States National Parks, for example), small reserves can simultaneously boast a diversity of wildlife while allowing an ease and frequency of access for those who live in the area. As development and modernization continue to shape environments throughout the world, an attention to the protection of even small natural spaces will prove increasingly beneficial.

If the postwar environmental movement emerged as a necessary redress of the ills of modernization, it did not signal necessarily the arrival of a more restful world. If anything restlessness and unease continue to increase. Jonathan Crary, for example, cites a new 24/7 regime that "supersedes an off/on logic, so that nothing is ever fundamentally 'off' and there is never actually a state of rest" (13). Here, again, the logic of capitalism approaches the Herecleitan stream of constant flux, imitating the constant movement of Nature itself. Speaking at one of the first international conferences held by IUCN in Edinburgh in 1951, Sigurd F. Olson outlined succinctly, if perhaps somewhat dramatically, the challenges facing humans throughout the 20th century:

> Today millions are cut off from any direct contact with the earth…No longer is there anything to fear except man's own ingenuity and he can devote himself in large part to the pursuit of pleasure and to the arts. But evidence is appearing that all is not well. There is wide unrest, frustration and even boredom with the new life. It is the pace, say the experts, the speed of modern city life, Freudian complexes, new foods, the wars, a thousand aberrations of the mind…[Man] dashes from place to place filling his leisure time with

> diversions…The old sense of belonging is gone and the inherent need of being part of a stabilized ecological complex. In spite of comforts and almost complete control of his environment, he is confused and insecure. (2–3)

Olson sees the preservation of the natural world as the key to fighting this epidemic of modern unease: rocks, trees, lakes, rivers and mountains become stalwarts in the fight to restore equilibrium between humans and the environment. Yet this appeal to equilibrium is ultimately a nostalgic and pastoral appeal, weighing man's condition on a scale that divides Nature on one side and technology on the other. Sigurd furthermore imagines a singular and reductive vision of a "man" who might find peace with himself if he simply spent more time among the healing powers of nature. While an important and necessary part of modern life, nature protection alone can hardly be expected to solve the incredible diversity of unease and agitation found in the increasingly complex environments of the modern world. Having access to the heterotopic space of the Nature Reserve—while no doubt therapeutic—can hardly solve the raft of concerns facing communities throughout the built environment. Structural change requires not only material and spatial changes, but ideological and cultural negotiations of environmental conditions.

Here again literature proves to be an invaluable resource for generating environmental awareness and change. If not Wordsworth, the postwar poetry of W. H. Auden helps to elaborate questions of difference, diversity and distinction. His poetry after "September 1939" largely refutes individual isolation. Yet, as Rainer Emig points out, he never fully abandons a "radical anthropocentrism" in which "nature…becomes a marker enabling the human creature to perceive its own limits" (224). An insistence upon difference becomes the defining feature of Auden's ecological and environmental thought. Yet far from

allowing humans to detach or achieve autonomy from their surroundings, Auden's anthropocentrism, as Douglas Mao argues, stems from the belief that "humans are distinguished from other organisms by their unparalleled susceptibility to environment" (307). Both Emig and Mao cite the poem "In Praise of Limestone," which in particular celebrates rock for its difference. The poem starts out with a description of a Mediterranean island whose "cliffs entertain / The butterfly and the lizard" (190). The narrator's use of "gennels," however, a Northern English word for a narrow passageway or alley, layers industrial England onto the idyllic scene. Thus critics note that the limestone of Ischia also evokes the limestone landscapes of Auden's birthplace, Yorkshire. In 1946, two years before the composition of the poem, Sir Francis Terry and Arnold Rowntree purchased Askham Bog to save it from development, leading to the establishment of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust. The organization would go on to protect, among numerous other sites, the Southerscales limestone grassland as an iconic site of Yorkshire diversity.

Yet in Auden's poem the limestone is celebrated not for its iconic links to human culture but precisely for its powers of non-identification, its resistance to anthropocentric agendas and epistemologies:

> This land is not the sweet home that it looks,
> Nor its peace the historical calm of a site
> Where something was settled once and for all […]
> It has a worldly duty which in spite of itself
> It does not neglect, but calls into question
> All the Great Powers assume; it disturbs our rights. The poet,
> Admired for his earnest habit of calling

The sun the sun, his mind Puzzle, is made uneasy
By these solid statues which so obviously doubt
His antimythological myth; and these gamins,
Pursuing the scientist down the tiled colonnade
With such lively offers, rebuke his concern for Nature's
Remotest aspects: I, too, am reproached, for what
And how much you know. (190–191)

Here the limestone sets off a series of disjunctions, unsettling the poet precisely because it falls outside of historical law. The "gamins" running through the stone "gennels" likewise unsettle the scientist who is interested above all in things such as "water" and "stone" that "can be predicted" and reveal natural laws (191). That "I" is reproached by "you" is perhaps the simplest expression of Auden's dialectics of diversity. In his 1950 essay "Nature, History and Poetry," Auden expands on these distinctions between natural law, human history and cultural knowledge. "In nature," he writes, "there exists only the total system of partial social systems and no community; i.e., we cannot say of a natural event that it occurs for the love of anything other than itself…It is only in history that one can speak of communities as well as societies, or make a distinction between an order and a system" (414). Auden's essay helpfully contextualizes the efforts of human societies that attempt to act in the interest of Nature. In particular, his distinction between a "society" as a "system that loves itself" and a "community," that exists "potentially" and "must embody itself in societies which express the love which is its *raison d'être*" elaborates the questions of exclusion and inclusivity that vex contemporary environmental efforts as outlined by Ray, Martinez-Alier, Harvey and others (413–414). The potential community of environmentally conscious individuals

throughout the 20th century benefitted from specific societies such as SPNR that encouraged local management and inclusive access to unique ecological sites throughout the United Kingdom. The work of environmental societies effectively brought natural phenomena and processes under the banner of historical law, increasingly positioning nature protection as "a cause of subsequent historical events by providing them with a motive for recurring" (412). Thus what began as a slow and arduous process gained increasing momentum in the postwar era as victories for nature protection replicated throughout the United Kingdom on local and national levels.

As nature preservation shifts from the potential to the actual, however, the ideologies and value systems embodied by environmentalism should be debated and reformulated. It is here that the intellectual work of literature can intervene to radicalize an anthropocentrism that could promote diversity while working against exclusion. For Auden, "The poem itself is a linguistic society or verbal system…As a society the verbal system is actively coercive upon the feelings it is attempting to embody…As a potential community the feelings are passively resistant to all claims of the system to embody them which they do not recognize as just" (418–20). The work of the poet becomes a negotiation between a verbal system that embodies society and an emotional register that remains to a certain extent ineffable and always *in potentia*. The poet, therefore, is constantly "modifying his conception of the ultimate nature of the community as the immediate suggestions of the system, and modifying the system in response to his growing intuition of the future needs of the community" (420). As contemporary efforts lead to the systemic protection of more and more tracts of "pristine nature" as well as the increasing rehabilitation of polluted ecosystems, environmentalists should not lose sight of the potential community of environmentally minded people that such

a system seeks to include. The work of an ecocritical modernism, then, may be recast not so much as a relentless thirst for "the new" that views environment as mere resource for autonomous creativity, but as a catalyst for freeing new potentials through an interrogation of systems that seek to restrict and bind communities within a static, prescribed environment.

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[1] See Philips chapter 1, Morton "Introduction" to *Ecology Without Nature* and Williams 1–54.
[2] See Wenz chapters 13 and 14 and Evans 181–193.
[3] See Carlson chapter 1.
[4] For a comprehensive account of SPNR, see Sands, Tim. *Wildlife in Trust*. London: Elliot and Thompson Limited, 2013.
[5] See Rothschild, Miriam. *Dear Lord Rothschild*. Philadelphia: Balaban. 1983.
[6] See Brennan 55–74 and Goldstone 10–17.
[7] One of Kepler's more striking works was *Somnium*, a dream of viewing the earth from the moon.
[8] One important principle of the force of inertia as Newton describes it is that inertia increases with velocity. Thus the faster an object is moving, the more difficult it is to change its state.
[9] The importance of Faraday's work can clearly be seen in the electrical vocabulary Lawrence employs to describe sexual forces of energy and attraction.
[10] See letter to Catherine Carswell, 30 October 1919 where Lawrence leaves his complete set of De Quincey's works to the Carswell, saying "I can go on reading and reading him."
[11] The influence of Taylorism can be seen most clearly in Gerald Crich's management of his father's coal mine and his obsession for efficiency. See *Women in Love*, "The Industrial Magnate."
[12] See Berghoff, Hartmut and Robert von Friedeburg. *Change and Inertia: Britain under the impact of the Great War.* Bodenheim: Philo, 1998.
[13] See discussion of inertia vs. the "offensive spirit." Ashworth, Tony. "The Live and Let Live System" in *The World War I Reader*. Ed. Michael S. Neiberg. New York: New York UP, 2007, 214–224.
[14] See Whitworth 124.
[15] See Eagleton, Terry. "The Novels of D. H. Lawrence." *The Eagleton Reader*. Ed. Stephen Regan. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
[16] See Taylor's discussion of the pig-iron handler in *Principles of Scientific Management*. New york: Harper and Brothers, 1913: 40–48.
[17] Lawrence would write to Dorothy Brett towards the end of his life, "you must allow me to choose my own life, even to manage my own 'inertia'" (*Letters VI* 57).
[18] See Lawrence's unpublished foreword to *Women in Love*.
[19] Despite this reference to Ulysses, Lawrence expressed no interest in reading Homer.
[20] In his defense of Joyce against this charge, Richard Ellmann cites the "Aeolus" episode for its presentation of man as an extension of the industrial machines of the printing press.
[21] See Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003. Brown, Richard. "Time, Space and the City in 'Wandering Rocks.'" In *Joyce's 'Wandering Rocks.'* Ed. Richard Brown. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi, 2002. Otte, George. "Time and Space (with the Emphasis on the Conjunction): Joyce's Response to Lewis." *James Joyce Quarterly* (1985 Spring): 297-306.
[22] See Thacker, Andrew. *Moving Through Modernity: Space and Geography in Modernism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
[23] See Bulson, Eric. *Novels, Maps, Modernity: The Spatial Imagination, 1850–2000*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2007. Print.
[24] For meteorological accuracy in *The Odyssey*, see Oliver, John. *The Encyclopedia of World Climatology*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2005, pp. 380–381.
[25] See "Supernature and the weather" in Egan, Gabriel. *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
[26] See for example the description of Golfo Placido in *Nostromo.*
[27] Bullough stresses the importance of balancing distance, describing over-distancing and under-distancing.
[28] See Jankovic, Vladimir. *Reading the Skies: A Cultural History of English Weather, 1650–1820.* Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2000.
[29] 1837–88. Notable for having produced one of the earliest maps of Mars.
[30] The level of interaction determines the complexity of environment, "an animal is able to distinguish as many objects as it can carry out actions in its environment" (96).
[31] See Aubert, Jacques. *The Aesthetics of James Joyce*. Baltimore: Hopkins University Press, 1992.
[32] See *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*. Trans Father Elder Mullan. New York: P. K. Kenedy & Sons, 1914. Print. pp. 35.
[33] His individual roaming coincides with the news that his family is being put out by the "landboro lordboro," a reference to the land-wars of the Catholics and the Anglo-Irish Protestant ascendency.

[34] Such contradictions can be seen in his analogy, "The earth was like a swinging swaying censer, a ball of incense, an ellipsoidal fall" (*P* 237).
[35] See also Hill, Jonathan. *Weather Architecture*. New York: Routledge, 2013.
[36] The word 'climate' stems from medieval geography, signifying bands or belts of the earth's surface stretching from west to east and associated with specific parallels of latitude.
[37] The word quincunx originally derived from a roman coin whose value was five twelfths of an *as*, and the quincunx design is found on many roman coins. In this sense it is also an expression of the economic "balance checking" of the priest's sermon.
[38] Joyce's address in Trieste was (coincidentally) 5 via Donato Bramante.
[39] A similar discussion can be found in "Drama and Life."
[40] The young Stephen Dedalus describes it in *Portrait* as "the flashing gold thing into which God was put on the altar in the middle of flowers and candles at benediction while the incense went up in clouds at both sides as the fellow swung the censer" (*P* 31).
[41] Joyce himself offers no help in this matter, leaving the man a mystery in "Ithaca."
[42] Hugh Kenner argues that the episode highlights Bloom's language itself.
[43] Ellmann recounts how Joyce was attracted to the painted scene of a tired Ulysses in the home of Baroness St. Leger in Locarno, "the artist had conceived of Ulysses as tired and so sitting down to draw his bow" (1983, 470).
[44] Barnes herself became dismissive of this early work. For more on Barnes and Synge see Phillip Herring, "Djuna Barnes and the Songs of Synge." *Eire-Ireland: A Journal of Irish Studies* 28.2 (1993): 139–144.
[45] A similar search for freedom in nature occurs in the short story "A Night in the Woods," which ends with Trenchard and his wife Jenny lying down in stillness after strangling their dog Pontz who has betrayed them to the authorities.
[46] G. F. Herbert Smith, "Nature Protection in Great Britain," *Nature* No. 4066 (October 4, 1947): 457–459.
[47] Patterson, for example, reads in Virgil's eclogues an early critique of imperial ambitions (254).
[48] The misplaced love between a lioness and a tiger forms the basis of Barnes's article "Tragedy in a Zoo," where the jealous lion mauls and kills the lioness before succumbing, along with the tiger to death in grief.
[49] It is also, paradoxically, only through death that Nora feels she would be able to keep Robin.
[50] Jane Marcus does a thorough job of reading Barnes's critique of Freudian psychoanalysis, yet a more sustained consideration of *Nightwood* in its relation to *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* remains to be pursued.
[51] A similar delight in imagining the perceptions of another creature runs throughout Uexküll's *Forays*.
[52] One outlet becomes what Catherine Whitley has explored as "excremental history" in the work of James Joyce and Djuna Barnes.
[53] Barnes seemingly had little desire to see this late poetry published. She sent drafts to *The New Yorker* but balked when an editor suggested she change even a single word.
[54] The domestication of silkworms occurred over 5000 years ago in China. It is second only to corn in receiving heterosis and cross breeding in order to yield a maximum commercial output. See Dennis Normile, "Sequencing 40 Silkworm Genomes Unravels History of Cultivation" *Science* 325 (2009): 1058–1059.
[55] Barnes also pursued these late poems as a means for sustaining her own life amid anxiety, medical burdens and financial duress, as she writes to Natalie Clifford Barney, "I peg away at my verses, God knows why...why? Because this at least I have. The chief anxiety, is Time, it goes with such extraordinary rapidity I no more than catch a line of verse, and it is night. I recall that I once said to T.S. Eliot, how I had wasted my time. He replied 'Yes, but think what you did when you were not wasting it.' Therefore, that I may not turn about somewhat later with a groan, I peg away at my verse" (Dec. 1964).
[56] Hugh Pattison Macmillan G.C.V.O. (1873–1952). Was chairman of the Committee on Finance and Industry from 1929–31. Also served briefly as Minister of Information during WWII.
[57] W. L. Taylor was a 20th century ecologist and animal biologist who published on "Animal Ecology" as well as forest ecosystems. President of the Institute of Foresters of Great Britain 1937–38. Published *Forest and Forestry in Great Britain* in 1946.
[58] Morton's *Ecology without Nature* is a watershed book in this respect.
[59] Cary Wolfe in particular has brought the term posthumanism into ecocritical debate, distinguishing it from the more technologically oriented work of N. Katherine Hayles. Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* has also been largely influential for ecologies of living and inanimate matter.
[60] Indeed, as Peder Anker points out, the spelling "ecology" was chosen for its homologies with "economy." Much has also been made of ecology as nature's economy.

[61] While Anker's study ends in 1945, the postwar era proved a challenge to the mechanistic ecology of imperialism as urges toward decolonization were made in order to focus more resources on British recovery efforts. In certain respects, then, the proliferation of Nature Reserves and conservation efforts in the UK during the postwar period can be seen as endo-colonization, where systems of control and resource management developed in the colonies were put to effect on the British interior.
[62] See Virilio, Paul. *The Lost Dimension*. New York: Semiotext(e), 1991. Print.
[63] As Berman explains, "the Faustian enterprise…will draw on nature's own energy and organize that energy into the fuel for new collective human purposes and projects" (62).
64 An interesting parallel is the outbreak of Encephalitis Lethargica or "sleeping sickness," which swept Europe between 1915 and 1926. See Molly Caldwell Crosby's *Asleep: The forgotten epidemic that remains one of medicine's greatest mysteries*. New York: Berkley Books, 2010.
[65] Sunday, of course, was also the day that Columbus happened to see the island. It is worth noting, however, that this was the fourth island Columbus named that day, 3 November 1493, the first being La Deseada, the second Guadaloupe, and the third Maria Galanta, after his own ship. As Symington Grieve writes, "Later in the same day he sighted a beautiful island with high mountains, at which he touched, and named in honour of the day La Dominica" (12).
[66] These passages also echo *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* in which Julia's mother says, " 'I can't rest in this country. This is such a cold, grey country" (123).
[67] This inability to generate change can be glimpsed when the scarred veteran René asks Sasha what she fears. Before answering, the narration interrupts the conversation with a meditation on temporality: "You are walking along a road peacefully. You trip. You fall into blackness. That's the past—or perhaps the future. And you know that there is no past, no future, there is only this blackness, changing faintly, slowly, but always the same" (*GMM* 172). Sasha goes on to say she is afraid of—or more precisely hates—men, women, and the "whole bloody human race," yet the real source of Sasha's despair is her inability to change human nature and her own complicity in the "bloody business." This want of agency finds its ultimate expression in Sasha saying she lacks the "guts" to take her own life.
[68] Another comparison might be made to Chapter 4 of the Book of Daniel in which Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a fruitful tree being hewed down, but left in the ground with an iron band around the stump. Daniel interprets the dream as a warning for the king to be humble and show mercy to the poor in order that he may lengthen his tranquility.
[69] Haywood published *Sport and Service in Africa*.
[70] These reserves also transitioned in some cases to become the first National Parks in Nigeria.
[71] In his essay "The Education of a British-Protected Child," Achebe recounts seeing Huxley when the latter visited the school of Umuahia, writing that Huxley skipped Sunday service to roam the "extensive grounds watching birds with binoculars" (12).
[72] In *Arrow of God*, Achebe also explores such spaces as the colonial "Rest House…surrounded by a ragged hedge of a native plant" (115).
[73] Most telling is the assertion that Mr. Green in fact plays a "black" role, although what this means or entails exactly Rogers never explains.
[74] In this view, environmental tariffs and ecotaxes may be recast as the bribe price for industry to continue generating profit.
[75] In this final image, Obi's position aligns very closely with that of the collier manager Tom Brangwen who relaxes into his "place of rest" within the larger industrial machine.
[76] Here again we see the room failing to provide the modernist with the escape he/she so desires. This final knock on the door is not unlike the final knock on Sasha's door made by the *commis voyageur* in *Good Morning, Midnight*.
[77] We might think here of James Joyce and his attempts to control the environment of Dublin through exile and artistic rendering.
[78] Admittedly, this is a strange sort of praise to celebrate a novel for something it *potentially* accomplishes.